

GOOD NEWS from EIRE • YOUNG MEN IN KC

UPLOOK

DECEMBER 1999



MILLENNIUM ISSUE

GRAVE NEW WORLD?

GRAVE NEW WORLD?

This is no time to “congregate in holy clubs or survival camps.”

It's a moot point that the 21st century begins on January 1, 2001, not 2000. In fact, due to the mixup in changing to the Gregorian calendar from the Julian in 1582, we've actually been in the new millennium for several years already. But it isn't just the passing of this significant date that we have slept through. Joseph Stowell writes:

A culture that wants to do what it wants to do must somehow dethrone a God who rightfully calls men to live under His authority...Like Rip Van Winkle, we in large measure slept through these last four decades, and as the alarm clock rings to usher in the twenty-first century, we wake up to notice how dramatically different our world is now...¹

Different indeed! Our world has cut loose from its moorings, wanting no one at the helm, and is being blown by the winds of change directly into the teeth of the last great storm.

President Ronald Reagan gave us the definition: “*Status quo* is Latin for ‘the mess we are in.’” And what a mess it is. In seeking to select the top three “hot spots of the new millennium,” *USA Today* reporter Barbara Slavin chose from “among a depressingly high number of candidates.” The article goes on to list 38 “countries in conflict” where disputes led to more than 1,000 deaths in a one-year-period during the last decade. *P. S.* “More than 1,000” would include the mass genocide in Kosovo, Burundi, and 43 years of war in Sudan leading to the deaths of 1.5 million! (Nov. 1, 1999, p. 11.)

Things are no brighter at home. We have our own 1.5 million figure—the unborn babies aborted in America alone *each year* since 1975. The wide acceptance of the evolutionary model has led to the devaluing of human life, bringing with it the growing threat of euthanasia and the Pandora's box of cloning and genetic manipulation. The “harvesting” of fetal tissue and organs is becoming a profitable sideline for abortion clinics.²

I hardly need to repeat the dire societal ills listed in our daily newspapers: rampant crime, family breakdown, the “gay” agenda, uncontrolled illegitimacy... As Mohandas Gandhi observed, “Wildlife is decreasing in

the jungles, but increasing in the towns.” Yet just when society desperately needs a word from God, Christianity is being censored by the monopolistic media and, as John Whitehead states, “privatized” by the government:

In Utah, homeowners conducting private Bible studies in their own homes were accused of violating zoning ordinances. In Illinois, a kindergartner who was grieved about having to cross out the word “God” in her spelling book was chastised for writing “I love you God” on her tiny palm to show her remorse...In Texas, teachers have been enjoined from participating in any prayers at their high school or at its extra-curricular events.³

C. S. Lewis remarked, “The world says, ‘You can be religious when you are alone,’ and then adds under its breath, ‘And we’ll make sure you are never alone.’” But as *Decision* editor Roger Palms notes, “The world wants us to keep Christianity private. They should have thought of that before they crucified the Lord in public.”

This is no time to retreat. Christianity has met paganism before, and swept the field in the first century. Our Lord's command is still in effect: “*Occupy till I come.*” The entertainment gospel, political gospel, social gospel, health and wealth gospel, are shams. “*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds*” (2 Cor. 10:4). Busy-ness, superficiality, compromise, and worldly distractions are the scourge of the church in the West.

But returning to the following seven Cs would demolish the devil's strongholds again: **clean lives** who take sin seriously; **clear thinking** about the real issues; **courage** in the face of mounting opposition; **compassion** for a lost and lonely world; **commitment** to the life of the church, manifested by sacrificial living; **confidence** in the inerrant Word of God for all matters of faith and practice; and **Christ-centeredness** that looks to Him alone for “*all things that pertain to life and godliness.*” Our world needs us now because it desperately needs to meet Him.

1 *Shepherding the Church in the 21st Century*, Victor Books, 1994, p. 17

2 See *World* magazine, Oct. 23, 1999, pp. 16-19

3 *Religious Apartheid*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1994, p. 157



by J. B. NICHOLSON, J. R.

UPLOOK

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS TO BE BROADCAST:

DECEMBER 27

Keynote Address by Tom Taylor

available by 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 28

Keynote Address by David Wilson and Eric Wieger

available by 11:30 am

Seminar on First Steps to Missionary Service by Tom and David Wilson

available by 1:00 pm

Seminar on God's Faithfulness by James Haesemeyer

available by 3:30 pm

Seminar on Lord, Teach us to Pray by J. Boyd Nicholson Sr.

available by 5:30 pm

Keynote Address by Kenneth Hardisty

available by 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 29

Keynote Address by Frank Haggerty

available by 11:30 am

Seminar on The Judgement Seat of Christ by Roy Hill

available by 1:00 pm

Seminar on What Happened at the Cross by Frank Haggerty (part 1)

available by 3:30 pm

Seminar on What Happened at the Cross by Frank Haggerty (part 2)

available by 5:30 pm

Keynote Address by William MacDonald (available by 10:00 pm)

DECEMBER 30

Keynote Address by Roy Hill

available by 11:30 am

PRAY FOR THE SPEAKERS, SEMINAR LEADERS, ATTENDEES, SAFETY, GOD'S BLESSING!

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER—WE STILL HAVE SPACE! CALL TODAY OR REGISTER ONLINE.

SKIING IN THE SMOKIES

Camp Living Water in Bryson City, NC, invites you to the Second Annual Assembly Ski Retreat, Jan. 14-17, 2000. Rex Trogdon (NC) is scheduled to minister from the Word for the weekend. For more info. contact Theresa Gustafson or Joel Sasscer at (828) 488-6012

Living-h2o@juno.com

WORD ALIVE WEEKENDS

The assemblies in the Winnipeg, Manitoba area are looking forward to their monthly young people's Bible study series:

January 29-30 J. B. Nicholson, MI
February 25-27 Mike Attwood, GA
March 24-26 To be confirmed

Each weekend includes a Friday Word Alive Rally for youth and an all-day Saturday Word Alive Seminar. Out of town visitors are welcome. For those wanting more information, contact:

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

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

The sixth year of the Bible Study Program, hosted by Hopedale Bible Chapel (Oakville, ON) is under way.

Classes run from 9 until 12 noon, including three 40-minute sessions with 15 minute breaks between each.
January 15 Brian Gunning, ON
February 19 Boyd Nicholson, ON
March 18 Randy Amos, NY
April 15 J. B. Nicholson, MI

YOUNG ADULT SERIES

The Brandywine Bible Chapel is planning to host a series of conferences for young adults. Each conference runs from 9:30 until 3:00, with breakfast and lunch served.

February 19 Wade LeBlanc, NB
March 18 Doug Kazen, WA
April 15 Keith Keyser, PA

Contact Tim Bhatt
(302) 425-0762
tim_bhatt@yahoo.com

WINTER CONFERENCE

Lord willing, the 13th Annual Winter Conference will be held at Galilean Bible Camp (ON) Feb. 25-27, 2000. Harold Summers (BC) will be speaking. Contact:

James Martin
1761 Rutherglen Cr.
Sudbury, ON P3A 2K4
jrm@sympatico.ca
Full details are available online at:
www3.sympatico.ca/jrm/wc.htm

IRELAND ASSEMBLY HERITAGE TOUR

Mark Kolchin and Mike Attwood will be conducting an 11-day assembly heritage tour, Lord willing, from July 3-13, 2000. Places to be visited significant to assembly heritage include Powerscourt Estate, Trinity College, Dublin and Wicklow, where J. N. Darby ministered. Other sights include Blarney Castle, Ring of Kerry, Killarney, Beleek, Waterford, and the Glens of Antrim. Plans have been made to meet with the assembly in Cork. The centerpiece of the trip will be two days at the Northfield conference in Newcastle, Northern Ireland where Joe Reese (ON) is scheduled to speak. Meals and deluxe accommodations each day. Departure from Newark International Airport (NJ). For more information, contact:

Mark Kolchin
P.O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
mkolchin@juno.com

OOPS...

We mistakenly gave the wrong dates for the 2000 National Elders' and Workers' Conference. It is scheduled for Oct. 10-12, 2000 in Lawrence, KS.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY**Guest Apartment Managers**

The Chicago Missionary Guest Apartments in Glen Ellyn, Illinois are a ministry of the Chicago Missionary Study Class. The primary purposes of the apartments are to provide a home for Chicago area missionaries who are home on furlough, and a place to stay for other missionaries visiting or passing through the area. There is a current need for a couple to be live-in managers of the CMGA. The managers handle hospitality, minor maintenance, yard work and reservations. In return, they occupy one of the four room apartments, rent free. Anyone interested in more details concerning this service opportunity may contact:

Bob Marshall (847) 524-6675 or
Bill Warke (708) 599-1389

NEW LIFE PRISON MINISTRY

Has the Lord given you a heart for the prisoner? Is He calling you into prison ministry? New Life Prison Ministry is an assembly-based Canadian prison ministry which provides Emmaus, Navigator, and Everyday Publications Bible correspondence courses to prisoners and their families across Canada. The twenty-year-old ministry has been appointed the Penal Coordinator for Canada by Emmaus Correspondence School.

With two offices in Ontario, NLPM is looking for individuals (with the support of their local assembly) that the Lord is calling to set up correspondence offices in other locations. It is more practical and efficient for local Christians to service prisons in their own area. Ideally, there would be offices in either each province, or in regions such as Western, Central, Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes. NLPM would obviously be available to help establish and train new correspon-

dence offices and volunteers. Anyone interested in receiving a NLPM brochure, please contact:

Gerrit Blok
Box 123
Arva, ON N0M 1C0
Phone: (519) 666-1950
Fax: (519) 666-1101
nlpm@execulink.com

TRAVEL TO BIBLE LAND

Travel with believers from the midwest United States to Israel. The ten-day tour, with J. B. Nicholson, Jr. as teacher, is scheduled for Mar. 4-13, 2000. The \$1995 cost will cover airfare from Chicago to Tel Aviv, double occupancy in first class hotels, two meals a day, tips and taxes. A \$150 deposit will secure a registration.

