

# *E-Herald of the Coming Kingdom*

*"The time has come, and the  
Kingdom of God is near.  
Change the way you think  
and act, and believe the  
Good News."  
Mark 1:15 GW*

## *In This Issue:*

*Three Important Questions for Parents*

*Religious - But Lost!*

*Revelation*

*I Thought I Hated Church History*

*Immortality and Who Has It*

*DEDICATED TO SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S COMING  
KINGDOM TO BE ESTABLISHED WHEN JESUS RETURNS*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Co-Editors: Wally Winner - Kent Ross



What a strange ten days here at the end of April and into May. We were just celebrating and remembering the death, burial, Resurrection of Jesus so many years ago. It was a time of renewal as we remember what God did in raising Him from the dead. Jesus didn't raise himself. He was dead, but because of His obedience God "broke all the rules", over-ruling even death and raised His Son and then granting Him eternal life, immortality . . . the first-fruits of them that sleep.

At the end of that week, they claim between one and two billion people watched the wedding of Will and Kate in London. Such a spectacle and such pageantry for some, including myself, who appreciate that sort of thing, but also somewhat hypocritical as they had been apparently living in sin for some eight years.

Only two or three days later much of the western world seemed to "celebrate" the killing of Osama Bin Laden, while millions in the Middle East were in grief and rage over it. For many of us the event drew mixed emotions, for while most were glad he was no longer a direct threat, the thought of seeking him out to kill had a measure of repugnance to it.

What this last event will bring to pass is unknown, though some Radical Islamists are declaring revenge on the United States. Egypt seems to be falling under the influence of the Islamic Brotherhood. Libya is a hotbed of war, as is Syria. All of this is predictable and to be expected. At what rate things will be occurring is unknowable, though some have proclaim this month, and then August to be dates of the Lord's direct involvement in our world.

I fervently hope so, but intend to keep working while watching. That is why in this issue there is, we hope, an interesting compilation of articles ranging from one on developing an Appreciation for History's Lessons (Pastor Alan Cain), another showing the first efforts of our churches organizing a conference and why they felt it important (copies from an early historical document), and another on Cultivating Your Faith Into Your Own Children (Pastor Seth Ross), and yet another on Opening the Book of Revelation (Part 1) (Pastor Dave Hixon). Pastor Wally Winner, J. M. Morgan and more.

Enjoy and be blessed.

# Contents

Editorial  
Page 2

Three Important Questions for  
Parents to Ask  
Page 4  
Seth Ross

Religious - But Lost!  
Page 9  
Wally Winner

Revelation  
Page 13  
Dave Hixon

I Thought I Hated Church History  
Page 20  
Alan Cain

Church of God Encyclopedia  
Page 23

Church of God  
Copy of 1920 Document  
Page 5

Immortality and Who Has  
Page 29  
J.M. Morgan



Contact Larry Mayberry at [larrymayberry@sbcglobal.net](mailto:larrymayberry@sbcglobal.net)

# Three Important Questions for Parents to Ask

By Seth Ross



The danger in writing an article on parenting is that you may drift into the “how to” category, which is always a losing proposition. Now that I have 3 year old & 1 year old boys, I realize the futility of telling others how to parent. The same ‘how to’s’ don’t even work on both boys in my family, so it would be absurd to think there are answers that fit every family and every situation. But I do think there are some over-arching, general principles that can give guidance to all parents.

I’ve worked in youth ministry for about 22 years. I don’t have many answers, but I’ve listened to a lot of stories. I’ve seen lots of dysfunction, but I’ve also had the opportunity to watch families do it right. They’ve raised kids who now have kids of their own. And while I’m no expert, I’ve had a lot of people to draw from in addition to God’s word, which gives us some insight into parenting.

My goal is to share three questions I believe are important for every parent to ask based on principles we can all use. The latest trend in parenting, it seems, is to believe, ‘If my kids get the right education, they’ll turn out just fine.’ But over the years, having talked to many families, there are certain things I’ve never had said to me. Most people, by the time they make it to my office, usually have the problem figured out. (‘Our problems stem from my parents’ divorce... my abuse as a child... my dad’s alcoholism...’) People are mostly just seeking an answer or solution.

Some counseling problems or statements I’ve NEVER heard include...

- ‘It all started when I didn’t make the 8<sup>th</sup> grade soccer team...’
- ‘My problems stem from not getting into my college of choice...’
- ‘I had to go to public school...’
- ‘My dad made me drive a used car, and now I can’t relate to my wife/kids/job...’
- ‘My clothes were so out of style, my self-esteem has never recovered...’
- ‘It all goes back to the quality of my education...’
- ‘I had to miss my gymnastic meet...’

My point is this; the things we get so focused on with our kids, what consumes our time & resources, often have little to do with our kids' success when they become adults. If aliens watched us & didn't understand our language, they may conclude that getting kids there on time is a life & death matter. Or we must stay active. If we sit still too long, we might die. Or a family can never be together for too long, so we must keep rushing to separate events, spending our resources on looking right & arriving on time.

None of us believe that, but it's the trend we battle every day. The end result is that we make our kids 'experience rich' and 'relationship poor.' Partly we parent from the idea that, 'I want my kids to experience things I never did. I want them to have what I never had.' So we're driven to make them a part of everything, to participate in the right activities, get the right grades, attend the right school. And so they grow up experience rich, but relationship poor.

As adults we know that our ability to develop mature, rich relationships is what makes life worth living. Not drawing from experience we had as a child. I'm not downplaying experiences, but we err on the side of ensuring an experience rich life. That often leads to a deficit in relationships. Everybody gets to the ballgame on time, tuition gets paid, the dorm room gets set up, but we never have dinner together. We're busy, busy, busy, but we can't remember the last time we had a 5 minute, face to face conversation with our child.

So we try to compensate. First, we compensate by over protecting them. Mom & dad aren't too active in Jimmy's life, but if he gets in trouble at school... they get real active & show up with a lawyer. We over react by protecting them from the consequences for their own actions, but we fail to invest relationally in them. Second, we compensate by either over or under disciplining them. We've been uninvolved, and now they're screwing up. So I jump in and get really involved & over discipline. Or I feel guilty for not having been involved, so I back off & under discipline. Neither extreme is helpful.

So how can we maintain a good balance? How can we give them key experiences, yet not rob them of key relationships? How do we get there? If parents will continually ask themselves three important questions (which we'll get to later), we'll have great context for parenting.

As adults, we are the product of our relationships, our experiences, and the decisions we've made. This is true for all of us. For the most part, our experiences are dictated by our relationships (who are friends are, who we work with, etc). Big decisions that we've made, those defining moments in life, were impacted by our relationships (who we were with that night, who we went into business with, our first roommate, who we fell in love with for the first time). Basically, the most influential piece of this are the relationships we develop. They have & do impact who we are, and who we become, more than anything else.

There are three key relationships are:

- 1) the relationship with our parents,
- 2) the relationship with God (or lack thereof), and
- 3) the relationships with people outside your home

To illustrate this, imagine a box with 3 knobs, each knob representing one of these relationships. Imagine you could go back to critical moments in your life & dial in our out any or all of those relationships to create a different mix. A different balance. At some point maybe you would dial out mom, dial in more dad. Imagine if you could, at critical times, shift the nature and health of those relationships. Imagine you're about to make the biggest mistake of your life, 'If I'd only been a Christian, if I were more serious about God...' Imagine dialing out the girl next door or your first roommate. Think back... 'he was a good guy, I'd dial more of him in.' If you could go back & adjust the mix of those relationships, most of us would find that we could have avoided our biggest regrets. We'd probably be more mature adults.

As parents, God gives us the opportunity and responsibility to dial those relationships into or out of our kids' lives. The earlier we're intentional about this mix, the easier it is to influence them in a positive way. Why? Just like you, your kids will be the result of their experiences, choices, and relationships. As parents, we can't control all they experience or the decisions they'll make. You CAN influence relationships they have. You can be a huge influence in the areas of their relationships with you, God, & others. God's given us the incredible opportunity, if we'd be intentional, to ask what we can do to improve our own relationship with them, enhance their relationship with God, and affect the mix of people they interact with outside your home.

### **The Relationship with Parents**

*Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)*

This is such a powerful verse for parents. Essentially it says you are never to alienate your children relationally. In fact, the phrase "bring them up" literally means "nurture them" which is a highly relational picture. God's call to us, in terms of our kids, is to stay involved, to stay tuned into them in a such a way that we never lose influence. Don't be so interfering that you lose influence. Notice the huge contrast... 'instead' nurture them under instruction of the Lord. This is great insight into the nature of the parent-child relationship.

### **The Relationship with God**

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

If you teach your kids to surrender to God in every area of life, God will engage with our children and make their paths straight. What an awesome thing to know as a parent that we have a partner in the process. But it means we must do all we can to enhance their relationship with God, so that they feel accountable to Him.

### **The Relationship with People Outside the Home**

*He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm. (Proverbs 13:20)*



In youth ministry, we teach students, 'Your friends will determine the direction & quality of your life.' As parents, you know this. So we must ask ourselves, 'What am I doing to influence the people who have a relationship with my child? Who has influence with my child?' Other kids, adults, teachers, coaches. It's not about keeping them away from Johnny next door with a BB gun. It's asking, 'Who are the people I need to influence TOWARD my kids?' And not just kids, but other adults. I was always grateful for other adults in my church who invested in me relationally. I'll be grateful for adults who invest in my children relationally.

