

THE GOSPEL JOURNAL

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NOW THAT YOU'VE BECOME A
Christian
WHAT DO YOU DO NOW?

MAR. 2022

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EDITORIAL:

Realize what you have Received!

By: Johnie Scaggs, Jr.



Having been baptized for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38, one puts on Christ, Galatians 3:27, and at the same time becomes heirs to the promise that was made to Abraham that through his seed, all nations would be blessed, Galatians 3:29. When this takes place, you now inherit all the spiritual blessings in Christ, Ephesians 1:3-14. Through Christ, we have "...all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). Moreover, the word of God is "...profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

When one becomes a Christian, they are now "in Christ." Because they are now "in Christ," they have great blessings and privileges. George Bailey wrote about these two words and stated, "Those two little words are found so many times in the New Testament. They suggest (1) a position; (2) a privilege; (3) a possession; and (4) a practice. Where he is (position), we should want to be! What he is (privilege), we should want to become! What he has (possession), we should desire to have! What he does (practice), we should want to do! "Apart from me," he said, "ye can do nothing" (Jno. 15:5)." (Great Preachers of Today, p. 28).

The apostle Paul helps us understand some of the great spiritual blessings we have in Christ. In Ephesus chapter one, Paul tells us we have all spiritual blessings in Christ.

In chapter one, we find at least seven spiritual blessings the child of God has been given. Paul wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). Let's look at these spiritual blessings together.

First, He chose us in Christ (ver.4). We were chosen before the foundation of the world. Notice, we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. That is to say, God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that man would need a Savior and pre-determined that in the fulness of time, He would send His son to die for the sins of mankind, Acts 2:23; Ephesians 1:10. Thus those who are in Christ have been chosen by God. How does one get into Christ? Paul wrote, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:26,27). Like the children of Israel whom God chose out of all other nations to be His special people, He has likewise chosen those who are obedient to His will out of the world to be His special people.

Second, in Christ, we have been adopted to be the "children of God" (ver. 5). To be adopted into the family of God means that we will receive all the blessings of the inheritance which would be given to His own family.

Third, He has bestowed upon us the riches of His grace (vers. 6,7,8). God's grace or favor has been bestowed upon all those who are now in His family.

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Furthermore, His grace continues to be poured out toward all His children. The word “abounded” in the text means, “be in abundance; provide in abundance; have more than enough; excessive; cause to be more; have greater advantage.” (Logos) Hence, God has bestowed His grace toward His children more than they can imagine.

Fourth, We have redemption in Christ (ver. 7). Redemption is the forgiveness of sin that we have through means of the blood of Christ. The Hebrews writer wrote, “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:22). This blood is the cleansing element found in water baptism, Romans 6:1-5. However, this is not the end of the cleansing work of the blood of Christ. It not only cleanses one when becoming a Christian but afterward continues to work in keeping us clean. John writes,

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:7-10).

This cleansing power is accomplished as we continue to walk in the light and confess our sins. Only those in Christ have access to this blessing.

Fifth, the mystery of His will has been revealed to us (vers. 9,10). In times past, men only heard about what was to come through the prophets. However, in this dispensation, God has revealed His complete will for humanity. Instead of speaking to us through the fathers or the prophets, He has spoken to us through His son, Hebrews, 1:1-2.

His son sent the Holy Spirit and inspired men to speak as the Spirit guided them, and when we read the things written, we can know the mystery of God, which was hidden in times gone by.

Sixth, In Christ, we now have a heritage (vers. 11,12). Robert R. Taylor, Jr. wrote this as it relates to this text:

The KJV has our “obtaining an inheritance. The ASV has our being “made an heritage” which is probably a better concept. We know from Romans 8:17 that as children we are “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ...” But surely we are God’s heritage as His saints. It has been marked out, pre-determined or predestinated by the precious purpose of Heaven’s Glorious God. Perfection marks out the counsel of His will.” (Studies in Ephesians and Colossians, p. 32)

Seventh, We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise in Christ (vers. 13,14). This seal is simply an earnest or a guarantee that the salvation offered in Christ is real and that if we remain faithful unto death, Revelation 2:10, we shall receive a crown of life. We have a guarantee that heaven will be our home. As Jesus said to His disciples;

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know, (John 14:1-4).

When we know what we have received as Christians, it helps us understand just how valuable our life is in Christ, not only to the Lord but also to each other. Therefore, we should strive together to help each other gain heaven as our final destiny.

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Realize What You Have Become!

By: Jason Rollo



Baptism is only the beginning. A very important beginning, for sure, but still just the beginning (1 Pet. 3:20-21; 2 Cor. 5:17). Having arisen from the watery grave through the act of correctly understood immersion (wherein the blood of Christ was contacted, and wherein sins were remitted, by the blood of Christ, Rev. 1:5-6; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1f), the new Christian must NOW confront the world, not as worldly person, but as a former participant (1 Cor. 6:11). As a babe “in” Christ, the new child of God NOW has a very different citizenship, namely one “in Heaven” (Phil. 3:20). Put another way, the redeemed man or woman has left the shackles of sin and condemnation and has embraced the propitiation of Christ and blessed hope found “in” and only “in” Christ Jesus (1 John 2:1-2; Col. 1:21; Rom. 8:1, 24; Eph. 1:3f).

For what purpose did God create woman? Did God create a privilege to be a Christian! To have received remission of sins (Acts 22:16). To have been added to the blood-bought church of Christ (Acts 2:47; 20:28; Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16). To have a new beginning thanks to the indescribable grace of God through King Jesus (John 3:3-5; Acts 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:1; Eph. 1:7). In short, to be saved (2 Tim. 2:10; Mark 16:15-16). Oh, what a fantastic outlook the new Christian NOW has: Forgiveness from past sins (Col. 2:10-12), Redemption (having been bought back, Rev. 5:9), Reconciliation (made friends again with God, 2 Cor. 5:18-19), Hope (which relates to desire, expectation and confidence, Heb. 6:19) and, yes, salvation from sin and spiritual death (Rom. 6:23).

But remember, this is only the beginning. The moment one obeys the Gospel (cf., hears (Rom. 10:17), believes (John 8:24), repents (Luke 13:3),

confesses Christ (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37) and is immersed into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1f; Gal. 3:27f))—he/she has accessed all these amazing spiritual blessings just mentioned (2 The. 1:7-9; Eph. 1:3f). All of the guilt from former days is now gone—erased, as if it never occurred. Justification is the Biblical word for it. Justified (made right), as if one had never sinned (Rom. 3:24; Tit. 3:7). No, this does not mean that there are never consequences for former sins, for certainly consequences can often linger (cf., Matthew 19:9; Let us never forget that repentance demands that one cannot continue to “walk” in sin, Col. 3:1f). However, justification does mean that “the guilt” of one’s past sins has been erased, and that innocence of conscience/soul has been fully restored (cf., Heb. 8:12; 1 Pet. 3:21; Matt. 19:14).