Contact Steve Allan at:
(573) 744-5843
sallank@juno.com

COMMENDATIONS

Danny Martin

Danny Martin has been in happy fellowship at the Myrtle Beach Bible Chapel for eight years. His wife Terri, son Adam, and daughter, Ashley also gather there. During his time of fellowship at MBBC, the elders have observed his spiritual growth, his faithfulness, and diligent study of the Scriptures.

Danny has ministered the Word of God and his messages have been much appreciated by his own assembly as well as several others in the South Carolina/North Carolina areas. He has conducted Vacation Bible Schools in various areas. He is currently engaged as a full-time teacher at Calvary Christian School in the Myrtle Beach area. This should be considered Christian service along with his preaching ministry.

Without hesitancy, the elders recommend Danny Martin's ministry as the Lord leads. He is available some weekends and during the summer months, possibly Sunday through

Wednesday, for meetings. His home address is:
1029 Linda Dr.
Conway, SC 29526
(843) 347-6619

NEW ASSEMBLY

Meetings of the Grace Gospel Chapel are held at Village English Ltd., 6503B Mississauga Rd., Streetsville, ON. Lord willing, a Bible Class on the topic "Who is this Jesus?" will be conducted for children and adults each Sunday from 11 until noon.

Every Sunday evening, a Breaking of Bread meeting will be held at 6:30 followed by a gospel/ministry meeting at 7:30.

Everyone is also welcome to the Tuesday evening Bible Study each week at 7:00.

Call Ian Churchill
(905) 785-0510 or
(905) 828-7230

FURNITURE AVAILABLE

The saints at the Albany Gospel Chapel (Albany, GA) are planning, Lord willing, to replace their 254 wood/metal folding seats with new pews. If any assembly could use this seating, please contact:

Bobby Marshall
(912) 883-4701 (days)
(912) 432-0436 (evenings)

SING AS THE HYMNS WERE WRITTEN

Could your assembly use help in teaching the saints how to sing? Do you want to make maximum use of your hymnbooks? Paul Forcucci has a plan. On this unique tape, *Unto Him Who Hath Loved Us*, he gives a collection of ideas and suggestions to help assemblies improve their singing of worship and praise hymns—especially those hymns used at the Lord's Supper such as are found in the *Hymns of Worship & Remembrance*.

On the tape Jack Spender con-



"Unto Him who hath Loved Us"

ducts an informal interview with brother Paul Forcucci. Jack ministers the Word of God in Connecticut where Paul fellowships with the young assembly in Waterbury. Paul is a music teacher by profession and has successfully communicated a love for the old hymns to the young people of that assembly. For those whose whole congregational singing experience has been spent singing the soprano part while a piano substituted the four-part harmony, you need to hear this tape. You will value your hymnbook more, and set your sights a bit higher after listening to it.

Although it contains some musical selections and portions, it is not a sophisticated musical production, but a practical teaching tool with singing to illustrate the points made.

The tapes are provided and shipped free of charge by Waterbury Christian Fellowship. Order the tape by calling (203) 756-1743.


FELLOWSHIP FOR FT. RILEY

Any Christian servicemen or women now stationed at Ft. Riley, KS are heartily invited to fellowship at the chapel near Abilene. Contact:

Ken Engle
PO Box 454
Abilene, KS 67410-0454
(785) 263-4640

COMMENDATIONS

The commendation given by Hiawassa Bible Chapel to Billy Skelton for work as director of Camp Horizon, Leesburg, FL is no longer in effect. It was his intention at the time the commendation was given to return to secular work in three or four years. This he has done.

We would join other assemblies in Florida in thanking him for a job well done. He will still be active in summer programs at camp and directing youth work at Hiawassa Bible Chapel. 

Construction area

Building men for the Church is one of God's big projects

DR. STEVE PRICE

“**A**nd the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Even a brief perusal of “assembly” annals shows that there have always been those who had a vision to train faithful men—whether through individually “apprenticing,” conferences or Bible schools. Our young men will probably be called to serve as elders or in other places of spiritual responsibility at a younger age than previous North American generations. Thus, the Lord exercised our hearts to work toward training faithful men.

We first contacted the elders from approximately ten assemblies in the central mid-west region of the US. Our intention was to gather those men whom the elders would recommend as serious-minded about the Lord. We would meet at a conveniently located home for the weekend and begin to cover topics intensively that would increase their fitness for

local assembly work. The idea was to gather for limited concentrated study, rather than pull them away from their home meetings for an extended period of time. They then could put into practice what they had learned in their own assembly, remaining under their local elders’ authority.

Our second goal is to teach these men how to search the Scriptures for themselves and not merely be spoon-fed. Thus, we initially held two weekend sessions on Bible study methods and hermeneutics. During our sessions, we would have times of “lecture” followed by self-study assignments, both individually or in small groups. We concluded these three-hour block sessions by a moderated discussion of what the men uncovered during their independent investigation. The men labored through approximately five of these three-hour blocks during a weekend, so as to eventually cover 14-16 hours of study. After finishing this topic, the men were given a homework assignment of fully exploring Titus by our next session. This would serve as the text for our next two sessions, which focused on homiletics. Our last meet-

ing was Sept. 10-12, 1999, with the men providing about 15 minutes of a sermon followed by classroom critique. Although this analysis could be potentially devastating, the atmosphere was safe and friendly and the men found it helpful. Something most memorable: an assembly that had sent seven young men to these sessions were so serious about the homework that for several months they studied Titus as a group, and set to memorize the book together!

We now attempt to meet three times per year. Our next two sessions will deal with the gospel, including its components, apologetics, and methods of gospel presentation. With these tools, we hope to take one of our three meetings and become co-laborers with an assembly that desires help with a gospel effort. We hope to meet, Lord willing, this coming September, in Little Rock, AR.

Thus, we would meet to study twice a year (eventually aiming to cover all the major Bible doctrines) and once a year to put our learning into practice. In the meantime, the men are encouraged to stay useful in their local assemblies, be accountable to their elders, and complete their homework assignments

Initially, we started with just ten men. Now we have grown to thirty-five, by the grace of our Lord. We are encouraged both by their interest and dedication. Our next weekend is being planned for latter January 2000. Our goal is to make it somewhat challenging, yet stimulating. May you likewise be encouraged. If an elder or individual is interested in more information, please contact:

Steve Price
(913) 897-9034
8prices@sunflowerroad.com
John Heller
(501) 663-5455
jhellerii@aol.com



Three times the number of young men in the Upper Room.



The greening of Eire

The land of Darby and Powerscourt, of Aungier Street and Merrion Hall, is seeing the Lord working again.

W. H. BURNETT

Recently there has been an awakening in the Republic of Ireland as the grip of the Roman Catholic system is weakening somewhat. Several assembly workers have been exercised to evangelize in the western area of the country with a view to seeing assemblies established. Among these are Garnet and Gwen Cooney, Tim and Linda Hood, Colin and Natalie Burnett, Anna Inge, and Dan and Melody Nicol.

The work is essentially in a pioneering phase at the moment and hence, until such time as other works can be established, all of the workers and their families, along with some recent converts, meet to break bread and conduct meetings in Charleville, County Cork (3.5 hours southwest of Dublin). During our visit, the gospel meeting was well attended, with quite a number of unsaved people coming under the sound of the Word.

The work is difficult and fraught with complications since the area is almost 100% Roman Catholic. Places in which there is potential for formation of new assemblies in the long term are Ballyunion, Limerick, and Rathkeale. Individual workers have a burden to take responsibility for leading the evangelical outreach in each of these centers. In the meantime, the work of preaching and door-to-door evangelization continues on a daily basis. There have been some remarkable conversions.

During our visit we had the privi-

lege of meeting people who had been gloriously saved. A few of these are mentioned below.

NEWTOWNSHANDRUM

Josephine: In Newtownshandrum, a few miles from Charleville, we met a remarkable lady called Josephine. She is a widow woman, brought up in the Catholic Church. She heard the gospel, responded in faith, and immediately saw the need to separate from the Catholic Church, and take a stand for Christ. This may seem a matter of no consequence to us, but consider the fact that this woman lives in a small community of a few thousand all of whom are adherents of the Catholic system. For her to take this stand was costly.

Due to the difficulties of getting a meeting place midweek, the assembly meets in her large house which she generously offers for the meetings. Again this is costly for her to do. We met at her home for three evenings of ministry; the numbers attending would be around thirty.

Edelle: The Lord is no man's debtor, and Josephine has seen this in a remarkable way. One day, my son Colin was feeling discouraged. His attempts to get access to the school system in Rathkeale had been thwarted, and he decided to return home for a time of prayer. On arriving home, he was told that Josephine had called for him to come to her house urgently. When he arrived, a young mother, Josephine's niece, Edelle, was sitting at the table, trembling from head to toe and weeping bitterly. She was a drug user, and had contemplated suicide that week. She had come to



Josephine of Newtownshandrum

Josephine because she saw her aunt had what she needed. After speaking to her for two hours, Colin had the joy of leading Edelle to Christ.

Colin told us that the effect was dramatic. No sooner had she confessed Christ, than she said, "Look! I've stopped shaking!" Then looking outside, she said, "It's even stopped raining!" I thought of the hymn,

*Heaven above is softer blue,
Earth beneath is sweeter green,
Something lives in every hue,
Christless eyes have never seen.*

We had the privilege of meeting Edelle, and she looks as if she has been a Christian all her days. She faced a real challenge the first weekend we were in Ireland, when her ex-boyfriend, who is still on drugs, visited with her, but she stood her ground, and he left with a Bible and a copy of *Ultimate Questions*.

RATHKEALE

Helen and Mike: A weekly Bible study is held in the home of this couple, and others in the area are invited in. Helen is a bright Christian. Saved but not yet separated from the Catholic Church, partly because her husband is not yet saved, and still attending Mass. We need to pray for Mike, because, after a period of opposition to the gospel, he has opened his home for the study to take place. He has been found to be suffering from MS and perhaps this has spoken to him. Pray that he will find Christ soon.

