

UPLOOK

October 1998

Who really
writes
history?



*Church History at a Glance
Building on Tradition*

God Works in Grand Forks

WHO REALLY WRITES HISTORY?

Our toughest challenge: seeing history as God sees it.

We know how difficult it is to see things as they really are. Ophthalmologists tell us that our eyes actually see everything upside down. Our brain then turns the information rightside up. And what we call a blue shirt is really everything *but* blue. Every other color is absorbed; blue is “rejected,” or reflected from the shirt. Objects which we call solid—tables and concrete blocks and your body—are mostly space, approximately the same proportion of space to matter in as the vast stellar world around us.

But it is not only the material world that is difficult to perceive aright. How easily we can be fooled by circumstances and people and our own deceitful hearts. We are warned in Scripture against “the deceitfulness of riches.” We are told to not look at “the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen.”

Even a cursory comparison between history as recorded by men and that in the Sacred Record shows a remarkable divergence of views. We could almost conclude that we were reading two different stories. Almost, but not quite.

As much as men would like to powder and paint the disfigured visage of fallen humanity, both holy and profane history agree on this: man is incorrigibly sinful. Conflict, sorrow, wars, corruption, rebellion are the rule, not the exception. The present painful chapter in the story of the American presidency is only the latest example to remind us of the corrupting influence of power—and the relentless link between action and consequence. As Senator Robert Byrd (D-W. Va.) assessed the deepening crisis at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, “There is no question but that the president, himself, has sown the wind, and he is reaping the whirlwind.”

All that men write, in spite of their best efforts, is written in the sand. Only God can write in the unchanging bedrock of eternal truth. I heard today that the wax figure of baseball great Roger Maris is being melted down to be made into the likeness of record breaker

Mark McGwire. But his image will be set in the same malleable substance. And it’s only a matter of time....


Not only is man’s history flawed by sin and warped by our fragmentary perspective, it is transient at best, and misses the real story entirely. While recording in graphic and endless detail the wars through the ages, secular history takes no account of the Real War. The chronicles that men write tell of victors and losers, but never mention the True Champion, the Victor of Calvary’s Hill. They write of kingdoms that evaporate with the morning dew, yet leave unnoticed, unheralded, The Kingdom which shall never have an end.



Men’s history books are severely edited, amputated, eviscerated. None of the great days in history are found in the books that men publish. Creation isn’t there; it’s treated as a religious myth. The Fall isn’t there; man is getting better, isn’t he? (Now *there’s* a myth!) The confusion of languages at Babel, the Flood, the call of Abram, the giving of the Law, the Incarnation and the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Birth of the Church—none of them make it by man’s reckoning. because the great days in history are the days when God entered this world and forever changed its course.

History. We all have our part to play. And though we would not want to mini-

mize the human government that is ordained by God, I dare say that in the end the work of a Christian mother or an assembly elder or a personal evangelist is far more significant than a president or a king.

Our part in history is often called biography. But we who watch it happen one day at a time call it life. How the passage of time fools us. It can lull us to sleep. “Brethren, the time is short” (1 Cor. 7:29). The Bible warns us that things do not “continue as they were from the beginning.” We all have a place in history, designed beforehand by God Himself (Eph. 2:10). Then let us redeem the time (Eph. 5:16). “For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11). 

by J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

UPLOOK

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Be sure to enclose your former address label when sending a change of address. Please let us know of changes six weeks in advance.

LADIES' CONFERENCE

The seventh annual SC Ladies' Missionary Conference will be held Oct. 17, DV, at Myrtle Beach Bible Chapel (2903 Church St., Myrtle Beach, SC). The invited speakers: Dr. Ruth W. Schwertfeger (WI) and Mrs. Cathy Ruff (Other Areas). Contact:

Mrs. Carol Parks
(843) 238-4844
carol_parks@juno.com

31ST ANNUAL LADIES' MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

A ladies' missionary conference will be held, DV, at Keystone Heights, FL, on Oct. 23 and 24. The speakers are: Ruth Bloom (Immanuel Mission, AZ), Sharon Geesey (Zambia), Esther Howell (Zambia), and Cathy Ruff (Other Areas).

BACK TO BETHEL

Edward St. Gospel Chapel will hold their Youth Bible Conference at Bethel Chapel (439 Moore St., London, ON) on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 1:00 until 8:00. The speaker expected is Bruce Longevin (ON). Dinner will be provided. There are no charges or fees for the conference.

For further information, contact:
M. J. Williams at (519) 668-7837

ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

Lakeside Bible Chapel, Sterling Heights, MI, will hold their annual fall conference Oct. 23-25, 1998. Speaker Daniel Smith (IA) will address the theme: Marriage and the Family. For further information, contact Steve Collard (810) 254-7246.

FALL COLORS FAMILY CAMP

Camp Living Water (Bryson City, NC) invites you for a great time of fun and relaxation in the beautiful Smoky Mountains. The speaker for the weekend will be Jamie Hull (CO) with separate sessions for the chil-

dren. The cost per family of \$50 includes 2 nights and 5 meals.

Call the camp at (828) 488-6012 or e-mail DCLW@juno.com

CONFERENCE IN TULSA

The East Tulsa Bible Chapel is planning a Fall conference to be held Oct. 23-25. The invited speakers are Jack Heseltine (OR) and John Heller (AR). Contact:

T. Victor Anderson
(918) 446-1591

MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

Bible and Life Ministries and Central Bible Chapel are sponsoring a Missionary Conference in Tampa, FL. The theme of the conference will be: "Establishing New Testament Assemblies in the 21st Century."

The speakers: Hank Gelling (Belgium), Mike Attwood (Ireland), Oli Jacobson (FL) and Donald Norbie (CO). The conference will be held at Central Bible Chapel, 2135 Busch Blvd, Tampa, on Sat., Oct. 24, from 10:00 to 4:00. Lunch will be provided. For info., contact David Dunlap at (813) 996-1053.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

West Hill Gospel Hall (159 Morningside Ave., Toronto, ON) will host a series of seminars entitled, "Practical Christianity in a World that Doesn't Think Christianity is Relevant." The sessions will be held the first Saturday morning of each month from October to April, except January. Each Saturday will have three seminars, with the following speakers: David Adams (Spiritual Warfare), Steve Anderson (In It, But Not of It), Rod Joyce (Bible Study: Getting Deeper).

The sessions will begin at 9 and end at noon on these dates: Nov. 7, Dec. 5, Feb. 6, Mar. 6, and Apr. 3. For information, contact:

Rod Joyce
(905) 619-1377
rjoyce@ca.ibm.com

FALL CONFERENCE

Brandywine Bible Chapel (Wilmington, DE) invites you to their conference with speakers Dr. Arthur Garnes, Randy Amos, and Billy Stevenson. Meetings are scheduled for Friday, Nov. 6 at 7:30; Saturday and Sunday at 2:30 and 6:30.

For information, contact:
Tony Colaiuta (610) 459-1707 or
Sid Bhatt (302) 424-0324

METRO MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

The believers in the New York metro area extend an invitation to their annual conference, scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 7 from 10:30-4:30. All meetings will be held at: Good Tidings Gospel Hall (345 Malcolm X Blvd., Brooklyn, NY).

The expected speakers are Curtis Jenkins (GA) and James Cochrane (Dominican Republic). Contact:

Jim McCall
Phone (718) 994-1318

REFRESHMENT AT BETHANY

A conference with Clark McClelland (NC) is scheduled to be held at Bethany Bible Chapel (East 116th St., Carmel, IN) on Nov. 7 and 8. For information, contact:

Brent Logan (317) 259-9252.

BIBLE CONFERENCE

The Christians at Southside Bible Chapel (Lafayette, LA) are pleased to announce their plans for a conference Nov. 7-8 with William MacDonald as the speaker.

Meetings on Saturday will be held at 3:00 and 7:30 with dinner served at 5:30. On Sunday, the Lord's Supper will be held at 9:15, followed

by ministry with Mr. MacDonald at 10:20 and 11:15. A covered dish dinner will be served at 12:45.

Contact Jeff Bloom
(318) 232-7798

THANKSGIVING CONF.

The Holiday Gospel Assembly (1842 Grand Blvd., Holiday, FL) will convene a Thanksgiving conference November 13 and 14. The expected speakers are Joe Reese (ON) and John Adams (AB).

Contact L. Cappiello
(727) 845-4572

DIGGING DEEP IN SLIDELL

Slidell Bible Chapel (Slidell, LA) will hold their Fall Bible Conference Nov. 13-15. Lord willing, Tom Taylor (PA) will minister God's Word and music ministry will be provided by ABBAS. Come and enjoy this refreshing time. Contact Bob Brown at (504) 641-4028 or call the chapel at (504) 649-1960.

FATHERS & SONS

The annual Father & Son retreat will take place at Camp Iroquoia in the Endless Mountains of Pennsylvania on Nov. 13-15. Don Dunkerton (NJ) will be the speaker. For details, call John MacPherson:

(717) 967-2577

GOOD TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship Family Camp was held August 2-6 near Estes Park, Colorado. It proved to be a time of real blessing with some coming from Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri, as well as local people. Phil Kleyman (NE) brought excellent teaching and several we had been praying for professed Christ. Camp dates for next year will be August 8-12.

NEW MEETING

Students at the University of Iowa in Iowa City are meeting weekly. In the will of the Lord, a New Testament

assembly may be forthcoming.

For more information:
call Dave at: (319) 351-4601
or e-mail Tim at:
tfrewing@blue.weeg.uiowa.edu

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ray and Carol Dolinski have a new address in London, England:
56 Mount Pleasant Rd.
Tottenham, London N17 6TN
England
Phone: 0181 801 0805
RayDolinski@compuserve.com

COMMENDATIONS

Garnet and Gwen Cooney

The believers at L'Amable Bible Chapel are pleased to commend Garnet and Gwen Cooney to extended service in Ireland. They have served in Ireland on two previous terms and plan to work in the Newcastle West area of the Republic of Ireland. There are new believers in the area and they hope to see an assembly started.

The Cooneys have served the Lord in Colombia and Jamaica. They were originally commended by L'Amable Bible Chapel 13 years ago to do evangelistic work in Matheson, ON. They were greatly used by the Lord in the assembly work there and also in prison and camp work in the area.

The assembly wishes them God's blessing and direction in Ireland.

Their daughter, Amanda, will begin studies at Kawartha Lakes Bible College in Peterborough, ON this fall. Their son, John, is presently in Ireland but plans to return to Ontario to seek employment and possibly continue his pilot's training.

Dennis Easton

The assembly that meets at L'Amable Bible Chapel commends Dennis Easton to the Lord's work at Kawartha Lakes Bible College and other areas as the Lord leads.

Dennis has been in happy fellow-

ship at L'Amable Bible Chapel for quite a few years and his services are much appreciated. However, the saints there fully support him in his desire to follow the Lord's leading to serve at KLBC.

John and Mary Denny

It is with great joy that the elders, on behalf of the believers in fellowship at the Gospel Chapel in Hutchinson, KS, extend the commendation of John and Mary Denny to the work at Kansas Bible Camp in Hutchinson, KS.

John and Mary were commended to the Lord's work at Immanuel Mission in Arizona nine years ago. They were used by the Lord there in many different capacities.

Over the years, John and Mary have been associated with Kansas Bible Camp in different areas, such as directing, teaching, nursing, and counseling. John has also been on the KBC board for a number of years. When the need arose for a new director at KBC, John and Mary felt the Lord leading them there, and we wholeheartedly concur.