Perhaps we should put it this way: Now that one has become a Christian, he should never forget what he has become. Acts 8:12 helps paint the picture for us of how lost people become saved people. It reads, “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Connect this verse with the larger context of Acts 8:37-39 wherein we find the same conversion process described, but this time concerning the eunuch. Catch the scene: The eunuch inquires, “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” Philip immediately responds, “if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

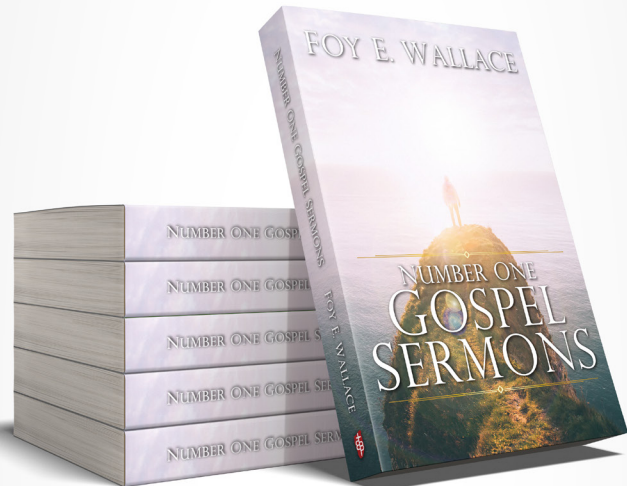
And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the

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eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.” Do not miss this last word, “rejoicing.” What was the state of the eunuch after becoming a Christian? What was he doing? He was “rejoicing!” Better yet why was he “rejoicing?” Because he realized (just as with those mentioned in Acts 8:12) that he was NOW a Christian. He was saved. He was free from sin. He was no longer lost. His past guilt was now forever gone. His life had a true purpose (Eph. 3:20-21). He had seen the Lamb’s sacrifice (remember he was studying Isaiah 53). He had obeyed the Savior’s call and accessed that redemptive saving blood. Put in succinct terminology: He realized what he had become!

Is it any different today? Has God’s plan of salvation been changed? The answer is clear—No! God’s soul-saving plan is the same today as it was in the book of Acts. The lost of the world still come to King Jesus the same way they did nearly two-thousand years ago—by obeying the “everlasting gospel” (cf., Acts; Rev. 14:6). Those who obey the Lord’s plan today (Heb. 5:9; Matt. 7:21) are added to the one true church, Christ’s Kingdom (1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:13). As members of the Church (or Body) of Christ, these men and women are now part of a family—God’s family (Eph. 3:15; 1 Tim. 3:15). Brothers and sisters “in” Christ—what a concept! What has one become, we ask? The inspired words of Mark 10:28-30 perhaps answer best. This Scripture reads, “Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is not man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.” Tragically, sometimes those who obey the gospel are rejected by their friends and family (cf., Matt. 10:34f; 1 Pet. 4:1f). Sometimes even brethren will fail us (2 Cor. 11:26). Thankfully, many brethren will not fail us. Yet, no matter what happens, Jesus never will (2 Tim. 4:16-17). As Christians, may we never forget what we have become!

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Realize I Am Part of the Body

By: Clint Yarber



One of the most important decisions we will ever make in this life is whether we obey the gospel of Jesus Christ or not. Although this is a monumental marker in our lives, it is not the end of our journey toward heaven. The mentality of a person who has become a disciple of Christ should be the “next” mentality. In other words, we should never become satisfied or complacent with where we are in our spiritual growth and maturity. But we should always be thinking about what is next. It is absolutely imperative for us to understand that whenever we obey the gospel become part of an institution, i.e., the Lord’s church. This Divine institution is illustrated in a variety of ways throughout the Scripture. One of these ways is as a body (1 Cor. 12:12ff). As a part of a greater institution, each one of us has a responsibility to contribute to something bigger than ourselves. The only way that we can do this is by realizing that I am part of the body of Christ or the church of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23).

YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE BODY

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12). The human body is a picture of Christ and His church. The body is one person, one being; yet there are many members or parts that make up the body. Despite having many members or parts, there is still only one body. Paul said, “...so also is Christ.” Just as the many members or parts of our bodies enable us to function as a whole, so is the church.

The church or body is made up of more than just a couple of people. If the church is going to influence the world like Christ wants us to, then it is going to take a bunch of people working together. But each person must do his or her part if the body is going to work like God wants it to. Realize that you have a part within the Lord’s church.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually” (1 Cor. 12:27). Each Christian is a member of the body of Christ and has his or her own place in it. Not one Christian is excluded from the body of Christ. “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?” (1 Cor. 12:29). While no one is excluded, we must all understand that all members do not have the same part within the body of Christ. In the first century all Christians were not apostles. Apostles were part of the church, but they were not all there was to it. Realize that you have a part within the Lord’s church. While all of our parts are not the same, they are all essential to the proper functioning of the body. Make sure you are doing your part!

THE BODY IS DEPENDING UPON YOU

Some who are “less gifted” often feel that they are unimportant to the body of Christ. Such feelings or thoughts are untrue! “For in fact the body is not one member but many” (1 Cor. 12:14). Every Christian is part of the body of Christ. This means every person is significant and a function to perform within the body of Christ. Each member is absolutely necessary. The foot may not be as gifted as the hand when it comes to picking things up, but the foot is still part of the body.

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The ear may not be able to see things like the eye can, but the ear is still part of the body. Each member has its own function and no other member can perform the function of others members. If the whole body were an eye it would be inoperative, unfunctional and useless. While the eye is important to the functioning of the entire body, it depends upon other members of the body to do their part.

Some who are “more gifted” feel they are more important to the body. Too often there are those who feel and think that they are more important than others within the church. They feel that their gifts or part are more important than any others inside of the body. Such feelings and thoughts are inaccurate, totally inaccurate! Even the least gifted member is as important as the most gifted. “And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you” (1 Cor. 12:21). While some members of the body might seem to be relatively unimportant, the reality of the situation is that they are not. No Christian should look down upon any other Christian within the body of Christ. Let none say that I am worthless or unneeded in the church!

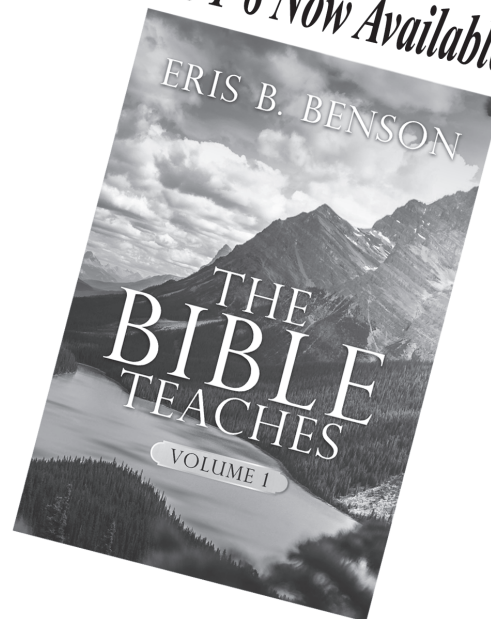
CONCLUSION:

While I cannot say to each what their part of function may be within the body of Christ with any certainty, I can say that you do have a part. Whatever part you have, whatever member you are of the body God has made you. “But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” (1 Cor. 12:18). God made you whatever part of the body that He wanted you to be. The eye sees because God gave it the ability to see. The ear hears because God gave it the ability to hear. God has set “each one” of us up to be a part of the church. Whatever part of the body God made you to be, please do your part! It takes all of us working together in order to fulfill God’s plan for us here upon this earth.

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by Eris B. Benson

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Realize Your Need for Spiritual Maturity

By: Matthew McBrayer



What does it mean to realize your need for spiritual maturity? Before you can really ask that question we need to understand the word “Realize.” Sometimes it is hard to define the simple words that we use from day to day. We use them in the context correctly, but when asked to define we might come up short. According to the Oxford Dictionary the word “realize” means, “to become fully aware of (something) as a fact; understand clearly.” The problem is that it is hard to recognize the need for many changes in our own lives. How many people must be told that they are doing something, because they had not realized they had been exhibiting said behavior? Realizing a need can be hard to do on our own, therefore, let’s look at some warning signs that may indicate a need for spiritual growth.

NO DESIRE FOR STUDY

There are some in the church that have decided that they have no need for study because they already know what they need to know (even though the indication is that we should study, 2 Tim. 2:15). This comes in different forms, but mostly presents in someone who has a general understanding of the Bible. Logically this shouldn’t make sense. We tend to forget things which means that we are in constant need of study, but those of us who have studied the scriptures know that every time you read the Bible you see something you didn’t see before, or have new questions. Sometimes you just read a passage and think about it from a different angle. If you don’t have questions about the Bible, you probably are not hearing it enough. Remember, if you want to be like the blessed man, then you better meditate upon the word of God day and night (Psa.1).