And again, it's not just about keeping bad people away, but intentionally bringing others into the lives of your kids. Why? He who walks with the wise, grows wise, and the companion of fools WILL suffer harm. It just happens. It's part of our stories.

What I know about you as a parent, regardless of how old your kids are, is that you already influence them in these areas. You're doing something now to build or detract from their relationship with you and their relationship with God. You're also influencing who they spend time with. It may be accidental or intentional. It may be positive, or it may be negative. One day, they'll talk about their relationship with you and whether it was healthy or not, about what you did to encourage their relationship with God, and they'll have some opinion about how involved you were with others in their lives.

If you believe in systematic parenting, or if you've already bailed out, the question is, 'Are we wise enough to be intentional? Are we wise enough to not just make sure they get wonderful experiences? Or will we ensure they're as connected as possible with us, God, and with the right people outside our family?'

### The Three Questions

1. **What are you doing to enhance your child's relationship with YOU?** More than just seeing them after work each night, what could you do to build that relationship deeper with each child?
2. **What are you doing to enhance your child's relationship with GOD?** More than just saying prayer at dinner & before bed, what could you do if you thought about it more? What could you do for a college student? For a pre-schooler? So when they leave home, they leave with a sense of accountability to God?
3. **What are you doing to influence your child's relationships with OTHERS outside your home?** Not just keeping the bad ones away, but how can you surround them with people who are investing in them at every step?

You're already doing something. What if you sat down with your spouse & talked about how you can build these three relationships in your child's life? Because we know as adults, they'll be the sum total of their decisions, experiences, & relationships. You'll be surprised at the answers you'll come up with & how creative you can be when you do this on purpose.

We've got to educate them. They all must eat & live indoors. They've got to be socialized & play. I'm not against them having experiences (take them to Disney World or Europe), but don't make the mistake of thinking, 'If they're experientially rich, then they'll be successful in adulthood.' We all know that's not true. All that takes is money.

The question is: are you being as intentional, doing as much planning, as willing to make an equal financial investment in their relationship with you, God, & those outside the home? And what are you doing to enhance those three relationships? If we can keep an eye on those three, we'll will go a long way to bucking the cultural trend & becoming the parents God calls us to be.



**And these words...  
shall be upon your heart;  
and you shall teach them  
diligently to your children...  
-Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

# Religious – But Lost!

By Wally Winner



On the voyage of the Titanic there was a host of prominent people from every walk of life. There were people who were prominent in the field of athletics, in the world of politics, in the world of the arts and show business, and in the world of business. The roster of passengers included hundreds of remarkable people who had made a name and a reputation for themselves in nearly every profession and calling.

Yet when that disaster took place and the Cunard steamship lines put a list of the fatalities on the windows of their buildings in New York and elsewhere, they used only two words which were significant for loved ones and families and friends. Each of these two words headed up a long list of names, one of which read, "Saved," and the other, "Lost." Nothing else mattered.

It didn't matter what kind of a name these people had made for themselves, what wealth they had, what awards they had received, what celebrities they were, or what distinctions they had. The only thing that mattered in the final analysis was: Were they *saved* or were they *lost*?

## SAVED OR LOST?

And friend, that's all that will ever really matter in the final analysis regarding any one of us. Whatever we may attain in this world and in this life, when the last chapter is written and the book is closed, all that will count is in which of these categories we are to be listed. Of course, the Cunard steamship line meant "saved" or "lost" in the physical sense, but in the spiritual sense as well, these are the only two categories that count with God.

## .RELIGIOUS — BUT LOST

In the book of Acts, chapters 10 and 11, there is a wonderful story of a man named Cornelius. He was deeply religious, but the Bible tells us that this man was lost. Cornelius was the kind of man who would be a welcome member to any service club organization, and indeed, a welcome member of a great many churches today. He had a great deal to commend him to his fellow human beings, if he were judged by the standards that men use.

We find this description of Cornelius in Acts 10:2: "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always," He was a sincere man who genuinely feared the Lord and we know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. So he was off to a good start. He stood in awe of Yahweh, and he revered the fact of the reality of the living God. It also says that he worshipped God according to the light that he had and according to the understanding that was his, and that is to be commended.

## A FINE MAN — BUT LOST

We also read that Cornelius was an unselfish and generous man. He gave much alms to the people, and later on in the story it tells how the people appreciated and respected him for the financial and material help he had given to others.

He was also an influential man. Acts 10 tells us that he was a soldier who had men under his command, and he had under him at least one devout soldier.

Acts 10:7 says, “He called two of his household servants, and a *devout soldier* of them that waited on him continually.”

That is quite interesting when you contemplate the fact that there are many people working or living under the authority of others who have no use for the boss’s religion, because the boss has no witness with them and doesn’t know how to treat them well. They say, “If that’s Christianity, I don’t want it.” It says volumes for this devout man that his influence was wholesome enough that some of the men under him were also devout. Cornelius had a wholesome and a good influence on those over whom he had jurisdiction and control.

It says also that he “feared God with all his house.” That also says something for him. There are people in family circles who will say, “If the religion of my mother and dad is what you’re asking me to enter into, forget it! I’m not interested. It isn’t doing very much for helping their attitude toward me. I don’t want my dad’s or my mother’s religion.” That is often the case.

But Cornelius had a positive kind of influence in his home and in his work, and there was something wholesome and good and right about him. There was so much sincerity in his religious life that his whole house followed his steps. God-fearing, generous in his almsgiving, influential in his immediate family circle and over the men where he had control. Yes, there was a lot to be said for this fellow.

We also read that Cornelius “prayed to God always.” He prayed — he believed in prayer, and he was regular at it. And it was during a time of prayer that Cornelius received a surprising message from God. In Acts 11:13-14, as his experience is recounted, we read that an angel appeared to Cornelius and said, “Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words, whereby *thou and all thy house shall be saved.*”

### ME? LOST?

I can imagine his response, “You mean I’m not saved now? Haven’t You seen my giving record and stewardship to religious causes? Don’t You see the

influence on my family? It’s wholesome and good! Haven’t You heard my prayers? Haven’t You seen my influence on these men who are devout soldiers? And what about my genuine fear of You?”

But God was saying, “No, Cornelius, that’s not enough. There is more. Your faith is incomplete. You’ve not followed through to the point of redemption and salvation, and I’ve got a man who’ll tell you all about it and fill in the gaps. Send for Peter, and he will tell you “words by which thou and all thy house shall be saved.”

Isn’t that an interesting way to put it? There were words from God that these people needed to hear. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). People so often today seem to think that they can be saved through a program of works and self-improvement. They think they need to “turn over a new leaf” and do better and try harder. But that’s not the truth. There’s a *message* from God that must be believed and appropriated and embraced, and only when you do that will you be saved and receive a new life and eternal life in the Kingdom. God told him, “Send for Peter, and he’ll tell you the words whereby you and your house shall be saved.”

Now keep in mind that this house of Cornelius was a pure Gentile home, and at that time the Jerusalem church was very narrow in its outlook. It produced those Judaizing teachers who dogged Paul’s steps wherever he went and told the people, “Now, Paul’s a great guy, but he’s leading you astray on one point. You have to be converted to Judaism to be saved. You have to keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved.” God had to work on and work over some of those people at that Jerusalem headquarters to tell them that the gospel was more cosmopolitan than that, and that the gospel was given to redeem all people: “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek and to all the Gentiles” (Rom. 1:16, 2:9-10).

It would have been natural for Peter to be reluctant to go to that Gentile home with the message of the gospel. But at one end God had a man whose heart was full with the message of salvation, and at the other end He had a man whose heart was not full by quite a ways, who had some missing gaps to be filled, and *God would do anything to bring those*

*two together.* So while He was telling Cornelius to send for Peter, at the same time He was preparing Peter to go.

The scripture tells us that God appeared to Peter on the rooftop at the hour of prayer, and by a vision of a sheet lowered from heaven full of animals considered unclean by the Old Testament ceremonial laws, God said to Peter, "Rise, kill and eat." Peter said, "Not so, Lord, I've never eaten anything common or unclean."

God answered, "What God has cleansed, call thou not common or unclean." And while God was getting that message through to Peter, there was a knock at the door downstairs. Cornelius' messengers had arrived, and Peter made the connection — he was to go to this Gentile home that a devout, loyal Jew would have believed to be an unclean place, and he was to tell this Gentile about Jesus Christ.

### **SOMETHING MISSING**

Now it's interesting to notice that God's operation here came in response to prayer. You remember it says that this man Cornelius prayed to God always. And in the place of prayer one day a messenger of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Cornelius, thy prayer is heard." *Thy prayer is heard.* That's an interesting statement, for without knowing the precise wording of his prayers, we know what Cornelius must have been asking for. God said, "Cornelius, your prayer is heard and I'm going to answer it."