John, Mary, and their family moved to Hutchinson in May. In addition to their ministries at the camp, they are also active in ministries in the local assembly.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Assembly Missionary Home

A caretaker couple is required for the Assembly Missionary Home in Asuncion, Paraguay. Commendation from their local assembly is required. The home is available to all assembly missionaries and those recommended by missionaries who need temporary accommodation.

For further details, write to:

The President
Mision Cristiana en el Paraguay
Casilla 1445
Asuncion 1209
Paraguay, South America



The Maldives

Urgent prayer request: You may not even know where this country is, but the Lord does. And He knows His own.

A chain of 1,200 small coral islands southwest of the southern tip of India, the Maldives (official name, Divehi Raajje) prides itself on being 100% Muslim, and to all appearances has been hardly touched by the gospel for many years. The current constitution makes it unlawful for Maldivian citizens to adhere to anything other than the Maldivian government's interpretation of Islam.

Until recently, there were no Scriptures in the Maldivian language (Divehi), no local church which a Maldivian could visit to hear the Word of God, no Christian broadcasts in the Maldivian language, and only a handful of isolated Maldivians who had trusted the Lord.

This has now changed. Beginning about 1985, Christians from many nations have come to work in the country as professionals. They learned the language and culture of Maldives, establishing friendships with Maldivians, and communicated the gospel in ways the islanders could understand. Over time the persistent witness of these Christians led to several Maldivians giving their lives to Christ. Despite intense community and government pressure to conform to the ways of Islam, these Maldivians chose to practice their Christian faith, to study portions of Scripture and pray together, and communicate their new hope to family and friends.

In June 1998, the government suddenly cracked down, arresting foreigners and nationals they suspected of helping to spread Christianity in

the country. The foreigners were interrogated, their homes raided, personal items confiscated, and between fifteen and twenty were expelled for life. Nationals who were suspected of being believers or sympathetic to these foreigners were interrogated, and at least twenty-five still remain in prison as of August 10.

One of the Christian women, Aneesa Hussein, 32, a young mother, has been beaten and is presently in solitary confinement and under frequent interrogation. Sources say that she will not be released until she renounces Christianity and again embraces Islam. Fifteen other women—some known believers and some who were friends of believers—are also detained at the same facility.

Another group arrested were from a Bible study of young Maldivians which apparently formed with little or no foreign influence. Details on their condition and whereabouts are uncertain, though they are assumed to be detained in Dhoonidhoo with the rest.

This current crisis seems to have been precipitated by several things. Scripture portions in the Maldivian language had found their way into the hands of the police, who recognized that the quality of translation could only have been achieved with assistance from local Maldivians. There is a 93% literacy rate in the Maldives, making the existence of New Testament Scripture in the local language a serious threat to the government. Never before had Scripture been translated and printed in the Maldivian language.



In March 1998, the Far Eastern Broadcasting Association (FEBA) in the nearby Seychelle Islands began a Christian broadcast in the Dhivehi language, which further alarmed the government. Up to this point the government had control of all broadcasting in the Maldivian language, and this was perceived as an affront to their authority. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom wrote to the government of the Seychelles and asked them to stop FEBA from broadcasting, but they politely refused.

These broadcasts have created political tensions in the country, as presidential elections are scheduled for this coming November. The President is under pressure from some leaders who are pressing for an even more extreme Islamic state.

Adapted from WEF Religious Liberty E-mail Conference (Mark Albrecht).

JUDGMENT IN MOROCCO

An appeals court in Morocco has upheld a sentence against four Western Christians accused of smuggling Bibles into the country to avoid customs duties.

British citizen, Graham Hutt, along with two Canadians and a French citizen were arrested May 30. The four were fined \$42,000, and Hutt has lost his motorcycle and a \$250,000 yacht to the authorities. —*Pulse*

HISPANICS IN THE U.S.

By the year 2005, Hispanics will be the largest minority group in America, displacing blacks. By 2050, there will be more Hispanics than all other minority groups combined, according to the Census Bureau. In a recent report, the bureau also reported that blacks and Hispanics now comprise about 15% of children in the country.

—*Pulse*

PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTION

A proposed law in Pakistan could force Christians, in essence, to become slaves to the state. The Christian Action Forum denounced a new law that would institute the Koran, along with the writings of Mohammed, into the country's constitution. Christian leaders fear the law would allow discrimination and persecution of religious minorities, leaving them restricted with no rights. The group is calling on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to immediately withdraw the bill, saying it is in the best interest of the country.

—*MNN*

WHERE'S DADDY?

For the first time in 60 years of research, a Census Bureau study found that a majority of firstborn children in America are now born out of wedlock. Back in the 1930s, the figure was 18 percent.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, teen pregnancy skyrocketed, but the late

90's have seen a shift, and many of the babies are being born to women in their 20s and 30s—old enough to marry but choosing to remain single.

Ironically, while the rate for unwed motherhood seems to be escalating out of control, another study conducted by the service group Public Allies, indicates that younger people long for a return to traditional families. The study found that young people cited their generation's number 1 problem as "the increase in divorce and single-parent families."

Survey respondents, a group of 728 young adults aged 18 to 30, even picked "having a strong family" as their most important goal—above money and career.

Economists theorize that marriages are less alluring because men and women have similar roles. Since the husband no longer acts primarily as the breadwinner and the wife as the child-rearer, the partners depend less on one another. —*World*

FLOODING IN BANGLADESH


In Bangladesh, the flooding has become so severe that the government is reporting 35 million people have become homeless since the monsoons began in July. World Relief, a Christian

missions group, is providing emergency food and other supplies to help prevent illnesses from claiming more victims. Agency officials say attending to the immediate physical crisis shows compassion and the love of Christ to the suffering. —*MNN*

NEPAL'S FAMILIES FOR SALE

The going rate for buying families in Nepal as bonded laborers is about \$250, according to London's *Telegraph* newspaper. The country has an annual legal slave market called the *Maghi*. —*Pulse*

ANGOLA & CONGO UPDATE

Angola is bracing for a resumption in its bloody civil war. The country's defense minister accuses disaffected Unita forces of mobilizing in some regions. Aid workers have joined the ranks of refugees going to Zambia to avoid violence. Meanwhile, reports out of the Democratic Republic of Congo indicate that the government of Laurent Kabila faces an ongoing challenge from Tutsi military officers. The rebels reportedly control two cities in the east. Mission Aviation Fellowship has grounded its air operation in the country. So far, there have been few reports of damage or injury. 

Arthur Leonard Farstad (b. Mar. 7, 1935) was called home to be with Christ Sept. 1 from complications following quadruple by-pass surgery.

A graduate of Emmaus Bible School and Dallas Theological Seminary, for many years Art taught New Testament Greek at DTS. With his colleague, Zane Hodges, he worked on *The Majority Text Greek New Testament*. This work is unique and should be in every serious Bible student's library. Farstad & Hodges followed a theory of textual criticism outlined in Ernest Pickering's book, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*. Brother Farstad is the general editor of the *New King James Translation*, and wrote a defense of that translation in the book, *In The Great Tradition*. He worked closely with William MacDonald on *The Believer's Bible Commentary* as an editor and resource on questions of the Greek language.

More recently, Art was working on a Bible translation which would more closely adhere to the *Majority Text Greek New Testament*. Called *Logos 21*, it is being published by Broadman and Holman.

Art was a good man. We thank God for his prodigious achievements and trust that he has enjoyed an abundant entrance into that better land. Our sympathies are with his brothers, Dick and Arnie, and their families.

God works in Grand Forks

“We went through fire and through water; but You brought us out to rich fulfillment” (Ps. 66:12).

GARY CLARK

During the spring of 1997, the attention of our assembly in West Fargo, ND, was riveted on the flooding of the Red River Valley and the major devastation in Grand Forks. Many of us became burdened for the people of that city but they were so preoccupied with rebuilding their homes and lives that we decided to concentrate our efforts the following year.

Meadow Ridge Bible Chapel hosted two regional men’s meetings where plans were prayerfully laid out to reach the people of Grand Forks with the gospel.

Early in 1998, the Lord sent Marvin Ee to the Grand Forks Air Force Base. He was unaware of our prayers to see an assembly started, though he had the same desire.

The first two Saturdays in May, nearly 10,000 homes in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks were visited with a specially prepared gospel brochure. It pictured the flood and fire damaged downtown Grand Forks, and had on the cover, “Upon this rock I will build My church” (Mt. 16:18). It outlined our doctrinal statement, summarized the key truths concerning a New Testament assembly, and our desire to see one planted in Grand Forks, announced our week-

ly Bible study on NT church principles, and offered a postage-paid tear-off reply card for a free Bible, literature, and information on how to become right with God and/or join in the Bible study.

About 50 people from our assembly and other areas participated. We included our children, and this provided a great experience for families to serve the Lord together.

People from our assembly have gone to Grand Forks for Bible studies since May 12. The studies are held in a rented conference room of a local



hotel on Tuesday nights. Part of the group stays for the Bible study while others continue door-to-door work, and follow up contacts made on previous visits and through mailed-in responses.

In August, year-long plans culminated with a group of about 40 people coming from Story Book Lodge (MN). Each day we met in Fargo for a time in the Word of God, and then travelled to Grand Forks for door-to-door work in the afternoon.

A new brochure was handed out, outlining the gospel and inviting people to nightly evangelistic meetings at

the Grand Forks Civic Auditorium. Also, approximately 6,000 *Ultimate Questions* booklets were given out.

John Bjorlie, formerly from North Dakota, and now of Grand Rapids, MI, preached the gospel nightly. Though only a small number of outsiders attended, the Christians were encouraged by valuable contacts with saved and unsaved people.

On the first day of this door-to-door effort, a lady called on the home of the religion reporter for the local newspaper, the *Grand Forks Herald*. As a result, the religion editor, Stephen J. Lee, interviewed John Bjorlie, Marvin Ee, and me. He visited one of the evangelistic meetings, and wrote two articles for the newspaper. One was a rather short article, but the second was a feature article for the Saturday “Faith and Religion” section of the paper.

As a result of those articles, several people have begun attending the weekly Bible study. One couple visited our assembly and plans on coming weekly until an assembly is started, Lord willing, in Grand Forks. Others attending the study are also becoming interested in the work.

We have been greatly encouraged by the prayer response from around the US from a weekly e-mail prayer update. If you would like to be added to that e-mail list, please send your request to:

GFNTChurch@juno.com



NEWS FLASH: Anyone interested in an intensive week of evangelism in MOBILE, Alabama, please hold JUNE 6-12, 1999, in the will of the Lord. A recent visit by several brethren to the city was encouraging. More to come!

SOME YOUNG PEOPLE TESTIFY ABOUT THEIR TESTIFYING

This August, I had the privilege of attending Story Book Lodge's Teen Challenge in Fargo, ND. I had no idea what my time would be like; only that I would be going door-to-door in Grand Forks. I was ready to serve the Lord in whatever way He led me. The first day, on the van trip up to the city, I was apprehensive. It was my second time going door-to-door—the first being an afternoon handing out invitations to DVBS. After the group met at the local *C'mon Inn*, and we left for our areas, my tension increased. I thought, "What will the reaction be to Your Word, Lord? Will we see any positive responses, or will we see persecution?"

It turned out that we saw a little of both. As I started going from one door to the next, my fears started to drop away. There was an exhilaration that I had never experienced before from doing the Lord's work. I realized that no matter what the reactions were to the literature, they weren't directed at me, but to the Lord. It was His Word, and I was His delivery boy.

