

JUNE 1999

UPLOOK



**WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH THIS
PICTURE?**

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

Like the German painter, have we left out the most important part?

The Palestinian Authority issued a commemorative stamp in May featuring the Wye River Accords with a picture of Yasser Arafat and President Clinton signing the document. The scene is from a photograph taken at the event, held at the White House last October. But Benjamin Netanyahu, recently defeated Prime Minister of Israel, who was in the photo, has been removed from the picture on the stamp. It almost seems prophetic.

This reminds me of an article I wrote for a Sunday school paper twenty years ago:

Adolph Friedrich Erdmann von Menzel was born in Breslau, Germany, in 1815 and died in Berlin in 1905. In between those dates, he became renowned for his fine paintings. He studied a little in the academy and more often by himself. At eighteen, he published his first work, a group of lithographs called *An Artist's Wanderings*. It immediately attracted attention and Menzel was quickly catapulted to fame.

Around 1836, his work as an illustrator opened with four hundred pictures for a book on Frederick the Great. In these paintings, Menzel showed himself to be both original and historically accurate. In later years, he painted a staggering eight hundred more for other works on Frederick.

Definitely one of the outstanding German artists of his day, Menzel received the Order of the Black Eagle in 1899. But obviously I'm not telling you this because you have a consuming interest in German painters of the last century.

In the Berlin art gallery hangs a painting by Menzel of Frederick the Great talking to his generals. But in the center of the picture, there is a small, bare patch. The work is obviously unfinished. A faint charcoal outline indicates the artist's intentions. He had skillfully and tediously painted in each general in his uniform, but had left the king till the last. Perhaps he thought he wasn't ready to portray the king in this crowning work of his life. He wanted it to be just perfect. But Menzel died before he was able to finish.

Isn't that like so many people today? They put in all the generals and leave the King to the last, with good intentions

that grow more faint every day. They mean to put the King in the center. Someday. But somehow they never get around to it and eternity looms ahead with their hopes as faded as the charcoal sketch on Menzel's canvas.

The search is going on today — a search for Christians willing to put the King first. The King Himself said, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*" (Mt. 6:33).


Is the King in your life just a faint outline, shrouded in good intentions? Or is He evident in all His vibrant glory, a living reality—the King in the center of your canvas?

This issue of *Uplook* features articles about biblical portraits of the Church. The illustrations are varied—a pastoral scene with sheep on the hillside; a domestic view with a bride getting ready for her wedding day; a construction site with a building rising to completion, to name a few. But what links these diverse word pictures is the central Figure in each one.

What is a bride without a bridegroom? A flock without a shepherd? A building without a foundation? A body without a head?

Yes, what indeed! Tragedies every one.

Am I overstating the case by saying that the Church in the West, Laodicea-like, has every imaginable accoutrement (and some unimaginable, like teeth fillings reputedly turning to gold at the Toronto Airport Church!). Drama, praise bands, mass rallies, mega-buildings—rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing. Except the Man standing outside the door.

Acts 2:42 is a great place to start in defining local church life, but it should not be the end of it. The *mechanics* of the assembly are important—how, where, when, how often we do things. But the *dynamic* is essential. You cannot have a New Testament assembly without New Testament life. And "*this life is in His Son.*" Our motive, our focus, our resources, our objectives, are all to be found in the One who knocks at the door. He's asking to come in. Does anyone hear His voice? 



Alex Nationalgalerie, Berlin

by J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

UPLOOK

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FEATURES

<p> PORTRAITS OF THE CHURCH <i>Peter Fleming</i> 4 AT HELL'S GATE <i>Staff Report</i> 9 BONE OF HIS BONE 11 FEAR NOT, LITTLE Flock <i>W. Ross Rainey</i> 13 TEN TEST QUESTIONS TO DISCERN ORTHODOXY <i>Chart</i> 14 CORPUS CHRISTI 16 THE HOUSE OF GOD: A METAPHOR <i>William Gustafson</i> 17 THE HOUSE OF GOD: IN REALITY <i>Larry Price</i> 19 ILLUMINATING LIVING 21 PILLAR POWER 23 MORE THAN A PROPHET <i>Jammy Shoyombo</i> 24 </p>

DEPARTMENTS

<p> EDITORIAL 2 FRONT LINES 7 WHAT'S GOING ON? 10 LIVING ASSEMBLIES <i>Brian Gunning</i> 22 BOUQUET OF BLESSING 25 LOOK AT BOOKS <i>Kevin Shantz</i> 26 </p>

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Fax: (616) 456-5522

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Portraits of the church

The author, who gave his life for the Saviour in Ecuador, writes passionately about the Church and the pen portraits given of her in the Scriptures.

PETER FLEMING

The Lord Jesus Christ's opening statement concerning the Church immediately arrests our attention. It is striking: "I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). The statement clarifies at once any question as to whose Church it is, who is responsible for its growth, and the measure of its triumph. "It is My Church," our Lord declares, identifying Himself with its construction and growth.

We may rightly expect, then, to discover, as Christ unfolds to us the glorious nature of His Church, that the character of Christ will inevitably be reflected in His Church. The daring plan of its construction and the startling perfection of its development demonstrate how completely the Architect gave Himself to His work.

The statement further suggests how complete is the triumph that the Church of Christ enjoys. The ancient eastern city forms the background for this figure, "the gates of hell," and especially the council of the city fathers who always met in the gates of such cities to decide all matters relating to the welfare of the citizens. All the intelligence, leadership, and planning of and for the city were represented in its gates. So the phrase, "the gates of hell," graphically pictures all the schemings of the potentates of hell who are pitted against the Church.

Yet the Church will not be over-



A relief from the central palace at Nimrod showing Tiglath-pileser and his troops storming the gates of his foe.

It isn't hell chasing the Church with its gates; it's the Church storming the ramparts of the enemy!

thrown! It not only will withstand, it will conquer and prevail!

At the outset, then, we are given by Christ Himself some measure by which we can form judgment as to the extraordinary character and prowess of this Church. So let everyone of us understand clearly just what we are dealing with; it is with nothing less than with the glorious, triumphant Church of Jesus Christ, against whom not even hell itself can ultimately prevail. No matter how fragmentary and schismatic the Church may appear to our limited view on earth, yet Christ leads it in triumph over all the Satanic hosts, foiling their thrusts, conquering evil by good, and error by truth.

Such a glorious introduction to the Church keynotes the whole presentation of it in the New Testament, and it is to the later presentations of the Church in the Acts and in the Epistles that we now turn.

THE RECOGNIZED AUTHORITY

In beginning, we must state that the New Testament alone will be our sole authority in determining the true character of the Church, and obedi-

ence to these Scriptures will be our sole aim. We are aware that in this we run contrary to many esteemed divines who profess to believe that while instructions for the maintenance of godly life in the individual are fully given in the New Testament, yet the instructions for the Church are inadequate.

Further, they believe that the New Testament picture of the early church is partial and limited, and that God intended to bring into existence, as the Church grew, certain forms, practices, and ordinances admittedly not contemplated in the New Testament.

To this is coupled the insistence that modern life and civilization have made necessary many things that the simple life and early beginnings of the Church did not. In this manner, many practices not ordained or contemplated in Scripture are justified.

This principle, however, is dangerous and unwarranted. It is dangerous in that anything could be justified just because someone thinks that it is necessitated by modern life. The same principle could be used to justify opposite and contradictory

things. It is unwarranted. The Scriptures give no indication that we are to expect any further revelation as to the Church's nature and function. We freely admit that God works in history, but we insist that it is only inside the pattern delineated by Holy Writ.

Further, we do not agree that the New Testament picture of the Church is fragmentary. While it is true that the events related cover only about fifty years' time, they actually encompass an amazing period of expansion of the Church's early history. Referring to literally dozens of churches, it was comprised of members of many different cultures, conducted in different languages, and extending over areas some of which are separated from each other by over a thousand miles. Basic problems in the expansion of the Church are fully contemplated.

Finally, we find it inconceivable that God should leave incomplete His instructions for the Church while the instructions for the individual are perfect and complete. In our study of the New Testament, we cannot but conclude that every important element necessary for the maintenance of spiritual life and order in local churches is touched upon, either by direct instruction, principle, event or illustration. Our confidence in its adequacy is repeatedly confirmed.

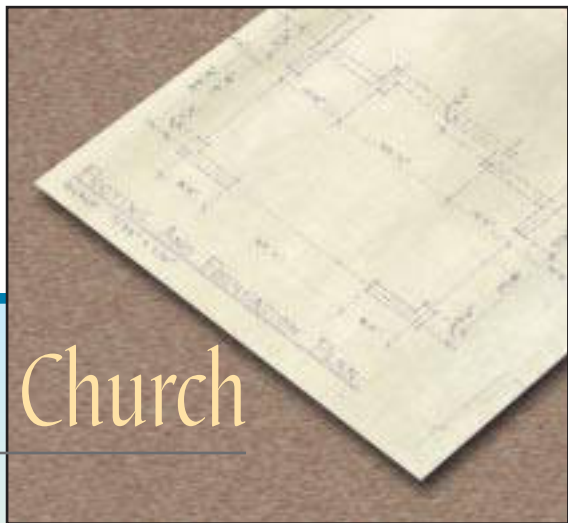
WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

What is the true Church? Any inquiry of this sort is aided by deciding on the basis of the Scriptures what the true Church is not. It is not a building, however auspicious and awe-inspiring. It is not a club of like-minded people, however altruistic and civic-minded. It is not a pressure group, lobbying for moral reform, however necessary and utilitarian. It is not an institution for the preservation of holy tradition, however revered and

respected. It is not a federation of local congregations, however imposing and spiritually-minded. Nor is it any particular denomination, however powerful and numerous. The true Church of God universal and spiritual, cannot be identified or coextensive with any of these groups, though in some particular or other it may be closely related. The true Church is larger and greater than any earthly institution, culture, religion, creed, tradition, or any other restrictions.