Rose and Pat: One of the attendees at the study in Helen's house was a young mother named Rose. She is a bright Christian recently saved.

NOTE: We also thank the Lord for assemblies that have been in existence in the south of Ireland for some years—Wicklow, Bray, Cork, Skibbereen, Bandon, Sligo, several in Dublin, and elsewhere.

Also we know of relatively new works in Kilkenny (where David and Beth Wilson [NJ] now labor), and in metropolitan Dublin, as well those in this report.

The town of Charleville, County Cork, should not be confused with the headquarters of Ireland Outreach in Dublin, which shares the same name.

BALLYBUNION

Peggy, Joseph and Gerald: It was our privilege to travel to Ballybunion to meet three unmarried brothers and sisters now in their seventies. They live on a large farm property on the Atlantic coast. If ever we met a unique family, it was this one. Peggy had been a nun for over fifty years until her conversion about seven years ago, and her brothers Joseph and Gerald had studied for the priesthood. Joseph is soundly saved, but Gerald, the oldest, now nearing eighty, is still not saved. But he did attend all of the meetings during our visit. We felt that he was near to accepting Christ.

Our visit to their home was one of the highlights of our time in Ireland. I can honestly say that I have never had such a workout on doctrinal issues as these people gave during our visit. We read Peggy's testimony and her reasons for leaving the Catholic Church. It is one of the clearest expositions that I have seen of the Epistle to the Galatians. These dear souls had to fight all the way for deliverance from the Roman Catholic system, and they had cleared the way doctrinally with great precision.

There is no assembly in this area at present so they attend a local Pentecostal Church, but are very unhappy with some of the practices, and would welcome an assembly environment. Pray that this will happen soon.

LIMERICK

Joe: One of the bright Christians we met in Charleville was Joe. Some time before, he had been brought down from Limerick to the meeting by two workers, Dan and Melody, who labor in the area. His reputation in the town went before him. The locals referred to him simply as "The Drunk" since he was rarely if ever sober. He had lost his job, and lived on the streets. Despite several attempts to change via Alcoholics Anonymous, he was unable to break his chains.



The group that gathers in Josephine's home

Well, when this man was introduced to Christ, he was gloriously saved. Speaking to him, there is not one vestige of the life of wantonness and debauchery that he previously had lived, and he happily told us that the night he was saved, the Lord completely took away any desire for alcohol, and that he had never even thought about it since. He was radiant with the joy of salvation.


Dennis: On one of the Lord's Day mornings, I had the privilege of preaching the gospel at Charleville. That day the workers from Limerick had brought a man named Dennis. He was seeker, but had been unwilling to take the final step. During a coffee break after the meeting, I spoke with him about salvation, and although he seemed near, he was hesitating. I stepped away for a moment to get some coffee and to give him some time to think, when Anna Inge approached him. The conversation about his soul's great need continued, and before long, he bowed his head and prayerfully accepted Christ as his Saviour.

REVISITING BANDON

When we made a previous visit to the Bandon St. Patrick's Day conference two years ago, the assembly was then meeting in a rather dilapidated church building. Since that time, they have sold the old building and are now the happy owners of a beautiful new building, with all modern conveniences, including an upstairs overflow room overlooking the main auditorium, equipped with closed circuit TV. It was our privilege to travel down to the Bandon assembly, who had arranged a special ministry meeting on a Friday night. The hall was well filled and the Lord blessed His Word.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

The workers in Ireland need much prayer as they travel around the counties carrying the Gospel. Although the strength of the Roman Catholic Church is not as strong as it once was, it can still carry considerable clout. Untold pressures can be brought to bear on those daring enough to step out from under her authority, and even the workers can meet this as they try to find accommodation for meetings. For example, a building became available in Newtowndrum at a good price and suitable for meetings. Upon enquiry, the workers were told that it was no longer for sale. Next day it was sold to another party! Pressure on the previous owner kept him from selling to the workers in the area.

Do pray that new assemblies will spring up soon, and the evangelism will thus find its true purpose, in seeing souls saved and brought to a place where they can be cared for and nurtured in the things of God. 

MURDER SUSPECT ARRESTED

New Delhi police have arrested another suspect in the murders of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons last January. But the man police suspect of master-minding the attack, Dara Singh, remains at large, despite numerous sightings in the last 10 months.

FACTS FROM HOLY LAND UPHOLD FAITH IN BIBLE

Years of research by Holy Land historians and archaeologists have proved many well-known Bible stories did actually happen.

Drawing from interviews with leading Bible experts and on-site visits to Israel and Egypt, *US News & World Report* correspondent Jeffery Sheler concludes that the common belief that the Bible's credibility has been undermined by critical scholarship is wrong.

Rather, the weight of historical evidence upholds the essential truth of key Bible events such as the Exodus and the gospel accounts of Christ, he writes in *Is The Bible True? How Modern Debates & Discoveries Affirm the Essence of the Scriptures*.

Sheler's research finds good reason to believe accounts such as that of the Exodus despite hard proof. Bearing in mind the Jews were slaves, according to the Bible, a lack of material evidence is not surprising, he notes. Apparent conflicts over the dating of the event can be reconciled, too, he says.

The 1993 discovery in upper Galilee of an ancient inscription referring to "The House of David"—the first solid evidence for the existence of the shepherd-king said by

skeptics to be just a legend—was just one of the "extraordinary ways modern archaeology has affirmed the historical core of the Old and New Testaments," says Sheler.

The book also reports that the 1968 finding of the skeletal remains of a crucified man outside of Jerusalem gave great weight to biblical accounts of Christ's death.

Sheler says that archaeological findings offer "promise and peril."

"In one moment, the unearthing of an inscription or artifact can shed new light or cast a shadow on a passage of Scripture and in the process shatter the presuppositions of biblical scholarship," he says. "One kind of truth is confirmed—or replaced—by another." —*Newswatch*

UPDATE FROM EPI

Ed and Gertrud Harlow of Everyday Publications, report that their faithful staff have published a total of 2,616,759 books. Many of these, sent often to countries going through social and political upheaval, have by now been destroyed—probably around 60%. This still leaves more than a million in existence.

SHOOTING "THE BODY"

Antonio Banderas travelled to Israel in November to shoot a film entitled "The Body." It is about what happens between Israel, the Palestinians and the Vatican when the body of Christ is discovered. The movie is being produced by two Israelis, Moshe Diamont and Rudy Cohen. Banderas will play the part of a Catholic priest.

—*Jerusalem Review*

WHO IS THIS POKEMON?

Most parents with young children have heard of Pokémon (short for POCkEt MONster, pronounced Pokeymon). They are strange little creatures from Japan who have suddenly become global super-stars. The

multi-billion dollar industry includes video games, trading cards, TV, books and a movie. They have stirred up very strong reactions.

The maker of the trading cards, Wizards of the Coast, Inc., also owns the world's best-selling *Magic: The Gathering* trading card game which is available in nine languages and sold in 52 countries, played by six million people worldwide. The mass-market appeal of the Pokémon was sparked by the success of Nintendo's Game Boy game, as well as the nation's highest-rated kids' television program.

In 1997 Wizards of the Coast purchased TSR Inc., creators of *Dungeons & Dragons*.

One website warning parents says it gives kids a seductive vision to become Pokémon masters, a tempting promise of supernatural power, a new objective to keep collecting Pokémon and an urgent command—"Gotta catch them all."

These enticements are drilled into young minds through clever ads, snappy slogans, and the Pokémon rap at the end of each TV episode.

Does Pokémon lure children into a fantasy world that eventually seems far more exciting than the real world? Here, evil looks good and good is dismissed as boring. Family, relationships, and responsibilities diminish in the wake of the social and media pressures to master the powers unleashed by the massive global entertainment industry.

AFRICAN YOUNG PEOPLE

Teenage girls are among the new targets of the AIDS virus in Africa. In two towns, in Zambia and Kenya, 15-23 percent of girls aged 15 to 19 were infected. Statistics show that the likely cause of infection is older men. UNICEF reports that in Zambia, between 20,000 and 50,000 babies are born with HIV/AIDS each year. —*Pulse*



Long range weather predictions

The One who controls the weather has already filed His report about the stormy days ahead.

R. E. HARLOW

Someone has maliciously said that it would be about as worthwhile if the weatherman theorized the stock market trends, and the financial guru tried predicting the weather. Of course we will not attempt either. What then?

Many Bible students find it posterous to suppose that the third millennium since Christ, will pass without Christ. This is not another inane attempt to foretell the day of His return. But we can learn from Scripture a lot of what will occur in the seven years ending in His appearance in power and glory. These trends are already discernible as never before, so merit our attention. For this little piece we will consider mostly the weather, as what we know best.

This year has seen in three weeks three earthquakes, graded about 7, and three severe hurricanes have hit well populated areas of North America. Five more earthquakes will occur in the post-Rapture period, or heptad of (seven) years.

1. After the opening of the sixth seal (Rev. 6:12), also marked by loss of sunlight and moonlight.

2. Before the seven trumpets (Rev. 8:5), with voices, thunder, lightning.

3. When the two witnesses rise from death (Rev. 11:13); one tenth of Jerusalem will fall, 7,000 people killed.

4. When the temple in heaven is opened (Rev. 11:19), also with lightnings, voices, thunderings, great hail.

5. When the seventh angel pours

out his bowl of wrath, and a great voice booms, "It is done!" There will be more voices, thunders, lightnings, and the vastest earthquake since God created man (Rev. 16:18).

There were earthquakes in Old Testament times, and at the death and resurrection of Christ, also when Paul and Silas prayed at midnight. The earth trembling is surely a proof of God's power.

Hailstones with huge tempests are positive signs of God's condemnation. The seventh plague in Egypt demolished crops, livestock, and trees (Ex. 9:19, 25), but selectively spared Israel. The hailstorm involved lightning and fire also (as in Ps. 78:47-48; 105:32; 148:8). God later punished Israel with these elements (Isa. 28:2; Ezek. 13:13; Hag. 2:17).