The work in Grand Forks is far from over. Your prayers are needed with the Bible studies. And the literature is still there—whether in garbage cans, on coffee tables, in kitchens, or cars. Pray that the Lord will still use these booklets to His own glory.

It was certainly a week that changed my life. My relationship with the Lord was strengthened immensely by serving Him. It was one of the best times of my life, and I pray that He will give me another opportunity soon.

—John T. Messerly

On Friday, I was passing out pamphlets door-to-door when I heard some voices across the street. Five young boys, probably 13-14 years old, said that they would take some of the "stuff" we were passing out. I went over and gave each of them the literature. They had questions about it and I was able to share the gospel with these five for at least 30 minutes! One of them, AJ, paid close attention to what I was telling them, and was not distracted like the others. Almost all of them had questions, though.

It was amazing to see how the Lord lined up these five at just the right time. They were all bored and had nothing to do. They said that they would come to that evening's gospel meeting, but didn't show up.

AJ thought he had been saved years ago but could not tell me how a person is saved. He did have some understanding, though. Please pray for him. —Eric Wiinanen

One man that we met in Grand Forks was Daniel. He said he reads his New Testament, but on Tuesday night of

the meetings, he was faced with the fact that he was a sinner. He immediately started shouting at the brothers near him for condemning him. Myron Martinson replied that it was the Bible that condemned him, and showed him several passages in the Word of God. But Daniel stormed out of the Civic Center, angry at the "Christian hypocrites."

On Wednesday night, God gave me the opportunity to discuss salvation one-on-one with Daniel. He was sober, and even somewhat receptive. He apologized for the way he behaved the night before. I showed him Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." He seemed to understand the message of the gospel, but when he left the Civic Center that night, he didn't seem to care too much. Yet I think his

soul was pierced. Wednesday night was the last time I saw Daniel. Please pray for his soul. —Daniel Schilling

One goes into a week like this expecting something along the lines of a Billy Graham Crusade where thousands turn out and then come forward. What a shock I was in for! Scorching sun, slammed doors, and people cursing you for what seemed your very existence—these all took their toll. When few people showed up for the meetings, it made me wonder why we did all this. I had to ask if the Lord knew we were doing this. Well, prayers *were* answered and people came. Not hundreds, not even fifty—but a handful. The handful was just what the Lord wanted us to have.—Peter VanHal

Going door to door you meet all kinds of people: drunks who usually are very willing to take the literature; wealthy people who usually are polite but not interested; people who take the literature just because they can't hear you over their crying baby or barking dog; little kids who are eager to take whatever you offer them; older people who are lonely and are willing to take anything just so they can talk to someone; people who refuse to take it because they've got their own religion and don't plan on changing; and the people who take it and then tell you to make sure you give it to the person next door: "He REALLY needs it."

God loves all of them and wants to offer to them eternity with Him, if they will only accept Christ. Sometimes I think when I leave a doorstep, "Oh, that booklet's in the garbage." But only the Lord knows what is needed in the person's life to bring them to Him. He truly works in mysterious ways! —Priscilla Rodgers



OUR PLACE IN HISTORY

Let's make some church history of our own

It is possible that this generation will see the rapture of the Church, that we will be those unique members of the Body that “remain unto the coming of the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:15). It would give us a connection to our brothers and sisters in Christ who lived in the first century. As they saw the beginning of this age, we could see the close.

Church history is helpful to show how men and women in a past generation understood the revelation of God. They may inspire us to devotion and warn us of error, but they cannot add to God's revelation. For that we must go back to the New Testament.

New Testament assemblies have always been convinced that not only does the New Testament speak authoritatively on matters of salvation and Christian living, it is also a record of what God intended for the practice of the local church. Many believers in assemblies today are attracted to the assembly because it is sound in the fundamental doctrines. Or the people are warm and friendly in Christian care and love. Or there may be an active interest in children or young people. Or the approach to church practice is a good way of doing things. But is it the only right way?

Tensions often exist in assemblies because there is a fundamental difference on this question. Is it a matter of believing only the fundamental doctrines of salvation and leaving each period of history to work out practice based on the evolution of tradition and culture? We believe the New Testament's record of the early church was God's way of instructing the church of every period of history. We should do what the New Testament believers did.


If our time is ever recorded in church history, will it observe a striking return to First Century practices? Will it note that our generation was characterized by a steadfast desire to be obedient to the Word of God? Will the historian have ample reason to see that this generation saw itself waiting for the Lord to return and in so doing

lived like First Century believers? It can happen.

Here are some observations of what the early church did. (1) *The Word of God was the sole authority* (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 14:37). (2) *Each local church was governed by a plurality of spiritual elders* (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-11). (3) *Two church ordinances were practiced: the Lord's Supper* (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:23-34) and baptism (Acts 8:35-39, Rom. 6:1-6). (4) *All believers acted as priests* (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 10:19-22, 13:15). (5) *The headship of Christ was recognized* (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph 1:22; Col. 1:18). (6) *There are distinctive roles of men and women* (1 Tim. 2:8-3:12; 1 Cor. 11:1-6; 14:34-35; Rom. 16:1-23). (7) *The church was capable of exercising discipline* (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom 16:17). (8) *Each local assembly was autonomous* in the Acts, Epistles, and Revelation. Churches were always addressed

on a local basis and never as a collective federation. (9) *They engaged in gospel outreach as a collective body* (Rom. 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1:8; Phil. 1:5, 14; 1 Thess. 1:8). (10) *Believers practiced holiness of life* (Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:22, 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:19; 1 Pet.1:15-16). (11) *They met in the name of the Lord Jesus* (Mt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 1:10-16). (12) *Only genuine believers were accepted into fellowship* (Acts 2:41). (13) *They met for collective prayer* (Acts 2:42; 4:24-31; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2:1, 12). (14) *They met for teaching* (Acts 2:42; 1

Tim. 4:11-16; Eph. 4:11-24; Titus 2:1). (15) *They contributed to the financial needs of fellow believers and Christian work and workers* (1 Tim. 6:17-19; Philemon 18-19; 1 Cor. 9:1-15; 2 Cor. 9; Phil. 4:18-19). (16) *The ministry of the Holy Spirit was depended on* (Eph. 2:22; Jn. 16:13; Acts 6; Acts 20:28, and several other references). (17) *The Lordship of Christ was assumed* (Phil. 2:1-11 and many others).

The first century church and the last century church—will there be a difference? How fitting to greet the Lord at His coming with the church having returned home. Let's make a little church history of our own. 

by BRIAN GUNNING

The other publisher

Grand Rapids, Michigan, is renowned for its Christian publishers. GFP is the best kept secret there.

A STAFF REPORT

When Christians hear “Grand Rapids,” they think Zondervan or Radio Bible Class or Children’s Bible Hour.

But where was the first Zondervan book typeset? And where did M. R. DeHaan bring his early manuscripts to be checked before airing them? Who first produced a Bible course for *The Wordless Book* in Arabic? *The Reason Why* in Korean? *God’s Way of Salvation* in Spanish? A bilingual hymnbook in Songo and Portuguese? The answer is Gospel Folio Press.

When visiting assemblies of believers throughout North America, in fact around the world, it’s almost inevitable to meet those familiar with Gospel Folio Press and the Pell family of Grand Rapids, MI. Usually anyone who has spent time there smiles and quips, “Gospel Folio Press is like heaven...there’s no night there!” In a way, they’re right.

Now in its 75th year of service, GFP has a rich heritage of men and

women who dedicated their lives to the ministry, not counting “overtime,” which usually stretched into the morning hours, or the sacrifices that were made so naturally that they hardly seemed to notice. It was a lifetime of investing in eternity.

The teenage son of a wallpaper hanger, William J. Pell hand-lettered gospel tracts on the back of scraps of wallpaper, then distributed them in the surrounding communities. By the time he and his brother Peter were in their late teens and early twenties, they were already busy conducting cottage meetings, Bible studies, and preaching on street corners.

The Pell brothers worked together their whole lives. Peter expounded the Word to believers and Will followed in the gospel or a word of stirring exhortation. He is remembered by many for his devotional messages. The brothers were especially well-known for their series with a model of the tabernacle.

In 1922, Bill Vanprooyen, a local businessman, helped Will acquire a \$25 hand press and he set it up in the parlor of his mother’s home. Soon

after, Mr. Vanprooyen got a distressed phone call from Will, saying, “Where are the letters?” Laughing, Mr. Vanprooyen explained that a printing press is much more than a glorified typewriter. He came over to show Will how to use it, arriving with a case of metal type. With these they set John 3:16, printing it on a small card—GFP’s first publication (see p. 12).



Shortly after the new press was purchased, Leonard Sheldrake asked Will to print his monthly gospel paper, *Words of Peace*. Mr. Sheldrake wrote: “If you feel you could handle the printing of *Words of Peace* and the will of God were so, we could yoke together in this service for His Name. The time is short. Soon our Lord will come. How much I have lost by lack of devotion to Him. Oh, that He might work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

With a regular publication, it was time to name the company. Will knew he would always use his press to print the gospel, and since he figured he would never print more than literature with one fold (a “folio” is a piece of paper folded once), he chose “Gospel Folio Press.”

After three-quarters of a century, *Words of Peace* continues to be printed at GFP by Prospect Publications, with John Bjorlie as editor.

The Pell homestead is situated only a few miles from downtown Grand Rapids, but it is nestled in between two hills—a secluded haven from the bustle of the city. Mr. and Mrs. Pell, Sr., bought it from the Postema family on May 1, 1900. It was here that their ten children—four boys and six girls—were raised.

A second house had been previously built on the same property, only a few feet away, by one of Mr. Pell’s brothers. After about a year of using his mother’s parlor as a workshop, Will moved the press into the hand-dug basement next door. The



house was occupied by relatives or friends of the Pell family until eventually the printing work took over. With two additions, it continues to operate there today.

The ministry soon became a vital part of the whole Pell family's life, with everyone involved—from writing and editing material, to running and maintaining the machines, to providing meals and an open home to visitors and staff any time of the day or night.

Around 1925, GFP began printing Sunday School papers. *Childhood Days* was started in 1931, with Mervyn Paul as editor. At the Sunday School Teachers' Conference held in May of 1931 at Toronto, the Lesson Manuals were born; J. R. Littleproud was editor until his death in 1941.

Besides Will, Grace, Lois and Peter Pell, the list is long of people who contributed to the Sunday School material. F. W. Schwartz, Nelson Brooks, James Gunn, John Robertson, Helen Shaw, John Small, Margie Johnson, John Walden, Ruth Mattice, Mabel Carter, and Ruth Sheldrake are some of those who worked for many years writing stories, doing illustrations, and outlining Bible lessons.

In 1972, when Lois Pell took over much of the responsibility for the Sunday School literature, she had a visit from John Boyd of Palos Hills, IL, who suggested she ask Neil Dougal and Boyd Nicholson, Sr., to help with the writing of the adult Bible lessons. They shared that ministry for twenty years.

For half a century, teaching material was mailed to Sunday Schools around the US and Canada every two weeks. "Paper Day" seemed to nip at the heels of the one before—no sooner were all the packages dropped off at the post office, than another deadline was looming, demanding that new materials be written, proofread, printed, packaged, labeled, and mailed.

In 1991, after more than twenty years of involvement with the press, J. B. Nicholson, Jr. accepted the responsibility as editor-in-chief for Gospel Folio Press and moved from Ontario to Grand Rapids to donate much of his time there. During the next five years, an undated modular Bible curriculum, *Line Upon Line*, was prepared. It offers teachers' manuals, student workbooks, and take-home papers for the entire narrative portion of the Bible at four levels of learning—primary, intermediate, junior high, and advanced. The philosophy is that everyone in the Sunday School, from primary to adult, can be studying the same Bible lessons at their individual level.