The true Church is spiritual and heavenly, though both individual and corporate representations of it may be seen on earth. It is composed of those who have truly believed in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (Acts 2:47), who have been formed into one body by the special action of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), maintained by the Spirit of God who indwells each individual member, led by Jesus Christ who is its "Head" (Col. 1:18), and to be completed finally by the second coming of Christ when it will be presented in perfect form to the Lord of the churches Himself (Eph. 5:27).

The unity of the Church is also spiritual in that all members are responsive to the same "Head," all are baptized into one body, and all are sons of the same Father. Since true unity is based on these unchanging universals, no failure of any members on earth destroys this unity,



More Details of the Church

In his list of descriptive titles given to the Church in the New Testament, William MacDonald in his book *Christ Loved the Church* has these two in addition:

1. A new man (Eph. 2:15). Here the idea of a new creation is prominent. The greatest of all differences among men—that of Jew and Gentile—has been abolished in the Church,

and God makes of these two peoples one new man.

2. An habitation of God (Eph. 2:22). This expression conveys the truth that God now dwells in the Church, rather than in a material tabernacle or temple, as in the Old Testament.

PORTRAITS OF THE CHURCH

though it may mar the practical expression of it in the experience of men.

Similarly, while any inconsistency or imperfection viewed in a member of its universal Church is reprehensible, it does not alter the perfect nature and inheritance of the Church, nor the eternal standing of its members. Disobedience in a son does not destroy the existence and nature of the family relationships, though it will certainly mar the enjoyment of them. So God's Church exists in perfect unity, a spiritual assembly of the regenerate, seen in God's view as indivisible and inviolate.

Therefore the Church is not of this world, though some members are still in it; it is not yet complete in heaven, though many members have preceded it there. Because it is spiritual in character, it cuts across every man-made boundary and division—whether national, cultural, ecclesiastical or denominational—and though hidden from the view of most, the formation of it constitutes the most glorious task with which God is occupied in our day. For the individual, nothing is more urgent than entering it by faith, and nothing more rewarding than enjoying its fellowship.

PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

A natural question may arise in the minds of many, "If the true Church is spiritual, of what importance are local churches? Are they superfluous and unnecessary.

Clearly the answer is "No," for the New Testament plainly shows that local churches were established throughout the Roman Empire by God's order to unite all believers in Christ in any convenient geographical area into autonomous, Spirit-directed congregations. These local congregations were expressions in this world of the true Church, microcosms which bore the same relation to the "Head" as the universal Church itself did.

In order to express adequately the many relationships which the Church holds to Christ, the New Testament uses a number of strikingly apt metaphors. Each is beautifully illustrative of some aspect of the Church, whether in its local or universal form. The Church is portrayed as:

1. *A body*, to stress its harmony and dependence. Christ is the Head, making Himself responsible for the direction and guidance of the rest of the body. The Church is the body with its various members fulfilling their various functions harmoniously and interdependently for the growth of the whole (Col. 1:18-24).

2. *A building*, to stress its planned architecture and construction (1 Cor. 3:9).

3. *A cultivated field*, to stress its growth and fruitfulness (1 Cor. 3:9b).

4. *A temple*, to stress its holiness and dedication (1 Cor. 3:16).

5. *A chaste virgin*, to stress its devotion and expectation (2 Cor. 11:2).

6. *A flock*, to stress its unity and loyalty (Acts 20:28).

7. *A house*, to stress its completeness and order (1 Tim. 3:15).

8. *A lampstand*, to stress its testimony and witness (Rev. 1:20).


9. *A pillar and bulwark of the truth*, to stress its strength and service (1 Tim. 3:15).

10. *A family*, to stress its closeness and intimacy (1 Tim. 5:1-2).

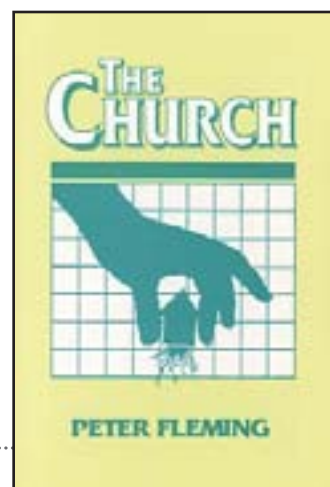
Of these lovely metaphors, at least four are used on different occasions to describe both the Church universal and the local church, *i.e.*, the temple, body, bride, and flock.

On the basis of this, a very important principle may be seen: the local church in its function and character stands in the same relation to Christ as the universal Church. It is the Church in miniature, a replica of the whole, giving visible and temporal expression to the invisible and eternal Church.

THE LOGICAL CONCLUSION

Since it is clearly evidenced in the Scriptures that Christ is the Head of the Church, our responsibility in establishing a local congregation will be to see to it that it corresponds to, and is patterned after, the nature of the true Church for which Christ died. 

This article is excerpted from a booklet entitled The Church, originally given in a series of messages at Northgate Chapel, Seattle, Washington, 16 months before the author's death in Ecuador.



PAN AMERICAN OUTREACH

This summer, Winnipeg, MB will host the largest multi-sport event ever held in Canada, larger than the 1988 (Calgary) and 1976 (Montreal) Olympics. In fact, outside of the '84 Los Angeles and the '92 Atlanta Olympics, the XIII Pan Am Games will be the largest games ever held in North America.

From July 23 to August 8, 5000 athletes along with over 3500 coaches, trainers, and officials accompanied by families and fans will come

to Winnipeg from 42 nations throughout the Western Hemisphere. Half of the visitors coming to Winnipeg will have either Spanish or Portuguese as their first language.

Plans are currently being made by Winnipeg-area assemblies and believers to conduct a daily program of evangelism involving literature distribution, personal witnessing and open-air work for the last week of the games (Aug. 1-7).

If you are interested in receiving further information, contact:

Ron Hampton
Phone: (204) 669-6026
Fax: (204) 669-1694
rhampton@mb.sympatico.ca

NORTHFIELD MEETINGS

The saints from several assemblies in County Down, Northern Ireland, will be hosting the Northfield Bible Weeks July 11-25 with John Speirs (Scotland) and J. B. Nicholson (MI) as the expected speakers. Ministry meetings will be held the first week each day at 11:00



December 27-30, 1999
Cincinnati, Ohio

The theme for Rise & Shine '99 is *Heaven's Light for Earth's Night*. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can bring light to the darkness of the post-Christian West, or the Islamic Middle East or the Buddhist Far East. A significant number of missionaries are at or beyond retirement age. Who will rise up to take their place? Who will stand in the gap? We pray that this conference will be used of God as a means to raise up men and women to this great calling and to encourage all of us to shine the light wherever God has placed us.

We are thrilled to have Christian Missions in Many Lands taking responsibility for a *Missions Emphasis Day* as part of Rise & Shine '99. Many missionaries from around the world will be there to share their experiences in the service of God and to provide one-on-one interaction.

CORRECTIONS and CLARIFICATIONS to the conference registration form printed in the May Uplook

- 1) On the registration form the conference fee for children should read \$15, not \$20; and the meal ticket price for children should read \$45 and \$30 for full and partial respectively.
- 2) The late registration surcharge applicable to registrations sent after Sept. 30 is \$30 per person.
- 3) People are not to register with the Hyatt directly. All registrations are to come through us.
- 4) Accommodation is available at the Hyatt before and after the conference at a discounted conference rate. Contact Uplook for details.

An International Conference convened by



UPLOOK MINISTRIES

Conference Hot Line	(616) 456-5123
Conference Fax Line	(616) 456-5522
E-mail	riseup@uplook.org
P.O. Box 3640, Grand Rapids, MI	49501-3640

Featuring a special Missions Emphasis Day
hosted by



AM and gospel meetings each evening at 8:00 PM for both weeks. Open air meetings in the Newcastle town center will be held weather permitting.

YOUNG ADULT CONFERENCE

A conference for young adults is being planned by the saints that meet at Westside Chapel (Wichita, KS) Aug. 20-22. Anyone high school age or older is welcome to attend. The invited speakers are Jamie Hull (CO) and Phil Miekley (OH). Accommodations and meals will be provided. For more information, contact:

Darold Peters
4420 W. 11th
Wichita, KS 67212
(316) 943-3334
darold.peters@juno.com

WOULD YOU GO?

The small group of believers that meet in Powell, WY, would like to host a conference during the summer of 2000. Since they are quite a distance from other assemblies that they know of, it would be helpful for their planning to know who would be interested in travelling to that area to take part in the conference. It would be an ideal opportunity to take a family vacation to Yellowstone Park, enjoy happy Christian fellowship and meet new friends. Contact:

John Tillotson
255 S. Division St.
Powell, WY 82435
(307) 754-5485

FRIENDS IN CEDARVILLE

A student attending Cedarville College in Ohio would like to meet with other Christians in the area who desire to follow the New Testament pattern for a local assembly.

Tom Freeman
(609) 585-1835
tfreeman3@juno.com

MEETING IN SIOUX FALLS

The believers in Sioux Falls, SD,

would appreciate our prayers that the Lord will enable them to see an assembly planted in that city. They have been meeting for Bible studies for several months, and look forward to breaking bread together. If you know of interested believers in the area or unsaved people who need to hear the gospel, contact Robert Swift at (605) 338-8959.

COMMENDATIONS

Charles and Bonney Nunley

The assembly of believers at Hiawassa Chapel, Orlando, FL, commend Charles and Bonney Nunley to full-time personal, house to house, and open-air evangelism in the Orlando/Central Florida area. They have been involved in this ministry since being in fellowship with the saints there and elsewhere before that. The brethren have found that they are well suited to this work by knowledge of the Word, temperament, experience, and desire.

Ken and Joyce Hardisy

The saints at Hiawassa Bible Chapel (Orlando, FL) commend Ken and Joyce Hardisy to full time missionary work in the Philippine Islands. After being commended to work with the assembly at Branford Bible Chapel for the past four years, they feel the Lord is definitely calling them back to the Philippines to the work they were first commended to in January, 1987.

Keith Keyser

The Christians that meet at Grace Chapel (Gilbertsville, PA) are pleased to commend our brother in Christ, Keith Keyser, as a full-time worker in the service of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As Keith responds to this calling, the believers there mention that Keith has grown up in their midst, accepted Christ as his personal Saviour there, and has demonstrated a life of devo-

tion to Christ, and a testimony consistent with biblical principles.