Without date, but in the near future, there will be hail:

1. With fire and blood, when the first angel sounds his trumpet (Rev. 8:7). This will devastate one-third of the trees and all green grass.

2. After the seventh trumpet, the temple in heaven will be opened. Beside the thunder, lightning and earthquake, there will be great hail (11:19).

3. But at the end, there will not only be the greatest earthquake, but also the worst hailstorm (Rev. 16:21). Every hailstone will weigh about 30 kilograms, perhaps a ball of ice 15 inches in diameter. Little wonder that men will blaspheme God!


Epidemics are partially connected



with weather, but can extend quickly, no matter. We must honor the medical profession; fabulous progress has been made, and life expectancy increased in the western world. But while AIDS is spreading irresistibly, older diseases, like tuberculosis, malaria, and others, are more resistant to standard treatment than ever.

From Revelation 6:8 we learn that the fourth horseman received power to destroy a quarter of the world population, over a billion at present. His four-pronged attack is war, famine, death, and wild animals. But notice the word "death" here corresponds to pestilence in Ezekiel 14:21. (Also the word *therion*, beasts, is used 36 times more in Revelation for the two beasts of Revelation 13. They kill all who will not worship the man of sin.)

It seems clear that the present expansion of disease is also a trend—preparatory for what lies ahead when the Church is gone. Millions of children die annually from malnutrition. Widespread famine today is also a precursor of what is to come.

How to escape? Happily, there is a way, the Way. Christ is the only way, so the choice is easy. He is always near, until the day of grace terminates. Until then, our certain duty is to confirm that all around us know the growing danger of our times, and the only Way to escape. 

TICK TALK

It's good to think about these things. But better to do them.

Time. We are conscious of it more than ever with the infamous “Y2K” now upon us. Could this be the year the Lord returns? Maybe. Not because of any prophetic significance to the year 2000, but because His return is imminent. It could happen at any time, but that does not mean it must happen today. The New Testament exhorts us to follow the apostle’s example and “wait for His Son from heaven” (1 Thess. 1:10) and, at the same time be “always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

During the 1960’s the first wave of “baby boomers” (those born shortly after the World War II) completed their education and stepped into careers. There was economic prosperity in the West. The Church was not unaffected by these social and economic changes. Many believers were swayed by the opportunities to build careers and wealth at the expense of spirituality. They lost focus and a sense of balance. The result: many of those early boomers, who could have been today’s experienced evangelists, Bible teachers, missionaries and elders, did not prepare themselves for the responsibilities awaiting them.

There should be a plentiful supply of Bible teachers, but elders of assemblies and conveners of conferences tell me it is getting more difficult to find good men. There should be an abundance of capable shepherds, caring for the flock, training today’s young men. Instead, some assemblies are attempting to function with as little as a single qualified elder—one man in retirement years trying to carry the load.

Young evangelists are being raised up to preach the gospel, but they are without experienced guidance. Their enthusiasm and zeal can sometimes cause disruptions.

Missionaries in the prayer handbook are getting older. Some in their sunset years seem to be carrying on work better suited for younger men and women. But this generation is missing.

Observers of history tell us that the past gives us lessons for the future. But before we are too critical of a past generation, we need to check the present situation. Very few in the past actually chose to let the world get the

best of them. It happened slowly, almost imperceptibly.

The question is: What can be done today? Is there hope of recovery and restoration? How can we avoid repeating this failure?

First, notice the similarity of past conditions and the present. We are again facing a period of economic prosperity and expansion in the West. Wealth creation and opportunities abound. Young people face legitimate obligations in providing for their families. Paul himself was in the tent-making business, but it never took over his life or diverted him from spiritual things.

Second, encourage timeless spiritual values as the basis of living. Our young people need to know that material things are not the main thing—necessary, but not the main thing. This problem is not new. Paul warned young Timothy about this. Read 1 Timothy.

Third, remember God is in the business of restoration and recovery. He can restore the productivity of lost years. Aging baby boomers can be used of God again. It is amazing what the Lord will do with those who are willing to

be used by Him. He quickly puts wasted years out of His mind and wants to use the remaining years for His glory. The Bible is full of examples of those who were used more by God in the closing years of life than the early years. Use your time and resources wisely in the encouragement of others and in whatever service God gives you.

Is there an evangelist, Bible teacher, missionary, elder who is buying the world’s idea, “I’m too old”? We need Calebs more than ever. It will inspire the young people.

Fourth, we need to teach young people. Again consider Paul’s advice to Timothy. “Preach the Word...the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” And there are many similar exhortations. Take time to disciple your young people. Give them opportunity when they show an interest.

The missing generation and the year 2000. Can we not redouble our efforts in abounding in the work of the Lord? As His return is near, assemblies of believers can restore the fresh enthusiasm for the things of the Lord that moved the Church in year 1.



by BRIAN GUNNING

Fishing with a giant net

Go fishing in any pond in the world right from home.

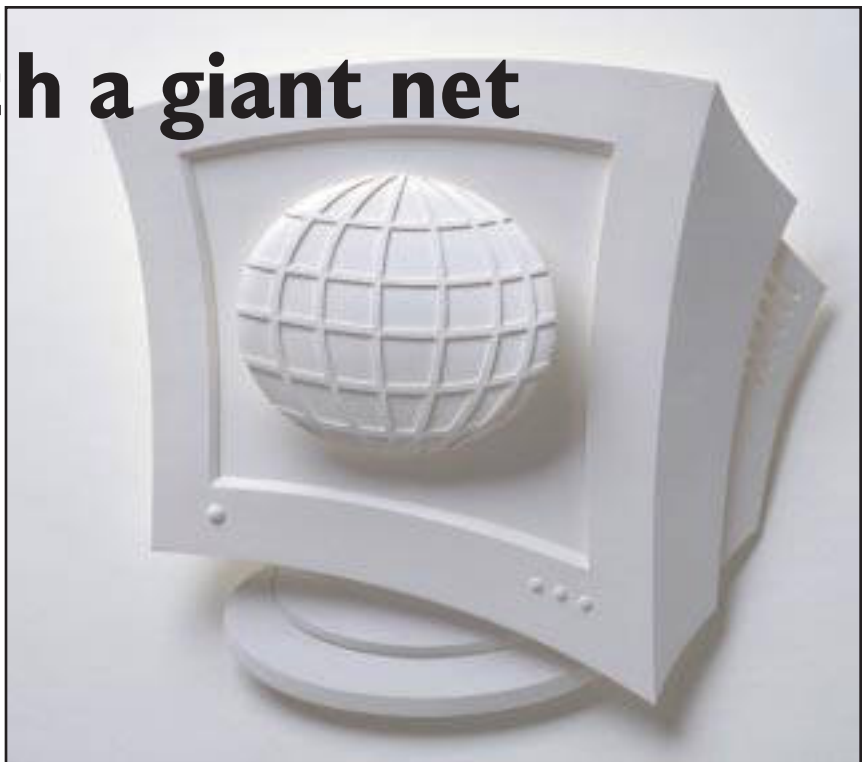
ERNIE TAN

Battles are fought every day on the Internet over the searching soul. Akin to everyday life, "the net" presents snares that can beguile both truth seeker and true believer. It can be a valuable Bible study tool to the student or a stumbling stone to the careless. To those who are evangelistically minded, the net presents a unique opportunity to share the Person of Christ.

Unlike the printed page, the internet provides a relatively easy and inexpensive way for one to publish and disseminate information to a broad audience. Accordingly, many are taking advantage of this medium to reach and encourage others.

Many versions of the Bible as well as a wide assortment of classic Christian literature are readily available free of charge. Likewise, websites that present a clear gospel message abound. As Christians, we ought to consider the internet as a means to reach others with the gospel of Christ.

In the United States alone, it is estimated that 84 million people have access to the Internet and that 64 million use it regularly (Mediamark Research). The numbers are even more staggering in other countries. By the end of the year, it is projected that 327 million people around the world will be 'online' (Computer Industry Almanac). What an enormous opportunity we have as Christians to reach the lost! A giant mission field awaits those who are



willing to invest, from the comfort of their own homes, a little time and effort to learn this enabling technology. The timid, the bold, and the shut-in can all enjoy the benefits of this new opportunity to minister.

There are many ways to communicate the gospel in this vast and virtual world. A most effective yet neglected means to reach the lost on the net is through personal testimony. We often envision net evangelism as joining an atheist chat room and ramping up for a spirited dialog. While this is altogether fine it is often difficult to find prepared and serious souls. Many are there to encourage debate for its sake and satisfaction and it is easy to be sidetracked with superfluous issues. A simple testimony presented on a single a web page, however, can declare the gospel truth in a straightforward yet personal way.

One might ask, "Who would care to find me, let alone my testimony in this vast expanse?" If a web page exists long enough, a search engine

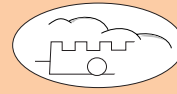
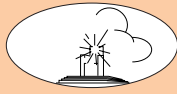
will eventually find and index it, especially if it is linked to other websites with similar content. As a result, a net searcher might stumble across your page or find it through a link in another page. This, while encouraging, is not the most efficient way to reach the lost.

Just as in the real world, relationships provide a natural in for the Christian. Hence, provide a link to your testimony on every email. Every acquaintance, colleague, friend or family member will have an opportunity to click and read about Christ's impact in your life. The incorruptible Seed will do the work that we can't while fishing for souls on the net.

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth" (Col.1:5-6).

REVELATION: Why should the book about OPENED things be a CLOSED book?

CLUES TO THE UNVEILING OF THE GLORIES OF CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE



Each separate movement of the book of the Revelation features some object from the House of God.

Golden Lampstands
(plural in the Temple)
Rev. 1:1-3:22

The Throne
(akin to the Mercy Seat)
Rev. 4:1-7:17

The Golden Altar of
Incense
Rev. 8:1-11:18

The Ark
of the Covenant
Rev. 11:19-15:4

The Shekinah in the
Sanctuary
Rev. 15:5-19:10

The New
Jerusalem
Rev. 19:11-22:21

After the 1st movement, the next 5 movements begin with something being "opened" "in heaven."