Here is a question to ask yourself, “Can I teach this subject to adults?” If the answer is “no” (we are talking knowledge not fear), you need more study. We should be able to teach anyone young or old about the scriptures. We need to be ready to give an answer (1 Pet. 3:15), and the only real way to do that is to know what is in the word (Psa. 119:11).

What about our attitude towards study? I think we can sum it up in 1 Peter 2:2, which says, “as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation.” Our attitude should be that we desire the word just like a newborn baby desires milk.

Have you ever been around a baby that was hungry? All it wants is its mothers milk. The desire is so strong that the child desires it above all things. Do we desire the word like this? It is our spiritual sustenance. We should desire to hear the word, read the word, and study God’s word above everything else in life. (Matt. 6:33).

NOT BEING CLOSE TO BRETHREN

Not preferring your brethren is another telltale sign of someone who needs to realize their own need for spiritual maturity. We know that we are supposed to do good to everyone, but especially our brethren (Gal. 6:10). There is also a preference for Christians to want to be around other Christians as they met on a daily basis (Acts 2:46). It has been this preacher’s experience that congregations that fellowship are just stronger congregations. When brethren do not spend time together the congregation is lacking. The problem in this arena is that some congregations struggle with the idea of spending time with each other, because they prefer people outside of the body of Christ.

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Romans 12:10 says, "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another." Our best friends should be our brethren rather than those that are of the world. If we desire people outside of Christ more than those inside of Christ, what does that mean about us. It has been said, "We are the average of those around us." Meaning we are like the people that we are around. If we are around brethren, then we should be more Christ-like. If we are around the world, then we will be more like the world. If we are not close to our brethren, then something needs to change.

BEING TOO BUSY WITH OTHER THINGS

It is no surprise that the world has our attention. Cell phones and cell phone apps are designed to distract us. Don't believe me? Have you ever checked your email, social media, or favorite app/website and looked up 30 minutes wondering what happened to the last half hour? We are distracted by the things in this life. Those things may not be inherently sinful, but they are busying us with other things that keep us from the Lord.


Many people busy themselves with their jobs thinking that they need to spend the majority of their time (even time they should be spending with the brethren worshipping our Lord) providing a means for themselves. We have already referenced Matthew 6:33, that we need to seek first the kingdom of God. Are we seeking God first when we go on vacation and don't worship Him, opting to get a head start on traffic? Are we seeking God first when participating in a sporting event takes precedence of our Lord? Are we seeking His kingdom first if we decide to go hunting or fishing instead of attending the services? The answer to all of these questions is absolutely not.

If we continue to busy ourselves with other things we will soon find ourselves placing a priority over our God and the opportunity to serve Him.

Remember that the Lord will take care of you (Matt. 6:24-34), but our responsibility that we have is to seek first His kingdom and let the Lord take care of us.

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Realize the Value of Personal Bible Study

By: Billy Bland



INTRODUCTION

The story is told of a young boy who fell out of his bed as he was sleeping. His mother asked him, “Why did you fall out of bed?” He replied, “I was sleeping too close to the getting in place.” Sometimes Christians fall away from the faith because they stayed too close to the getting in place. Soon after Jesus was baptized (Mat. 3), the devil came to tempt Him (Mat. 4). Someone observed, “after one is baptized, comes the devil.” One can be assured that if satan tempted the Son of God, he will also tempt you and me. Consequently, one must continue to grow in the knowledge of God’s Word after becoming a Christian.

Personal Bible study is vitally important for the child of God. Too often people fail to study the Word of God for themselves. It is easier to ask the preacher, an elder, or a Christian friend. While it is good to seek counsel or Bible answers from those who know the Bible, it can never take the place of individual (personal) Bible study. Even when one seeks Bible answers from those in whom he has confidence, he should verify the truthfulness of the answer from the Word of God. The Bible says, “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). The noble Bereans verified the preaching of Paul and Silas by the Word of God. Personal Bible Study is vital.

PERSONAL: The word “personal” as used here refers to one’s “individual” or “private” study of the Bible. When studying the Word of God, I like to try to ascertain the meaning of a passage before consulting commentaries and/or other study helps. This way the knowledge gained is personal and not simply relying on others’ interpretations. After my personal study, I then may consult other works and see if I have missed anything, and I can then profit from the years of experience from those who have many more years in the study of God’s Word. Even then, however, I maintain my personal appraisal of the passage under consideration. When one does personal Bible study, he gains personal assurances from God’s Word. He is not basing his assurance of salvation simply on the words of others, but rather directly on God’s Word. When one stands before God in judgment, he must personally stand before the judgment. It will not benefit one on judgment day to say, “my preacher said...”. Paul stated, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

BIBLE: The Bible is the greatest book in the world. It is the only book that is inspired by God. Paul stated, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16–17). God has given us the very “word” of God which means the Bible is verbally inspired.

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David said, “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). Likewise, Jeremiah wrote, “Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth” (Jer. 1:9). It is a tremendous blessing that we have the very Word of God in our possession.

The Bible is the greatest book because it tells us of the greatest Being – “God.” One learns of God’s nature, as well as His will for our lives, from the Bible. The Psalmist exclaimed, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2). The Bible also shows man his greatest problem – “sin.” Sin separates us from a loving God. Isaiah wrote, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:1–2). Fortunately, the Bible also tells man of his greatest blessing – “salvation.” Since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), Christ came to bear the sins of mankind and offer him salvation from his sins (Isa. 53). When people asked what to do to be saved, the Bible says, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).

STUDY: Whereas reading the Bible is to be commended, one profits much more from studying the Bible in addition to simply reading the Bible. James exhorted; “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (Jam. 1:22–25).

The word translated “looketh” in verse 25, means “to bend over or stoop down, with the implication of looking into something” (Louw and Nida). It is translated “stooped down and looked” describing Mary looking into the empty tomb of Jesus (cf. John 20:11). She did not take a casual glance, but rather she looked with intent, even stooping down to see. Likewise, one should look intently into the Word of God (cf. James 1:25).

CONCLUSION

Peter exhorted, “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:1–2). After one has become a Christian, he should not “sleep too close to the getting in place.” He needs to continue to grow into a mature, knowledgeable child of God.

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Realize the Value of Prayer

By: Michael Clarke



“Do you know what you have?” That was the question I asked one of the members at the local congregation I attended when they gave me a practically brand new Dickson Analytical Study Bible. These particular Bibles are out of print and often will go for \$500 or more on various resale sites. This sweet lady had brought me a copy that was sitting on her shelf and was trying to get me to keep it. She said, “I am not going to take the time to sell it, and I do not want to keep it. I would be happier knowing that it was appreciated by someone.” That Bible sits in its box on the bookshelf in my office as I type this article about realizing the proper value of prayer. There are numerous things in the world that are underappreciated. Sadder still, the same could be said about the things that are in the “religious” world too. Perhaps one of the greatest and undervalued items in the Christian’s life is prayer. Let us examine three areas in which the value of prayer should be seen.

REALIZING THE VALUE OF PRAYER WHEN LIFE IS EASY

You might be like I am when it comes to life going well for you. My mindset is almost never to think from a positive ideology. I will almost always go to this thought process: “Well, things are going well, so something bad must be on its way.” Or perhaps you need to accomplish what should be an easy task only to find yourself saying, “I just know this will not be as easy as it should be.” It can be hard for us to see that at times, we may begin to pull back from our communication with our Lord when life is going well. Consider what Jesus instructed His disciples to do

when it came to praying when life is easy: “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11).