He has been exemplary in the ministry there at Gilbertsville, having had advanced schooling in the Scriptures, and has followed the Lord's leading previously while assisting in a church planting ministry in Palencia, Spain, and as an itinerant Bible teacher in several states of the US and in Canada.

Ray and Carol Dolinski

The assemblies in Shelbyville, TN and Redondo Beach, CA have withdrawn their commendation of Ray and Carol Dolinski from the work among Turkish people in England. The Dolinskis have taken secular employment and are in fellowship at Carriage Hills Bible Chapel in East Lansing, MI.

PRINCE OF PEACE MINISTRY

John Sebastian, a brother from the Kottayam District, Kerala State, India invites *Uplook* readers to visit the gospel website of Prince of Peace Ministries where he seeks to answer questions regarding Christ and Christianity.

www.peaceministry.org

CORRESPONDENT CHANGE

The saints that meet at Grace Gospel Chapel in Richmond, Virginia have a new correspondent:

Joel P. Wilkerson
6566 Willson Rd.
Richmond, VA 23231

FALL FOLIAGE CONF.

Phil Morgan (NC) will be the speaker at a conference Sep. 20-24, 1999, at Camp-of-the-Woods, Speculator, NY. He will be speaking on "Dare to be a Daniel." The cost (\$265 pp) includes meals & accommodations. Contact

Mark Kolchin
P.O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734



At hell's gates

Before Marilyn Manson got his message to the youth of Grand Rapids, the gospel got there first.



John Bjorlie caught on camera

When two students identified as members of the “Trench Coat Mafia” in Littleton, Colorado, went on a rampage in their high school on Tuesday, April 20, the question rang out through the nation, “Why?”

The experts pointed to three areas of entertainment which they believe breed violence and hate in young people: certain movies, video games and music.

One musician who came under attack was “Marilyn Manson,” the stage name for Brian Warner. Fans of music like his, called “Goths,” are fascinated with the morbid, wearing black and painting their faces white. He calls himself the “Antichrist Superstar” and the lyrics of his songs drip with references to violence, sex, death, suicide, and believing in no one but yourself.

It was early in March that Christians in Grand Rapids, MI, first heard that a Manson concert was scheduled for their city on April 21. Small groups from a few of the area

assemblies began to pray—that the concert would be cancelled. If not, they planned to go downtown before the concert to be a witness for the Lord Jesus.

Almost immediately, newspapers reported that Manson had broken his ankle and would be cancelling several concerts. It was announced that all appearances were called off...until the Grand Rapids date.

On the evening of the concert, it was with apprehension and excitement that the little troop headed to the “lion’s den,” while those at the regular mid-week prayer meetings interceded.

In response to the shootings in Colorado the previous day and the associations that had been made, national and local media were out in full force. When one newsman asked one of the young Christians why they

were protesting, why they didn’t go somewhere else and leave the Manson fans alone, the believer responded, “Are you with the media? You’re not listening. We’re not protesting anything. We’re proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ! These young people are looking for a radical message, and we have something more radical than Marilyn Manson.”

John Bjorlie and Scott Domont began to preach the gospel to the line of people that stretched down the block. Television crews (finding the perfect counterpoint for their stories) rolled their cameras and Manson fans tried to outdo the preaching—and one another—by screaming blasphemy and vulgarities.

New people arriving on the scene were passed gospel tracts. Many of these portable evangelists were stuffed into pockets; some were burned in the faces of the givers or stomped on, on the sidewalks.

More and more Christians from various churches throughout the city began arriving. Soon there were hundreds of Christians surrounding the concert arena, praying, passing out literature, having one-on-one conversations, and preaching. One group of men divided into groups of 10 or so and knelt in quiet circles to pray. When the crowds went inside to the concert, they stood on the sidewalk and sang hymns.

God heard the cries of His people. Manson cancelled the five remaining concerts of his tour, out of sympathy

Some concert-goers said: “I believe totally in freedom of speech, but I don’t go into churches pressing our beliefs on them...” “I do not believe in God. If someone is going to believe in something, they might as well believe in themselves. And I think that’s very positive.” Appalled Michigan State Senator Dale Shugars after attending the concert: “If you believe that Frank Sinatra can make you feel romantic and if you believe that John Philip Sousa can make you feel patriotic, then you must believe that Marilyn Manson is going to make you feel violent.”

(or bad publicity) over the incident in Colorado.

And at least one person professed faith in Christ that night. He sent an e-mail to the address on the back of his tract when he got home, telling of his conversion. The Christians followed him up, and he has been showing interest in spiritual things. Pray for Ben to grow strong in the Lord!

UPDATE FROM MYANMAR

In the March issue of *Uplook*, the country of Myanmar was introduced in an article entitled "The Suffering Church Today." Peter Ferry, missionary to Thailand responded:

"Last month I was in Rangoon (capital city of Myanmar) to speak at an Elders' Conference. Brethren from different ethnic groups from many parts of the country were present.

"It was a joy to minister the Word and also to hear reports of the Lord's work. Today there are assemblies all over the country and at least sixty full time workers have been commended. All are supported by believers in the country and the work is quite varied. I introduced Emmaus Courses into Burma more than twenty years ago and this work is going on well.

"Radio work has been part of the assembly work for many years. The programs are prepared in Yangon and sent to Manila where they are broadcast by Far East Broadcasting (FEBC). Brother Tin Maung Tun, director of FEBC Myanmar, has a daily program to which people listen all over the country.

"Through the various ministries, in 1998, 3000 people professed faith in Christ, one thousand were baptized. A Bible School has been started to train local workers and I had the joy of speaking at the graduation. I have also taught during the term.

"It was a joy to gather with the Lord's people in Yangon last month. On Sunday morning the large hall was filled with at least 600 people. At the same time as the adults were meeting, around 300 children were being taught in Sunday School. There is so much going on and it has been a thrill to have been part of this work for twenty-five years."

GETTING NONRELIGION

A US federal court declared that "nonreligion" must be the dominant worldview in public schools. In a 2-1

decision, the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Beaumont (TX) Independent School Districts' "Clergy in the Schools" program is unconstitutional.

Beaumont schools began the program in 1996 in an effort to teach students morality and civic virtues. The district invited religious leaders to counsel elementary and secondary students during school hours. Ministers could not pray with the students or discuss religion, sex, or abortion. But even this wasn't watered down enough for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the Anti-Defamation League, and several parents. The parents sued the district and the groups submitted briefs against the program.

The appeals court, in overturning a lower federal court's ruling in support of the program, said the school district's "creation of a special program that recruits only clergymen to render volunteer counseling makes a clear statement that it favors religion over nonreligion."

The judges also objected because the school district disproportionately selected Protestant ministers. Parents were not notified or asked to give consent, though students could decline to participate. —*World*

IN THE WAKE OF MITCH

Central America is experiencing an explosion of street children from Honduras. They have been forced to look for work and shelter after the devastation of their homeland by Hurricane Mitch. One shelter on the Guatemala-Mexico border reports that more than a thousand migrants visited during three weeks in January, compared to 160 for the whole month in 1998. Many boys and girls on the move attempt to get into Mexico or the United States but end up being deported. Others wind up victims of thieves, sexual predators, and others. The storm killed at least 9,000 peo-

ple, with another 9,000 still missing. Hundreds of thousands more are out of work, and there was \$8.5 billion in damage to the infrastructure.

—*Pulse*

BIBLE EXHIBITION

The Ayrshire Bible Exhibition has been in England before, but reports from Bury, in Lancashire, and Spencer Bridge Rd. in Northampton illustrate once again how the Lord can use this exhibition in aiding an assembly to contact people in their area as well as the schools.


At Bury, over 400 children from fourteen different schools attended and spent time completing their work sheet. Each child was presented with a Gospel of John. One school later sent back work that had been done as follow-up in school time. It was surprising how much the children had absorbed from their visit.

At Northampton a similar number of children saw the exhibition as well as about a hundred adults. The schools were re-visited to present prizes to children for the best worksheets. —*Precious Seed*

MILLENNIUM BUG REPORT

The electric power industry, the FAA, the Federal Reserve, and the NASDAQ stock exchange have been conducting extensive Y2K tests. They all report there is nothing to fear except fear itself.

A White House report issued an upbeat assessment highlighting US efforts in some of the most important areas, including electricity, telephones, banking, broadcasting, and transportation. According to the council, domestic food supply is likely to be safe because most large grocery stores carry several weeks' inventory. Oil and gas may experience "minor disruptions which may impact consumers minimally."

Overseas travellers may have their hands full. They should expect failures in some countries. 

Bone of his bone

Eve portrays the first “bride of the wounded side”; the Church is the second one.

It is well known that the Ephesian and Colossian epistles are, in large measure, mirror images. Their overall layout is very similar: after a greeting, thanksgiving and prayer, Paul gives a doctrinal section where he discusses the gospel coming to the Gentiles.

After that, both letters teach us about Christ and the Church as the Head and His Body. But Ephesians emphasizes the Body and its relationship to the Head, while Colossians stresses the Head and His ministry to the Body. Ephesians underlines the unity of the Body; Colossians portrays the preeminence of the Head.

Following that, Paul in Ephesians teaches us our responsibility regarding our unity in the Body; in Colossians, he explains what our unity with the Head means practically.

Both epistles then give exhortations to relationships within the households of believers, followed by a call to be careful and prayerful, before Paul gives his concluding remarks. In all, there are perhaps a dozen parallel passages in the two books.

One of the most helpful is cross-referencing Ephesians 5:19 with Colossians 3:16 where the verses provide a

kind of equation. The variables are “Be filled with the Spirit” = “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

However, the most breathtaking complements, surely, are Colossians

2:9-10 and Ephesians 1:22-23. Here are these tremendous statements:

“For in Him dwelleth all the fulness (plērōma) of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head...” (Col. 2:9-10).

“[God] hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness (plērōma) of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23).