Rev. 1:1 *Apocalypse*
means "to unveil." It is
the opposite of an eclipse.

Rev. 4:1 "After this I looked,
and, behold, a door was
[standing open] in heaven"

Rev. 8:1 "When He had
opened the seventh seal, there
was silence in heaven..."

Rev. 11:19 "And the
temple of God was
opened in heaven..."

Rev. 15:5 "...the tabernacle
of the testimony in heaven
was opened"

Rev. 19:11
"And I saw heaven opened,
and behold..."

Each movement closes with a comment. These comments include or accompany praise concerning God's great salvation.

Rev. 2-3
Christ is speaking at
length to the angels of
the 7 churches.

Rev. 7:13-17
One of the twenty-four
elders answers
John's question.

Rev. 11:15-18
The twenty-four elders
thank God for
answering prayer.

Rev. 15:2-4
The victors sing the
song of Moses and
of the Lamb.

Rev. 19:1-10
John heard a great voice
of many people
saying, Alleluia.

Rev. 22:16-21
Jesus speaks, and the
Spirit and the
Bride say, Come.

Each movement features some overall message which contributes to the complete message of the book.

Light characterizes God
as He deals with His
people and in His
judgments of the world.
God is seen as open,
honest, and transparent
about His policies and
agenda. Unlike the
world's shadowy political
intrigues, He speaks in
the full light.

This movement lays out
the character of God's
throne and the right
that He has to bring
judgment. Here God is
seen obviously to be both
just, and the justifier of
him that believes in
Jesus. *The throne or
thrones* are mentioned
24 times.

The meaning of the
golden altar is already
given in Revelation
6:9-11. Here God is
judging in answer to the
prayers of God's
suffering people. God
answers the problem of
human sorrow and a
silent heaven. And this
time the answer is loud.

The Ark of the Covenant
which has reference to
the Law that was
contained inside that
Ark is affronted by
idolatry. In this
movement, God judges
man's perversion of
power when the Man
of Sin forces people
to idolize him.

In this section
of the book, the
Beauty of Holiness is
contrasted to the
perversion of beauty in
the great whore, "the
Mother of Harlots,"
Babylon the Great.
God's judgment of that
system reinforces to us
what real beauty is.

After such sweeping
judgments as previously
seen, will there be
anything, or anyone, left?
In the New Jerusalem,
God presents the perfect
Man and the perfect
Woman in the perfect
setting, and shows that
happy endings are not
just a dream.

With special thanks for the helpful ministry of Drs. David Gooding and John Lennox on the Book of the Revelation. Chart prepared by John Bjorlie and J. B. Nicholson, Jr.

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This issue of **UPLOOK** magazine included the chart shown above in a double-page format. This full-color printed chart as well as the various topics listed below are available from Uplook Ministries by calling toll-free 1-800-952-2382 (new charts are added periodically). The wealth of info in these charts is perfect for Bible studies, intermediate and advanced Sunday school classes and for reference. Printed on quality paper and shipped in durable mailers.

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- Stir up your Gift L-GCH
- The Habitation of God on Earth L-TCH
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- Key Locations from the days of the Early Church (map) L-KKL
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- Multiple Names and Titles of the Lord Jesus L-MNT

- Real Snake Handling: The Devil's Devices L-RSH
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 - Ten Test Questions to Discern Biblical Orthodoxy L-TTQ
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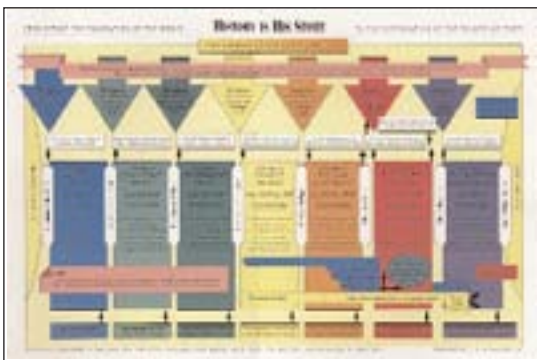
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🕒 The Multiple Names and Titles of the Lord Jesus Christ



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



🕒 7 Parables of the Kingdom

Y2K—Is this the time?

Guessing when the Lord will return is a futile exercise. But living as though He will return today is a purifying and energizing impetus.

WILLIAM MacDONALD

What is the prophetic significance of the year 2000? Is January 1, 2000 related in any positive way to the coming of the Lord? There is good reason to avoid such a notion.

That would be a form of date setting, and well-taught Christians know that they should not indulge in this pastime.

The only definite thing we can say about the time of our Lord's return is that it is unknown and will be unexpected when it occurs.

Calendar experts now tell us that Christ's birth actually took place about six years before the date we have always accepted. If that is true, then the New Millennium began six years ago and passed without fanfare.

God has not boxed Himself in to thousand year periods in spacing important prophetic events. Only once in human history is a millennium specifically designated, and that will occur when the Lord Jesus reigns over the earth (the "thousand years" is mentioned 7 times in 7 verses, Rev. 20:2-7). That will not begin in 2000. It must be preceded at the very least by seven years of tribulation.

But although we need not expect

any great intervention of God on the January 1, we can still look for the rapture at any moment. We can still keep the motto on the wall above the kitchen sink—"Perhaps Today."

There have never been so many compelling reasons to expect His imminent, any-moment return.

Let me list a few:

- The United Nations had intruded into the religious realm by calling for a meeting of 1000 leaders of world religions in 2000. The stated purpose is to eliminate conflicts between various faiths, but that may only be the opening wedge toward formation of a one-world religion.

- The International Red Cross recently issued a world disaster report predicting a decade of super-disasters. It said that 1998's season of natural disasters was the worst on record, causing more damage than ever before. 1999 had its full share as well.

- The need for a strong world

leader becomes ever more evident with the increasing centralization of power in this global village. Never forget what Henri Spaak, one of the founders of the European Common Market, said: "Send us such a man, and be he God or devil, we will follow him."

We have plenty of other reasons to believe that our redemption is drawing near. Here are some of them:

- The increasing importance of Israel and Jerusalem in world affairs.


- Preparations for rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem.

- The formation of the most prominent European nations into an economic community.

- The apostasy of Christendom, crystallized in the ecumenical movement.

- The worldwide decline of culture into a moral sewer.

- The prevalence of false prophets and false messiahs.

These and other signs that will precede the coming of the Lord in power and glory are more evident today than ever before. That being so, how much closer is the Rapture—Christ's coming for His saints! Y2K is no time to be fearful or apprehensive. What is darkness and gloom for the world is light and joy for the believer. 



Why He came the first time

The Lord Jesus spoke plainly. It was no secret why He came. To found a new religion? To help those who help themselves? To bring world peace? Read on.

A SCRIPTURE COMPILATION

Even the popular magazines on the news racks are displaying banner headlines about prophetic events and the messianic hopes (and fears) that are stirring in the hearts of ordinary people as the year 2000 approaches. What better time could there be to ask why the Lord Jesus came the first time? A selection of New Testament verses have been arranged under sixteen biblical reasons for the Incarnation.

1. To fulfill the Old Covenant with its prophetic Scriptures and to establish the basis for the New:

• Mt. 5:17 *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I*

am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

• Jn. 1:14, 17 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth...For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

• Rom. 5:19 *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.*

• Rom. 15:8 *...Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.*

• Gal. 3:13-14 *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through*

Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

• Gal. 4:4-5 *But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

• Eph. 2:15-17 *Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

2. To show us true servanthood and to equip us to follow His steps:

• Mt. 4:19 *And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men (Mk. 1:17).*

• Mt. 20:28 *...the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many (Mk. 10:45).*

• Jn. 13:14-15 *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done.*

3. To accomplish the will of the Father—here was a real Man who lived all for God:

• Jn. 4:34 *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.*

• Jn. 5:30 *I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My*



judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me.

- Jn. 6:38 *For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.*
- Jn. 9:4 *I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*
- Heb. 10:9 *Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.*

4. To clarify distinctions between light and dark, between children of the devil and the children of God:

- Mt. 10:34-35 *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.*
- Lk. 12:51 *Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.*
- Jn. 3:19 *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*
- Jn. 12:46 *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness.*
- 1 Jn. 4:3 *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*
- 1 Jn. 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.*

5. To offer men the opportunity to enter His kingdom and family, and to enjoy His God-sized generosity:

- Mt. 23:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (Lk. 13:34).*
- Lk. 4:43 *And He said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.*
- Lk. 11:20 *But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.*
- Lk. 14:16-17 *Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.*
- Jn. 1:11-12 *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.*

- Jn. 10:10 *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*
- Jn. 17:13 *And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.*
- Jn. 18:37 *Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.*
- 1 Jn. 1:2-3 *The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was...manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

6. To reveal the wisdom, power, glory, and love of God to humanity in all its fullness:

- Lk. 4:18-19 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*
- Lk. 11:31 *The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.*
- Jn. 2:11 *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.*
- Jn. 9:3 *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*
- Jn. 17:1 *These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*
- 1 Tim. 3:16 *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.*
- 2 Pet. 1:16 *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.*

7. To seek the rightful fruit from the lives of those who professed to be God's tillage:

- Mt. 21:33-34, 37 *Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and*

hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it...But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son (Mk. 12:1-7).

- Lk. 13:6 *He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.*

8. To seek and to save sinners:

- Mt. 9:13 *But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*
- Mk. 2:17 *When Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*
- Lk. 9:56 *For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

- 1 Cor. 15:20-21 *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead.*

Col. 2:15 *Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

- 1 Thess. 1:10 *...His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

- 2 Tim. 1:9-10 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

- Heb. 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

Jesus' coming is the final and unanswerable proof that God cares.