So Peter came and explained about redemption and explained about forgiveness of sins and explained about Jesus dying on the cross and how God raised Him from the dead. Peter told them about how the Holy Spirit was upon Christ, and how He went about doing many good and wonderful miracles. "He's the Redeemer! He's the Savior!" That's what Peter told

them, and evidently, that's what Cornelius was asking about in his prayers. Oh, he probably wasn't saying, "Please, dear God, get some word to me about Jesus." I think rather his prayer was something along these lines: "Dear God, you know I'm a religious man. I give generously to the church. We have high ethics and high morals in this household. We are trying to be the best friend, neighbor and citizen we can be. But, dear God, I just sense there's something missing. What is it that I lack?"

God heard Cornelius' prayer, and I think the reason that his prayer was heard was because this man was living up to the light that he had, and he acted on what he knew.



And when anybody honestly and sincerely lives up to the light that they have, God will get more light to them. That's His policy, and that's the way He operates. I think some of us would get more understanding and more light from the Lord if we were doing more with the light we already have. There is an awful lot of understanding of what the Christian life ought to be and should be that a lot of us aren't living up to now. So why should we be

asking God for anything *more* when we're doing nothing with *what we've got*?

But this man was sincere and devout, and had acted on the light he had received. When Cornelius prayed, "Dear God, there's something missing," God answered.

So Peter came, and we read that Cornelius got all his family and friends into his house (Acts 10:24). Cornelius told them how God had appeared to him. Then he said, "We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (10:33). I like that. God will bless the church and the pastor that has a congregation like that. He was saying, "Peter, we're here and we want you to tell it like it is. We want to hear all the things that are

commanded of God. We want the whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help you God, Give us the whole story.” What a setup for a meeting!

And with that introduction, Peter started into his sermon. And as he recounted what happened next he said, “I just *began* to speak and the Holy Spirit came upon them with conviction of sin. God ended my sermon where I barely got it started.”

What did Peter talk about? In Acts 10:34-43 we find these essential themes recorded: Jesus Christ is Lord. God anointed Christ. God was with Him. God allowed Him to die on the cross for our sins. God raised Him from the dead. God has made Him judge.

Then Peter came to the point where he spoke of forgiveness of sins through Christ’s death. We find it recorded in Acts 10:43, “Through His [Christ’s] name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.’ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word” (verse 44). That truth broke up the meeting, and God met Cornelius, his family and his household in that Gentile home.

### REPENTANCE AND FAITH

This account includes several important points, and let me ask you, friend, does your experience correspond to this? First, we find repentance and remission of sins (11:18). You might say, “How can this be? Cornelius was such a wonderful man; what in the world did he have to repent of?” Believe me, when God through His Spirit deals with people, they find plenty to repent of. We *all* are sinners.

Maybe you’re like Cornelius — a very religious, devout and lovely person. But here’s a good place to begin in your repentance: You need to repent of keeping Jesus Christ out of the central place in your life during all the years you’ve been alive. Start there; it’s a good beginning. To keep Him from being Lord in your life after all He’s done for you — there’s sin enough right there that needs to be repented and taken care of. Even Cornelius, evidently, found out that he had some things to repent of and that he needed to receive remission of sins. Have you received this remission of sins?

Then it also talks about receiving the Lord Jesus. Have you received Christ? Until you accept His death on the cross for your sins and believe in His resurrection, you haven’t received Him into your life.

And we read that Cornelius and the believers here received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Has God put His Holy Spirit into your heart so that you have a new sensitivity now to what is sin and to what is right? Does the Lord live within you?

We see then that Cornelius and his household were “baptized in the name of the Lord” (Acts 10:48). Cornelius asked Peter to stay on for several days of further instruction.

*Religious, but lost.* There are tens of thousands of people who fit into that category. I hope you’re not one of them. Don’t settle for anything short of a confrontation and an appropriation of Jesus Christ. Cornelius said, “Lord there’s something missing, something that’s lacking, and oh, I want it.”

All his sincerity and wholesome living, and all his generosity and good influence meant nothing by God’s standard unless he repented of his sin and received the salvation God offers through Christ’s redeeming blood.

There are only two words that will have any significance when the book of your life is closed: *Saved* or *Lost*. Make sure that you aren’t numbered among the eternal “casualties.” Accept God’s offer of forgiveness and new life today.



# REVELATION

By Dave Hixon

Is the book of Revelation relevant today? Is it possible to understand it? I think the book is more relevant today than ever before in history.

The fundamental message of the book of Revelation is simple. It promises that God will institute universal peace, prosperity and cooperation over all the earth immediately after the return of Jesus Christ. It reveals how this wonderful new world will be established and why it will never be destroyed.

Now this evening, you may hear some terrible things. BUT JUST REMEMBER, JUST LIKE PAUL HARVEY SAYS, WE KNOW THE REST OF THE STORY!! WE KNOW HOW THE BOOK ENDS! THERE IS NO NEED TO FEAR.

We are going to examine this evening the 7 seals of Revelation. Now before we begin what is the significance of the number 7 in the scriptures? It means completeness or perfections. There are seven seals, there are seven trumpets and seven bowls of God's wrath.

How many of you have heard of the "four horsemen of the Apocalypse"?—this term Apocalypse is the Greek name for the book of Revelation. This is where we will begin.

In Revelation 6, Christ uses four horsemen to represent the first four of the seven seals He opens from the scroll in His hand.

John here is taken in a vision to the very throne of God. He sees the risen Glorified Jesus come out and He is the only one found worthy to open the scroll.

Now, I want to interject here. And you will need to keep this in mind as we go through. What year was the Book of Revelation written? Any one know? It was written around ad 90 while John was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. This was AFTER the destruction of the temple in ad 70. Keep that in mind as we go through.

When the seals open before John, he sees the first four uniquely pictured. Four ominous horsemen arise in an eerie sequence.

To better understand what these horsemen represent, let's look at another key prophecy Jesus Christ gave during His ministry.

Jesus' disciples were visiting Jerusalem with Him. After admiring the temple's buildings, they crossed the Kindron Valley, climbed the Mount of Olives and paused to ask Christ for signs of His coming and the end of the age.

Jesus gave four signs that correspond PERFECTLY with the first four seals of Revelation 6: **Matthew 24:4-8- "And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you." For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many. "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes." But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."**

Here Jesus reveals an overview of trends and conditions from the first century until the end of the age. Take note of the four significant developments He foretold: **Religious deception, war, famine and disease.**

Let's now look more closely at what John saw in Revelation 6. As the first seal opens, John writes the following: **"Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." I**





looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.” (Revelation 6:1-2).

White is a symbol of purity and peace. Here is a rider who appears to come in the name of and bearing a message of peace.

But he is a conqueror, one who imposes his version of peace on the world.

Possibly this rider will even bring about a pseudo peace, a condition described by the apostle Paul in **1 Thessalonians 5:3**: “**While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.**”

MANY confuse this rider with Jesus Christ, whom Revelation 19 shows riding a white horse at His second coming. But a careful examination reveals important distinctions. Christ is wearing “many crowns” at His return, not just a single crown as worn by this first horseman. And instead of holding a bow, Christ is holding a sword with which He strikes the nations.

When we look back to Matthew 24, we see that this rider represents not Jesus, but instead false teachers who use His name while corrupting His plain teaching and leading many into false teachings.

Remember His warning: “**See to it that no one misleads you.**” For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.” (Matthew 24:4-5).

It didn’t take long after Christ’s death for a “different gospel” (Galatians 1:6) to invade the Church, causing division and confusion. The apostles were forced to deal with this problem, as evidenced by their writings to the Church.

Paul warned the elders of the congregation at Ephesus to beware of false teachers: “**Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.**” I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” (Acts 20:28-30).

We see the apostles, in many places, warning of the corruption of the true faith brought by Jesus Christ.

Peter gave warnings, Paul gave warnings, Christ gave warnings.

I think Jude summed it up perfectly when he wrote of the need to “**contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints**” (Jude 3).

Within decades, the truth of God was gravely corrupted by false teachers. The result was teachings that no longer resembled the gospel brought by Christ. In Galatians 1:6, Paul had to reprimand the Galatians for “turning away ... *to a different gospel.*”

Christ’s Olivet prophecy in **Matthew 24**, progresses, in perfect harmony with the book of Revelation, toward the final events before His return. He said, “**For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.**” (Matthew 24:24).



Christ spoke of false religion as the precursor to “**wars and rumors of wars.**” The second seal of Revelation 6 is a rider on a red horse described as taking peace from the earth. Religious strife has often been the cause of war. Now we will see the connection between the two as we look at the ride of this next horseman.

When the second seal opens, a red horse appears: “**When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come.” And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.**” (Rev. 6:3-4).

This horse and rider “take peace from the earth.” The opposite of peace is war. When peace is removed, war is what remains. This pictures the “**wars and rumors of wars**” that Christ referenced in **Matthew 24:6**.

Remember Matthew 24 follows perfectly with Revelation 6. This is an important key to Revelation.

Wars have continued and grown steadily worse since the time of Christ’s prophecy. But this part of John’s astounding vision has the worst implications for all alive on earth today.

This horseman represents the dreadful destruction of world war.

In the Matthew 24’s parallel prophecy, war immediately follows false religion. By the end of the age, the potential for devastation in war has become so great that it holds the power to take peace not just from two or more nations, but now “from the earth.”

Only in the modern age have such terrible weapons of mass destruction been available. The twentieth century saw the two most devastating wars in history, with World War II far more destructive than World War I.