Did you catch that one very important phrase? “Give us this day our daily bread.” Jesus right then and there showed that our prayer life is supposed to continue even when life is going well. Some of us have gotten a “you don’t go to a doctor if you are not sick” mentality when it comes to prayer. Since life is going well, why would we need God in those moments anyway? What if we attributed the same mentality toward our marriages? Can we stop living like we love our spouse the moment that things are going well for us? Suppose your spouse said to you, “Well things seem to be going pretty well. Do not talk to me until they are not.” I can guarantee you that the moment that sentence was finished they could reply, “Guess what? Things just stopped going pretty well!” Why should we rob God of hearing from us when we wake up to the blessings that we get to experience? Praying without ceasing means that there should never be a time in my life good or bad that I do not wake up and say, “Thank you God for all of the wonderful blessings that you give to me. Thank you for being the Great I AM and the One Who is Holy and Just. Everything that I am and everything that I could ever be will be because of you and the work that you accomplished for me.” Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

REALIZING THE VALUE OF PRAYER WHEN LIFE IS HARD

This season of life is easier for man to grasp needing help in. It is not hard to realize the value of cheaper gas when we see how expensive our journeys

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to the pump have become. When life has knocked us down to the absolute pits and we find ourselves in the muck and the mire, we should pray that God would deliver us. We should be like Jacob when he prayed that Esau would not be able to harm him (Genesis 32:11) or like David when he pleaded with the Lord to cause Ahithophel's counsel to foolishness (2 Samuel 15:31). We are to pray even for those who are spiteful and persecute us (Matthew 5:44). Yes, even when it seems that everyone and their relatives are out to make my life the worst that it has ever been, I should realize the value of what I have! Though the world fashions itself against me, I will not fear because my God is greater (Psalm 3:6)! Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

REALIZING THE VALUE OF PRAYER WHEN LIFE NEEDS A CHANGE

The last season of life in which we often find our anchor dropping in is the time when we realize the way that we are living cannot continue. We need to make a change. So often people sit in pews and listen to sermons that are intended to prick and invoke change. Unfortunately, those people are also often the ones who stand with their arms crossed during the invitation song and will not come forward. Perhaps the value that King Jeroboam saw in praying to restore his hand to its normal state is the same value that we should all see today (1 Kings 13:1-6). Jesus also told us the best way to keep our lives from needing to have that change is for us to pray that we not be tempted (Luke 22:40, 46). Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

CONCLUSION

We have the most valuable calling service that this world will ever see. We can communicate with our God, and He wants to listen! How could we ever diminish the value of prayer and cheapen it to a worship and food only activity? When life is easy, we must pray. When it is difficult, we must pray. When we need to change, we must pray. There is immense value in prayer!

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A Senior's Moment: The Gospel of God

By: Keith A. Mosher, Sr.



In writing to the Romans, Paul described himself as a “called apostle” (Rom. 1:1a). The words, “to be,” are in italics in my King James Version, indicating that they were not found in any Greek text, but had been added by the translators. Therefore, Paul was not indicating what God had called him “to be,” but was indicating his sobriquet after Christ called him as an apostle (Acts 9; 22; 26). He further stated that he had been “separated unto the gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1b). Paul had been separated from his former Jewish religion, friends, and authority upon his conversion to Christ (Acts 22:16). Paul had begun to preach a “new and living way” (cf. Heb. 10:20). As had the prophets of the Old Testament, Paul faced a new task as a sanctified gospel preacher (cf. Jer. 1:5). His message had come from heaven.

Paul was to preach “**the gospel of God.**” In the first place the message of Christianity originated in the eternal counsels of Deity (Rom. 1:2; cf. Eph. 3:10-11; Gen. 12:-3; 49:10; Isa. 2; Dan. 2; Joel 2; Acts 2). The Old Testament prophets predicted the new message under guidance of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Therefore, any true believer of the Old Testament would have to be a believer of the New Testament, for the gospel is “according to the scriptures,” which came through the prophets (Heb. 1:1).

In the second place, the “gospel of God” was “concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 1:3a).

The Christ fulfilled all the demands of the Mosaic legislation thus “taking it out of the way and nailing it to His cross” (Col. 2:14). He was the Word of God in eternity Who became flesh (John 1:1-14). His taking on the body of a human was in order to die as the only possible sacrifice that met the Father’s demand for justice (Phi. 2:5-11; John 10:17). A sinless man, Adam, sinned and God’s justice would demand a sinless “man” as the only sufficient atonement for Adam’s error (Rom. 5:12-21). Jesus was a willing sacrifice and the sin-bearer for the world; the One born to the Godhead (Isa. 9:6). His nature as a human was to come in the seed-line of king David (Rom. 1:3b). Any action by the ancient Davidic line was part of the providence of God because of His promise to David (2 Sam. 7:11-12; Psalms 89:3-4, 34-37). Christ succeeded to the throne of David which royal seat is in heaven (Acts 2:30; cf. Psalms 89:37). His ascension to the Davidic throne in heaven gave the Christ a position of absolute authority over heaven and earth, except for the Father (1 Cor. 15:27).

In the third place, all of the above were actions and attributes affirmed by His resurrection (Rom. 1:4). The One Who was said to be the only true seed of David, was now seen to be the Son of God as guaranteed by His exit from the tomb of death. He was, indeed, already the Son, but the resurrection affirmed His place in heaven (cf. Mat. 28:18-20).

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[Some interpret this verse to mean that His ability to raise the dead affirmed His authority. Others interpret the verse to say that: “the resurrection age has burst upon us because of Him.”] It is the case that in order to glorify the Christ, one needs to preach obedience to His teaching (Rom. 1:5). [The grace mentioned here is about the Divine inspiration given to Paul as an apostle.] The gospel of Christ is the only call to a sinner and the only hope of salvation for all (2 The. 2:14; Rom. 1:16-17). The final result of obeying the gospel makes one a “called” saint (Rom. 1:6).

In the fourth place, the object, extent, and result of His commission promotes obedience to “the faith” (Rom. 1:5b). Men must be taught the truth (Mat. 28:19; John 6:44-45), and they then become salt and light to the world (Mat. 5:13-16). It is a fatal mistake [the loss of one’s soul] to believe that “faith only” [mental assent that He is a Savior and I trust Him] equals salvation. Only in total obedience to His teaching can one find salvation (John 6:46; Mat. 7:21-23). Belief is just one of the requirements of His plan and alone it is a dead faith (Jam. 2:19). When Paul wrote “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1), he had to mean the faith. [It is the case that when Paul wrote concerning law and faith in the same context, he was contrasting the law of Moses with the faith or gospel of Christ (cf. Gal. 3:1-5; Eph. 2:8-9).]

The gospel of God originated in the mind of God, was fulfilled in the Christ, proclaimed by the apostles, including Paul, and those who obey its commands are the called out of the world (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9). The gospel of God promotes the brotherhood of man among all races for “In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand as an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). Jesse was David’s father, and Christ, the world’s Savior, descended from that human line through His mother, Mary. To glorify Him, we preach His message; we obey it and call on others to do the same in respect of the gospel of God.



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The Invitation

Why The Invitation?

Part 5 - The Invitation by Example

By: Daniel F. Cates



Acts 9 contains the first of three accounts (cf Acts 22:4-16; 26:11-20 [at this time focus will be given to Acts 9's account and meshing it with those in Acts 22 and 26; those latter passages will be given more detail in their respective order]) of the conversion of the great persecutor of the early church, the man who gave consent to the murder of Stephen--Saul of Tarsus (Acts 8:1). As Acts 9 begins, Saul, more commonly called by his Latin name Paul, has been given authority to persecute the church as far as Damascus in Syria; the "bound" of Acts 9:2 is not an innocuous term, for Acts 9:1 speaks of his "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" and Acts 26:10 has this confession: "... and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." As terrible as Saul was to the church, the Lord saw great value in him (1 Tim. 1:12); Paul told Timothy of his blasphemous persecution, merciful salvation, and ignorant unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13) and of the Lord's abounding grace (1 Tim. 1:14). Paul called himself the "chief of sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15), explaining that his salvation was a "first" example of the ability of Jesus to save (1 Tim. 1:16)--the words "chief" and "first" are forms of the same word in the Greek, *protos* (Gr. *πρῶτος*). None should say "Jesus Christ cannot save me," for Jesus was able to save Paul; for some a genuine mourning over grievous sin may prompt them, humbly, to feel such, but they can have assurance of even their salvation; for others, claiming to have such terrible sins merely excuses their remaining in sin, for they are, pridefully, effectively saying, "I am a greater sinner than Jesus is a Savior."