How do we understand such breathtaking truth? Paul says in Ephesians 5, “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” That we are complete in the One who is the fulness of the Godhead is a fact that fills our sky. But how can it be that we are the fulness of the One who is the fulness of God? Surely this lies beyond our horizon.

The Colossian epistle is considerably shorter than the letter to the Ephesians, so in Ephesians Paul has time to develop not only the Church as the Body (a picture shared with Colossians) but also the Church as a building and as a bride. It is this third illustration that I think may help us begin to grasp Ephesians 1:22-23.

When Adam was the only human being in existence, his body was complete in itself. But Adam had no earthly companion with whom he could fellowship. So three great steps were taken to rectify this predicament, to give him a help suitable for him.

First, in Genesis 2:21, we see the bride being born through the “deep sleep” of Adam, corresponding to the



The Bride and Groom

*Clad in a robe of pure and spotless white,
The youthful bride, with timid steps, comes forth
To greet the hand to which she plights her troth,
Her soft eyes radiant with a strange delight,
The snowy veil which circles her around,
Shades the sweet face from every gazer's eye,
And thus enwraps, she passes calmly by,
Nor casts a look, but on the unconscious ground.
So should the Church, the bride elect from Heaven—
Remembering whom she goeth forth to meet,
And with a truth that cannot brook deceit,
Holding the faith which unto her is given,
Pass through this world, which claims her for awhile,
Nor cast about her longing look nor smile.*

—ALICE B. NEAL

death of Christ. It was a volitional act of temporary separation to make the bride possible.

Second, though perfectly distinct from Adam, Eve was a part of Adam, formed out of him from *“the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man”* (Gen. 2:22). Eve, like the Church, was the bride of his wounded side.

Adam called her Woman (meaning “out of Man”) because out of his fullness his bride had been made for him.

Third, the Lord God *“...made (or builded) He a woman.”* The woman was bone of Adam’s bones, flesh of his flesh, yet God saw Eve as a distinct creation: *“in the image of God created He them”* (Gen. 1:27).

Even so, there was an organic union; they were seen as sharing a common life. As F. A. Perigo writes: *“And as they were looked at as one— ‘He called their name Adam’—the people of God are never looked at apart from Christ; they have no life in themselves. Christ is our life”* (*Bridal Aspects of the Church*, p. 10).

How does this Edenic scene help us with Ephesians 1:22-23? Simply in this way: Until Adam’s sleep, he was complete in himself. But in order to have a companion, he gave up his rib. From that point on, there was a sense in which he was not complete unless Eve was with him—because she had his rib! Bone of his bone, she had his life in her.

The “last Adam” is infinitely superior to the first (see 1 Cor. 15:45-49). However, there surely is still a similarity between the *“living soul”* of Adam and the *“life-giving spirit”* of Christ.

One verse that links the old and new order of things is found in Genesis 2:24 and repeated by our Lord in Matthew 19:5. *“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.”* Of course the Lord Jesus never left His Father as to relationship and communion. He Himself was, and is, ever *“the Son of man which is in heaven”* (Jn. 3:13), as He stated while talking to Nicodemus. Yet *“for this cause,”* the Son left His Father’s house and laid His glory in the dust that He might give to us of His life. *“Of His fulness we have received”* and so are complete in Him.

But there is a sense (and only a sense) in which the

Man in glory is alone today—though surrounded by angelic servants and sitting at the Father’s right hand. He still awaits His Bride. And it is not good that the Man should be alone.

In this sense it appears that the Church is *“the fulness of Him.”* He gave His life to us; we have life from the Life. We are now the Body of Christ. We are *“one flesh”* with Him in that *“both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one...”* (Heb. 2:11).

The Adam-Eve relationship is applied to us in the New Testament in various practical ways. As noted, it instructs us as to the sanctity of marriage, showing how intimate, interdependent, and permanent the marriage union was designed to be.

Paul also uses this first marriage to teach the man-woman order in the church (1 Cor. 11:3-12). Yet more spectacular than the truth itself are the mental gymnastics some commentators take in telling us this passage is only applicable to the cultural scene in first century Corinth. They mention temple prostitutes who shaved their heads. Where is that verse? It must be there because everyone quotes it—but I can’t find it! Instead I find a divine order established in the first creation but overturned by rebellion. That same order is to be re-established in the new creation, yet the same rebellion lurks in the hearts of people today who will

“wrest the scripture” rather than cling to it.

How good it would be if, in this egocentric age, we would apply this principle at the highest level: *“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man”* (1 Cor. 11:8-9). The Church finds its life in the Man at God’s right hand who stooped to the earth to have her. She was made for the Man: for His pleasure we *“are, and were created”* (Rev. 4:11).

Again F. A. Perigo insightfully writes: *“Why is Ephesians the topstone of Paul’s letters? The appreciation of Christ forms a basis in the soul for all divine truth. We find that while Judas valued Him at 30 pieces of silver, the Ephesians in Acts 19:19 give as their appreciation 50,000 pieces of silver! To such a company of saints, Paul declared the whole counsel of God.”*

A Bridal Show



There are many other Bible brides that display some of the characteristics of the Church. Here are a few of them:

- 1. Sarah: the pilgrim bride who shared the hope of things to come**
- 2. Rebekah: the enriched bride who loved her bridegroom unseen**
- 3. Rachel: The beloved bride, the fruit of her bridegroom’s labor**
- 4. Asenath: the Gentile bride who shared her bridegroom’s throne**
- 5. Ruth: the redeemed bride who bears Obed (meaning worship)**
- 6. Priscilla: the laboring bride who worked sacrificially with her bridegroom**

Fear not, little flock

Some sheep were put out of Judaism's fold by the Good Shepherd Himself, and others—Gentile sheep—joined them to make one new flock.

W. ROSS RAINEY

John 10 is one of the great chapters of the Bible. It presents the Lord Jesus Christ as the Shepherd in a fivefold light: He is the true Shepherd (vv. 1-6); the good Shepherd (vv. 7-11); the only Shepherd (vv. 12-16); the obedient Shepherd (vv. 19-42). Still further, as the Head of the Church, He is not only the good Shepherd but also the great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20) and the chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4).

The words of John 10:16 serve as the key to the entire chapter. The Lord Jesus said, *"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."* It should be noted that the word for "fold" is everywhere else in the New Testament translated "flock," as it should be at the close of verse 16.

At the beginning of verse 16 an entirely different word is used which is correctly rendered "fold"—*"other sheep I have which are not of this fold."*

The Saviour came into the world especially on behalf of Israel, but in this text He spoke of *"other sheep."* These "other sheep" were the Gentiles who would believe on Him. They were not of Israel's fold, but His heart of love embraced them as well. The Lord spoke these words in anticipation of the Church, wherein believing Jews and Gentiles would become one flock with Christ as the Shepherd over the flock.

Referring to John 10:16, Harry A. Ironside commented, "You see, Judaism was a fold, a circumference without a center, but Christianity is a flock, where we have a center without a circumference. We have no wall about us, but we are gathered about Him, our Good Shepherd."¹

There is a deep practical lesson in the word *"other"* which tells us of our Saviour's love. In a deserted place near Capernaum the people virtually pleaded with the Lord to stay, but He said to them, *"I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent"* (Lk. 4:43). Here in John 10:16, He spoke of *"other sheep,"* while in Matthew 27:42 the chief priests indeed spoke the truth when they mockingly said of Christ on the cross, *"He saved others."*

Guy H. King tells of Sir Bartle Frere who was returning home from India. He was to be met at the railway station by a newly hired footman who asked how he would recognize Sir Bartle. His aged mother said, "Look out for somebody helping someone else." Sure enough, when the London train had drawn in, the footman observed a gentleman assisting an elderly lady to the platform and then jumping back into the railway car to

fetch her luggage. Going right to him, the footman enquired, "Sir Bartle?" Yes, it was he. What a



delightful reputation to have, and how like our Lord!²

*To think that Jesus died for me
Upon the Cross of Calvary
Should move my selfish heart to pray,
For others, Lord, I'll live each day.*

As a result of Christ's "otherness," the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles has been broken down. Through faith in Christ we are one flock, one new man, and one body (Jn. 10:16; Eph. 2:14-18).

ENDNOTES:

- 1 H. A. Ironside, *Addresses on the Gospel of John*, p. 424
- 2 Guy H. King, *Joy Way*, pp. 70-71



TEN TEST QUESTIONS TO DISCERN BIBLICAL ORTHODOXY

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

1 WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT CHRIST?

Does this teaching demean the person of Christ, undermining His nature, His offices, or ministries? "But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:20-21). Anything that makes me think less of my Saviour—the preeminent One—is wrong and I should repudiate it. We cannot speak too well of the Lord Jesus. We will never be rebuked by heaven for exaggerating His excellencies.

2 WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT MAN?

Does this teaching elevate man apart from the Crosswork and the believer's standing in the Lord Jesus? "For I say...to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Rom. 12:3). Man was formed by God, deformed by sin, and must be transformed by grace. To be reformed, the work of false religion, is a hopeless task.

3 WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR IT?

Does this teaching depend on an obscure verse or a forced interpretation? There are "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). Most error is truth—out of place or out of proportion. We begin with the clear truths of Scripture, then move to the more obscure. Even a child knows where the straight edges go in a puzzle.

4 DOES IT CONTRADICT THE OVERALL TENOR OF SCRIPTURE?

The Bible is a body of truth. If you throw one vertebra out in your back, does it affect the rest of the body? It is, after all, only one small bone! God has given us a safeguard against error by placing balancing truths in His Word. For example, someone who would teach no distinction of roles between man and woman must face a dilemma: the man-woman order is a mirror image truth to the Christ-church order (Eph. 5:22-33). Dare they also teach role equality there too?

5 DOES IT UNDULY EMPHASIZE THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Lord Jesus made the Spirit's ministry clear: "...The Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear...He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jn. 16:13-14). The Spirit's ministry is like a telescope; you have to know how it works, but the purpose is not to look at it, but through it. Any movement truly of the Spirit will emphasize, not the Spirit, but Christ.