A monthly ministry magazine, *Look on the Fields*, edited by Leonard Sheldrake and published by GFP, was begun in 1927. When Peter Pell became its editor a few years later, the name was changed to *Uplook*. The name was changed to *Assembly Annals* in 1933 by its next editor, Dr. H. A. Cameron. In 1968, the name reverted back to *Uplook*. In 1991, when J. B. Nicholson became editor, the format was enlarged from a small 5x8 size to its present look. At that time, there were about 800 names on the mailing list. Almost 10,000 copies of this issue will be sent throughout the US and Canada and to more than one hundred foreign countries. The magazine is also available on the internet.

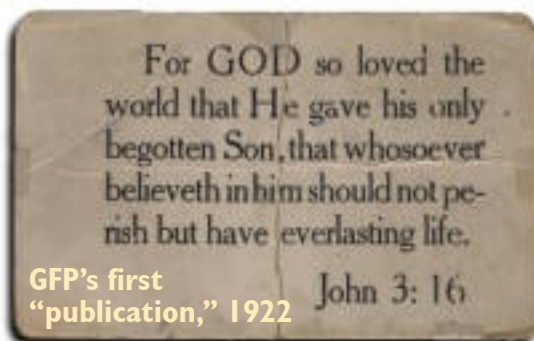
In 1939, Will became exercised about a daily devotional calendar. In spite of discouraging remarks from some who said it wasn't feasible in North America, the calendar (initially named *The Remembrancer* but soon changed to *Choice Gleanings*) was launched in 1940. It was decided to print 800 the first year. Will figured he had that many friends. "At least I can give that many away," he said. The only daily devotional calendar on the market for many years, it quickly became the most popular item that the Press produced. Soon they were printing 44,000 calendars annually.

In later years, Will felt this to be his main ministry. Whenever he was away preaching, he loved to hunt through the library of his hosts, searching for fresh material.

Ann Pell, one of the sisters, ran the press until the mid-60's when, battling cancer, she wasn't able to work any longer. Tim Johnson came on as pressman at that time and worked along with Dave Pell, a nephew of the Pell sisters. Dave and Tim are still serving the Lord in the print shop today.

When the Lord took Ann home, her sister Ruth took responsibility for running the print shop. Today, at 82, she doesn't run the machines or manage the mailing room anymore, but she still proofreads almost every piece of literature that goes out our doors. Tillie (who handled the accounting end of the press for many years) and Lois are retired from the day-to-day operation, but still provide sage advice and are both actively involved in the ministry of Rest Haven Homes.

Since Will Pell was more of a preacher and writer than a businessman, through the years he frequently turned to F. W. Schwartz of Detroit for business advice, as well as Mr. Vanprooyen (who was involved from the very beginning). Often Will and Mr. Schwartz would sit at the





The Pell family, 1934

kitchen table with a box of graham crackers and a bottle of milk, talking the night away.

On March 30, 1972, Will was called to be with the Lord and almost exactly nine years later, his brother Peter also passed away. The responsibility of the work was left in the hands of their four sisters: Grace, Tillie, Ruth, and Lois. They carried on for a decade with the help of many, but in addition to their responsibilities for Rest Haven Homes and Grace's failing health, it became almost impossible to carry on.

In 1991, a Board of Directors was formed for the running of Gospel Folio Press and it was reorganized as a non-profit corporation at that time. Now Gospel Folio Press is the book publishing division of Uplook Ministries, which also provides the Lord's people with tracts, booklets, books, the distribution of dependable Christian literature from other publishers, a tape library, the *Uplook* magazine, the Modular Bible Lessons, as well as arranging book tables and our Rise Up & Build Bible conferences.

The past seven years have seen many structural changes in the building, technological changes in the equipment, and design and editorial changes in the products. A two-color press and a stitcher-collator-folder-trimmer were the first pieces of equipment purchased in '91. Macintosh computers have replaced the Linotype and the manual cut-and-paste process. A color scanner has allowed us to include more graphics in our work. And just this year the purchase of an output-to-film device streamlined the process even more, bypassing the darkroom stage.

A toll-free 800 order number, computerized billing, a fax machine, e-mail, and a website were all unknown at

GFP seven years ago. The Lord has been so good to us!

While books are flooding the Christian market, there is real concern by many as to the quality of the teaching found on the shelves of most Christian bookstores. A needed service to the Lord's people is the distribution of selected books and products that Christians can trust. Along with the ten or so books per year published by GFP, a wider line from other trustworthy publishers is available through our mail order division. We are distributors for John Ritchie, Precious Seed, and Christian Year in North America. As well, we carefully choose other books to offer to you. This has been a service much appreciated by readers of quality Christian literature.

What of the future? Only the Lord really knows what lies ahead, but our desire is to increasingly provide sound biblical and Christ-honoring resources to the people of God. We are not primarily in the printing business; we are in the business of communicating the truth, by whatever means it can most effectively communicated.

We are deeply appreciative to the Lord's people who have sacrificially and substantially invested in this ministry over the years—through prayer support, volunteer labor, providing quality material for publishing, and through financial resources that have helped us grow. We believe the Lord has raised up this ministry for such a time as this. There is so much left to be done. We need the prayers of the Lord's people to know how to use the very limited resources we have at our disposal. And if it is His purpose, we need the Lord to open up the way to expand the ministry here, with larger facilities and improved equipment so that we can provide more good books, helpful teaching resources, a more comprehensive website, and other ministry to assist believers in their lives and labors for the Lord.



The present staff at Uplook Ministries

Heather Moldenhauer

A brief **CHURCH HISTORY** at a glance

THE EARLY CHURCH, AD 29-313 (Pentecost to the reign of Constantine)

PENTECOST c. AD 29 birth of the Church (Acts 2)	EARLY PERSECUTIONS death of Stephen (Acts 7)	CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSAUS (Acts 9)	PAUL'S 1st MISSION TRIP: Syria-Cyprus-Turkey c. AD 48 (Acts 13:1-15:35)	JERUSALEM COUNCIL c. AD 49-50 (Acts 15)	PAUL'S 2nd TRIP: Turkey-Greece (Philippi, Thess., Berea, Corinth) c. AD 51	PAUL'S 3rd TRIP: Eph., Maced., Cor., Miletus AD 54 (Acts 18:23-21:17)	PAUL IMPRISONED c. AD 58 Voyage to Rome c. AD 60 Martyred AD 67?	INTENSE PERSECUTION under NERO burning of Rome AD 64	FALL OF JERUSALEM under Vespasian/Titus AD 70 (Lk. 19:43-44)	10 GREAT PERSECUTORS Domitian (AD 81) to Marcus Aurelius (180)	RELATIVE CALM for the Church (AD 180-313) Exceptions: Severus, Maximin, Decius, Diocletian	REIGN OF CONSTANTINE Edict of Milan: repeal of Christian persecution AD 313
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THE WORLDLY CHURCH, AD 313-622 (The "Holy" Roman Empire to the Birth of Islam)

MARRIAGE OF CHURCH & STATE the cross exchanged for an earthly throne	COUNCIL OF NICEA Nicene Creed to refute Arianism (denial of Christ's full deity). Bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome given authority over divisions of Roman Empire. AD 325	AUGUSTINE AD 354-430 strongly influences Catholic and Calvinistic thought	ULPHILAS c. AD 311-381 "apostle to the Goths" translates the Bible into Gothic	JEROME'S VULGATE AD 386 translates the Bible into Latin	THEODOSIUS II AD 395 divides the empire between his sons: Honorius (West), Arcadius (East)	COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE 27 books of NT accepted as canonical AD 397	PATRICK (c. AD 372-?) a Scot, evangelizes Ireland c. AD 412	COUNCIL OF EPHEBUS condemns Pelagius' heresy (denied original sin). AD 431	PAPACY FORMALIZED Leo I (440-461). RC Church lists 48 popes before Leo to Peter	COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON refutes Nestorianism re 2 natures of Christ. AD 451	SACKING OF ROME by barbarians (Goths) from Germany AD 476	First BENEDICTINE MONASTERY established AD 529 at Monte Cassino	GREGORY I AD 540-604 transformed bishopric of Rome into the Papal State	MOHAMMED born c. AD 569. Birth of Islam dated from flight to Medina AD 622
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THE DARK AGES, AD 623-1492 (Triumph of Islam to the Dawn of a New Era)

JERUSALEM falls to the Muslim Caliph Omar AD 637 AD 636-781	NESTORIANS Huns, Medes, Elamites, Arabs, Indians, Chinese AD 636-781	PAULICIANS, AD 653 separate from State Church, accept only Bible as authoritative. 100,000 martyred	CHARLEMAGNE crowned king Dec. 25, 800. Begins long war to "convert" all of Europe	CATHOLIC & ORTHODOX CHURCHES split AD 1054	COUNCIL OF CLEMONT AD 1095 Urban II calls for Crusade to take holy sites	SIEGE OF JERUSALEM AD 1099, followed by 7 more Crusades (1147-1270). Thousands of Jews slaughtered as "Christ-killers"	PETER de BRUEYS speaks out in France against corruption of Rome. Burned alive AD 1110	The INQUISITION In 1220, handed to Dominican order. Torture approved in 1252	PETER WALDO & the "poor men of Lyon" AD 1220, handed to 3rd Lateran Council, AD 1179	JOHN WYCLIF denounces transubstantiation. Complete Latin Bible into English	JOHN HUS of Bohemia AD 1369-1415 burned at the stake July 6, 1415	UNITED BRETHREN (from Moravia) banished for their faith. Publish Bible in Bohemian, 1470	BIBLES! Preparation for the coming Reformation: Italian (1474), Dutch & French (1477), Spanish (1478)	COLUMBUS reaches the New World in 1492; Magellan's crew circle the globe by ship AD 1519-1522
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THE REFORMATION ERA, AD 1492-1648 (Protest to Puritanism)

JEROME SAVONAROLA (AD 1452-1498) early reformer is tortured, hanged and burned with 2 others in 1498	ERASMUS' Greek New Testament published in Basle AD 1516	MARTIN LUTHER (AD 1483-1546) nails his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg, October 31, 1517	LUTHER'S German Bible printed, 1522; WH. TYNDALE'S & MILES COVERDALE'S English Bible in 1525	CONRAD GREBEL & FELIX MANZ, 1523, insist on believer's baptism, reject idea of State Church. Given name of Anabaptists	HENRY VIII breaks with Rome. The "Supremacy Act of 1534 lays ground for Anglicanism	JOHN CALVIN (1509-1564) publishes "Institutes of the Christian Religion," 1536	COUNCIL OF TRENT AD 1545-1563 defined Catholicism in wake of Counter-Reformation	HUGH LATIMER & THOMAS CRANMER burned at the stake in London, 1555-1556	JOHN KNOX returns to Scotland in August 24-26, 1572	ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY MASSACRE AD 1369-1415 Huguenots slaughtered	JAMES VI of Scotland calls for Bible translation. The KJV published in 1611	The MAYFLOWER carries 102 Pilgrims (Puritan Separatists) to establish a colony in America. Arrive on November 21, 1620	The 30 YEARS WAR (1618-1648) closes the Reformation period with a bloodbath
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THE AGE OF AWAKENING AND REVIVAL, AD 1643-1899 (European Polarization to D. L. Moody)

The SCOTTISH COVENANTERS pay the price in blood for their faith 1643-1688	COUNT NIKOLAUS von ZINZENDORF invites exiled Protestants to settle on his Saxony estate, 1722. Begins Moravian missionary movement	JOHN WESLEY (1703-1791) & GEORGE WHITFIELD (1714-1770) , shut out of Anglican churches, take gospel outdoors. Methodism the answer to deism	The GREAT AWAKENING (1720-1776) brings widespread conversions in America and prominence to JONATHAN EDWARDS	NEW MISSIONARY MOVEMENT: William Carey to India, 1793 Robt. Morrison to China, 1807 Robt. Moffat (1816) & David Livingstone (1840) to Africa A. N. Groves (1829) to Persia	CHARLES G. FINNEY revivals (beginning in 1824) and "holiness" teaching popularized Perfectionism	"BRETHREN" MOVEMENT has its beginnings when four meet to break bread in Dublin, Nov. 1827	NEW CULTS: Mormonism, 1830 7th-Day Adventism, 1831 Spiritualism, 1848 Russellism (JW's) 1872 Christian Science, 1876	GEORGE MÜLLER opens his first orphanage in Bristol, England, 1836	STUNDIST movement begins among lower classes in Russia 1858	HUDSON TAYLOR forms the China Inland Mission in 1865	C. H. SPURGEON preaches for the first time in 6,000 seat Metropolitan Tabernacle at age 22, 1861	D. L. MOODY (1837-1899) in worldwide preaching addresses 100 million people
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THE MODERN WORLD, AD 1900-present (Every wind of doctrine—the last days?)