- Lk. 19:10 *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Mt. 18:11).*

- Jn. 3:17 *For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.*

- Jn. 12:47 *And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.*

- Acts 3:26 *...God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*

- 1 Tim. 1:15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners....*

- 1 Jn. 3:5 *And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.*

- 1 Jn. 4:14 *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*

9. To destroy the works of the devil and deliver us from death and future judgment:

- Jn. 6:39-40 *And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

- 1 Jn. 3:8 *He that committeth sin is of the devil...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

10. To die as God's paschal Lamb, providing—among other blessings—propitiation, redemption, justification and sanctification:

- Jn. 12:27 *Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.*

- Rom. 5:18 *Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

- 1 Jn. 4:10 *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

11. To meet the longing in the human heart with that which satisfies the very heart of God:

- Jn. 6:51 *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

- Jn. 7:37 *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.*

WHY HE CAME THE FIRST TIME

• 2 Cor. 8:9 *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.*

12. To provide a new life principle on earth that would produce heavenly fruit in us by abiding in Christ:

• Jn. 17:23 *I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.*

• Phil. 2:5-7 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

• 1 Jn. 4:9 *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.*

13. To reconcile us to God, and to win for Himself a Bride to be His eternal companion:

• 1 Pet. 3:18 *Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.*

• Rev. 19:7 *...Be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready.*

14. To establish a righteous basis for the future judgment of Christ-rejectors:

• Lk. 12:49 *I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?*

• Jn. 9:39 *For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.*

15. To enter heaven as a real Man, a sympathetic high priest, opening heaven to us as well:

• Heb. 2:10 *For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect*

through sufferings.

• Heb. 2:17 *Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*

• Heb. 6:20 *Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

• Heb. 7:26 *...Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens.*

• Heb. 10:19-20 *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.*

16. To complete the full-orbed revelation of God's communications to man:

• Jn. 3:34 *He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.*

• Jn. 4:25, 29 *The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things...Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*

• Jn. 12:49 *For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.*

• Jn. 17:6, 8 *I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word...For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.*

• Acts 10:36 *The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all.*

• Heb. 1:1-2 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.*

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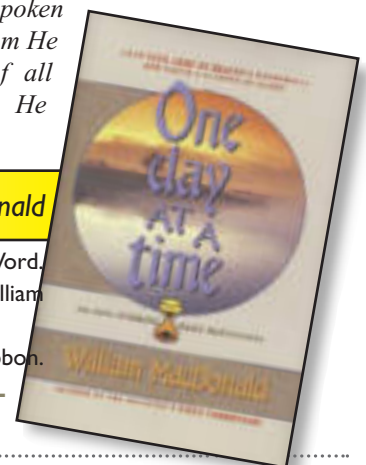
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DEVOTIONAL

B-ODA



Standing on their shoulders

We asked our “Heroes” columnist to select ten great advances of Christians in the last 1000 years.

JOHN A. BJORLIE

To acknowledge indebtedness to our Christian forebears does not mean that we are engaging in ancestral worship. We should not erect shrines to the dead, but in many ways we are indebted to them and enriched by their legacy. Still, it strikes me as strange that history is used as a point of pride. It must be that those who swell their chests every time they think of their forefathers only take a glance and not a careful look; “the distance adds a halo to the view.” Shouldn’t a look back at our forefathers cause us instead to be humbled?

The failures ought to humble us. And honest souls must admit that we are cut out of the same piece of cloth. Like Elijah under the juniper tree, we confess, “*We are not better than our fathers.*” But we are also humbled by the victories, humbled that our great God can take instruments so weak, ignorant, and inconsistent, and still use them in astounding ways.

The backward look does little to minister to our sense of self worth, but it will stir in us the song, *O God our Help in Ages Past*. The more I learn about Martin Luther, the less I adore him and the more I want to worship his Saviour; the same should be said about John Knox, John Wesley, William Carey, David Livingstone, C. H. Spurgeon, and D. L. Moody. “*Trust not in man, whose breath is in his nostrils*” (Isa. 2:22).

If we stand on the shoulders of our spiritual forebears, it is not so much a

credit to them, but to the God who made them supporting pillars. The ground we stand on was, time and again, a battleground, sometimes sodden with martyr’s blood. It is also right to be thanking God for the price others have paid.

1

When Pope Urban II called for the first Crusade to retake the holy sites in 1095, it appeared that nothing could stop them. There was no lack of volunteers. There were eight major crusades in all and several minor ones. But lonely **RAYMUND LULL** rose up to say that we should love our enemies, not give them the broad ax. He went as a missionary to the Moslems of North Africa. His contemporaries thought Lull’s efforts were futile, but today the vast majority say he won, and won decisively.

The battle to put the English Bible in our hands was decisively won by **WYCLIFFE** (1320-1384) and **TYNDALE**. Tyndale’s dying words were, “O Lord, open the king of England’s eyes.” Within two years of Tyndale’s death, the king made a proclamation to place the Bible in the English language in every parish church, making it available to the common people.

3

LUTHER nailed his famed 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenburg Chapel (1517), and launched a reformation. And **GUTTENBERG**’s printing of the German Bible in 1455 began the steady stream of Bibles that have been produced since then.

The battle for the “three only”—*sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide*—was decisively fought by the

4

When **CONRAD GREBEL** baptized **GEORGE BLAUROCK** in 1523, these Anabaptists stated that the only apostolic succession worth having was apostolic practice. They championed a living faith evidenced by good works, and the believers’ church. They started a hard fight, and died fighting. Who today seriously thinks the Epistle of James is at odds with Galatians? Or who questions that the church should be composed of only true believers? That battle was decisively won.

The **ACT OF UNIFORMITY** in 1662 expelled the learned Puritans from their pulpits, and by that forced retirement, gave those men the opportunity to write. The Puritans set out to purify the Church of England, but ended up purifying the body of Christ. They liked to say, “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that is alone does not save.” They finished the fight against Antinomianism that the Anabaptists had begun, hounding that doctrine right out of the Church.

When **GEORGE WHITEFIELD** was shut out of the pulpits of the state church, he leaped over his prejudices and went preaching to coal miners in the open air at Kingswood near Bristol in 1739. He did what the Puritans seemed incapable of: “*unto*

6

the poor the gospel [was] preached.” Thus the Great Awakening sounded with Whitefield’s favorite text, “Ye

must be born again,” and we have never doubted it since. Men like Jonathan Edwards, John and Charles Wesley, and Whitefield believed passionately in the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion and that the evangelist is not sent on a fool’s errand. All fought this battle decisively. Today to be a Christian means that we believe in evangelism to the masses. Wesley’s unordained itinerant preachers restored the right of the common Christian to handle and proclaim the Word of God. Thus a great blow was struck at the unscriptural clergy/laity distinction. Those of us who have never been harassed—let alone stoned—for preaching openly, stand on their shoulders.

7 A cobbler named **WILLIAM CAREY** answered the remark that if God wished to convert the heathen, He could do it well enough without our help—by going to India (1793) and the age of world missions began. Morrison, Moffat, Livingston, Groves—all tell us that being an evangelical Christian is to be missionary minded.

In the days of the Anabaptists, books like *The Dippers Dipped* ridiculed the practice of baptism as an almost occult phenomena. Many of the celebrities of Church history, like Martin Luther, George Whitefield, Charles Finney, and D. L. Moody, were never scripturally baptized. But today the truth of believer’s baptism by immersion is more than in the public domain. It is the standard among true believers. Why? Because we stand on the shoulders of dear men like **JOHN BUNYAN** who put baptism in its proper place.

9 Every congregation of saints who gather in the name of Christ without some umbrella organization to validate it, stands on the shoulders of believers like **J. G. BELLETT** and **JOHN DARBY** who met to simply “break bread” in Dublin in 1825-1827. At the Powerscourt prophetic conferences (c. 1830-1836), they recovered the truth that we are all one Body, and our Head is in heaven. They held that the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven could, if given room, have His way in the Church, so that we need no creed but the Bible. The prophetic passages of the Bible were opened in a way that men like John Calvin never thought possible. That battle was decisively won. For thousands of non-denominational churches, the hold of institutional sectarianism is a memory of the past.

Two California businessmen contacted **A. C. DIXON** to edit and publish foundational articles about Christianity. The result: a 12-volume series called *The Fundamentals*, edited by Dixon and **R. A. TORREY** between 1910 and 1915 that drew together a careful collection from the finest and soundest Bible teachers. Their fight for a pure orthodoxy came like a call across Christendom to all those attending apostate

Is it true that what they lived without knowing it, we know without living it?


churches, “Come out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord.” A line was drawn between the false church and the true, and our landscape has never been the same. Today we understand that to be a Christian means that we embrace clearly-stated fundamentals, and we know what they are.

Why did all those battles and controversies of the past millennium occur? Because uncovering the apostolic truth after it has been buried under a heap of Philistine rubble can be nasty work.

The apostles warned that they would be followed by apostasy. Paul said, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). Even in his own day he had to say, “All they that be in Asia have forsaken me.” Peter said that as there were false prophets among the people, “so there shall be false teachers among you.” John added, “even now there are many antichrists.” And Jude has his own direct warnings.

So it was. Even while the apostles lived, there began a fearful departure from the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of the so-called Apostolic Fathers (c. 95-150), caved in on justification by works, had sloppy thinking on the Lord’s Supper and baptism, and introduced the clergy-laity system. When there are people who have a vested interest in having the truth buried, bringing it back into the light will mean a fight.

In this millennium, when the true Church has enjoyed stages of recovery, it has always been with hard struggle. But has there really been progressive recovery? Obviously. Today we commonly enjoy truths that were once secreted among a timid minority. Does this mean that we enjoy more truth than Martin Luther did, or Jonathan Edwards did? Do we?

Of course we do. To say so is not to exalt ourselves, but it is to say that the battles these very men fought were won, and won decisively. We enjoy the spoils. “The path of the just is as a shining light that shines **more and more** unto the perfect day.” We do go “from strength to strength.” It may be true that what they lived without knowing it, we know without living it. Many of them lived in the spirit of true Christianity while we seem to have it only in theory. But if we do have it only in theory, the only thing that keeps us from living it is our own lack of faith. As this age closes, sin abounds, but “*grace does much more abound.*” To preserve and protect His Church, Christ has abounded to us by making available more truth. Things that confounded Martin Luther or John Wesley are common knowledge today to babes in Christ. Why? Because we stand on their shoulders. 