6 DOES IT ENCOURAGE WRONG BEHAVIOR OR THINKING?

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing...from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6:3-5). In his Pastoral Epistles, Paul regularly links "sound" (healthful) doctrine with right thinking and good behavior. Beware doctrine that excuses deeds (see Rev. 2:6, 15). Beware elitist philosophies. Beware gnostic know-it-alls.

7 DOES IT CONFUSE BIBLICAL DISTINCTIONS?

Am I "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15)? Some of the more common confusions: mixing the tenses of salvation—I have been, am being, shall be, saved—leading to a "works salvation" theory; confusing Israel, the Church, and the Kingdom, leading to some trying to live under law (e.g., Seventh Day Adventists) and others to try and bring in the Kingdom (e.g., Watchtower Society).

8 WHERE IS THE EMPHASIS?

Does this teaching focus on the temporal rather than the eternal? The material rather than the spiritual? "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18). The "health & wealth gospel" places emphasis on the here and now, robbing rather than enriching us (see warnings in 1 Tim. 6, distinguishing between gain and godliness).

9 IS IT A WORLDLY IDEA IN DISGUISE?

Sometimes false doctrine is a thinly-disguised version of a contemporary secular trend. The Charismatic movement is largely Existentialism in Christian dress. Of course Israel did this—incorporating pagan Canaanite gods into Hebrew worship. Main line religions have also done this for centuries. Syncretism, the combining of differing beliefs without critical examination or logical unity, has allowed pagans to be "converted" without giving up their pagan ways.

10 WHO ELSE BELIEVES IT?

Paul could give Timothy this litmus test for a final assessment of the things he had heard: "knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Paul links the "manner of entering in we had" to the Thessalonians with "what manner of men we were among you" (1 Thess. 1:9, 5). So ask yourself this about some doctrine: Is it believed by those whom I know to be walking with the Lord, and to be like the Lord? It should not be the only test, but it should be one of them.

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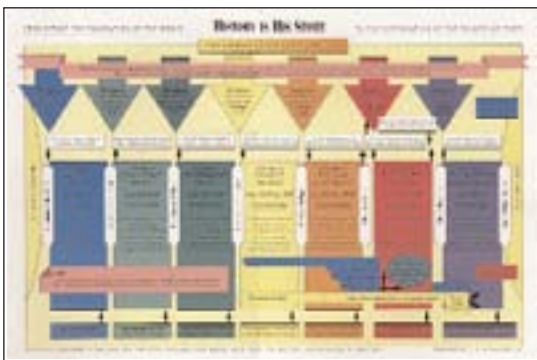
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Corpus Christi

The relationship between Christ and His Church is so close that Paul dares to use the head and the body.

Four key passages paint for us the portrait of the Church as the mystical body of Christ: Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 10-12; Eph. 1-4; and Col. 1-3. Taken together, they present to us four great principles.

UNITY without UNANIMITY

The one body has many members (1 Cor. 12:12, 20, 27; Eph. 4:4; Col. 3:15) for *“the body is not one member, but many”* (1 Cor. 12:14). There are ten systems of the body (skeletal, muscular, digestive, circulatory, etc.) which provide the unifying benefits of common life in the body. Yet the various organs are allowed to be individuals, with their own ministries within that one body.

Practically applied, Paul states: *“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful”* (Col 3:15). At the beginning of the verse is a passive act of submission to the divine resource that will captivate our hearts if we simply allow the Lord to carry on. At the end of the verse is an active bringing to mind reasons to be thankful of the believers in my local assembly. In between is the solid fact that it wasn't my idea, this being in one body—I was called to it. It was God's idea.

DIVERSITY without DIVISION

How often we see things through our own gift: If you aren't doing what I'm doing, the way I'm doing it, you aren't doing anything of value! *“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are*

one body in Christ, and every one members one of another” (Rom. 12:4-5). In fact, the more I minister to the body with my gift, the more I have a vested interest in other parts of the body. As I contribute to the general life of the aggregate, my life becomes their life, and *vice versa*.

There is amazing variety in the Body, not all of it obvious to the eye. How often we think little is happening in our assemblies because we see little happening. But of course I don't see you digesting your dinner (nor do I want to), or supplying your extremities with fresh oxygen, yet these are the secrets of a healthy body.

Just so, says Paul. *“...those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness...but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another”* (1 Cor. 12:22-25).

ALLEGIANCE not ATROPHY

Our loyalty to the Head (*“Holding the Head,”* Col. 2:19) is manifested by our communion in the Body. And each first day of the week we are to proclaim again our fealty to our risen Head by partaking of the emblems. This is a weekly confirmation of what should be a daily reality: *“The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are*

one bread, and one body...” (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

Our recognition of the vital role of our glorious Head, however, does not cause us to leave all the work to Him. He has chosen to work through His Body, not independently of it.

The Church *“is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all”* (Eph. 1:23). We should not ask Him to do things we have been instructed to do; nor should we attempt to do by our energy what He has said He will do. Praying once a week at our prayer meeting: *“Lord, save souls,”* is a sickly response to His commission to go, show and tell. Of course we should pray, because there are aspects of evangelism that only He can perform, but our part (done by His strength, of course) is our part.

CO-OPERATING not COMPETING

It's a good thing my left foot never tries to race my right foot to the door. And though I am right-handed, my left hand has never expressed any desire to dominate by snatching objects from its partner. *“If the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him”* (1 Cor. 12:16-18).

There is not one “selfish” organ in the body. Each is there for the well-being of the others. So it is with His Body: We are to minister *“for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ”* (Eph. 4:12).



STEP INTO THE GOOD OF IT!



The house of God: a metaphor

Behaving ourselves (1 Tim. 3:15) begins when we discover that the true family calls Heaven home.

WILLIAM GUSTAFSON

The first mention of “the house of God” occurs in Genesis 28 where we find Jacob awakening from his dream with the

ings, an outdoor location with none of the amenities we count as essential today—but there was the presence of the God of heaven.

May I suggest that the local expression of the New Testament church is our “Bethel,” *i.e.*, the house of God and the “gateway to heaven.”

through worship, prayer, the teaching of His Word, the fellowship of the saints, and the preaching of the gospel.

A house is a physical dwelling place or habitation; a home has been defined as “the dwelling place of the affections” (“home is where the heart is”). Still further, a scriptural home is a place where the occupants live together for the Lord Jesus. As



realization that he has been in the presence of the living God: “How dreadful (awesome) is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” As a result of his experience with God on that occasion, the place was named Bethel. There was certainly nothing striking about the surround-

This is the place where the Lord has chosen to place His Name. “Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there” (Deut. 12:11).

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt. 18:20). This is the place where we meet God

the local church should bear resemblance to the family, so our homes should share the spiritual atmosphere of the local church.

You will remember that in the book of Exodus, the God of Israel first spoke of dwelling among His people, of having a sanctuary (a holy place, a safe haven) in the center of

their camp. *“Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established”* (Ex. 15:17). As He said, *“Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them”* (Ex. 25:8).

Paul’s concern in writing to Timothy was that the saints in Ephesus should know how to conduct themselves or ‘busy themselves’ in the local church. They had never seen a local expression of the church and had no idea how they were to function in the midst of their idol-worshiping society, hence the epistle to them via Timothy.


As we approach a house, the first thing we notice is the entryway. The door reminds us of access, and communication. *“I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture”* (Jn. 10:9). Are folks given a hearty welcome as they enter our assemblies? Are the saints encouraged to go out into the highways and byways, seeking the lost and needy?

Upon entering the house, we’re usually taken into the living room where we experience the kind hospitality of the host. *“Use hospitality one to another”* (1 Pet. 4:9). We get to know the residents and are cordially entertained by them. Our assemblies should be centers of hospitality, making known to all who enter the unlimited provision of the good Word of God. *“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* (2 Pet. 1:3).

We might also be beneficiaries of the ministry of the kitchen where food and drink is prepared in a tasty and

eye-appealing manner in order to meet the nutritional needs of even the youngest guest. Our ministry and teaching sessions in the assembly should be known for the healthy meals served, offering spiritual nourishment to all who enter. Great care must be taken so that the dietary needs of every individual saint are met. *“Feed me with food convenient for me”* (Prov. 30:8). We proceed to the dining room where a bounty is spread before us and we are told to make ourselves at home. *“Thou preparest a table before me”* (Ps. 23:5). (See the story of David and Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9).

If our stay is to be an extended one, we’ll likely be shown the location of the bathroom and bedroom, suggesting the opportunity for cleansing and rest. Didn’t Paul remind Timothy of the necessity of being a cleansed vessel fit for the master’s use (2 Tim. 2:21)? Please remember, too, that the Lord Jesus told His disciples of the necessity of physical rest for the body (Mk. 6:31) and of spiritual rest for the believer as He is taught the marvelous truths of Scripture (Mt. 11:28; Heb. 4:9).

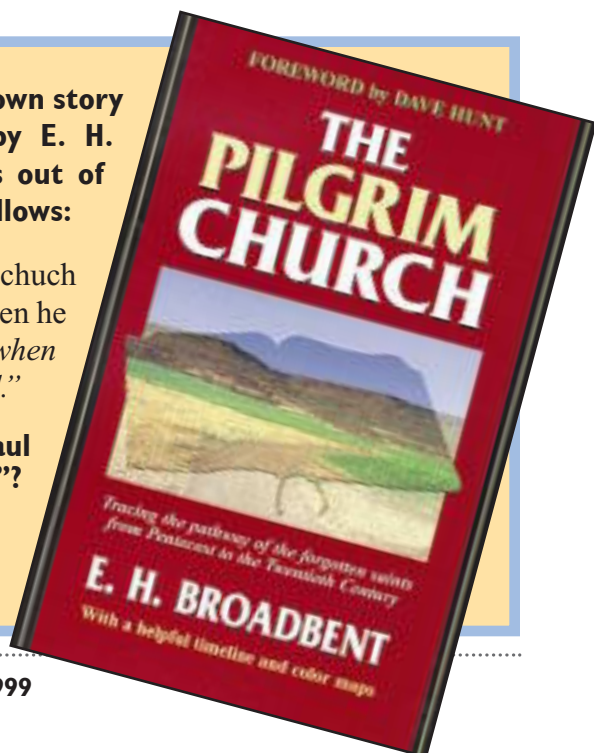
How sad that national surveys indicate Americans are more drawn to a local church by the appearance of the physical facility than the quality of the teaching of God’s Word! May we consider the gathering of the saints (and our own homes) as God’s house—a place of safety, security, and enjoyment in this crooked and perverse generation. *“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord”* (Ps. 122:1). Like the virtuous woman, may the local church share this testimony: *“She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; her lamp goeth not out by night...She looketh well to the ways of her household”* (Prov. 31:18, 27). 