LIBERALISM: German Higher Criticism, evolution of religion, denial of supernatural	FUNDAMENTALISM is defined in a 12-volume series "The Fundamentals" edited by R.A. Torrey & A.C. Dixon, 1910-1915	The GREAT WAR 1914-1918 when 27 nations in "total war" show fruits of Nationalism	NEO-ORTHODOXY led by Karl Barth (1886-1968) declares the Bible only "contains" the Word of God	NAZISM'S rise leads to World War II (1939-1948) and the slaughter of 6 million Jews	WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES formed in Amsterdam with 147 denominations 1948	BILLY GRAHAM'S first large evangelistic "crusade" held in Los Angeles 1949	COMMUNISM leads to slaughter of untold millions in scores of countries worldwide 1917-present	NEO-EVANGELICALISM finds an eloquent spokesman in Carl F. H. Henry, first editor of <i>Christianity Today</i> , 1956	CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT sweeps across Catholic and liberal Protestant churches, 1960-1975. Dramatic decline in mainline denominations	VATICAN II, 1962-1965 Pope John XXIII attempts to modernize Catholicism. Changes are unsettling; Catholics allowed to read Bibles—many saved	NEW AGE MOVEMENT promoted with 1971 publication of "Be Here Now" by Baba Ram Das. Eastern religions gain ground in the West	21st CENTURY approaches with harvest fields white, the time nearer than when we believed
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This issue of **UPLOOK** magazine included the chart shown above in a double-page format. This full-color printed chart as well as the various topics listed below are available from Uplook Ministries by calling toll-free 1-800-952-2382 (new charts are added periodically). The wealth of info in these charts is perfect for Bible studies, intermediate and advanced Sunday school classes and for reference. Printed on quality paper and shipped in durable mailers.

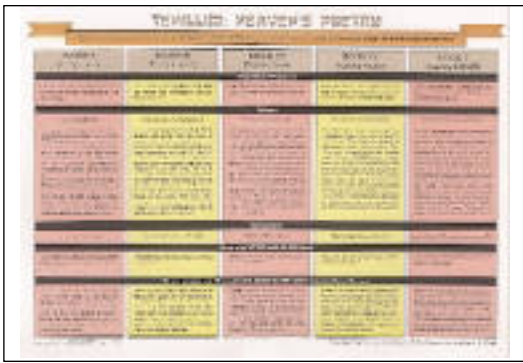
- History is His Story (The Dispensations) L-CHA
- The Feasts of Jehovah L-FCH
- Key Events in the Life of Peter (map) L- CPE
- The Seven Churches of Revelation 2 & 3 L-SCR
- Stir up your Gift L-GCH
- The Habitation of God on Earth L-TCH
- The Levitical Offerings L-OCH
- The Seven Parables of the Kingdom L-PCH
- Key Locations from the days of the Early Church (map) L-CKL
- The Conspiracy of Love: God's Tactics in Evangelism L-CLL
- Psalms: Heaven's Poetry L-CPS
- The Long Walk: Israel's Wilderness Journey (map) L-CLO
- Compound Names of Jehovah L-CNA
- Unlocking the Treasure Chest: the Sources of Truth L-CUT
- Multiple Names and Titles of the Lord Jesus L-MNT

- Real Snake Handling: The Devil's Devices L-RSH
 - Love By Association L-LBA
 - Isaiah: The Old Testament Evangelist L-OTE
 - A Brief Church History at a Glance L-CHG
 - Unfolding of the Doctrine of Dispensations L-UDD
 - Ten Test Questions to Discern Biblical Orthodoxy L-TTQ
 - So Great Salvation (definitions, examples, references) L-SGS
 - Revelation: The Book of Opened Things L-BOT
- (Some of these charts are pictured on the next page)**

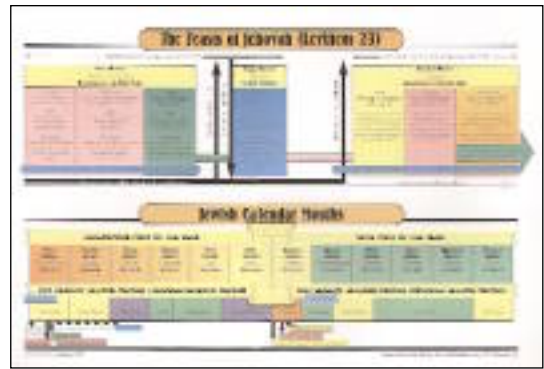
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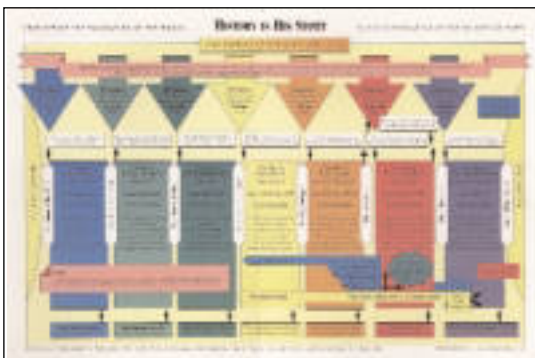
📅 The Feasts of Jehovah and Jewish Calendar Months



🏛️ The Seven Churches of Revelation 2 & 3



📍 The Key Locations of the Early Church



🕒 Outline of the Dispensations showing the purpose of the ages



👤 The Multiple Names and Titles of the Lord Jesus Christ



🎁 Stir Up Your Gift with definitions & examples of gifts in Scripture



👑 7 Parables of the Kingdom

HIS STORY

“All my possessions for a moment of time”

—LAST WORDS OF ELIZABETH I

History, n. An account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools.

—Ambrose Bierce in *Cynic's World Book*

**Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own.**

—James Russell Lowell

He who has no vision of eternity
has no hold on time.

—Thomas Carlyle

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, “Return, ye children of men.” For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Psalm 90:1-4

Learn to hold loosely all that is not eternal.

—A. M. Royden

*Crown Him the Lord of years,
The Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
Ineffably sublime!* —M. Bridges

The historian is a prophet looking backwards.

—Schlegel

The Church Universal

*One holy Church of God appears
Through every age and race
Unwasted by the lapse of years,
Unchanged by changing place.*

*From oldest time, on farthest shores,
Beneath the pine or palm,
One unseen Presence she adores,
With silence or with psalm.*

*O living Church! thine errand speed,
Fulfill thy task sublime;
With bread of life earth's hunger feed,
Redeem the evil time!*

—Samuel Longfellow

History repeats itself. Historians repeat each other.

—Philip Guedella

A page of history is worth a volume of logic. —Oliver W. Holmes, Jr.

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you. Deuteronomy 32:7

Some dismiss that “by-gone age” of doctrinal troubles and schisms among Christians, with the remark, “Let the dead bury their dead.” But none escape the consequences of history. And ignoring it will not save us from perpetuating it. As Elijah did, we should confess, “We are not better than our fathers.” Weigh the past in the balances of the sanctuary. Otherwise we doom ourselves to a path strewn with danger.

*Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forevermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious,
Shall be the church at rest.*

—S. J. Stone

That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons that history has to teach.

—Aldous Huxley

Building on tradition

Is all tradition wrong? How do we distinguish between good tradition and bad?

DONALD L. NORBIE

Many of us cringe if someone starts talking about being loyal to tradition. We think of formal churches with their ornate ritual and Gothic architecture, the priestly garb of their ministers, and the lack of spontaneity in their services. But how does Scripture use the term?

The word "tradition" is a translation in the New Testament of the Greek word *paradosis*, the noun form from *paradidomi*, meaning "to give over, to deliver or to pass on." It is used in Matthew 17:22 by Jesus, "*The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men.*"

He was about to be handed over to the hands of His enemies. Tradition, then, is a teaching or practice which has been handed over to the next generation for its preservation and continued practice.

Perhaps many think of tradition in a bad sense. Jesus was surrounded by the scribes and Pharisees and was challenged by them, "*Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread*" (Mt. 15:2).

Jesus replied, "*Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God com-*

manded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt.15:3-9).

Jesus castigated them for sup-

planting the teaching of God's Word with their additional doctrines, their traditions. In Mark 7 there is the parallel passage where the Pharisees and their traditions are condemned. The Law itself was complex enough and very burdensome for the people to keep, but the legalistic spirit of the rabbis kept on adding rules and regulations. In Matthew 23, where Jesus delivers a scathing condemnation of them, He said, "*They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers*" (Mt. 23:4). Paul was caught up in this system, "*being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers*" (Gal. 1:14).

The Bible, however, does speak of tradition in a good sense. Jaroslav Pelikan differentiates between tradition and traditionalism, calling tradition "the living faith of the dead" and traditionalism "the dead faith of the

living." It is an insightful analysis. But this "living faith" which many have, from which "dead" has it been passed on? For the Church does this mean the creeds, practices, and pronouncements of 2,000 years of Church history? If so, which of all of these contradictory and confusing traditions is one to follow?

The Bible distinguishes between two kinds of tradition. There is the "tradition of men" (Col. 2:8) and there is the tradition of the apostles. Paul could write the believers in Thessalonica, "*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word, or our epistle*" (2 Thess. 2:15). Later in the same epistle he wrote, "*But we command you,*



brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly, and not according to the tradition which he received from us” (2 Thess. 3:6). Strong words indeed! The apostles claimed the authority of the Lord Jesus as they preached the gospel and established churches, laying down a pattern of doctrine and practice (Mt. 28:18-20). They were foundational in the Church (Eph. 2:20).

In writing to a church struggling with moral and doctrinal problems, Paul exhorted the believers, *“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you”* (1 Cor. 11:1-2). There was a universal, apostolic tradition to which Paul could appeal. To those who questioned his teaching Paul could write, *“But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God”* (1 Cor. 11:16). Anyone who would challenge Paul in this area was warned that he was going contrary to the practice of all the churches.