8

10

THE AGE OF AGES

Any surprise that it is ruled by the King of kings?

As the present millennium winds to a close and a new millennium looms before us, many are speculating concerning what we should expect in this new age. *Newsweek* magazine recently disclosed that there are 239 different web sites on the Internet exploring the uncertainty of the coming millennium. Philosophers, scientists, sociologists, and religious leaders are raising their voices, some in dire predictions, others in rapt anticipation of this glorious new epoch. Medical researchers claim that in the next millennium virulent diseases will be eradicated, new medical advances will enable men and women to commonly live past 100 years.

On Wall Street, pundits and financial observers are promising rising levels in the stock market far into the next century. Social scientists expect great advances to be made in the areas of race relations, poverty, and crime. Human ability and human achievements are causing many hearts to quicken with eager anticipation for this new millennium. Scientists, political leaders, and other experts are placing great faith in the triumph of humanism for a utopian future.

The Bible, however, describes a very different scene for the future. The glorious ability and advances of man do not find themselves on center stage. That is reserved exclusively for the glory of God, in the person of Christ, seen in all of His manifold and shining excellencies. This biblical age may not begin on January 1, 2000, but when it finally breaks upon the world stage, it will be the decisive age in human history. The apostle Paul beautifully described this time to come: *"Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"* (Eph. 3:21). It is worth noting that the apostle wrote in the original, *"Unto Him be glory...unto all the generations of the age of ages, Amen."*

At once this striking phrase *"Age of ages,"* or *"Eternity of ages,"* stirs our spiritual imagination. This time period will not be merely another age, much like

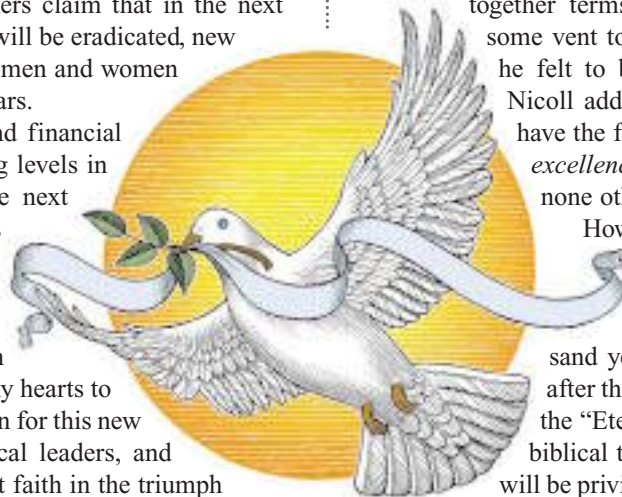
many others that have gone before it. It will not be marked simply by medical, political, and societal advances. Unlike all others, it will be the "Age of Ages."

Careful students of the Word of God have long labored to grasp the breadth of this remarkable phrase. Theologian Charles Hodge expressed something of the greatness of this age, when he wrote, "'To all the generation of an eternity of ages.' In finding no ordinary forms of expression suited to his demands, the apostle heaps together terms of the largest import to give some vent to thoughts and aspirations which he felt to be unutterable..."¹ W. Robertson Nicoll adds, "The phrase *age of ages* may have the force of a superlative, the *age par excellence*, the age besides which there is none other to be named."²

However, among serious Bible students there is not complete agreement concerning whether this period refers to the one thousand year reign of Christ or the period after the millennium called "Eternity" or the "Eternal State." We may say that this biblical time period, in which the Church will be privileged to display to angels and the nations the glories of her Saviour, will begin at the millennial reign of Christ and continue on into eternity.

However, among Christians there is broad agreement concerning the high privilege and importance of this time period to those who are numbered among the Church of God. Commentator Albert Leckie writes, "If the age of ages be the coming millennium, as I judge it to be, then the Church in its peculiar and unique relationship to Christ will be seen by generations to the glory of the Father. The Church on earth today displays to angelic beings in the heavenlies the multi-varied wisdom of God. In the age of ages it shall display from its place in the heavenlies with Christ Jesus glory to the Father to generations of men on the earth. Amen."³

There are two principles concerning the glory of Christ which characterize this time period from the commencement of the millennium to the "eternity of ages" in



by DAVID DUNLAP

the eternal state. The first of these is that Christ is the centerpiece of the “age of ages.” This principle is brought out in a quiet and yet profound way in Revelation 4 and 5. Properly speaking, Revelation chapters 4 and 5 do not take place during the millennium or the eternal state, but rather at a time in heaven after the Church is taken up, while the earth below experiences that which the Bible describes as the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*.” However, spiritual principles that we find here will be carried on into the millennium and the eternal state. In Revelation 4 and 5 we find Christ to be the very centerpiece of heaven. He is the backdrop, foreground, the all-surpassing theme, the gathering center, the preeminent One of heaven—the Lamb is all the glory.

Heaven would not be heaven if the Lamb were not there. Christ’s presence defines heaven. One of the most frequently-used descriptive phrase in the New Testament for heaven is simply, “*Where I am*” (Jn. 14:3; 17:24). All things in heaven, whether objects, persons, or spirit beings, are described in their relationship to Christ on the throne. The first thing John mentions that he sees in heaven, is the throne and the One who sits upon it. The sight of the throne is so gripping to his spiritual mind that he mentions it fifteen times in these two chapters.

As he describes the scene in the most detailed portion in all of Scripture concerning heaven, everything is spoken of in its relationship to the throne. Notice the following: “*a rainbow round about the throne*” (4:3); “*round about the throne were four and twenty seats*” (4:4); “*out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunders and voices*” (4:5); “*before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal*” (4:6); “*the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne*” (4:10); “*...cast their crowns before the throne*” (4:10). Christ is the centerpiece of Heaven. In the Age of ages He alone will captivate our hearts, He alone will be the incomparable object of worship, and He alone will distinguish and mark the glory of the Age of ages.

Not only will Christ be the *centerpiece* of that age, He also will be the *masterpiece* of that age. Ages, whether they be decades or centuries, have been characterized by temporal and passing human achievements. Ages, that we have called “Stone Age,” “Bronze Age,” “Age of Enlightenment,” and the “Computer Age,” have all come and will all go. History will notice that they were marked by mere temporal developments. In marked contrast to these ages, the age to come will have upon it the imprint of eternity. Its achievements will be marked by the unequalled and unparalleled changeless work of God. In that day, one work of God will stand above all others, imbedded in our hearts forever—the penal and substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At three different times, John the apostle writes in Revelation 5 that the Lamb had been “*slain*.” We read, “*...In the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain*” (5:6); “*And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood...’*” (5:9); “*Saying in a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing’*” (5:12). The Lamb slain will be the reason for our eternal praise, it will be the cause of our love, and it will distinguish our triumphant worship. The memory of the Lamb slain will grip our hearts and minds for eternity. The Lamb slain will be the masterpiece of God in heaven. It shall stand in that day unrivaled, unmatched in glory, importance, and worth.

James Flanigan has well written, “John looks through his tears...and sees the Lamb of God, in the midst of the Throne. The marks of sacrifice are upon Him, as if freshly slain. The memory of Calvary will be fresh in Heaven throughout all eternity.”⁴

As we enter the new millennium, aware of this world’s yearning and aspirations for it, believers remain cautious, for our hearts pound with eager expectation of the soon coming of our Lord from heaven. Our hope lies not in what man has in store for himself, but rather in what our Lord Jesus Christ has marked out for His Bride. The Christian moves not in lock-step with the world, in the same direction with the same purpose, desire, and longing. We look up to heaven, awaiting our Lord, in anticipation of the day when the King in all His glory shall stand on Olive’s heights. Upon His thigh a name will be written, King of kings, and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). At His side will be the armies which were in heaven, following Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean (Rev. 19:14). Then that innumerable host of blood-bought saints of the Lord will be gathered with Him to reign as kings and priests forever (Rev. 5:10).

Expectantly, we look for the inauguration of the Age of ages, with all the redeemed ones from first to last who love Him. The saintly Samuel Rutherford has written about this Age of ages:

*The King there in His beauty without a veil is seen:
It were a well spent journey, though seven deaths lay between.
The Lamb, with His fair army, doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel’s land.*

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Charles Hodge, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), p. 195
- 2 W. R. Nicholl, ed., *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 319
- 3 Albert Leckie, *Ephesians* (Kilmarnock: John Ritchie Ltd, 1983), p. 149
- 4 James Flanigan, *Notes on Revelation* (Glasgow: Gospel Tract Pub., 1987), p. 46



Great expectations?

We must understand our times to be good witnesses.

The coming millennium is a strange mix of the Beginning and the End. It proffers scientific breakthroughs, communication at lightning speed, perhaps greater length of life—mixed blessings at best. We sympathize with T. S. Eliot: “Man is advancing progressively backwards.” Here are some trends to watch for in this downward spiral.

Globalism/Tribalism: The internet, media coverage, and rapid travel keep shrinking the planet. We can visit the Taj Mahal or climb Mount Everest in person, watch someone do it while we sit at home, or “experience” it through virtual reality.

Of course the results of sin travel that quickly, too. Wars on the other side of the world can be observed as they happen. Pornography *ad nauseam* is a mouse click away. And plagues can travel by jet from one continent to another in a few hours.

But nations are fragmenting as fast as the economy is globalizing. For centuries, colonialism held tribalism at bay. Now tribal wars have resumed, not with bows and arrows but with Uzis and surface-to-air missiles. Bosnia, Burundi, Chechnya, Sudan—most countries of the world are affected. Evidently iron and clay don’t make for a stable foundation.

Technology and Superstition: You would think that as the human race harnesses the secrets of the universe, witchcraft and superstition would disappear. The opposite is happening. There are more fortune tellers in France than medical doctors; Asian businessmen won’t buy a house in Vancouver without approval on the

luck value of the street address; many won’t do business if the horoscope is against it. New Age powerbeads are the rage (popularized by the Dalai Lama). So-called earth religions gain popularity and official recognition.