We have just re-issued the classic work on the unknown story of the suffering saints, *The Pilgrim Church*, by E. H. Broadbent, now available again after several years out of print. One of my favorite lines from the book is as follows:

At Nancy, France, a preacher of the gospel named Schuch was burnt by order of the Duke, Anthony the Good. When he heard his sentence, Schuch simply said: *“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”*

How do you defeat people like this? Was this what Paul meant when he spoke about “more than conquerors”?

Available now from GFP at 1-800-952-2382



The house of God: in reality

The church of God isn't merely like a family in the way it is like a bride or a flock. It really is a family.

LARRY PRICE

One of the descriptions the New Testament gives for the Church is that of a temple, also known as the house of God. More than just a metaphor, this allusion to the Old Testament temple is meant to stir our imagination to think of that temple—its worship, service, and structure—and to draw applications to the church in this age (see 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:20).

The similarities between God's house in different economies—past, present, and future—are obvious and thus make it easy to draw applications from the truths connected to God's house, whatever the age. What was that house? What are the parallels between that house and God's house today? What are some of the applications that can be drawn from this picture of the house of God?

THE HOUSE OF OLD

The house of God was a place to meet with God and to worship Him. God's presence was there as He dwelt in the midst of His people. It was a place to learn of God even as we who are His children shall do through eternity (Rev. 21:3). It was a place where the service of God was conducted according to the manner He prescribed. There the priests exercised their service, and gifts were brought for God's service and use. There the altar was maintained, that great Old Testament symbol of the means of approach to God and basis

of acceptance with God.

Supremely, the house was a place where love to God was expressed through obedience to His commandments, a place to gather and to rejoice in His presence (see Deut. 12:5-14).

Perhaps it would do us good to also consider what that house was *not*. It was not a place to express



one's individuality, nor a place to gather because some great man was there. They did not come there merely to socialize, although there were times of rejoicing in His presence. Nor was it a place to seek to accomplish a political agenda. It was not for entertainment. It was certainly not a place where the "unsaved" were made to feel comfortable.

The house of God was designed by Him and for Him, a place where He would attach His name and His glory, a place existing for His pleasure. It was a garden in the midst of a desert world where He might enjoy His people and delight in the fruits of

His labors (1 Cor. 3:9). There His truth was upheld, evidenced, and promoted without apology and without compromise (1 Tim. 3:15).

The rules were laid down by the Owner of the house. How to conduct oneself in the house of God was determined by the government and guidance given by the Owner (see 1 Tim. 3:15). It is to God we look, not man, to learn how to conduct ourselves in His house. When these rules were properly adhered to, the house of God was a powerful testimony. When there was departure from God's ways and eventually from the very house itself it led to the ruin of God's people.

It should be apparent to those who recognize the authority of God's Word that the truths connected with God's house in other economies are consistent with truths related to the Church in this age. Let us consider the witness the house of God was intended to be, and some of the great truths it was intended to convey.

A WITNESS TO HIS NAME

(Deut. 12:11; 1 Cor. 1:10-15)

This was God's house. Would there be any question whose name it would bear? Would Moses place his name there? Would Solomon or David? In the church age, would Paul instruct the saints to gather together unto his name? There was only one name worthy of being attached to that place. It was His house and meant to have His name and His name only, indicating among other things, His authority.

A WITNESS TO HIS LORDSHIP

(Deut. 12:14, 28, 32; Rom. 6:2-6; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)¹

The house is designed with cer-

tain observable features that are an evidence of ownership and control. These features also allow the individuals that compose the house to confess and display their allegiance and recognition of His Lordship. These outward symbolic practices are commonly referred to as ordinances. The faithful observance of His ordinances are a witness to His Lordship. Baptism shows that the old life is over and that a believer is now no longer his own, but is under the control of another. The regular observance of the Lord's Supper by its very name indicates that we recognize Him as Lord. It is the *Lord's Supper*.

A WITNESS TO HIS HEADSHIP

(1 Cor. 11:3-7; Eph. 1:20-22; Col. 1:18; 2:10, 19)

Headship is a vital New Testament truth. While the Lord Jesus was born a king, He entered into position as Head of the Church only through death, resurrection, and ascension back to glory. The symbolic observance of the truth of headship is seen in the assembly by the uncovered head of the man and the covered head of the woman. This truth transcends time and culture, and is not bound by societal conditions or trends.

The practical truth of headship is evidenced by the members of the house, the assembly, submitting to the authority of the Head of the Church, and by looking to Him for the wisdom and resources it needs to accomplish His will in this world.

A WITNESS TO HIS HOLINESS

(2 Cor. 7:1)

The house of God is also referred to as the temple of God. As the temple of God, holiness is one of its chief characteristics. "*Holiness becometh Thine house,*" said the psalmist (Ps. 93:5). Holiness is separation from that which is evil or defiling. To attempt to mingle what is pure with that which is sinful is to deny the very character of holiness. As the temple in the Old Testament was to be a place of purity, so is the Church today.

Purity and separation are to characterize the members of the house as well. Individual members are called to maintain purity (1 Cor. 6:19) as is the assembly (1 Cor. 3:16). It is a habitation of God through the Spirit. In the context of doctrinal and moral purity, 1 Corinthians uses the term "temple" in whatever form the temple takes, whether corporate or individual, local or universal.

Those who are strangers to God and His grace are not a part of that house. In Old Testament times, "strangers" who were attracted by that Name had to come on God's terms, in His way, and for His purpose (1 Ki. 8:41-43). Contrary to much popular opinion today, the design of the local church is not to be tampered with in order to attract the unsaved or to be a gathering place for the

ungodly. The house of God today is constructed with living stones who have been regenerated by the Spirit of God. Worship and service are only acceptable by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:5). There is in the Bible a "within" and a "without" (1 Cor. 5:12). While the church cannot control the behavior of those "without," it is commanded to judge those "within." Only in this way is the witness to God's holiness maintained.


A WITNESS TO HIS SUFFICIENCY

(Phil. 4:19)

One of the great objects of God dwelling in the midst of His people is that His people might learn dependence on Him for all things. As in the days of the tabernacle when God supplied for His peoples physical and temporal needs, so today the Church is to be dependent on Him for all things. He is sufficient to supply all that is needed for His work and for His Church to thrive and expand.

The Church is a heavenly, spiritual people. As such they are not to adopt the world's techniques and methods (2 Cor. 10:3-4). The Church is not to seek the world's wisdom (1 Cor. 3:19), but to look to its Head for wisdom (1 Cor. 3:19). Residing in Him is a rich storehouse of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

The Church is dependent on the Spirit of God for spiritual resources. It is a sad but often telling sign when today so many indicate by their actions that they do not feel the need to come together as an assembly and lift up their united voice in prayer (Acts 4:24, note: "*their voice*"). Rather than an expression of dependency, poorly attended prayer meetings express an attitude of self-sufficiency. Such self-sufficiency also is evidenced by the grasping for methods and programs and even men rather than patiently waiting on the Head to solve whatever the problem might be.

What a privilege to form part of the habitation of God on earth! What responsibilities are associated with those who are part of that house! The very design of God's house is meant to convey spiritual truth. How vital it is that those who make up this house see the need of accurately displaying and not distorting the truth the house of God is meant to convey (1 Tim. 3:15). May God by His grace enable such to faithfully uphold and maintain the truth of the testimony on earth today. 

ENDNOTE:

1 Water baptism is the picture drawn from, even if water baptism isn't specifically in view in this passage.

Illuminating living

John on Patmos saw seven assemblies in Turkey. They looked like lampstands shining in the darkness.

It could be anticipated that the Revelation (or the Unveiling) would pull back the coverings that stand between us and the future, between us and the real world, and take us on a tour of the temple in heaven (of which the earthly models were mere “figures of the true”). What began as a long desert march has reached its final glorious destination.

The ark is there, seen to be what it always was—the throne of God. The altars are there (the brazen in 8:5, the golden in 8:3 and 9:13). The laver or sea (note Rev. 4:6 with 1 Ki. 7:23-25) the censer with its incense (8:5), and the Lamb as if freshly slain—all are there (can you find the table of showbread?). Of course the priests are there, after the order of Melchizedek, a kingdom of them! And the singers with their songs fill the book.

THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

The tabernacle also had a menorah or candelabra, with one main stalk and six branches, each of the seven crowned with a light. It was beaten out of pure gold, and made to look not like an olive, but like an almond tree (see Ex. 25:33-34; 37:19-20).

Why the almond? We might find help in Numbers 17:8, where Aaron’s rod budded. It suggests resurrection since the rod, once cut down, came back to life—a new kind of life where time is no restriction, for buds, blossoms and almonds appeared together. This was also true of the lampstand.

The Hebrew word for almond is derived from a root meaning “to hasten,” appropriate because the almond is the harbinger of spring, being the

first to blossom. In Jeremiah 1:11-12, the Lord explains the prophet’s sighting of an almond tree by saying, “*Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word to perform it.*”

THE UNITY OF THE LAMPS

When the Lord introduces the seven churches in Revelation 1-3, He shows them as lamps. They, like the menorah in the tabernacle, are the only light in the darkness. But here they are not linked to each other, as with the branches on the tabernacle candlestick, sharing a common base. What unifies the seven churches is the Figure in the midst.

Notice that it is not the responsibility of the lampstands to remove other lampstands from fellowship: “*Remember...and repent...or else I will come unto thee quickly,*” says the Lord, “*and will remove thy candlestick out of his place*” (Rev. 2:5).

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAMPS

Lamps are not purchased to illuminate themselves. Nor are these lamps intended to do so. It is the privilege of each local assembly, standing on its own base, answerable to the Lord, to show Christ to the world.