We are now in the last—intermission—preceding the time of the truly greatest war, prophesied to exceed anything in the last century. We have reached a time when war’s potential cannot grow worse, but can now erase all life from earth in one final blast of complete destruction—if Christ did not intervene and cut events “short” it says that no flesh on earth would remain alive!



**But the pattern of history is that famine always follows war. This is why famine (the third seal) follows on the heels of war (the second seal).**

The third seal opens and a black horse, a symbol of famine, appears: “**When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come” I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.”** (Revelation 6:5-6).

A denarius is typically a day’s wages. Not much food for working all day is it?

This pictures extreme famine, beyond anything civilization has ever seen. This condition is seizing the entire world in an extraordinary way. Famine is now far worse than most imagine. Look at Ethiopia. You see the starving kids on TV. Well right here in the US there are starving kids as well.

We look at the farmers today. What will they do about the rising cost of everything? Fuel is on the rise again, everything cost’s a fortune now. Today it is estimated that only 2% of all the people in the US are farmers! How long with that small number be able to support a growing US and Worldwide people???

Also consider that grocery stores (which would be non-existent without farmers), from which we are accustomed to obtaining the bulk of our food, “...they operate on razor-thin profit margins, which requires keeping low inventories and using a ‘just-in-time’ delivery mechanism to restock on a daily or weekly basis”.

It pictures for us the reality that, at any given time, there is no more than a three-or-four-day supply of food on grocers’ shelves.

Does this statement shock you? It should shock and frighten you—especially when you consider how little it takes to create civil upheaval and outright mayhem today. In a society built on the principle of “every man for himself,” when the “cupboards are bare,” chaos will reign supreme!



The opening of the fourth seal reveals a pale horse, which represents pestilence or disease: “**When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come.” I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.”** Revelation 6:7-8).

This horse is depicted as pale or ashen because it is sickly. This color that is represented is a light green, pale color of sickness.

It obviously represents disease—pestilence! Invariably, war leads to famine—and resulting malnutrition leads to disease. New diseases, or old ones grown worse, seem to be appearing almost daily. The death toll from disease around the world is staggering—now over a quarter million die every day!

We have diseases like Aids, West Nile Virus, Asian Flu, many old diseases that we thought were done away with are coming back. Even things like Bubonic plague are coming back now.

Malnutrition lowers our immune system, which leads to us becoming more susceptible to these diseases.

Ezekiel talks about this time. In **Ezekiel 5:12** God says **“One third of you will die by plague or be consumed by famine among you, one third will fall by the sword around you, and one third I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe a sword behind them.”**

**Did you hear that??? 1/3 will DIE from these things!**

If you truly fear God, and are led by His Holy Spirit, then God promises to protect you from the time of trouble coming upon the world. In **Psalm 91:5-10**, He promises, **“You will not be afraid of the terror by night, Or of the arrow that flies by day; Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon. A thousand may fall at your side And ten thousand at your right hand, But it shall not approach you. You will only look on with your eyes And see the recompense of the wicked. For you have made the LORD, my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place. No evil will befall you, Nor will any plague come near your tent.”**

The opening of the fifth seal does not reveal a horse. Instead, it briefly talks about the soon-to-come worst time of world trouble in history—the Great Tribulation!

Here is what Christ told His disciples would occur next: **“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.” (Matthew 24:9)**

Before continuing with more of Christ’s explanation in Matthew 24 about the Tribulation, we need to read John’s description of the fifth seal: **“When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.” (Revelation 6:9-11)**

The fifth seal portrays the martyrdom of the saints. This occurs during the Tribulation. Verse 11 is a symbolic instruction to the martyrs to await this latter martyrdom of the end time.

During the Tribulation, there will be a great religious persecution. Christ was very specific about this in **Matthew 24:10-13** **“At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.” Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. “Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. “**

Christ goes on in verse 21

**Matthew 24:21-24- “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. “Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him. “For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.”**

WE must remain on guard!

We may have to suffer this final martyrdom. BUT If we are faithful, God will give us the strength to get through it.



We talked in our teen class about this situation. The question was presented, “What if someone put a gun to your head and said either you take the mark of the beast or I will pull the trigger.” I asked what would you do?

Well you have to love the youth. They said, “Well if they pulled the trigger... I would be in the resurrection in my next waking moment, so I will tell them to go ahead!” I pray that if that time comes we ALL have that kind of faith!

The elect is talked about here... Who are the elect??? WE ARE!! If we have been raptured off to Heaven what was the point of saying we could be misled???

We need to see here that many prophecies are dual in nature.

In Matthew 24:2, Christ prophesied that the temple would be completely destroyed, with not one stone remaining. This occurred in A.D. 70, as an early type of staggering fulfillment at the end of the age.

But today, we still have the wailing wall standing. It was part of the original temple, the court of the gentiles, so there will be a FUTURE complete fulfillment of this prophecy that Christ gave us.

Here is how Christ described this final fulfillment of national invasion, war and captivity: **“Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people; and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Luke 21:23-24).**

We must now look at an inset of the prophecy that precedes and leads up to the Great Tribulation. It explains why you are here this afternoon: **“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (Matt. 24:14).**

The true gospel is about the kingdom of God. Many people have made the Gospel only about Christ’s death, that is part of it, but Christ preached a message about a soon-coming, world-ruling government to be established at His Return. **This is our job! Preaching and teaching this wonderful truth!!**

This is the wonderful good news—the word “gospel” means good news. When our task is complete, “then the end will come”!

Though there is still time for announcing God’s kingdom, it will soon run out. Some will still turn to God as a result of our Work, RIGHT HERE IN OUR CHURCHES which is a direct fulfillment of Christ’s prophecy in **Matthew 24:14.**

Next comes the sixth seal—the heavenly signs: **“I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.” (Rev. 6:12-13).**

Remember the sixth seal comes **after** the Great Tribulation.

How do we know that the Heavenly Signs come directly **AFTER** the Great Tribulation? Here are Christ’s words: **“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” (Matt. 24:29).**

This is an almost verbatim, phrase-by-phrase description of **Revelation 6:12-13.** The parallel is unmistakable. Christ has again interpreted the sixth seal, and its timing, for us. The phrase **“immediately after the tribulation”** removes all doubt about when the Heavenly Signs occur.



Now, I have a question for you? What hasn’t happened yet? Well we just saw that the sixth seal **FOLLOWS** the Great Tribulation. So we are **AFTER** the Tribulation now. What hasn’t happened yet???? **Christ has not returned yet!!**

The arrival of the Heavenly Signs start a great change in the direction—and speed—of events. This is understood by continuing in Revelation 6, a few verses later. Notice: **“for the great day of their wrath**

**has come, and who is able to stand?”?” (Revelation 6:17).**

There it is in plain English. The Day of the Lord, or Day of God’s Wrath, follows the sixth seal. Heaven and earth are shaken! This time reveals God’s awesome power! It is comparable to nothing that has ever happened before, or will ever happen again.

The prophet Joel was speaking of this time when God’s awesome power and great Wrath will be displayed when he said, **“The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.” (Joel 2:31).**

Notice **Revelation 6 verse 12** speaks of a “great earthquake.” This earthquake occurs after the fifth seal, upon the opening of the sixth seal. The terrible time of the fifth seal involves the military invasion and the captivity of Israel. This includes three and a half years of unparalleled suffering and tribulation—unrivaled in history.

By its very timing and context, this earthquake proclaims the end of the tribulation and the beginning of signs that appear in the heavens.

**Luke 21:25-26** describes this same event: **“There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. .”**

This earthquake will be so terrible that “every mountain” and “every island” will be shaken out of position (**Rev. 6:14**).



This earthquake announces the sixth seal—the Heavenly Signs. Notice Isaiah’s description of this time: **“In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats Their idols of silver and their idols of gold, Which they made for themselves to worship, In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs Before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble.” (Isaiah 2:20-21).** This compares perfectly with Revelation 6:15-16.

All of Revelation 6:14-17 shows that this sign is the heavens rolling together like a scroll. This time will be so terrible that John records people, in sheer terror, hiding themselves in caves and rocks and crying out to die. Verse 17 asks, “...and who shall be able to stand?” The masses fear facing the full Wrath of the One they have disobeyed!

Understand! The Tribulation and God’s Wrath are not synonymous! These are completely separate, different events. The Heavenly Signs come between the Tribulation, which precedes them, and The Day of the Lord, which follows them.

The Tribulation comes first. “Immediately after the tribulation” (Christ recorded) come the Heavenly Signs. These introduce the Day of the Lord (God’s Wrath), which is a separate period of events. We have seen how Joel, Isaiah, Luke and Matthew have explained what Christ revealed in vision to John in the Revelation. By now, these great events should be clear.

If you truly seek God (remember from Psalm 91), you do not need to worry. Let’s take a moment to read **Luke 21:36**. It is a reassuring promise from Christ that requires us to **“But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”**

You see, these things will trap the unsuspecting world as Christ says “Like a snare”. If we keep alert and pray, we have nothing to fear!

**Our goal as a Christian is to stand before Christ at His Return, and rule with Him when the kingdom of God is established!**

Right before God's Wrath, an angel temporarily holds back the four winds. In **Revelation 7:1** it says **"After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree."**

Many know the truth today but are either not acting on it, or are only responding to it in a limited way. Many people have heard the truth of God's word in our churches all across the world. Many people have stood and boldly proclaimed the true gospel of the kingdom of God. Many did not heed. They were "choked by the cares of the world."