If Paul could be saved, anyone can!

Some will speak of Saul's journey pre-arrival in Damascus as the conversion of Saul. In reality, he was not saved on the road to Damascus. Note what Jesus told him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ... I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. ... Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:4-6; cf 22:7,8,10; 26:14,15) and "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:16-18). Jesus did not tell Saul that his sins were forgiven; rather, He told Saul what his purpose would be and that he would be told in Damascus what he had to do. Paul told Agrippa, "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, ..." (Acts 26:19,20). Saul was not saved on the road to Damascus! There was no joy like that accompanying salvation (Acts 8:39); rather, there was blindness and fasting (Acts 9:9,10) and praying (Acts 9:11).

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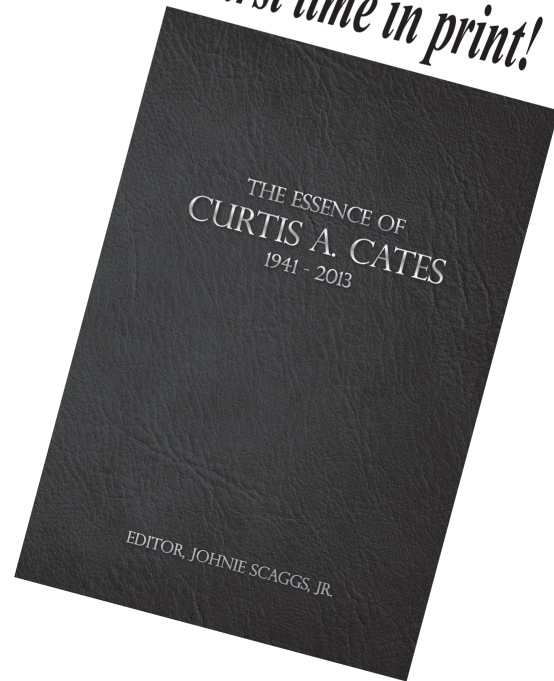
Why, then, one might ask, did Ananias call him “brother Saul” (Acts 9:17; 22:13)? One can be a brother in one sense and not another: There are physical brothers, step and foster brothers, brothers-in-arms (like the famed “Band of Brothers”), “blood brothers” (as children sometimes might pretend to be), brothers in industries (“International Brotherhood of ...”), brothers in a fraternity, brothers on the sports field, religious brothers, national brethren, et cetera. Ananias was a Jew speaking to a Jew; it was fitting and proper for him to call Saul, “brother Saul”—especially given Ananias had had his reservations about Saul (Acts 9:13,14) and may have been trying to find common ground with this one who could be an enemy.

Some may argue that the baptism in Acts 9:18 was just a washing since Paul was probably still dirty from his journey and had been weakened by fasting (Acts 9:19). Acts 22:16 plainly answers that objection, for Ananias said, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Paul was fasting in his sin, not in his salvation. “Calling on the name of the Lord,” that is, obeying the authority of the Lord, required Saul be baptized so that his sins could be washed away. Until he was baptized, he was no more than a blasphemous persecutor of the church for he was still in his sins!

As Acts 9 closes, Peter’s work has come back into focus: when he healed Aeneas, people “turned to the Lord” (Acts 9:32-35); when he raised Tabitha, “many believed in the Lord (Acts 9:36-42). Any claiming salvation by belief only in Acts 9:42 must acknowledge that turning only (Acts 9:35) is equally sufficient [which, ironically, would eliminate belief]. In reality, one who turns to the Lord only does so believing in the Lord and one who turns to the Lord in belief is going to do all that the Lord has commanded, including being saved the same way all others in the church age had been and would.

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Understanding Canonization

The Bible and Canonization Part 3

By: Kevin Cauley



WHAT IS THE APOCRYPHA?

In 1957, a committee associated with the Revised Standard Version published a translation of the Apocrypha. They listed the following books in their table of contents: *1 Esdras, 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, The Wisdom of Solomon (Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach), Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah, The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees*. In the preface to the translation, they state:

The Apocrypha here translated are those books and portions of books which appear in the Latin Vulgate, either as part of the Old Testament or as an appendix, but are not in the Hebrew Bible. With the exception of 2 Esdras these books appear in the Greek version of the Old Testament which is known as the Septuagint, but they are not included in the Hebrew Canon of Holy Scripture (The Apocrypha: Revised Standard Version, Thomas Nelson and Sons, iv.).

The Roman Catholic Church, however, took it upon themselves to canonize these books in the Council of Trent (1546 A.D.) because they were included in the Vulgate (a Latin translation of the Bible), and the Catholic Church popularly considered them as scripture.

However, these books never had canonical status in the Hebrew Bible.

The translator of the Vulgate, Jerome (342-420 A.D.), said that they were not to be considered part of the canon of the Old Testament. He maintained that there were twenty-two books in the Old Testament canon and he listed them in a letter known today as the Prologus Galeatus. He said, “what is not found in our list must be placed amongst the Apocryphal writings,” and they “are not in the canon” (trans. Philip Schaff, <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.vii.iii.iv.html>). The Catholic Church, however, decided to include them as part of the canon solely on the basis of popular use. What constitutes scripture, however, is not what is popular, but what is inspired of God, and these books were never so regarded by those of the times in which they were written. Neither Jesus, the apostles, the prophets, Josephus, or Jerome saw them as authoritative and inspired of God.

NEW TESTAMENT PROCESSES ENSURING CANONIZATION

God revealed the Old Testament through the prophets one portion at a time over a period of a thousand years. The New Testament was revealed in a relatively short period of time, roughly sixty years. The succession of prophets in the Old Testament enabled ongoing miraculous corroboration of inspired materials. For the New Testament, miracles ceased after the last person on whom the apostles laid their hands passed away, and the ability to miraculously confirm inspired documents ended. This probably happened sometime in the middle of the second century A.D.