The lamps of Revelation 1-3 are golden, not the simple clay lamps used by the common people in Jesus’ time. The allusion seems to point to the Old Testament lamps, which shone “*before the Lord*” in the holy place. It is His desire “*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world*” (Phil. 2:15).



What an honor for us that the One who is the Light of the world and the little lamps scattered throughout the world share this ministry.

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAMPS

But how do the lamps work? In the book of Zechariah we have the description of another lampstand which uses oil as fuel for its light. There God taught the prophet this principle: “*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*” (Zech. 4:1-6). A better lesson could not be learned by Christian churches today.

All the beauty we can see in our physical world is a result of light. In fact the colors we see are not in the objects but in the light itself. In the moral world, all beauty is resident in the One who is the Light of the world. Our society desperately needs to see something of that beauty. Perhaps we could claim two desires expressed by the psalmist: “*One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple*” and “*let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it*” (Ps. 27:4; 90:17). 

Baptism: a matter of obedience

“Have you been baptized?” used to be asked often. It needs to be asked often again.

What does the New Testament teach about baptism? The Holy Spirit begins in the Gospels where the disciples were commanded to “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...*” (Mt. 28:19). Baptism is included in the commission to worldwide evangelism. Let’s call this *exhortation to baptism*.

The next time we meet baptism is in the Acts, where it appears at least five times. In Acts 2:38, Peter calls for the Jews to be baptized “*for the remission of sins.*” Then in Acts 8:14-17, the Samaritans are said to have been baptized but were waiting to receive the Spirit. In Acts 8:36-39, there is the baptism of the eunuch. In Acts 10:44-48 we see Gentiles being baptized. And in Acts 19:1-7, there is the case of the disciples of John being baptized or, more specifically, rebaptized. At first this may appear confusing because the order of faith, receiving the Holy Spirit, and water baptism are different. On further consideration, however, we see significant distinctions and an observable pattern emerges.

William MacDonald states it concisely: “Does this mean there were four ways of salvation in the Book of Acts? (*Writer’s note: We might also ask, “Does this mean there are four baptisms?”*) Of course not. Salvation was, is, and always will be on the basis of faith in the Lord. But during the transition period recorded in Acts, God chose to vary the events connected with the reception of the Holy Spirit for reasons which He knew but did not choose to reveal to us. Then which of these patterns applies to us today? Since Israel nationally has rejected the Messiah, the Jewish people have forfeited any special privileges they might have had. Today God is calling out of the Gentiles a people for His Name (Acts 15:14). Therefore, the order for today is that which is found in Acts 10: Faith. Reception of the Holy Spirit. Water baptism. We believe this order applies to all today, to Jews as

well as to Gentiles.”

In Acts, therefore, we have the order of baptism—it follows salvation. In addition we learn how people were baptized through the account of the conversion and baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch—baptism is by immersion.

The account of Philip and the new believer going down into the water was no mere incidental remark. It is clear infants were not baptized since baptism is a conscious act of obedience. Thus in the Acts is the *example of baptism*.

The next major section on baptism is in Paul’s letter to the Romans. Here we learn the meaning of baptism. We could call this the *exposition of baptism*. Romans 6 shows that baptism is a symbolic act, the outward demonstration of what took place in our lives when we were saved. No

one could actually see what happened when we trusted the Lord. But they can see our baptism. Paul explains the similarity. In a baptism we go into the water, under the water and come up out of

the water. We learn from verses 4-6 that at conversion we died (went into the water), were buried (went under the water), were resurrected (came up out of the water). We are a new person (see 2 Cor. 5:17). Baptism demonstrates to others what took place in our lives. Romans 6 further teaches that we are called to a life of obedience and yielding to the Lord and His Word. Baptism does not exempt us from the practical life of holiness that should be evident in new creatures. But it is the first step in the life of those who want to please the Lord.

Peter contributes a helpful observation about baptism. He points out in 1 Peter 3:21 that baptism is “the answer of a good conscience toward God,” and is not part of our salvation.

What about you? Have you been baptized? If not, why not? You do not have to know everything about baptism to be baptized. All of us are ever learning. The issue is, do you want to obey? If so, call an elder right now and tell him you want to be baptized. It will make his day. It will



by BRIAN GUNNING

Pillar power

Let's take a trip to Bethel. See what we can learn at the foot of the ladder to heaven.

Fleeing for his life, young Jacob had travelled over the undulating road from Beersheva on the edge of the Negev. Skirting old Salem, he had made it about twelve miles further north before the sun slipped behind the hills and “the Supplanter” bedded down for the night at what the Scripture calls simply “a certain place” (Gen. 28:11).

The man who would some day receive from God “the land whereon thou liest,” as he would soon be told, made a pillow of stones and fell into a fitful sleep.

He dreamed. In the dream he saw a tremendous ladder reaching from where he lay all the way up to heaven. And “behold!” angels ascended and descended on its rungs.

Above the ladder stood the Lord Himself, and He began to speak to Jacob in his dream. “I am,” He said, “the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac...and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. 28:13-15).

Awaking from his slumber, Jacob cried, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not!” (v. 16). Calling it “the house of God” and “the gate of heaven,” Jacob turned his pillow into a

pillar and named the place Bethel.

So we have God and His house, angels and the ladder, a pillar the patriarch raised up, and the ground on which Jacob lay—promised to him and to his seed.

Two New Testament passages shed light on this Genesis scene: John 1:51 and 1 Timothy 3:15-16.

John 1 introduces us to the Light that illuminates the darkness of sin’s interminable night and of a Word spoken in the stillness. Like Jacob’s confession—“Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not!”—so “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not” (Jn. 1:10).

Verse 51 leaves us in no doubt as to the ladder linking heaven and earth: “And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

We have a stone in John 1 as well, one of many stones to be built into the house of God. When Andrew brought his brother to Messiah, Jesus said, “Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone” (v. 42). Later this Stone would write: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 2:5).

Paul no doubt was also thinking of this roadside scene when he wrote to Timothy:

“...that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in

the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:15-16).


If we are going to behave properly at Bethel, we will need to understand the following:

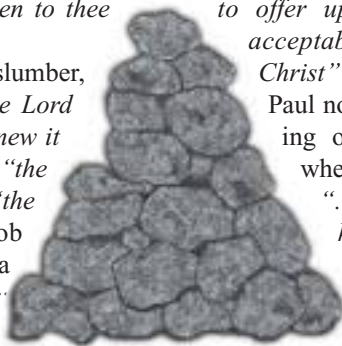
1. We are always in the presence of God, whether we are aware of it or not. Practicing the presence of God is one of the secrets of holy living.

2. The church should be known for its pillar, not a pillow. It is high time to awake, as Jacob did, and to catch a glimpse of the glory.

3. The pillar was anointed with oil as Jacob made a vow to remain true to God. He wandered far from Bethel, but when the Lord brought him back, he once again anointed the pillar and was restored in fellowship.

4. The word for “ground” might well be understood as the foundation of a pillar. But this was no Roman pillar. It was a cairn raised up on the ground Jacob had been promised. The Greek work used for ground in 1 Timothy 3 is from the same root as the word Paul used for the ground to which Paul fell on the Damascus road (Acts 22:7). The pillar was the memorial; the ground was the inheritance, like the ground on which Jacob lay, but now a spiritual possession of the people of God.

What do we need to see at Bethel if we are to behave ourselves in the midst of our crooked and perverse nations? Again 1 Timothy 3:16 describes the span from earth to glory, but now the angels are observers. It is the Son of God Himself who comes to us in incarnation and who has ascended for us in glory. Great is the mystery! 



Jammy fellowships at Grace Gospel Chapel, Jersey City, NJ



More than a prophet

This Muslim discovered that Islam has no Saviour—and he needed one.

Born and raised in Nigeria as a Muslim, I took the Islamic faith very seriously in my early years. I adhered wholeheartedly to the Islamic teachings and practices, participating in Islamic organizations in school, and often engaging in discussions aimed at comparing the Quran to the Bible.

Sometimes in the early 1990s, a friend of mine, who also had been a Muslim, became a Christian. I was very disappointed. Our friendship became strained. After his conversion, he was always trying to witness to me. Because I took pride in my religion, I would argue with him. Through the help of some brochures and books that were designed to criticize the Bible, I tried to defend my position. Out of my ignorance, I maintained zealously that Islam is the only true religion.

When my friend went to college, we had minimum contacts thereafter. Meanwhile, I continued with my devotion to Islam.

After high school, I enrolled for a pre-college program at a school near my house. While at the school, I developed an interest in one of my classmates, who happened to be a Christian. Because of the difference in our beliefs, I knew I would have no chance of getting to know her personally. To overcome this obstacle, I pretended to be a Christian.

At that time, I knew very little about salvation and the different denominations. Because of my desire

for her, I was determined to do anything to win her friendship.

We started going out on dates and became good friends. Wrapped in my deception and not knowing that God was working in me through the situations, I decided to visit her church to experience how things were done. During my third visit, I found myself standing in front of the pulpit after an altar call. I could not explain what had happened. But that day I confessed my sins and accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour. I was enrolled in the baptismal class and I started reading the Bible objectively.

Subsequently my girlfriend and I decided to end our relationship, but continued to stay in touch with each other. We knew we were not ready for a serious relationship.

In the meantime, I told my family about my salvation. They initially thought I was only kidding. Some thought it was just a phase. As time went by, however, everyone knew I had been changed for good.

Meanwhile, Satan had another plan. My older brother, who I was very close to, became infuriated with my decision. Consequently, he decided to stop being my sponsor to remain in the U. S. At that time, I was already in college and was working at a bookstore in a local church to support myself.

My brother and I did not communicate with each other for awhile after that. All my friends and relatives advised me to deny my faith in Christ so that my relationship with my family and friends would not be strained. Some of them said I could

always change my mind and do whatever I wanted once I finished with school and I


was on my own. I was deeply troubled. I loved my family. But what if I died before I finished college? What if I never had the opportunity to go back?