Some will finally wake up during or after the tribulation, after seeing the terror of the Heavenly Signs—and after much suffering. These stupendous events will sober and awaken many before it is too late. These people, in complete submission, they will repent and turn to God.

Now, we get an introduction to the seventh and final seal. **Revelation 8:1-2** **"When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them."**

I want you to get this picture in your mind. Here is the picture in Heaven. Seven angels standing with seven trumpets.

Why do you think there was "silence for half an hour"? Because this is the beginning of the end.

Up to this point... God has given mankind a great deal of time to repent and turn to Him. He is still patient. He is still waiting for the precious few that will still repent and turn to him.

In Revelation 8 verse 5 we see there is another earthquake. Why does God send Earthquakes? Because it shakes people up!!!! There is something un-nerving when the ground starts to move under your feet.

We see the angels are ready. In **Revelation 8:6** **"And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them."**

The angels are ready to sound...

And with the sounding of the seventh angel, we will see the greatest event that this world has ever seen or ever will see, **The return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

In our next installment we will look at the seventh trumpet and all that it involves.

I pray that each of us, when we see these things taking place will heed the words of Jesus and hold our heads up high, because our Redemption is drawing near.





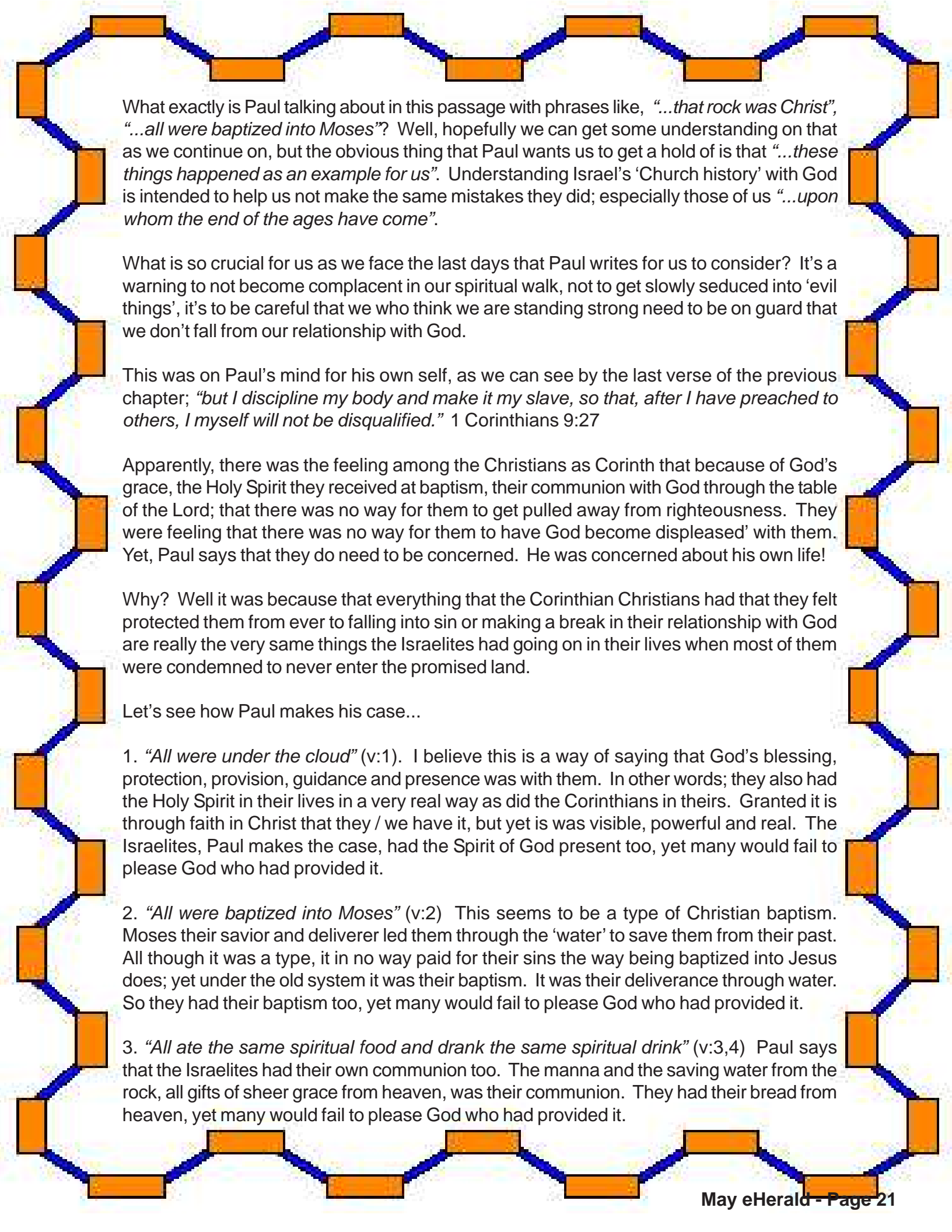
# I Thought I Hated Church History!

By Alan Cain

Well, I'm not sure I really hated Church History. It was just because as a young man I thought I had more important things I wanted to do than to study Church History or read Paul Tillich. Yet, Kent Ross made me do it anyway. I'm not sure what those important things were now, that I HAD to do back then, but I know they must have been important...or not.

Although, I may have struggled with the class work at times the truth remains that Church History or God's history with His people is essential for us to understand. Paul reminds us of that in 1 Corinthians 10:1-12...(emphasis mine)

*1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.*



What exactly is Paul talking about in this passage with phrases like, “...that rock was Christ”, “...all were baptized into Moses”? Well, hopefully we can get some understanding on that as we continue on, but the obvious thing that Paul wants us to get a hold of is that “...these things happened as an example for us”. Understanding Israel’s ‘Church history’ with God is intended to help us not make the same mistakes they did; especially those of us “...upon whom the end of the ages have come”.

What is so crucial for us as we face the last days that Paul writes for us to consider? It’s a warning to not become complacent in our spiritual walk, not to get slowly seduced into ‘evil things’, it’s to be careful that we who think we are standing strong need to be on guard that we don’t fall from our relationship with God.

This was on Paul’s mind for his own self, as we can see by the last verse of the previous chapter; “but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:27

Apparently, there was the feeling among the Christians as Corinth that because of God’s grace, the Holy Spirit they received at baptism, their communion with God through the table of the Lord; that there was no way for them to get pulled away from righteousness. They were feeling that there was no way for them to have God become displeased’ with them. Yet, Paul says that they do need to be concerned. He was concerned about his own life!

Why? Well it was because that everything that the Corinthian Christians had that they felt protected them from ever to falling into sin or making a break in their relationship with God are really the very same things the Israelites had going on in their lives when most of them were condemned to never enter the promised land.

Let’s see how Paul makes his case...

1. “All were under the cloud” (v:1). I believe this is a way of saying that God’s blessing, protection, provision, guidance and presence was with them. In other words; they also had the Holy Spirit in their lives in a very real way as did the Corinthians in theirs. Granted it is through faith in Christ that they / we have it, but yet it was visible, powerful and real. The Israelites, Paul makes the case, had the Spirit of God present too, yet many would fail to please God who had provided it.

2. “All were baptized into Moses” (v:2) This seems to be a type of Christian baptism. Moses their savior and deliverer led them through the ‘water’ to save them from their past. All though it was a type, it in no way paid for their sins the way being baptized into Jesus does; yet under the old system it was their baptism. It was their deliverance through water. So they had their baptism too, yet many would fail to please God who had provided it.

3. “All ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink” (v:3,4) Paul says that the Israelites had their own communion too. The manna and the saving water from the rock, all gifts of sheer grace from heaven, was their communion. They had their bread from heaven, yet many would fail to please God who had provided it.

4. "A spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ" (v:4) The rock that brought them water in a dry and barren land was their 'messiah', their rescue! It gave life when life was impossible in the natural world. It was a supernatural gift of 'living water' that followed them throughout their wanderings. They had a Christ that walked with them, yet many would fail to please God who had provided it.

Paul has taken the Old Testament reality of God's dealing with Israel and told us we are in the same boat even with our communion, our indwelling of the Spirit, our baptism and our Savior. What boat is that? It's that no one is immune from getting sloppy in their spiritual life to the point that they can't either run away at the worst or only slightly less horrible, wake up on day to find that they are no longer living in a way that is pleasing to God. Look at the New Testament warning again from verse 5, "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness." Nevertheless, meaning despite all that God was doing in, around and through them, many got off track and pursued sin and fell even though they thought they were standing strong and safe because, "we are God's chosen people".

Paul I think begs us in these last days to stay vigilant in our need to 'discipline our body and make it our slave' so that we do not get left in the desert. God is all about Grace and He is about free will. He will not make us follow Him and He will not force us to stay with Him either. That is our choice, and may I say our battle. The battle Paul enjoins us here in this passage to enter with all our hearts.

The difference between us and them is the grace that we have in Jesus Christ. So if you are in sin and breathing, you have the chance to confess that sin and God will be able and just and will forgive you of that sin. Yet your sin is not 'ok' with God. Take advantage of that grace but also beware that in these last days the tendency for watering down God's Word and righteousness will only continue to become more common and more of a temptation to all who are believers.