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MIRACULOUS CONFIRMATION

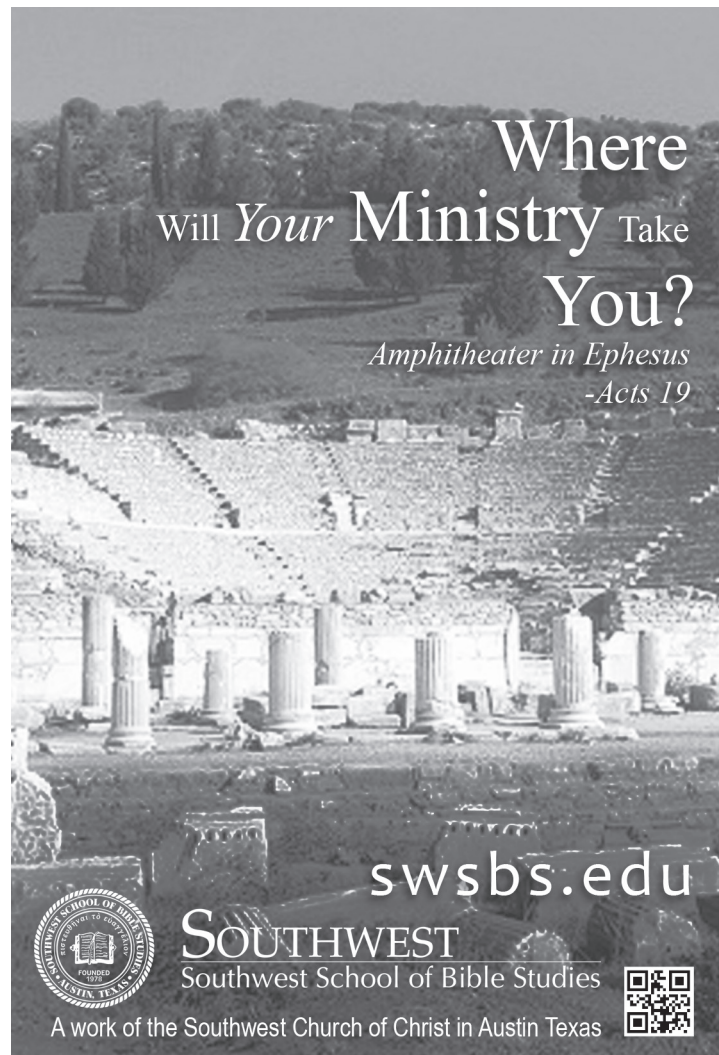
These relatively fewer years, however, were enough time for the New Testament to be miraculously confirmed. In that regard, consider Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 14:37: "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." Paul's point was that those gifted by the Holy Spirit had the miraculous ability to corroborate the truth when it was presented to them. He expected them, in fact, to use that ability to acknowledge the truthfulness of his letters. Mark 16:20 records that Jesus confirmed the words of the apostles with signs: "And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen." In addition to the miraculous confirmation of inspired writings, this confirmation of the gospel worked to ensure that those who heard the word would know which written documents contained truth and which ones did not.

NON-MIRACULOUS CONFIRMATION

The documents also had non-miraculous confirmation. Those to whom the inspired writings were initially sent received the messages of the apostles and prophets as authoritative (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Paul used trusted messengers to send his letters to the churches. He sent Timothy to Corinth, Philippi, and Thessalonica (1 Corinthians 4:17, Philippians 2:19, 1 Thessalonians 3:2). Paul used Epaphroditus (their messenger) to communicate to Philippi (Philippians 2:25), and he used Tychicus with Colossae (Colossians 4:7-9). Paul had a bevy of couriers available. His letter to Titus said that he would send one of two messengers, Artemus or Tychicus (Titus 3:12). Paul and Barnabus themselves acted as messengers of the church in Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 15:30). These initial confidantes created the foundational impetus to transmit the authoritative word to the churches.

The inspired writings of the apostles and prophets circulated to the churches as scribes had opportunity and resources to copy them. Peter was able to obtain some of Paul's writings because he mentions at the end of his second letter that he had read them (2 Peter 3:15). Those to whom he wrote also had copies of Paul's letters for he said that Paul "had written to you."

Second Peter was written "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1). This could have encompassed many congregations and implies that they already had copies of Paul's letters. The full distribution of inspired documents was in process, but it was not complete until the apostle John contributed his works in the early 90s A.D. These final inspired additions to the New Testament extended the timeframe for scribes to copy and circulate these documents. While the canon was complete, the churches had not completely disseminated it. The persecutions of Nero and Domitian curtailed these efforts too. These logistical issues meant that the corpus of the New Testament was not in full circulation until the early part of the second century A.D. Unfortunately, that circumstance admitted the introduction of fabricated works by false teachers.





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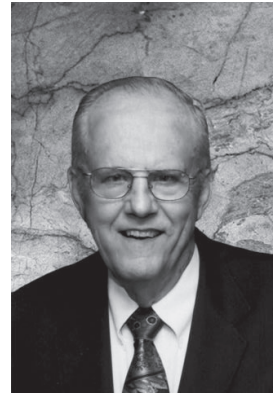



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Gems From the Greek

"Forever," This Earth, and the Jehovah's Witnesses

By: Wayne Price



An elementary fallacy of the Jehovah's Witnesses' theology is the unproven (and unprovable) assumption that it was God's original intention to leave material man on this material earth for a material eternity, and that the death of Jesus was designed for this original plan. In this, the J.W.'s are as materialistic as some of Christ's followers were with their ideas of a physical kingdom. The inability of envisioning a spiritual kingdom as the fulfillment of certain Old Testament prophecies lies at the root of all premillennial doctrines. Jesus declared that His kingdom was "not of this world" (John 18:36) and that the "kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). A materialistic kingdom on a material earth was not part of God's plan, not now nor in the first century (Acts 1:6). The primary change the J.W.'s make in the reign of Christ on earth is that it is not for a "1,000 years" (as premillennialists contend), but rather eternal! Both doctrines are without Biblical foundation.

To understand what the J.W.s are actually saying, let us quote from their own works: The thought of persons living on earth as subjects of God's kingdom may seem strange to many Bible believers who think of all those saved as being in heaven. The Bible shows that only a limited number go to heaven, and that those who will live forever on earth (emphasis mine, wp) will be a great

crowd of unlimited number (Rev. 14:1-5; 7:9; Psa. 37:11, 29). [Quotation taken from Jehovah's Witnesses in the Twentieth Century, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York, 1978, p.16).

Other proof passages listed in the booklet as showing this earth is eternal are as follows: "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever" (Psa. 37:29). "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever" (Eccl 1:4). "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens: God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited..." (Psa. 45:18). "And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever" (Psa. 78:69).

Since so much emphasis is placed on the word "forever" as a term describing the earth as man's dwelling place, let us turn our attention to the meaning of that term. The Hebrew word *olam* and the Greek *aion* are variously rendered as "everlasting" and "eternal," BUT are relative terms, and as such may be applied to any period of time. The basic meaning is "age-lasting."

Yes, Ecclesiastes 1:4 says, "the earth abides forever," but this serves as a contrast to the constant succession of generations of men who live here. One is lasting, the other is not.

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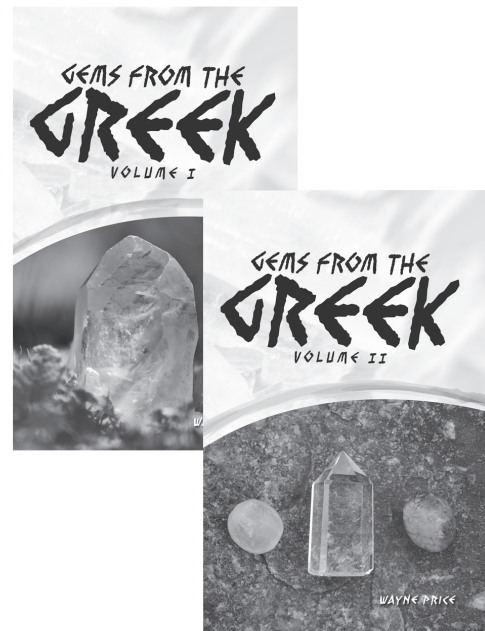
However, this does not imply that the earth is eternal, for the word often denoted limited time of conditioned duration. For example, the same word is used of a slave's service to his master (Exodus 21:6). Does this mean the slave renders service to his master eternally, or throughout his lifetime – age lasting? The same word is also used in Jonah 2:6 describing the length of Jonah's visit in the fish's belly. What may have seemed like an eternity to Jonah was actually three days and nights (Matt. 12:40). The Levitical priesthood was to be "everlasting" (Exodus 40:15), but certainly not eternal (Heb. 8, et al.). God's covenant with Abraham was "everlasting" (Gen. 17:7) with a land promise also described as "everlasting" (v. 8), and that same covenant included circumcision (vss. 10-13). However, the word "everlasting" does not mean that this covenant would literally be "forever," but rather that the covenant, Canaan, and circumcision would be "age lasting."

F.W. Gould states that when this term (forever) "applies to a man's life, it exhausts it. If to future time, it exhausts it. If to the Mosaic Age, it exhausts it. If to eternity, it exhausts it (Matt. 25:46). The words are perfectly exhaustive of the period to which they are applied."