Thank God that I did not listen to any of their advice. By the grace of God, my trust in Christ was maintained; I refused to look back. Praise God that through the prayers of His people and as my brother saw the reality of my new life in Christ, our relationship was eventually restored. My brother was saved and some of the other members of the family also trusted the Lord. Praise God!

While in college, I wrote to my former girlfriend to confess to her my deception. I also explained to her that I believe the whole thing was allowed by God, and that it was not a coincidence. She was very surprised, but thankful to God that I am now saved and know “whom I believe.”

Today, fifteen years later, I thank God that, based on His abundant grace, I am still living for Him. God continues to be very faithful to me. He has put me in a position that I certainly did not deserve. He has never let me down.

Have you been trying to witness to some Muslims or other unsaved people? Please don't give up. No one is too difficult to be reached with the gospel. Continue to pray for them. God's time is always the best.

If you are experiencing rejection by family and friends, or if you are encountering problems because of your faith in Christ, don't give up. Hold fast unto the faith. God is always faithful. He has not forgotten about you. (Read Lk. 18:29-30.) 

THE CHURCH

Born in the Father's mind; bought with the Son's blood; sealed by the Holy Spirit.

*On Christ salvation rests secure;
The Rock of Ages must endure;
Nor can that faith be overthrown
Which rests upon the "Living Stone."*

*No other hope shall intervene;
To Him we look, on Him we lean;
Other foundations we disown,
And build on Christ, the "Living Stone."*

*In Him it is ordained to raise
A temple to Jehovah's praise,
Composed of all His saints, who own
No Saviour but the "Living Stone."*

*View the vast building, see it rise;
The work, how great! The plan, how wise!
O wondrous fabric! Power unknown,
That rests it on the "Living Stone."*

In our world of today there is much confusion and little understanding of what the Church really is. We hear the names of many different kinds of churches and denominations, and the earnest believer inquires as to which is the right one to belong to or to be affiliated with.

The Word of God is the only right place to which one may go to find the answer. Therein we read throughout of one Church in blessed unity in all lands. But we find no denominational names of men attached to it such as we hear of in our day. This Church is the Church of the living God and the only church which God owns and recognizes, and to which every true believer is already joined by God's Spirit.

—*The Church of the Living God* by R. K. Campbell

He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church. Ephesians 1:20-22

That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
Ephesians 5:27

The church is never a place but always a people; never a fold but always a flock, never a sacred building but always a believing assembly. The church is you who pray, not where you pray. A structure of brick or marble can no more be a church than your clothes of serge or satin can be you.

And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:18

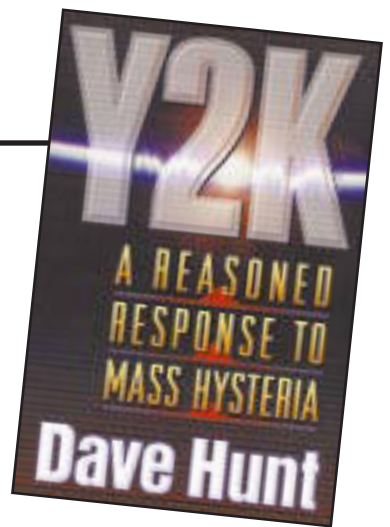
Next to that of God's beloved Son, the most important revelation in the Scriptures is that of the house of God. This is the substance of God's eternal purpose and the meaning and object of all His works in creation and redemption. We must not interpret that purpose as being something of man's activity, but, rather, the spiritual objective of all the toil of God. There is nothing of man's work in what God builds. Everything, like the tabernacle and temple of ancient times, is of divine pattern and all the materials must speak of Christ...Every part of the house must express something of Christ, or else it is not God's house. What is not of Him is expunged. There is not the least place given to man's fallen nature.

—*The House of God* by Daniel Smith

In the Ephesian epistle three metaphors are used by the apostle when speaking of the Church. He refers to it as the "body" (1:23); the "building" or sanctuary (2:20); and the bride (5:32). Of the body, Christ is the head. Of the building, He is the chief corner stone; whereas in chapter 5 in the illustration of the bond between the husband and wife, He is said to have loved the Church and given Himself for it, and is to present it to Himself a glorious Church (5:25-33). It is well to note the seven statements made in this section concerning the Lord and His relation to the Church. He loved it. He gave Himself for it. He sanctifies and cleanses it. He nourishes and cherishes it. He will eventually present it to Himself. In that completed vessel there will be fully and perfectly displayed the wonder of His grace. Her garments of glory will be without spot and wrinkle. All the virtues, the spiritual graces resident in Him will be reproduced in her. There will be a complete conformity to His image and likeness. Such is to be her glorious destiny. —*The Lord and the Churches* by J. M. Davies

A reasoned response

Y2K: A Reasoned Response to Mass Hysteria by *Dave Hunt*.
286 pages. Harvest House \$10.99. Available from Gospel Folio Press.



KEVIN SHANTZ

In the January issue of *Uplink* I wrote an article in which I stated that the Y2K problem was analogous to a runaway train on a collision course with a station. Catastrophe was certain unless the train was stopped in time. When I wrote that, there was considerable doubt in my mind that the train would be stopped.

Writing now, in May 1999, the situation looks much more optimistic. Many companies are announcing that they are Y2K compliant or will be well before January 1, 2000. Even the government is making significant strides toward compliance.

Why then another book on Y2K? Doomsayers continue to sound the alarm. Some have not changed the tone of their message at all, despite progress made by many organizations towards compliance. Christians are still being encouraged to sell their homes and head to the hills, to withdraw their money from the banks, to prepare for extreme chaos.

This fear-mongering has prompted well-known author Dave Hunt to write a book presenting the other side. *Y2K—A Reasoned Response to Mass Hysteria* gives a thoughtful analysis of the issues. He seeks to calm the fears of those who are troubled by what they are hearing. As well, he writes out of a heartfelt concern for the testimony of the Church as a whole. He argues that Christians are on the Y2K bandwagon in numbers way out of proportion to the rest of society. If Y2K turns out to be a

big bust, individuals who have been speaking out about Y2K will find their witness significantly impacted. He also fears that prophetic teaching will be severely discredited.

First Hunt deals with the technological aspects. In a very non-technical way he shows how concerns over embedded chips and millions of lines of code are not the insurmountable problems they first appeared to be. His main arguments are as follows:

1) Every major corporation and organization (at least in the West) is now aware of the nature and extent of the problem.

2) These organizations have the strongest motivation—money—for doing everything in their power to rectify the problem. Major corporations are demanding statements of compliance from suppliers with the clear threat that an alternative supplier will be found if they are not compliant. Such companies could easily be driven out of business.

3) Programs are now available to repair software code, doing in hours what formerly took weeks or months.

4) The problem of embedded chips has been vastly overstated. Far fewer are affected than first thought. Many of those that are, would not shut down essential operations.


Hunt also deals with the biblical aspect of Y2K. Many doomsayers try to fit Y2K into Bible prophecy, seeing it as the start of the Tribulation. Some post-millennialists view it as the golden opportunity for Christians to rise up and take control.

Even if Y2K were to be as bad as some people claim, Hunt argues it would be none of the above and

points out the logical and biblical fallacies of these positions. It does not make sense that Y2K could begin the Tribulation in that it is only through computer technology that it is possible for one person to effectively monitor and control a global population such that “no man can buy or sell unless he have the mark of the beast.” How could the Antichrist come to power by the failure of the very technology he depends on to exercise his control?

Secondly, Hunt shows that the Rapture precedes the Tribulation. Unless the Lord comes between now and January 1, 2000, it is hard to see how Y2K could inaugurate the Tribulation. Hunt also argues that Scripture seems to indicate that the coming of the Lord will be in a day when the world as a whole will not be expecting Him.

While the book seems to be repetitive at times, it provides solid arguments and is well documented with hundreds of quotes from people on both sides of the debate. For anyone who has only heard the doom and gloom side of Y2K, it is a must read.

Ironically, Hunt concludes the book warning of the possibility of serious problems due to hoarding by people worried about Y2K. A run on the banks and stores is still a real possibility which would create problems totally aside from Y2K. Thus he encourages readers to have a supply of food and essentials on hand—just in case. 

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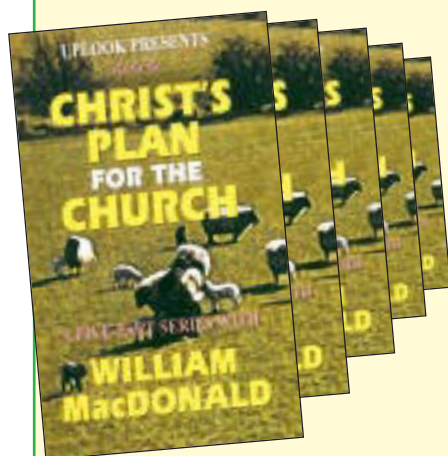
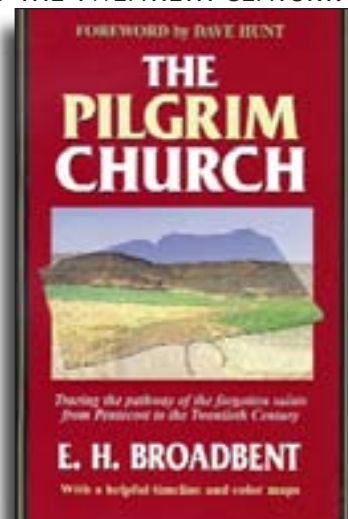
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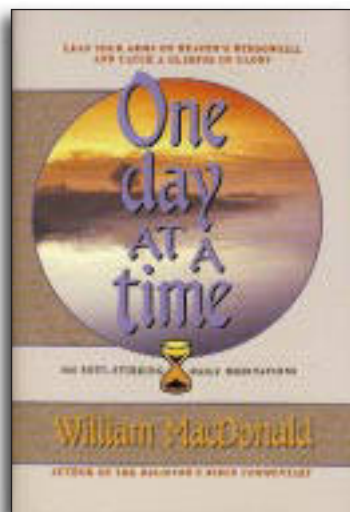
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Points where a wider course to steer, shows how to 'scape conflicting tides.*

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