Remember what Jesus said to his disciples when they asked about the end of the age? Jesus said, "most men's love will grow cold" (Matthew 24:12). I have always taken that to mean "most believer's love will grow cold". The love they have is for God through Christ, and Jesus makes the dire prediction that most (as it was in Israel's wanderings in the desert) will fall away.

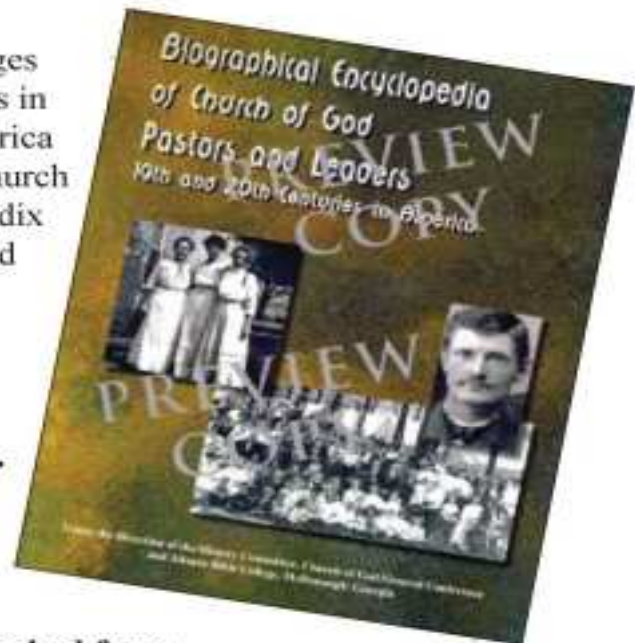
There is a spiritual battle! It's time to take it serious in our own **personal** lives. "Therefore let **him who** thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12)



Let's arm ourselves for battle!

**Coming Soon!**  
***Biographical Encyclopedia: Chronicling the History of the  
 Church of God Abrahamic Faith 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries***  
**by Jan Stilson and the History Committee**

More than 500 entries, 200 photos and 600 pages of biographies for pastors, leaders and pioneers in the development of the Church of God in America and abroad. This compilation is drawn from church Archives and historical periodicals. The appendix features essays, time lines, historical poetry and more. Visit [www.bio-cog.com](http://www.bio-cog.com) to learn more.



The retail price will be \$39,  
 but for a limited time,

**copies may be reserved for just \$29.**

Special pre-publication price expires  
 June 1, 2011. Reserve your copies today!

**Contact Nola at 800-347-4261 or use the attached form.**

The *Biographical Encyclopedia* is an invaluable resource, enlightening read and indispensable educational reference. **Find your family members in its pages!**

Call Nola at 800-347-4261 or 678-833-1839 or mail this reservation form to:  
 Church of God General Conf. Attn: Encyclopedia  
 2020 Avalon Parkway, Suite 400  
 McDonough, GA 30253

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ copies x \$29 each = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Order Date (to verify price) \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping and handling will be determined based on book weight and quantity ordered.

Temporary pre-publication reservation offer expires June 1. Final cover price is \$39 per copy. Hurry to take advantage of the savings. Don't forget to order extra copies for Christmas gifts and to donate to libraries within your ministry.

AN  
EFFORT TO DISCOVER  
THE ONE TRUE  
**Church of God**

ITS ARCHITECT  
ITS STRUCTURE  
ITS PURPOSE

**This was copied from one the documents  
as this organization was being founded.**

An Appeal to Earnestly Strive to Conform to  
God's Instructions  
Pertaining Thereto in Every Particular

Being the Report of Studies at Oregon, Ill.,

Nov. 9-12, 1920

For I have been let to behold the result of loving the Christ, and becoming a part of His gloriously wonderful body, the church. I sit in awe and wonder if such as I can become so spiritually discerned as to become worthy of even a small place there, when I think of the real status in which I must be found, the desire I really have to attain to it. I know none but God can lead, direct and finally bring the consummation of Spirit-Life, and so these lessons have been a spiritual uplift.

"Then the association with so many others, whom I had not thought to meet until the Lord gathered His church has been a great satisfaction, mainly because in the discussion of these perplexing questions which have confronted us not one has shown an antagonistic spirit, but such a pleasant willingness to be taught, even though all the thoughts presented to them could not be immediately digested, or perhaps clearly understood, we have sought as learners. And I pray that our beloved Head, Jesus the Christ, may be pleased with out deliberations, and may we all be willing to seek aid of God, not man, and not forget, when we return to our homes, to impart a large portion of the spirit of the meeting to others, and strive to lead them into a deeper spiritual life."

"M. A. WOODWARD."

### A GLAD DAY

The morning of the third day of the session was a glad one, for all present—twenty-six at opening.

Song was followed by several short, earnest heart-full prayers. It was as though the meditation necessary to the preparation of the foregoing summaries had solemnized every heart. And as each one then proceeded to read their own summary of the work of the preceding days, not only the unity of sentiment expressed throughout, as you, the reader, already recognize, but the earnest welling-out of a unity of spirit made all to experience the richness of the assurance—"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

It was immediately suggested, and unanimously approved that these individual summaries be incorporated in this report.

Then followed an earnest appeal by Brother Patrick in behalf of the Scriptural name of the Church. A brief of his remarks, is herewith given, namely:—

### THE NAME

Our Saviour instructed His apostles to address:—"Our Father." Not, my Father. Math. 9:6.

In Gen. 4:26 (margin), "men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord." That is by the name, "God Almighty." Ex. 6:3.

But His great name, "Jehovah," was revealed only at a later time. See "LORD," in Ex. 3:1, 4, 15, 16. Also see 3:14. And the name "Jesus," which Joseph was told should be the name of Mary's son, is a form of the word "Joshua," which in turn is derived from the Hebrew JHVH., that is JeHoVaH. Thus, Son was named after Father.

The Father's "whole family in heaven and earth is named" of the Father. Eph. 3:14, 15. Accordingly, the Saviour prayed, John 17:11, "Holy Father! Keep them in thy name which (i.e. which name) thou hast given to me." Roth. The Son was called by the name of "God," Heb. 1:8, because He inherited the "more excellent name," 1:4. And the "house of God" (that is "Christ's own house," Heb. 3:5), is the "Church of God." 1 Tim. 3:15.

Conclusion,—The one and only name for God's people is the name of God, from whom His whole family is named, and in which name our Saviour prayed His Father to keep all who had been given him.

Discussion of subject followed until noon.

### SURVEY OF CHURCHES

The Thursday afternoon session opened with the general subject, A Survey of Our Churches.

Some of the views on the subject are expressed in the following sentences:

"The churches are living beneath their opportunity."

"Lack of proper degree of spirituality."

**Note the reason for using the name Church of God**

The Christian work towers high above every other labor.  
The field is large.  
The door is open,  
There is unlimited opportunity to work for our Master.

Question:—Shall we unify our aims and our methods, and consecrate ourselves wholly, as ONE, to His service?

Answer:—Let us pray and seek earnestly to become—

One in Christ;

One in accepting His appointed ways and directions; and,

Wholly given to His service.

Submitted in love, with a prayer that God will direct every consecrated one in giving earnest consideration and response.

Yours in the Master's service,

F. L. AUSTIN, Sec.-Treas.,  
Fonthill, Ont.

---

COMMITTEE:—

J. W. Williams, Chairman, 807 N. 3rd St., Phoenix, Ariz.

Jas. A. Patrick, Eden Valley, Minn.

Mrs. Grace Marsh, 104 So. 7th St., Marshalltown, Ia.

F. E. Siple, Oregon, Ill.

Alta King, 940 Conger St., Waterloo, Ia.

Judd Lyon, Citronelle, Ala.

Rolla Hightower, Golden, Ill.

Leota Hanson, 106 So. 2nd St., St. Louis, Mo.

D. E. Vanvactor, Argos, Ind.

**Note the people on the organizing committee.  
Many are still recognizable for their contributions.**



**Note the Bible understanding we've shared from the beginning.**

(4) Our whole policy shall be conducted with a view to maintain the unity of Christian spirit. With such unity we purpose to unite in a common effort to affirm by print and voice the following Biblical truths, and such as are in harmony therewith, all of which are commonly accepted by the people of the Church of God:

- a. The oneness and omnipotence of God.
- b. The inspiration of Scriptures.
- c. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, as a means for the remission of sins and salvation.
- d. Immortality only through Christ.
- e. The resurrection of the dead.
- f. The second coming of Christ, followed by the establishment of the kingdom of God.
- g. Belief, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.
- h. A Godly life.

This General Assembly shall not encourage anyone in advocating a doctrine not commonly accepted and which tends to cause division.

(5) That a board of benevolences be organized to minister to individual needs as they may arise.

To put into operation the foregoing aims and purposes, this Committee recommends the establishment of a General Assembly of the Churches of God to be made up of individual members, state and district conferences, and National Berean Society. That said General Assembly shall select five of its number who shall constitute its Executive Board, the same to be aided by an Advisory Board to include the Presidents of the several state conferences, and who shall be the legal trustees for said Assembly.

A suggestive working Constitution was drafted, which we are endeavoring to have ready for the printer by June 1st for distribution to one and all for study and consideration.