Science, once the domain of realists like Newton, Boyle, and Kelvin, who accepted the laws of nature (cause and effect, biogenesis, thermodynamics) now is the domain of those weaned on the idea of evolution. Relativism is their world view.

Can We, not Should We: If we are mere products of chance, let’s improve our chances! Less than 50 years ago, Watson and Crick discovered the basic structure of DNA. The Human Genome Project anticipates having all the chromosomes mapped in three years. This data is intended to help cure disease, alleviate suffering, and prolong life. But there’s more.

C. S. Lewis wrote in 1965 in *The Abolition of Man*: “Man’s conquest of Nature, if the dreams of some scientific planners are realized, means the rule of a few hundreds of men over billions upon billions of men.” Did he overstate the case? Geneticist Bentley Glass stated in his president’s address (1971) to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, “No parent will in that future time have a right to burden society with a malformed or mentally incompetent child.” Chilling indeed.


Smarter and Dumber: It seems that as we gain access to more facts, we lose the ability to make sense of them, “*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (2 Tim. 3:7). The best sound systems are tuned to the worst music. We spend millions trying to make contact with extra-terrestrials while terrestrials starve. We have developed

communications tools *par excellence*, but have nothing worth saying.

Tolerance and Persecution: How is it possible that the tolerant are so intolerant of Christianity? Because the Christian message declares Christ to be the only way. We are watching East meet West. The so-called Christian countries in their surfeit of blessings have forgotten God. Al Gini, writing in *Business and Society Review*, says, “In 1917 America and the world experienced the...influenza epidemic that struck down an estimated 20 million victims. Today we are all suffering from a pandemic of *Affluenza* (the disease of consumerism) (Fall, 1999, p. 257). Now the West embraces Baha’i (any religion is OK), Hinduism (we are every religion), Buddhism (no religion is OK) and Islam (only our religion is OK). Buddhism has a tenfold increase in 40 years; mosques are sprouting across the landscape; Baha’i has followers in more countries than any but Christianity.

Meanwhile in the East, millions are turning from these empty forms to Christ. Korea is now considered a Christian country, one of the major mission sending nations. More Christians in China sat down to remember the Lord this past week than in all of western Europe.

Ecumenism and Fragmentation: Expect to see continued fractures in Christendom over social and doctrinal issues (as prophesied in 1 and 2 Timothy). At the same time watch for the monotheists of the world trying to link arms. The syncretizing of Christianity with other beliefs will produce personal designer religions.

It makes me homesick for heaven. Only one Man has the answers. So come, Lord Jesus! —*J. B. N., Jr.* 

Complement or competition?

From India came the old stories about the juggernaut, the massive cart that carried weighty idols, and as it crunched the cobblestone roads, would occasionally crush a stumbling pedestrian. Here in the West we have seen something like the old juggernaut. Young people who attend the universities will tell you, if they are honest, that more than once they have felt like little creatures scurrying in the path of the oncoming massive bulk of secular humanism. This juggernaut waves off the Bible as an authoritative voice. In particular it looks down on the biblical idea of subjection and headship. It says, "Stand against our movement and become bug juice." One wheel on this machine is *feminism*. Which, if it can, will crush the biblical teaching of the respective roles of men and women. So imposing are the teachings of feminism in the universities and in the media that many conservative and Bible oriented people have succumbed. They think that to call a truce is our best chance of survival against this irresistible force. So the evangelicals scurry back to their Bibles to "re-examine the traditional views of the church about the roles of men and women" in order to appease the giant. But even with their noses in their Bibles, it is that background noise, that crunch, crunch sound of the oncoming wheels, that keeps some of our fine evangelical scholars from thinking clearly.

Is thinking clearly about this matter really a question of perspective? Are we overly concerned about how we may appear to a sarcastic world, or are we altogether concerned about how we stand before a holy God? This world focus problem can be tricky. Worldliness will plead that it's real concern is for greater evangelistic outreach,

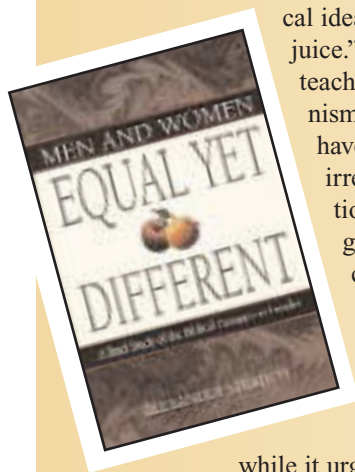
while it urges us to compromise so as to avoid the stigma of the cross. Appealing? Yes, and Bible believing people can stumble at this point.

How does this play out? Joe University Freshman comes home for the New Year's break after finding shelter all semester by attending a parachurch organization on a secular university campus, and behold, he has been utterly indoctrinated by *evangelical feminism*. I wish Joe's situation was the exception. But it isn't. Wherever we find believers basking under the big tent of modern evangelicalism we will see young and old ingesting the tenants of evangelical feminism. And they are often eager to share their new insights in the local church fellowship.

Alexander Strauch has blessed the church with a new book, *Men and Women: Equal Yet Different, A Brief Study of the Biblical Passages on Gender*. This book does not target radical feminism. Rather it answers those known as *evangelical feminists* like Ward Gasque, Gretchen G. Hull (the granddaughter of Arno C. Gaebelein), and Derek Kidner. This, like brother Strauch's other books, is utilitarian. Read it, pass it around, write in its margins, add your insights, and give it to your young people. This is the kind of book that you can implement. Don't judge the book by its size. At 128 pages, it is lean, non-technical, and to-the-point. One thing I personally admire in Strauch's writing is his reverence for God in His Word. When he sees a thing clearly in the scriptures he talks about it, but in points questionable he stops short of speculation.

The book is not exhaustive, and says so in its title. Ninety per cent of the book is exposition. It makes a passing glance at all the verses while focusing on the linchpins. While writing graciously, it is obvious that evangelical feminism is in trouble before we get past Genesis 2. So if we want to talk Bible, then brother Strauch has written a book that talks Bible, and point by point takes up the major tenants of *evangelical feminism*. —J. A. B.

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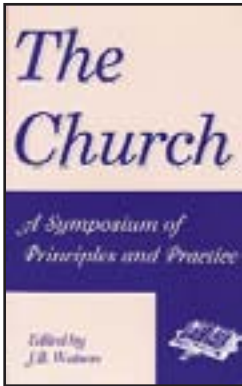
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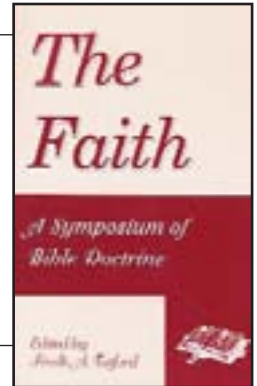
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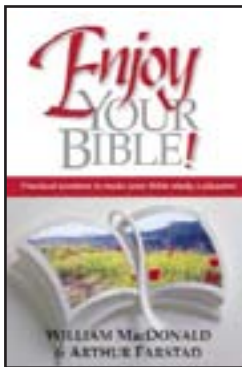


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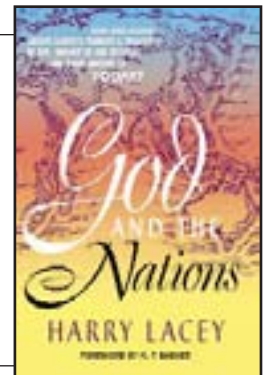
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- A**rrival at a specific time (Gen. 49:10; Dan. 9:24-26; Gal. 4:4)
- B**orn of a virgin (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:18-23)
- C**alled Emmanuel = God with us (Isa. 7:4; Mt. 1:23)
- D**espised and rejected (Ps. 69:8; Isa. 53:3; Jn. 1:11; 7:5)
- E**ntered this world at Bethlehem of Judea (Mic. 5:2; Mt. 2:1; Jn. 7:42)
- F**orsaken by God and man (Ps. 22:1; Mt. 26:31; 27:46; Jn. 7:53; 8:1)
- G**entiles' hope as well as Jews (Isa. 42:1-4; 49:6; Mt. 12:18-21)
- H**ated without a cause (Ps. 69:4; Isa. 49:7; Jn. 7:48; 15:25)
- I**ntroduced by John the Baptist (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Mt. 3:1-3; 11:10)
- J**ealous Herod slew the innocent boys (Jer. 31:15; Mt. 2:16-18)
- K**new His sheep for whom He died (Ps. 23:11; Jn. 10:11-14)
- L**ifted up and pierced (crucified) (Ps. 22:16; Jn. 3:14; 8:28; 12:3-32)
- M**iracles unquestioned (Jn. 2:9-11; 4:18-26; 6:11-12, 26; Lk. 17:14-6)
- N**umbered with transgressors (Isa. 53:12; Mt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27)
- O**ffered Himself as the Lamb of God (Isa. 53:7; Jn. 1:29; Heb. 9:12-28)
- P**reached through parables (Ps. 78:2; Mt. 13:34-35; Lk. 15:3)
- Q**uoted scriptures concerning Himself (Isa. 61:1-3; Lk. 4:17-27; Jn. 12:38-39)
- R**aised from the dead (Zech. 13:6; Lk. 24:6; Jn. 24:6; 1 Thess. 4:14-17)
- S**old for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12-13, Mt. 26:14-16; 27:3-10)
- T**hirsted while dying for our sins (Ps. 22:15; 69:21, Mt. 27:34, Mk. 15:36)
- U**njustly punished for sins not His own (Isa. 53:5-6; Lk. 23:40-41)
- V**oluntarily gave Himself for sinners (Isa. 42:1-4; Jn. 10:11-18; 2 Cor. 8:9)
- W**orshipped and worthy (Ps. 24:8-10; Mt. 4:10; Rev. 4:11; 5:9-12)
- X**alted in glory (Isa. 52:13; Mt. 28:5-6; Acts 2:24; Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:3, 13)
- Y**ielded to His Father's will (Ps. 40:8; Mt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36; Heb. 10:7)
- Z**eal for the Lord motivated Him to finish God's work (Ps. 69:9; Jn. 2:17)