Later in this epistle Paul claimed the very authority of God for his teaching. *“If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord”* (1 Cor. 14:37). Paul claimed for these “traditions” of the apostles the same authority that Moses claimed as he descended from Mt. Sinai to the people of Israel. This is the Word of God, just as authoritative as if Christ personally spoke it. Apostolic tradition is authoritative.

Since the first century, with the decease of the apostles, no man has been able to make such valid claims for inspiration and authority. The only source of direction for the churches is now the written Word of God itself. No church should appeal to church history for its guidance and authority. One may

study the past to learn lessons and to avoid making the same mistakes, but the authority for doctrine and practice must be only the Word of God, the Bible.

It is very easy to lapse into traditionalism and to make one’s own practices a legalistic norm. The Scripture indicates the early churches had their meetings on Sunday, the Lord’s Day, the day when He arose (Acts 20:7). But there is no biblical direction as to the time of day. You may prefer the Lord’s supper at 9:30, but have no right to demand that all other churches conform. A church may prefer to sit in a circle at the Breaking of bread, but there is no apostolic directive to this end. The Scripture teaches modesty but does not demand a certain dress code for women, as some religious groups do today.

It is very easy to lapse into traditionalism; that can be deadening. We may celebrate the Lord’s Supper every

Sunday, but if the heart has gone out of the meeting, it becomes a dead form. Some churches adopt a regular liturgy and know their parts by rote. Others decry that but still fall into a lifeless pattern—a hymn and a prayer, a hymn and a prayer—with few heart-warming expressions of thanks or exercised prayers. If someone would stand and give a heartfelt exhortation, he would be viewed as out of place. “We are comfortable; do not disturb us.” Traditionalism!

Yes, we believe in traditions, the traditions of the apostles. When churches appeal to other traditions, they lay themselves open to all sorts of error and confusion. Isaiah cried, *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”* (Isa. 8:20). It is always healthy for a church to evaluate its beliefs and practices in the light of God’s Word, not to appeal to its traditions. The Spirit of God is still eager to lead God’s people into all truth.



*Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race,
Call on the lazy, leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet’s pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast
entombed,
And, last of all, thy greedy self consumed,
Then long eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And joy shall overtake us as a flood
With everything that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love shall ever
shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him whose happy-making sight alone,
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall
climb,
Then all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars, we shall forever sit,
Triumphing over death, and chance, and thee,
O Time.*

—JOHN MILTON (1608-1674)



Who were “the Fathers”?

Prominent Christians of the Second and Third Centuries

W. ROSS RAINEY

“**T**he first century following the death of the Apostles produced few Christian writers, few men of learning or note. For the most part, the Christians of those days were concerned about living Christianity and they found in the Scriptures all that was necessary to their salvation and edification.”¹

However, during the second and third centuries, there were several prominent Christians or so-called Church Fathers.

CLEMENT OF ROME (c. 30-100)

Clement was an elder in the church at Rome. Noted for his letter to the Corinthians, he wrote during the lifetime of the Apostle John, providing some light on the life of the churches at the close of the first century. He had seen both the apostles

Peter and Paul, and in his letter made reference to their martyrdom. He wrote with humility yet triumphantly of persecution, the value of Old Testament typology, the hope of Christ’s return, and the way of salvation, stressing the importance of good works in a Christian’s life. He also defended the faith against the heresy of Docetism (i.e., that Jesus was a pure-spirit, and not a man).

The Apostle Paul mentions a certain Clement in Philippians 4:3, but it is debatable if this is the Clement of Rome who wrote a letter to the Corinthians.

IGNATIUS (c. 50—c. 111)

All we know of Ignatius is primarily through 15 letters ascribed to him. He was probably a native of Syria, a pupil of the Apostle John, and an elder of the church at Antioch, Syria. He manifested a deep love for Christ, stressed the importance of Christ’s incarnation, and was persuaded that

the Lord’s Supper was a means of ensuring unity.

At the time of his martyrdom, his contemporaries described him as “a man in all things like the Apostles. As to his martyrdom, he said, “I would rather die for Christ than rule the whole world.”³

JUSTIN MARTYR (?-163)

The date of Justin Martyr’s birth is unknown. He was born at present-day Nablus in Palestine and was one of the few very learned men of the second century. He was an apologist, that is, a writer who defended the Christian faith. Walking by the sea one day, he met a total stranger who told him about Christ and he became a believer. He never saw the man again. Justin became an ardent defender of the faith, having written the *Apology for Christianity* and several other works. What we know about him comes chiefly from his writings.

Justin was later accused of the crime of being a Christian, and the sentence imposed on him—along with several others was that they first be scourged, then beheaded. Around 163 AD he sealed his testimony with his blood.

POLYCARP (c. 69—155)

Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John and a friend of Ignatius. While still a young man, he became an elder at Smyrna, the city of his birth. He was a link between the apostles and the second century church, having contributed greatly to the latter. Around 155 AD, local persecution took place in Smyrna and several Christians were martyred. He was singled out as the leader of the church there and was marked out for



Ignatius, devoured by wild animals in Rome, AD 111

WHO WERE “THE FATHERS”?

martyrdom. When asked to repent of his faith, he is reported to have said, “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How can I speak evil of my King who saved me?” He was burned at the stake following his bold and courageous confession.

IRANAEUS (c. 130—c. 202)

Having probably been born at Smyrna, Iranaeus studied under Polycarp and ultimately became an elder at Lyons. For many years he labored zealously in literary activity, pastoral work, and missionary preaching. His greatest literary work was entitled, *Against Heresies*, a defense of the Christian faith against the insidious teachings of the Gnostics and other heretics.

Iranaeus made full use of the New Testament, showing the unity of the Old and New Testaments. We know nothing more of him after 190 AD, and it’s believed that he died a martyr’s death.

TERTULLIAN (c. 160—c. 220)

Born in Carthage, North Africa, where he lived most of his life, Tertullian was highly educated and the first Christian author to write in Latin. For 30 or so years he lived in licentiousness, then became a Christian about 190 AD. He was a prolific writer, ardent defender of the faith, and a gifted preacher, his main concerns having been Christianity’s attitude to the Roman state and society, the defense of orthodox beliefs against heresy, and the moral behavior of Christians.

Around 207 AD, reacting against the worldliness of the church, his own strict moral code led him to cast in his lot with the Montanist schism that was making itself felt in the church at that time. In turn this led him to asceticism and legalism. Although married, he placed celibacy higher than marriage.

Toward the end of Tertullian’s life, he left the Montanists and formed a sect of his own. He was the first Christian writer to use the words Trinity and Person in relation to the Godhead.

ORIGEN (c. 185—c. 254)

Born into a Christian family in Alexandria, Egypt, Origen became the greatest scholar and most prolific author of the early church fathers. His first major work, *First Principles*, attempted to systematically present fundamental Christian doctrines. However, in his attempt to explain Christianity in the prevailing philosophical ideas of his time, it was to the detriment of the former. Nevertheless, he remained faithful to the basic truths of Christianity.

Origen was deeply spiritual and led a spartan life. He traveled widely and his death around 254 AD was the

result of injuries inflicted during the persecution under the Emperor Decius.

CYPRIAN (c. 195—c. 258)

Cyprian became a Christian in 246 AD. He was a rich, cultured man of Carthage, North Africa, but gave away much of his wealth to the poor after his conversion. At the request of the people, he became bishop of Carthage, but accepted the position reluctantly. However, he developed a strong insistence on the authority of the bishop, although there was no desire on his part to lord it over God’s flock.

Cyprian was a godly man with a well trained but clear and simple mind. His labors were greatly blessed and he steered clear of the philosophical teachings of his day, adhering to the plain apostolic line of teaching. He was the instrument of a great revival in Carthage, the effects of which spread far and wide.

Cyprian’s career was limited to 13 years, during which time there was considerable persecution, his life having been cut short by a martyr’s death.

AN ASSESSMENT

What can we learn from this vital period of second and third century Christianity? On the negative side, there are several things we need to observe. The emphasis placed on one man becoming the bishop of a city or area laid the foundation for clerisy, which has been so prevalent in the church’s history, something totally foreign to the teaching of the New Testament. We further note the trends toward asceticism, legalism, celibacy, and party spirit. Also, man’s philosophies commenced to influence fundamental Christianity, coupled with a growing spirit of worldliness in the church.


On the positive side, however, we should be grateful to God for faithful men and women who contended for the faith, even to sealing their testimony with their life’s blood. We all have feet of clay and are flawed in one way or another. No one of us holds the truth perfectly, although this by no means excuses us for allowing error to creep into the church or into our own personal lives.

Whatever valid criticisms we may have of the so-called early Church Fathers, we need to ask ourselves to what extent we measure up to their sacrificial devotion to Christ and faithfulness to the Word of God. And, if necessary, are we ready to die a martyr’s death for His sake?

ENDNOTES

1 T. W. Carron, *The Christian’s Testimony through the Ages*, p. 41.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

3 Elgin S. Moyer, *Who Was Who in Church History*, p. 209. 

UNKNOWN, YET WELL KNOWN

There were always those who simply wanted just to be brethren

Anyone reading Church histories, especially those covering the Middle Ages, will doubtless meet the Waldensians, the Lollards, and the Anabaptists. But who were they?

THE WALDENSAINS

In 1160, Peter Waldo (?-1217), a wealthy young banker, was stunned by the death of a guest at one of his banquets. Peter had also been impressed by the message of a troubadour who related the legend of Saint Alexius, the penitent scion of a noble family who refused a bride and went into self-imposed exile and poverty. Alexius returned to his home years later, destitute and unknown.

Waldo consulted the local theological minds about this story and was directed to the saying of the Lord Jesus, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me" (Mt. 19:21). In 1173, he sold his property, gave away all the proceeds except what he needed to care for his wife, and sent his two daughters to a monastery.

Thereafter, in class-conscious feudal Europe, he stepped down and began to preach to the common people.

At some point in those early years, while he still had the income to do so, he obtained a copy of the Scriptures and employed two clerks to translate it into the Romance dialect. Portions of these handwritten translations, called the Romaunt or Gallic Version, are still preserved.

As a leader and organizer, Peter banded his co-workers together. They were styled "the poor in spirit," or "the poor of Lyons." Their initial intent was not to become a protest movement. They really had two desires: freedom to preach as laymen, and permission to produce Bible translations in the vernacular of the common people.

In 1179, they crossed the mountains in order to present their cause in Rome at the Third Lateran Council.

Pope Alexander III allowed the "Poor of Lyons" to maintain vows of poverty, but they were denied permission to preach as laymen unless they were expressly invited to preach by the local clergyman.

At first they thought they could live with this arrangement, but soon realized that dissolute clergymen made poor supervisors. So they went preaching with or without an invitation. In 1184, Pope Lucius III had them excommunicated for insubordination.

By this time, Waldo had contacted believers from the Alpine valleys on the boundary between France and Italy. On the west side of the range the believers on French soil were called Albigenses, probably because of their proximity to the city of Albi.

Within Italy, their accusers called them Waldenses. It is popularly assumed that they are named after Peter Waldo. Both groups were known as Vaudois by the French, and the Valdes by the Italians. One of them described his fellowship as "the little flock of Christians referred to falsely and with false names as p.o.v.o.b." The initials probably stood for "Picards or

Valdes or Beghards," all such titles were so inflammatory that it was unsafe to write them out in full.

Where were the Waldensians doctrinally? We cannot assume that everyone burned at the stake or hurled off a cliff by the magistrates of the Middle Ages was a Bible-believing Christian. But in the case of the Waldensians, we believe they were the most strictly biblical group of believers of the Middle Ages. The Inquisition itself affirmed their soundness on the basic doctrines of Scripture. The complaint against them was not their doctrines but their stubborn resistance to papal authority.