"Forever" and "everlasting" are thus applied to any period of time, with the entire scope of that period being under consideration. A slave's service to his master is described as "forever," meaning all that person's life; the Passover is an ordinance to be kept "forever" (Exodus 12:14), meaning throughout the age of Judaism; Jonah's residence in the whale's belly is defined as "forever," meaning the entire period of that ordeal; and one's final destiny, whether heaven or hell, when described as "everlasting" or "eternal," carries the same idea, i.e. throughout the entirety of duration of future life. This earth is "forever," meaning as long as it exists, or until it is burned up (2 Peter 3:10).

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Expository Preaching

"I Declare Unto to You the Gospel"

By: Donald Z. Underwood



Our text of study highlights a work and responsibility that God's people must fulfill in this world of sin and darkness. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

The apostle Paul is the author of these inspired words which he writes to encourage and provoke our brethren to declare the gospel. The word gospel means good news or joyful tidings. Thus, the good news for the world in Corinth and beyond was redemption or salvation from sin. Humanity can be rescued! But the Corinthians and we today must declare the gospel.

The word declare means to simply make known or to gain knowledge.

Hence, knowing the gospel will lead us out of the darkness of ignorance. Paul clearly stated that he preached unto them the gospel, the truth that set them free and today sets souls at liberty. Paul did not preach unto them a perverted or a different or another gospel, but a simple unadulterated good news. Also, there was a recognition and acceptance from the Corinthians that they had received the gospel. Therefore, it is within the gospel of Christ they stand, and we stand today. In the good news our salvation is safe and secure.

The place of our spiritual location is in the gospel! If we dwell or abide within the doctrine of Christ, we are saved. Thus, we must stand in the doctrine or gospel, like our Corinthian brethren stood within the gospel. Outside of the light of truth we are lost and in darkness. Peter said to Christians that we are to put the brethren in remembrance of truth and Paul said to keep in memory what he had declared unto them. This responsibility has not changed throughout the ages, we must put our brethren in remembrance of the truth.

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The gospel or good news saturates the entire Bible, much like blood flows through our bodies. The prophet Isaiah revealed the coming gospel in Isaiah 52:7, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” Paul and the apostles knew this passage and other similar references had come to be fulfilled during their lifetime.

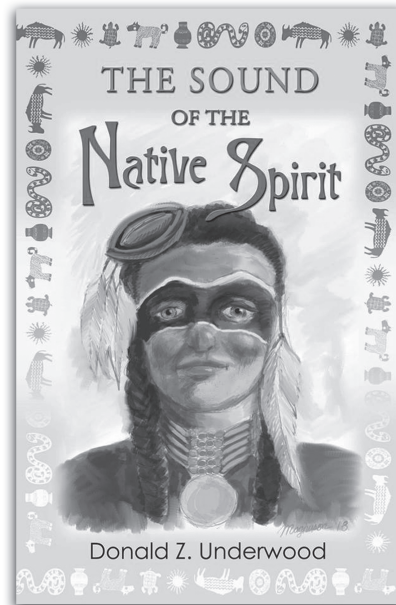
Paul declared or made known unto the church how that Christ died for our sins. This was truly good news! Paul emphasized that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (such as Isaiah 61:1-2 and many others) when he said first of all. The apostles, evangelists and Christians preached Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23) and we must preach and declare Christ crucified.

Paul declared that Jesus was buried in a tomb, our Lord literally suffered death and was factually buried according to the Scriptures and many eyewitnesses. The affirmed that Jesus would rise from the grave on the third day, and this was done in accordance with the Scriptures. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to an empty tomb, Jesus had resurrected. Death could not hold the Christ.

From Acts 2 the gospel has been declared and preached. Today we have a duty to present and make known to the world the gospel. May we have the boldness to go forth in this world with the good news of salvation.

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by Donald Z. Underwood



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One Woman's Perspective

Wives be Wives

By: Luann Rogers



Since at least the 1970's, the feminist movement has criticized and tried to erase the traditional, biblical image of a "a wife" from the public's consciousness. In the 1971 premier issue of MS Magazine, author Judy Syfers penned a tongue-in-cheek article entitled "Why I Want a Wife", poking fun at all the things a wife does. She concludes by asking, "...who wouldn't want a wife?" The secular world mocks and laughs at the role God has given wives, and many Christian women have accepted as legitimate this culture of ridicule. Even the word "wife" seems outdated: instead, you hear terms like "significant other" or "life partner", thus removing any hint of the God-given role for a woman married to a man.

Even though our culture changes (and has changed throughout time), the role God gave the wife has not changed. What does God say a wife is?

- "a help meet for her husband"— a companion comparable to him (Gen. 2:18-20)
- "crown of her husband" (Prov. 12:4)
- "A good thing" (Prov. 18:22)
- "the weaker vessel" (1 Peter 3:7)
- "a companion" (Mal. 2:14)

A wife is NOT:

- a man
- a husband's mama
- a doormat

- a slave
- a trophy
- someone to be taken lightly by her husband (Eph. 5:25)

Sister, if you don't want to be a wife, don't become one (you do have a choice!). If you want to be a wife, BE a wife!

Any organization, especially the home, must have an assignment of duties and leadership to keep things running smoothly. It is important for each member to fulfill their given role or the organization (home) winds up in chaos. Without a leader in place; either a power struggle ensues, or nothing gets done or decided: Either way, chaos results.

God gave distinctly different roles to husbands and wives. When we change or alter those roles, the family structure is weakened and confusion and conflict reign. Each member has equal value (Gal. 3:38), but different roles. Being a good and godly wife does not depend on having a good and godly husband (consider Abigail in 1 Samuel 25.)

TO BE A WIFE WHO PLEASES GOD AND YOUR HUSBAND, DO THE FOLLOWING—

Submit to your husband (Eph. 5:22).

This instruction is ridiculed and misunderstood by the world. The world reads this as, "Husbands MAKE your wives submit", but this command is addressed to the wife (not the husband): she voluntarily places herself under his leadership.

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Submission is a way of life for all faithful Christians, man or woman; it's not "for women only." Both are told to "submit to God" (James 4:7), "to the elders" (Heb. 13:17), to "older people" (I Pet. 5:5)," and to "government rulers" (I Pet. 2:13). Even Christ submits to the Father (I Cor. 15:28).

Respect your husband (Eph. 5:33).

Respect is the key to a man's heart and is commanded by God. In her book "For Women Only," Shaunti Feldhahn reports the results of having surveyed hundreds of men and identifies five key needs men have regarding respect. You should respect:

1. His judgment
2. His abilities
3. Him, in communication
4. Him, in public
5. Him, in your assumptions

Love your husband (Titus 2:4)

Applying Philippians 2:3-4 will help you show him your love. Be content with him and put his needs above yours. Discontentment is Satan's greatest tool for destroying homes and happy marriages.

Be Faithful and Trustworthy (Prov. 31:11).

Adultery has become an accepted practice in our society. To guard against this temptation, keep your relationships with other men in check and be grateful for a faithful husband. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 explains our responsibility regarding our own husband's needs. Adultery will destroy your soul (Pro. 6:32) and keep you out of the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

Do him good and not evil (Prov. 31:12).

Take care of your household (Titus 2:5).

Be kind and forgiving toward him (Eph. 4:32).

If we stand in the place God has given us as wives, our homes will be stronger and happier. We will enable our husbands to be the leaders they are commanded to be, and we will please God.

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Special Studies

The Catholic Church: The Magisterium

By: Victor M. Eskew



Unless you are familiar with the Catholic faith you have probably never heard of something within the Catholic Church called The Magisterium. However, you have heard of the pope, the college or body of bishops, and papal infallibility. All of these things are involved in a study of “The Magisterium.” Let’s do some examination of this authoritative body within Catholicism.