The Committee having received invitation from the Executive Board of the Iowa State Conference to hold a General Conference on their grounds at Waterloo, Ia., it has decided to accept said invitation, and to call a General Conference of the "Churches of God" beginning with the closing day of the Iowa State Conference, Sunday, August 28th, continuing over Sunday, Sept. 3rd. Details and programme will be published soon.

On account of opposition to, and misunderstanding of some of Bro. J. W. Williams' expressed opinions, he, in the interest of unity, offered his resignation as chairman of this Committee. In the same interests the Committee accepted the resignation and selected Bro. Jas. A. Patrick, Eden Valley, Minn., to head the Committee.

Those who have been presenting these matters to the judgment of the Church have constantly kept one scriptural injunction before them. It is this,—*"I therefore, . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."* Eph. 4:1.

With such "*unity of spirit*" any brotherhood can assemble and consider all questions of Christian service and faith to the edification of all concerned. And as it is with the earnest wish that the Scriptural and Christian course may be determined upon relative to the whole question of a General Headquarter for our work, it is to be hoped that one and all who hold the cause of Christ

## SEPTEMBER 4, THE CORRECT DATE

All previous announcements have given September 3 as closing date of General Assembly. This is an error. The meeting is called for August 28 to Sunday, September 4. Over two Sundays.

Iowa State Conference, August 20 to 28.  
General Assembly of the Church of God, August 28 to September 4.

## REDUCED RAILROAD RATES ON THE CERTIFICATE PLAN

Reduced rates have been granted for both the Iowa and the General Conference. The Railroad Associations have various systems of granting reduced rates. Will all take notice that the system of reduced rates for Conventions and such meetings, is that of the Certificate Plan.

Every person attending should purchase a one way railroad ticket to point of meeting and must secure a **CERTIFICATE** from the ticket agent at time of purchase.

When 350 such Certificates shall have been endorsed by the Secretary of the Conference and the Railway Company's representative, then each holder is entitled upon the presentation of the endorsed Certificate, to purchase return ticket at one-half fare.

Let all take notice and be sure to secure a **CERTIFICATE with Railroad ticket.**

Do not make the mistake of accepting a receipt! It must be a **CERTIFICATE.**

Carefully read the accompanying circular of instructions relative to reduced rates and territories covered by same.

## COME BY RAIL

Now that the Railroads have granted rates to Waterloo don't bother with the car, come by rail. Be sure to ask for a certificate when you buy your regular ticket to Waterloo, then the certificate will entitle you to half fare on return trip.

There will be more of our speakers, teachers, and evangelists at the General Assembly than ever gathered at one place before, also a large and diversified gathering of our brotherhood in general. You can't afford to miss this opportunity. Buy a ticket, get a certificate, and board the train for Waterloo.

—Frank E. Siple.

## STENOGRAPHER

The services of a good stenographer, or stenotypist, for the General Assembly, will be needed. If any of our own number who can render such service expect to be in attendance, kindly correspond at once with F. L. Austin.

## PROGRAM

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the CHURCH OF GOD

Waterloo, Ia., August 28 to September 4, 1921

#### Sunday, August 28

- 8:30 Devotional, C. E. Randall, Minnesota Evangelist.
- 10:00 Address of welcome, G. E. Marsh, Iowa Conference President.
- 11:00 Response, J. A. Patrick, of Minn., Chairman Nat'l Committee.
- 12:00 Dinner.
- 2:30 Sermon, "The Approaching Crisis of the Ages," F. L. Austin, Ontario.
- 4:00 Communion.
- 5:30 Supper.
- 6:45 Berean Meeting, led by Nat'l Berean President, Leila E. Whitehead, Chicago.
- 7:30 Song Service, Edna Allard, Iowa.
- 8:00 Sermon, "The Ideal Church," F. V. Blakely, President Michigan Conference.

#### Regular Daily Program

- 7:30 Breakfast.
- 8:30 Devotional.
- 9:00 Round Table.
- 10:00 Bible Classes.
- 12:00 Dinner.
- 1:30 Business.
- 3:15 Song Service.
- 3:30 Sermon.
- 5:30 Supper.
- 6:45 Berean Meeting.
- 7:30 Song Service.
- 8:00 Sermon

We anticipate the assistance and co-operation of the leading speakers, teachers and workers from all over the United States and Canada. In Bible Class work stress will be laid on Prophecy, fulfilled, being fulfilled and unfulfilled.

Round Table discussions and Sermons will deal with the all-important problems of individuals and of the church as a whole.

This is by far the *most important gathering ever held by our people. We need you and you need us.*

Meet me at Waterloo, August 28 to September 4.

Program Committee: F. E. Siple,  
Mrs. G. E. Marsh,  
J. S. Lyon.

## LETTERS

Have your mail addressed to Lock Box 274, care of Church of God. Telegrams may be addressed, care of Church of God Camp Ground.

**Not the daily schedule of the coming Conference meetings, especially the amount of time devoted to preaching and teaching of the Word.**

# CHAPTER ONE

## IMMORTALITY, AND WHO HAS IT

**Examined by J. M. Morgan in THE GUIDING LIGHT OF GOD'S TRUTH MADE PLAIN**

**[J.W. Morgan was one of the early preachers and evangelists in the Church of God]**

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, hut the end thereof is the ways of death” (Prov. 16:25). “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:105). The one plan of salvation, and the cause for it being perfected, was God's love for man (John 3:16), and the Saviour was promised after man sinned (Gen. 3:15).

The guiding light of divine truth is the revelation from God to man. It is contained in the Bible. “He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.” Everything in nature tells us that the Bible is the divine revelation from God (Job 38:31, 32). Ask the atheist who placed the North Star in its fixed place around which the seven stars or Pleiades (Hebrew for seven stars), known as the dipper, go every twenty-three hours. The infidels have no answer. “The fool hath said in his heart. There is no God” (Psa. 14:1; 53; these chapters are alike). By inspiration of the mighty God of the ages have been revealed to His servants, the holy prophets, the things past, present and future. Shall we “turn away from him that speaketh from heaven” and go to the uncertain teachings of mortal man? No, let us leave all the uncertain theories of men and turn from all the foolish philosophy of man, and take the Bible. We will receive from the eternal Teacher the words of everlasting life. John 6:68 says, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.”

There are three outstanding groups of so-called Bible teachers. The first of these three is the largest group of those who profess religion. This group alone may be called orthodox in its views. Orthodoxy, then, is this: it teaches that all men possess an immortal soul by nature, whether they are good or bad, and therefore their souls will be in endless existence either in joy or in misery. The second view is like the first view in the belief that all men have immortal souls, but it teaches that all of Adam's race will be saved. This second class is known as Universalists, but there are many others who teach Universalism who do not believe that all men possess immortal souls. The third class denies that Adam and his race have by nature an immortal soul. It teaches that only those who believe and obey the gospel of Christ will ever possess immortality, and that it is the gift of God through Christ. Therefore, it teaches that immortality is conditional (Rom. 2:7; John 3:16) These three positions are so different that no one can hold to any two of them at the same time, for two things that differ can never be alike. Two solid bodies cannot occupy the same place at the same time. A thing cannot both be and not be at the same time. There is a cause for every effect.

Does the Bible teach conditional life everlasting or immortality by nature? Those who do not study the Bible for themselves, can come only to one conclusion on this vital subject of human immortality if they believe the instructions imparted to them by the so-called Orthodox teachers, for they are constantly using such terms as “immortal soul,” “deathless soul,” “deathless spirit,” “disembodied spirit,” “an eternal torment,” “endless misery,” “unending torment,” “endless woe,” “undying soul,” and other kindred words heard from pulpits and found in songbooks and other literature. No such words, however, are found in the Bible.

People are made to believe that the Bible, in which these teachings are supposed to be found, is filled with such expressions as “the death that never dies,” and “the immortal part of man.” What would be their amazement, then, to find that the word “immortal” is used but once in the entire Bible and applied then, not to man or the soul of man, but to God, ONLY! The only place the term “immortal” is found in the Bible is in 1 Timothy 1:17, which reads: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever.” Here the eternal King, “the only wise God,” is said to be immortal. He is the only

being who is ever said to be immortal in the Bible. The Scripture does not use this word “immortal” again, or apply it to man even one time as being now in possession of it.

The words “soul” and “spirit” occur in the Bible about nine hundred times, and never once is the term “immortal” connected with either of them. The writers of the Bible had nine hundred chances to inform us that the soul is immortal, but never did so. Surely this is proof that there is no immortal soul. The teaching of the verse just quoted should be accepted by all. No one will question the immortality of God. All admit this, that He is eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. These are the attributes of God. The word “immortal” is not used with reference to any other being. Man is never called immortal in the Bible. The soul is never called immortal. Indeed, the exact opposite is constantly affirmed throughout the Scriptures, that man is mortal. Job 4:17: “Shall mortal man be more just than God?”

Instead of the Bible being full of the teaching of the immortality of the soul, as the adherents of that doctrine confidently assert. God has thought it of more importance to set forth to men his own immortality. Wherever in the universe life is manifested, of whatever kind, He is the fountain of it. “In him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Absolute and essential self-existence and therefore absolute and essential immortality! Jehovah alone is immortal.