The Waldenses were evangelical in the best sense of the word, sending out young men in pairs on missionary trips. The fact that these men were usually unmarried has led to the slander that the Waldensians forbade marriage.



The burning of Wycliffe's writings

by JOHN A. BJORLIE

John Darby noted that many of their beliefs were in reaction to errors of the State Church. "The infamy of the clergy, degraded by species of vice which none can call in question, had roused the conscience of many, and more as to practice and the acts by which they made money than as to dogma. But purgatory, consecration to the priesthood, indulgences, confession to priests, and prayers for the dead, were all rejected."

This lines up with the accusation of the inquisitor Sacconi, "They preach much from the Gospels and say among other things that a man should do no evil, nor lie, nor swear. When they preach from the Gospels and Epistles they corrupt them with their explanations, as masters of error who know not to sit at the feet of truth, teaching and expounding the Scriptures being wholly forbidden to layfolk. They say that their church is the true church and that the Roman church is not a true Church but is the Church of malignants. They reprobate Church wealth and ecclesiastical 'regalia' or the high feudal privileges of bishops and abbots. They seek to abolish all ecclesiastical privilege and they maintain no one should be compelled to the faith... They condemn the Church's sacraments and say that a priest who lives in mortal sin cannot make the body of Christ; that transubstantiation takes place not in the hands of the priest...but in the mind of him who received it worthily." And all of this from Rainier Sacconi, who was formerly among the "heretics," but in the time of persecution left them and became a Dominican and an Inquisitor.

The Waldenses saw evident success in gospel work. By the sixteenth century, there were functioning congregations in Bavaria, Bohemia, England, France, Italy, Poland, Swabia, and Switzerland. One claimed there were as many as 13,000 Waldenses believers in Austria.

THE LOLLARDS

The term "Lollard" eventually became a general name for those deemed heretical to the Roman Church, but it was not so from the beginning. One opinion is that the name comes from the Middle Dutch, *lollaert*, meaning to mumble or mutter. Another traces the word to the Low German *lollen* or *lullen*, meaning to sing in a low tone, from the subdued and plaintive dirges used while accompanying the dead to the grave. If this is so, it corresponds to the contemporary scorn for hymn singing, which worldly-minded people speak of as "funeral dirges."

Much of what we learn of the Lollards has been gleaned, not from their writings, but from their accusers. In Broadbent's *Pilgrim Church*, we read, "One chronicle relates that in 1322 a certain Walther came to Cologne from Mainz. He was 'a leader of the Brethren and a dangerous heresiarch, who for many years had remained hid-

den and had involved many in his dangerous errors. He was seized near Cologne and by court of justice given over to the fire and burnt. He was a man full of the Devil, more able than any other, constant in his error, clever in his answers, corrupt in faith, and no promises, no threats, not even the most terrible tortures could bring him to betray his fellow culprits, of whom there were many. This Lollard, Walther, of Netherland origin, had little knowledge of the Latin language, and wrote the numerous works of his false faith in the German tongue, as he could not do it in the Roman speech, and distributed them very secretly to those whom he had deceived and led astray. As he refused all repentance and recantation, and defended his error most steadfastly, not to say obstinately, he was thrown into the fire and left nothing but his ashes behind.'" How remarkable that the writer felt entirely justified, thinking he was doing God service, by assenting to such monstrous cruelty.

When Wycliff began his work, men were employed to preach everywhere across England, and these also became known as Lollards. How many of them were burned at the stake in England is hard to know. But the flame they lit swept across Europe with gospel light.

THE ANABAPTISTS

The brethren of Reformation times called "Anabaptists" claimed that their congregations existed from earliest times. They affirmed that the havoc and political unrest of the Reformation created a window of opportunity to these long persecuted brethren. Taking advantage of the social upheaval, the underground church of the Dark Ages went public. Missionaries traversed central Europe, holding meetings among brethren who previously had been secretive. Converted Catholic priests and monks held conferences, and performed public baptisms. Around 1524, in Germany, many gatherings declared their independence from the State Church by receiving believer's baptism. It was then that the name "Second Baptizers" or "Anabaptists" was born. Hitherto, almost everyone within a region, whether Catholic or Protestant, had been baptized as an infant. In those days to have an infant baptized was comparable to parents applying for a social security number for a newborn.

The state viewed your baptism papers as they would citizenship papers. To be baptized a second time was to renounce your first baptism, and in their case to appear to renounce your citizenship. This may explain why the Anabaptists were besieged and harried. They had committed treason. With few places to hide, they lived without government protection during the times of the Reformation in northern Europe. But being neither Lutheran nor Catholic, they were unrecognized and unin-

It is often thought that when the Reformation was established, Europe was divided into Protestants (whether Lutheran or Swiss) on the one hand, and Roman Catholics on the other. The large numbers of Christians are overlooked who did not belong to either party, but who, most of them, met as independent churches, not relying, as the others did, on the support of the civil power, but endeavoring to carry out the principles of Scripture as in New Testament times. They were so numerous that both the State Church parties feared they might come to threaten their own power and even existence. The reason that so important a movement occupies so small a place in the history of those times is, that by the relentless use of the power of the State, the great Churches, Catholic and Protestant, were able almost to destroy it, the few adherents who were left being driven abroad or remaining only as weakened and comparatively unimportant companies. The victorious party was also able to destroy much of the literature of the brethren, and, writing their history, to represent them as holding doctrines which they repudiated, and to give them names to which an odious significance was attached.

— E. H. Broadbent
The Pilgrim Church

corporated under the laws of the land. Illegal preachers who raised illegal lights into that inky night soon met the executioner. One edict said, “Out of the ashes of Waldo many new shoots arise and it is necessary to impose a severe and heavy punishment as an example.”

Conrad Grebel was imprisoned for three months in the tower at Zurich. He escaped in 1526, but he did not live out the year. A fugitive, he narrowly missed martyrdom by dying of the plague. Felix Manz was repeatedly arrested and finally drowned in the Limmat River by order of the Zurich Council in 1527. His execution was the first of a long line of Anabaptist martyrs. Michael Sattler was burned at the stake in Rottenburg in 1527. His faithful wife followed him, being drowned in the Neckar River eight days later. In that same year, a conference of Anabaptists was held in Augsburg which became known as “The Martyrs’ Synod” because so many of those in attendance lost their lives for the name of Christ. Hans Denck took a leading part in that conference. Before the year was out, the weary fugitive would die of the plague. George Blurock was captured at Tyrol and burned at Innsbruck in 1529. All of these gifted ser-

vants of Christ were in their mid-thirties, except Balthaser Hubmaier, who endured a lengthy interrogation before he was burned in Vienna in 1528; he was about 48 years old. Three days after his martyrdom, his wife was drowned in the Danube River.

Exiled, tortured, drowned and burnt, the death toll mounted to the thousands in Austria, Germany, and Holland. Followers of this fledgling movement had barely poked their heads out of the caves and dens in which they were hiding when they were stripped of their most promising Bible teachers and evangelists. And these tremors reached across Europe.

Martin Luther collided with the Anabaptists over the purity of the Church. The Anabaptists strove for a believing church, comprised only of true Christians, while Luther could not bring himself to renounce the State Church idea (necessarily a mixed multitude of saved and lost). It would mean sacrificing the political support of the princes. At this Luther drew back, defending an inclusive church where sinners belonged.

Luther felt that the Anabaptists did not understand “the pure doctrine nor did they seek it.” “The pure doctrine” was Luther’s formula of *sola fide* (“by faith alone”). He meant that man cannot earn his salvation, neither in whole nor in part. As such it is quite biblical. But Luther’s view of salvation had a lopsided emphasis on salvation as a judicial clearing of guilt—“justification” at the expense of a practical life change—“regeneration.” This worried the underground Church. They read Luther to mean *sola fide* as “faith standing alone” or “faith unaccompanied” which they could not accept. They had paid too dearly to recover the lifestyle of authentic Christianity to accept a theology which undermined a distinctive way of life. They appreciated the book of James, and it shocked them to hear Luther call it a “right strawy epistle.” Lucas of Prague chided Luther for neglecting “fruits worthy of repentance.”

Our hearts rejoice to know that there have always been, since the days of the apostles, believers who have gone “forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach” (Heb. 13:13).

FOR FURTHER READING:

Wycliffe the Morning Star, by George S. Innis

The Lollards, the Witnesses for the Truth in Great Britain,

published by the Religious Tract Society

Medieval Heresy, Malcolm Lambert, Blackwell

Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont and of the Albigenses, Peter Allix

Anatomy of a Hybrid, Leonard Verduin, Eerdmans

Martyrs’ Mirror, Herald Press

The Vaudois, J. N. Darby, Collected Writings, Vol. 20



The end of the world?

Terror strikes and tragedy stalks the nations as the end of the millennium approaches

ANDREW MILLER

No period in Church history...presents a darker picture than Christian Europe at the close of the tenth century. The degradation of the Papacy, the corrupt state of the Church within, and the number and power of her enemies without, threatened her complete overthrow. Besides the Muslims in the East, and the pagan Northmen, a new enemy—the Hungarians—burst unexpectedly upon Christendom. In the strong language of history, they seemed as hordes of savages, or wild beasts, let loose on mankind. Their source was unknown, but their numbers appeared inexhaustible. Indiscriminate massacre seemed their only war law: civilization and Christianity withered before their desolating march; mankind were panic-stricken.

In addition to these appalling calamities, famines prevailed and brought plague and pestilence in their train...The prediction of our Lord seemed to be accomplished: *“And there shall be...upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”*

But, though these words describe the state of things then, the prophecy was far from being fulfilled; as our Lord immediately adds, *“And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great*

glory” (Lk. 21:25-27).

But if ever man might be forgiven the dream of believing that the end of the world was come, it was then. The clergy preached it, the people believed it, and it rapidly spread over all Europe. It was boldly promulgated that the world would come to an end when a thousand years from the Saviour’s birth were expired. From about the year 960 the panic increased, but the year 999 was looked upon as the last which anyone would ever see. This general delusion, through the power of Satan, was founded on a total misunderstanding...of the prophecy concerning the Millennial reign of the saints with



Christ for a thousand years. *“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years”* (Rev. 20:6-7).

999—THE YEAR OF TERROR

The ordinary cares and employments of this life were given up. The land was left untilled; for why plow, why sow, when no one would be left

to reap? Houses were allowed to fall into decay; for why build, why repair, why trouble about property, when a few months will put an end to all terrestrial things?...


The rich, the noble, the princes, and bishops, abandoned their friends and families, and hastened to the shores of Palestine in the persuasion that Mount Zion would be the throne of Christ when He descended to judge the world.

Large sums of money were given to churches, as if to secure a more favorable sentence from the supreme Judge. Kings and emperors begged at monastery doors, to be admitted as brethren of the holy order; crowds of the common people slept in the porches of the holy buildings, or at least under their shadow.

But in the meantime the multitudes must be fed. The last day of the thousand years had not yet arrived. But food there was none; corn and cattle were exhausted, and no provision had been made for the future. The most frightful extremities were endured, far too revolting to be repeated here. But the day of doom drew nearer and nearer.

The last evening of the thousand years arrived: a sleepless night for all Europe! Imagination must fill up the doleful picture. But in place of some extraordinary convulsion, which all were tremblingly waiting for, the night passed away as other nights had done, and in the morning the sun shed forth his beams as peacefully as ever. The amazed but now relieved multitudes began to return to their homes, repair their buildings, plow, sow, and resume their former occupations.