It is this, indeed, that He claims as His name—“I AM”—the self-existing one, “the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” He is uncreated, self-existent, absolute, eternal, immortal. His existence had no beginning. Neither will it have any ending. He is absolute life, absolute being, absolute existence, absolute immortality.

The most exalted angel is a creature. We are all creatures from the highest to the lowest. Our existence had a definite beginning. It will have, or may have, a definite ending at any time when He who gave it life sees fit to take it away. We continue to live only because He continues to give us life. The power to take life away is implied in the power to give life. The power to destroy is implied in the power to create. We are dependent creatures. God has never made any independent, self-existing beings. God is immortal. We are mortal. It is just on this point of his eternity and self-existence that God contrasts Himself with man whose life is but “a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:14). “I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me; I kill and I make alive; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever” (Deut. 32:39, 40). He is Jehovah, “the everliving,” “the Eternal God,” “the Everlasting Father,” or “the Father of Eternity,” “whose years have no end,” “who liveth forever and ever,” “the Lord shall endure forever.” Man, a mortal, transitory being, is weak and puny. Is man also able to say; “I, too, live forever.” No, the immortality and eternity of God is affirmed in every part of the Bible. The immortality of man is not mentioned or even hinted at in the Bible. Is the immortality of man so much more obvious than that of God that there is no need of mentioning it, while God’s immortality must be constantly affirmed? Or is not this constant, assertion of the immortality of God and the absence of all similar assertion of the immortality of man in the Bible rather for the specific purpose of showing a contrast between God and man in respect to immortality? God is infinite. Man is finite. God is immortal. Man is mortal. God is eternal. Man is transitory. God has immortality in Himself. Man has no immortality in himself, and his only hope of living forever is dependent, therefore, upon God to give man life eternal through Christ our Saviour, who has promised eternal life to all who believe and obey Him.

One of the chief objects of the Bible, indeed, seems to be to reveal to men that this life is brief, vapory, shadowy, and transitory. It does this in the very plainest terms. Not only does the Bible not call man immortal, or ever-living, but it emphatically declares him to be the opposite. He is said to be mortal in Job 4:17; Romans 6:12; 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54; and 2 Corinthians 4:11. His life is said to be “even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:14). His life is said to be a “wind” in

Job 7:7 and Psalm 78:39 says that "they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again:" In Psalm 90:5, 6, men are said to be "as a sleep." "In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:2). "All flesh is grass, and all goodness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth . . . surely the people is grass" (Isa. 40:6, 7). Thus while the word "soul" is spoken of hundreds of times in the Bible, it is never once said to be immortal or deathless in its nature, but is always spoken of as short in duration of life and perishable. The only hope of an eternal existence which man has ever had is that held out to him through the gospel as found in the Bible.

In the Scriptures, it is never affirmed that man possesses immortality in himself, inherently, the attribute of immortality. On the contrary, the teaching of the Bible is that man is mortal. It is not denied, however, that he is capable of being made immortal. The Bible clearly teaches that under certain conditions the gift of immortality may be conferred upon men at the resurrection. (2 Cor. 15:52-54.)

In this part we shall study every passage in the Scriptures which contains the word "immortality," that by so doing we shall come to a full knowledge of the teaching of the Bible on this subject. Surely, if we shall search out every passage where this term "immortality" is used, in every connection we shall learn what the Bible has to say concerning this important question. We should discover who has immortality and who does not have it and how those who do not have it may receive it, and upon what conditions it will be given, and at what, time it will be given, if the conditions for obtaining it are met. The whole relation of humanity to this attribute should be clearly established and understood by such a study of the Scriptures on this great subject of immortality.

The first text which we shall study concerns the subject of God alone having immortality. In 1 Timothy 6:13-16, Paul says, "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality [deathlessness], dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see." If the plain truth of this verse is accepted, the whole question as to whether mankind possesses immortality by nature is at once settled, for here is the plain, bold statement of facts that God "only hath immortality." There is nothing left to the imagination of those who may believe the opposite. There is really nothing to be perverted. The sense is so clear as to make a twisting of its meaning impossible. In fact, no other words in the English language could be put together in any different way to make the thought any clearer than these words make it.

The verse quoted above not only establishes who has immortality, but also who does not have it. If God "only hath immortality," it follows that we do not have it, for if we do have it, this statement would not be true. If the theory of the natural immortality of all men is true, then the statement that God "only hath immortality" could never be the truth, but it was made by an inspired apostle; it is true and settled that the theory of inherent immortality is not true, but false; and the fact is established that the attribute of immortality is the possession of God alone. The question at once is raised, "Is it then possible for men ever to secure this precious gift?" God has given to men many great and precious promises. Has He said anything upon which we can base a hope of having immortality conferred upon us at any time? Surely these are questions of vital importance. The answer is found in Romans 2:7 and 1 Corinthians 15:52-54.

If we are seekers for immortality, where shall we find it? To whom shall we go for it? An answer to these questions will be found in 2 Timothy 1:10. Paul said, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death [rendered death powerless], and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" of Christ. Death passed upon all men through Adam, but through

Christ it has been abolished (rendered powerless). (1 Cor. 15:21, 22.) The Adam race would have perished forever, if it had not been for the sacrifice of Christ, who tasted death for every man. (Heb. 2:9.) But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The sentence of the first death was abolished" or rendered powerless by Christ so that the first death will be destroyed by a resurrection, and those who believe in Him will not have the sentence of the second death executed upon them after the judgment, as the wicked will die the second death for their sins.

The relation which men should sustain to this attribute of immortality is set forth very clearly in Romans 2:5-7. It says, "But after the hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." That is, God will render eternal life to those who are seeking for immortality. Immortality means deathlessness. Therefore, eternal life will give man a deathless nature or "immortality." Jesus says in Luke 20:36, "Neither can they die any more." In Romans 2:7, the relation of mankind to immortality is set forth plainly that they are seekers for "immortality" or should be seeking for it. Men do not seek for that which they already have. The very fact that men are seeking for immortality is conclusive evidence that they do not possess it by nature, for God "only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16). But this verse shows something more. It reveals clearly that only those who seek for immortality by patient continuance in well-doing will secure this attribute. Only a certain class will have it conferred upon them. This class will be composed of those who continue in well-doing', "seeking for eternal life" (Rom. 2:7). Those who are "contentious and do not obey the truth" (v. 8) cannot expect to receive immortality which will be given to those alone "who by patient continuance in well-doing'" seek for it. This verse certainly teaches that immortality is conditional; conditioned upon the attainment of a certain character, an experience in well-doing. Those who do not have this character or experience have no promise of ever receiving immortality. This immortality has been brought to light "through the gospel." It is possible for men to secure it, not only "through the gospel of Christ." It follows therefore that those who do not accept the gospel plan of God's salvation can never have immortality; the only way to secure it is "through the gospel of Christ."

The doctrine of conditional immortality is the basis of our hope upon which we differ with others who claim it as an inheritance from Adam; we teach it is a gift of God through Jesus Christ.

So far in this study we have found the term "immortality" used three times. It is used the fourth and fifth times in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54. In these verses, we are told that this attribute of immortality will be conferred upon those who secure it "through the gospel of Christ." These verses are as follows: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written; Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?"

These verses clearly teach that the time of putting on immortality will not be at death, but at the resurrection, at the last trump. And it says "this mortal [at that time] shall put on immortality." Therefore, even if we accept the gospel of Jesus Christ, where immortality is brought to light, we will not actually have immortality bestowed upon us until the time when the "dead shall be raised incorruptible." At that time, "we shall be changed" from mortal to immortal and from corruptible to incorruptible. O glorious hope! And may the time soon come for the change of God's children from mortality to immortality, and from corruptibility to incorruptibility.

“With this passage we have completed our task. The term “immortality” is used in no other place in the Bible, it occurs but five times in the Bible, and we have carefully studied each verse in which it is used. While the words “soul” and “spirit” occur hundreds of times in the Scriptures, the word “immortality” is never coupled with these words. We have found in the only verses where the attribute of immortality is named, they never teach that it is possessed by man either by soul, body or spirit and these scriptures teach that immortality is not a possession of all men by nature—not even by one man in this age.

On the contrary, we have found the Scripture teaching clearly; first, that God alone possesses immortality; second, that men are, or should be, seekers for it; third, that if seeking for immortality, they can find it in the gospel of Christ; and fourth, that if they secure it “through the gospel,” it will not be conferred upon them until “the last trump,” or at the time of the resurrection at the coming of our Lord.

This, then, is the entire teaching of the Bible on this subject, for we have studied every verse which mentions the words “immortal” or “immortality.” Surely there is no reason for anyone to be in ignorance or doubt concerning this subject, of immortality when the Bible so clearly sets for the truth.

I pray that God will so bless that we mortals will receive the great blessing of immortality in the coming ages of endless joy in the Kingdom of God.

A brief review on the question of immortality. (1) Is Christ immortal or deathless? Yes, for deathless means, not subject to death, but deathlessness means state or quality of being deathless. The only difference in the deathless immortality of the Father, God and His Son is that God has always had eternal life in Himself. But, not so with the Son of God. John 5:26 says, “For as the Father hath [present tense] life in himself; so hath he given to the son to have life in himself.” This eternal life (zoe) was given to His Son, when God raised Him out (ek) of the dead ones. (Acts 3:14, 15; R ev. 1:18.)