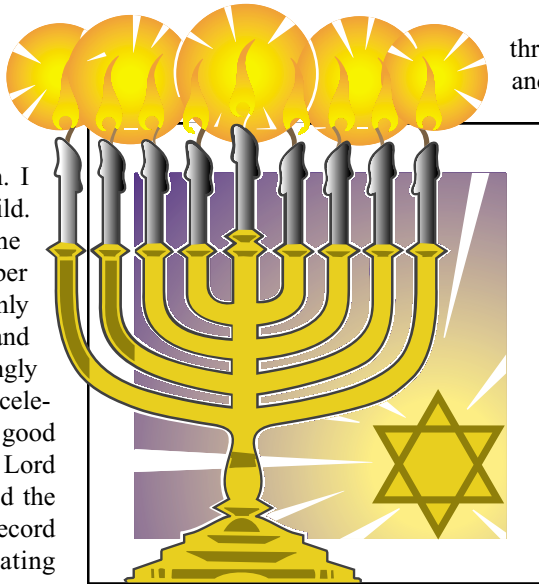
Thus closed the first thousand years of the Church’s history; the darkest day in the reign of Jezebel, and in the annals of Christendom.

Miller’s Church History, pp. 323-325 

JESUS CELEBRATED HANUKKAH

Here is one non-biblical tradition Jesus used for God's glory.

Two friends of mine, Gentile believers in the Lord Jesus living in Israel, shared the excitement of the impending birth of their firstborn. I inquired as to the due date of the child. The proud father-to-be replied, "The doctor said the child is due December 25." I lamented, "The poor child will only receive one set of gifts for Christmas and his or her birthday." Yisrael, half-jokingly responded, "That's no problem; we'll celebrate Hanukkah instead!" We had a good laugh, but I thought to myself, "The Lord Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, celebrated the festival of Hanukkah, yet there is no record in the Gospels of Him celebrating Christmas!"



thrust him through with a spear and also killed one of the Seleucid soldiers. Thus began the Maccabean revolt. Mattathias, his five sons and others fled into the Gophna Hills and conducted a guerrilla war against the Seleucids for three years. Eventually Jerusalem was liberated, yet the Temple was defiled. The history of this revolt is found in First Maccabees 1 and 4 and Second Maccabees 6 and 10. While these books are not inspired, they record important historical information.

THE ORIGIN OF HANUKKAH

Hanukkah is a festival which commemorates the purification and rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus on Kislev 25, 165 BC (usually in December). Three years prior, Antiochus IV, the Seleucid (Syrian) king, defiled the Temple by erecting an idol to Baal Shamen (Zeus), sacrificing a pig on the altar, and proclaiming himself to be a god. Some of the coins he minted had his features on the face of Zeus along with the words "Epiphanes" meaning "the god manifest." He also decreed that Torah (the Law of God) could not be studied under penalty of death, circumcision was forbidden, and the Sabbath was not to be kept. This brought an internal struggle within Judaism out in the open. On the one hand there were the observant Jews who wanted to keep Torah, and on the other, the Hellenized Jews who wanted to assimilate into the Greek culture around them and become "born again" Greeks.

Antiochus sent troops from village to village with a statue of himself, ordering people to bow down to it. One day they arrived in the village of Modi'im. An elderly man stepped forward to comply with the order, but an observant priest, Mattathias of the Hasmonean family,

The Rabbis recount the miracle of Hanukkah in these terms, "On Kislev 25 begin the Hanukkah days, eight of them...When the Greeks entered the Temple Sanctuary, they contaminated all the oil. When the Hasmoneans defeated them, they searched and found only one cruse of oil bearing the High Priest's seal. The cruse had enough oil for only one day's burning, but a miracle came to pass and it lasted eight days. The following year, these days were declared a holiday to be celebrated with the saying of Hallel and thanksgiving prayers" (Megillat Taanit).

The centerpiece of the celebration is a nine-branch candelabrum. The first candle is called the "servant" candle and is used to light one additional candle each night to commemorate the eight days of the miracle.

JESUS CELEBRATES HANUKKAH

The Lord Jesus observed the celebration of Hanukkah in the Temple during the winter of AD 29 (Jn. 10:22-39). Just prior to this account, two "illustrations" (10:6) of Jesus as the Good Shepherd (10:1-5 and 10:7-10) were given, and then Jesus' interpretation of these parables (10:11-18). The Jewish reader would immediately pick up the messianic connotation of this discourse. The Davidic Messiah would be a Shepherd (Ezek. 34).

by GORDON FRANZ

As He walked through Solomon's porch on the east side of the Temple enclosure, some Jews approached Him and asked Him point blank, "Are you the Messiah?" (10:24). Jesus had to be careful how He answered that question. During the festival, throngs of Jews caught up in the nationalistic fever, were visiting Jerusalem. The word "Messiah" might spark off riots because of its heavy nationalistic and political overtones.


Roman intelligence, headquartered in the Antonia's Fortress to the northwest of the Temple, was aware of a popular song entitled "A Psalm of Solomon, with Song, to the King." In this song, composed during the mid-first century BC by a Pharisee, the Lord was acknowledged as King and a Davidic ruler would reign forever. He describes how the latter Hasmonean rulers led the people away from Torah and the Romans under the leadership of Pompey punished the people. The Pharisee prays that the Lord will raise up a king, the Son of David, to rule over Israel. In so doing, this king would "destroy the unrighteous rulers," "purge Jerusalem from Gentiles," "drive out the sinners," "smash the arrogance of sinners," and "destroy the unlawful nations!" Their king, the Lord Messiah, would do all this! (Psalm of Solomon 17). If Jesus answered the question "yes," the Roman authorities could have arrested Him on the spot for insurrection.

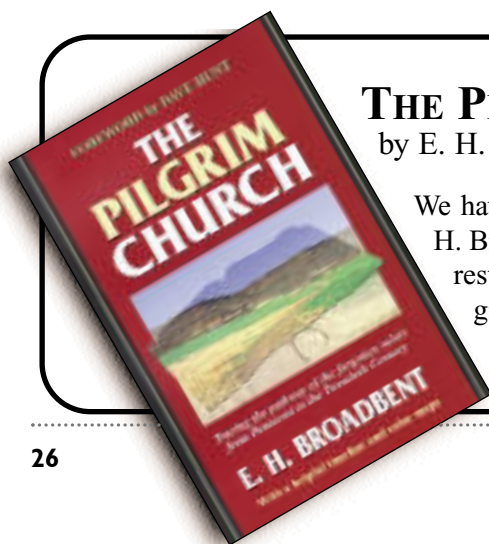
Jesus does, however, answer the question in the affirmative, but not directly. When He answers, He is careful not to use the contemporary term and understanding. After pointing out the security which a believer in the Lord Jesus has because of faith in Him, He says, "I and My Father are one!" (10:30). That statement had heavy religious overtones for the festival which they were presently celebrating. Those gathered on the Temple Mount recalled the events nearly 200 years before on the very mount where, Antiochus IV, a mere man, proclaimed himself to be god. Jesus, God manifest in human flesh, made the same claim but His claim was true. The Jews picked up stones to stone Him for blasphemy because, in their thinking, He was a man who made

Himself God (10:31-33). Jesus declared that He was the fulfillment of Hanukkah by saying the Father "sanctified" the Son of God and sent Him into the world (10:34-36). The Father was in Him and He in the Father (10:38). If the Greek word "sanctified" were translated into Hebrew, it would be "dedication" or Hanukkah!

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

John writes his Gospel primarily to a Jewish and Samaritan audience. One of the unique things about John's Gospel is his emphasis on the Jewish and Samaritan festivals and his indication that Jesus was the fulfillment of these holidays. Hanukkah was the rededication of a defiled Temple. At the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then the Jews said, It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days? But He was speaking of the temple of His body" (2:19-21). A wicked and corrupt priesthood had defiled Herod's Temple. The sinless Lord Jesus was "sanctified" by His death, burial, and resurrection. He is the New Temple.

The Apostle John selected "signs" (miracles) and events, when he penned his Gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to convey two purposes (20:30-31). The first was to present the deity of the Lord Jesus. John skillfully selects the Hanukkah event because of the festival impact on the crowd. In contrast to the arrogant and blasphemous statement by Antiochus IV, Jesus truly is God manifest in human flesh. The second purpose was to challenge people to put their trust (believe) in the Lord Jesus Christ as the One who died for their sins and rose again from the dead. When they trust Him, God gives them the gift of eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and a home in Heaven. There seems to be a marked contrast between the response of the Jews on the Temple Mount (10:37-39) and those "beyond the Jordan" who believed on Him (10:40-42). What is your response? Have you trusted the One who is the fulfillment of Hanukkah? 

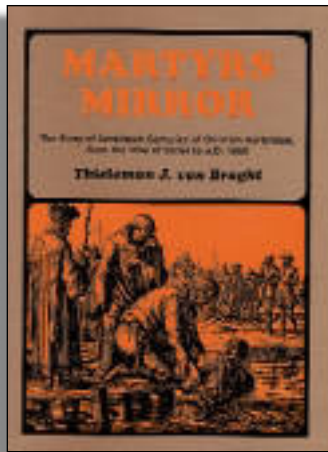


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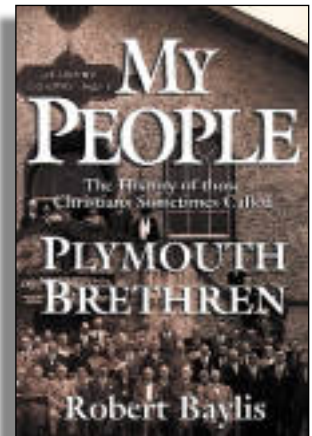
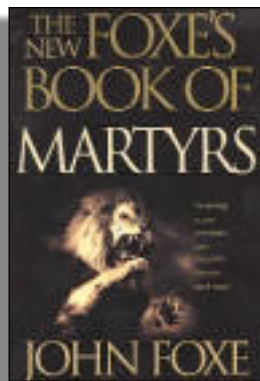
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Giving Away the Bride

**Who gives this woman
to be married to this man?**

I do.

Two monosyllables. Three letters in total. Why were they so difficult to say? I was “giving away the bride” and it was one of the hardest things I’ve ever had to do. Don’t misunderstand.

I was very happy with Beth’s choice of a husband. It was a delight to be involved in such a marriage: two devoted souls united in the desire to be living sacrifices for the Lord. What was my problem? I hadn’t faced the same feeling when my son was married a few years ago.

My mind went back to the dawn of human history. The story really begins with a wedding in a garden, and ends with one, too—in a palace in a land called heaven. On both occasions, the Father is the One who gives away the bride. As I read these two accounts in the first and last books of my Bible, I began to understand how momentous it was for Crawford and Beth to say, “I do” to each other. But I also understood why it was so hard for me to say it first.

When our son, John, was married, he became the head of a new home. I didn’t “give him away.” But standing there with my firstborn daughter all in white, radiant in love, I was removing her from the place God had put her, under my headship. I was being asked to give her over to a new head, and I felt my side wounded as surely as Adam’s was.

Beth took a new name on August 22. She is now Mrs. Elisabeth Paul. Eve did the same thing when God called *their* name “Adam.” The Bride also bears Christ’s name and we remind ourselves of it every time we pray. We are Christ’s ones—Christians—because we belong to Christ.

It wasn’t easy to give my daughter away, but I better learn to deal with it. I have four more daughters to go. Unless the other Wedding Day comes first.

—J. B. N., Jr.