In The Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Magisterium is defined on page 24. They tell us that when Christ instituted the Twelve, “he constituted {them} in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them.” From this they reason that just as “by the Lord’s institution, St. Peter and the rest of the apostles constitute a single apostolic college, so in like fashion the Roman Pontiff, Peter’s successor, and the bishops, the successors of the apostles, are related with and united to one another.” We have already studied the doctrine that affirms Peter was the first pope of the church. There is no evidence that Peter was ever the pope. Too, there is no evidence that the Lord intended for there to be what is called apostolic succession. In fact, there is Bible teaching that teaches to the contrary.

When Jesus was in the upper room on the night before His crucifixion, He took time to teach, warn, and promise the Twelve several things. In Luke 22:28-30, He made this promise to them: “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

The Catholic Church believes that the authority of the apostles only lasted while these men were alive. Not so! Jesus told these men that they would receive the Holy Spirit, and He would guide them into all truth (John 16:13). These men wrote that truth down and we possess it now in written form (2 Tim. 3:16-17). By means of this truth, the apostles continue to rule and reign within the kingdom of God. These men are still the foundation of the precious church of our Lord. “Now therefore ye are not more strangers and foreigners,” Paul told the Ephesians, “But fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Eph. 2:19-20). Jesus is till the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). The apostles, through the New Testament, continue to sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, a figurative term that describes the church or spiritual Israel.

There are two components of the Magisterium, the pope and the college of bishops. These two components must act together in order for them to exercise authority within the Catholic Church. The Catechism confirms this in regard to the bishops on pages 254-255. “The college or body of bishops, has no authority unless united with the Roman Pontiff, Peter’s successor, as its head. Yes, this group exercises supreme and full authority over the universal Church, “but this power cannot be exercised without agreement of the Roman Pontiff.”

Remember, the bishops are said to occupy the seat of the Twelve today. These men are not free to make decisions on their own. They must come together with the pope to exercise their supreme authority. Two arguments need to be considered by those who agree with this organizational structure. First, Paul was an apostle. He was converted in the city of Damascus. In the book of Galatians, he tells us of his movements after his conversion. “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother” (Gal. 1:17-19). After that one visit with Peter and James, Paul says it was another fourteen years before he went up Jerusalem again. Was Paul making decisions for the churches? Was he exercising his authority as an apostle? Was he doing these things without the affirmation of Peter and the other apostles? The answer is: “Yes.” How could Paul do such things without being assembled with the Magisterium?

Second, we read of only one gathering of the apostles to discuss an issue in the church. Some refer to this gathering as “The Jerusalem Council” (Acts 15). The question involved circumcision and the Old Law (Acts 15:1, 5). It should be kept in mind that the church did not have the written Word at the time of this gathering. Our question is: “Why don’t we see more gatherings of the “Magisterium” of the first century? They should have been meeting on numerous occasions to discuss issues within the early church. This is not what we find. Ultimately, the apostles were scattered all over the world to proclaim the gospel of Christ (See Matt. 28:20; Mark 16:15). They did not constantly gather in Rome as an authoritative body over the church. These men were preaching and teaching the gospel by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They did not need to assemble together with Peter as their overseer to make judgments about the church.

In our next article, we will examine the purposes of the Magisterium. Too, we will discuss the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope. That article will be our final installment on the Catholic Church. We will, then, take up a study of Calvinism.

One Grape at a Time

by Brother Garland Elkins

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Tom's Pen

Falling For Fads

By: Tom Wacaster



Some of you are old enough to remember leisure suits. It has been almost 40 years since I bought my one (and only) leisure suit. I was living in Ada, Oklahoma, and there was a J.C. Penny store on Main Street. Of course, the days of “Main Street” shopping seem to be going the way of the leisure suits. Leisure suits were worn with bright colorful, open collar shirts, usually coordinated to match the suit. The lapels on the suit coat were wide. For some odd reason I was attracted to the suit, and the price was not too bad when compared with the more traditional suits. After some assurance from the salesman that I really looked good in a leisure suit, I decided I’d purchase it. I was so proud of that suit that I actually wore it into the pulpit for my evening lesson. Following the worship service one of the dear sweet sisters came to me and said, rather bluntly, “Don’t ever wear that in the pulpit again; it is not becoming!” I felt sort of like the man who bought a used car and a few months later went back to the salesman and said, “Tell me about this car again; I’m discouraged!” Well, I wore that suit on occasions until it went out of style, and then I think I sold it in a garage sale. It was a fad that faded in the proverbial sunset of earthly things.

The late Adair Chapman once told the following story about a conversation between the elders and deacons of a certain congregation: “What went wrong,” one of the men said, “is that the preacher came in with some ideas about how we are going to turn the community upside down. The ideas were very expensive. We wanted the church to grow, and we went along. We just didn’t stop to count the cost. The program did not work, the promoter is gone, and now we’re stuck with some long-term indebtedness that has just about paralyzed our mission work. We were foolish to fall for a fad.”

Unfortunately, the brotherhood has had its fair share of “fads” that have come and gone over the years. Some unscrupulous brethren have gone from congregation to congregation promoting a particular program, charging a lot of money for the counseling advice on how to make their particular fad work, and promising unrealistic results. In theory the fad may have really looked good; but practically speaking, what was good for one church was not necessarily good for another.

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Church growth is a worthy goal, and any congregation satisfied with just keeping house is not pleasing in the sight of God. Jesus chastised the church of Ephesus for having left their first love (Rev. 2:4). They evidently had become satisfied with hard work that was not motivated by genuine love for the Lord. The church at Laodicea is a good example of a congregation that had become satisfied with keeping house, being neither hot nor cold. For that reason, Jesus warned that He was about to “spew thee out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:16). Any attempt to sit on the side lines and warm ourselves next to the fires of mediocrity is not the answer to the downturn in numerical growth.

Latching on to the latest fad to somehow generate numbers is not an effective means of growth either. Fads come and go; the leisure suit craze is a good example of that. The days of the “bus ministry” ran its course in about ten years. Some congregations made good use of the “joy buses” they purchased, but as the newness wore off and it soon became apparent that it would take hard work and a lot of expense to maintain such a program, churches began to bail out. In some places the old “joy bus” was turned into a “Senior Citizen Shuttle,” but that, too, has run its course in many places.

It is not wrong to be open-minded for programs that work; but programs do not work without hard work on the part of the people. Someone once observed, “New and old methods should be prayerfully evaluated from the standpoint of scripture and practicality. There are few shortcuts to effective and lasting evangelism.” That same sentiment has been expressed by good brethren who have demonstrated by their love for lost souls and a willingness to work and labor for the Master, knowing they were in it for the long haul.

It has been my observation over the years that a steady application of the word of God has done more to generate growth than some of the fads that have come and gone. Remember, the word of God is likened unto leaven that, when mixed into the lump, slowly-sometimes imperceptibly-produces growth. A consistent declaration of the word of God, without compromise, is the one technique that will never be out of date. Paul told us that the power is in the gospel. It is the faith and not some fad that will win the souls of men and produce consistent growth. Fads come and go, “but the word of the Lord abideth forever” (1 Pet. 1:25).

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From the Vault:

Instrumental Music in the Church

By: Carl O. Cooper



It is certainly no secret and it is very well documented as historical fact, musical instruments were not used in church worship until well over a thousand years after the church started in AD 33. In fact, even after the reformation movement and denominations separated from the Catholic Church, almost all of the famous well known reformers of denominational churches were very much against the introduction of musical instruments into the worship of the church. This too, is well documented in history and is not even disputed anywhere as far as I can determine.

It is interesting to note that the early church had copies of Scripture that told them precisely what type of music God had told them to present to Him in worship. It was clearly understood by the early church that God had instructed the New Testament Church to present worship to Him in the form of music as acapella singing only. This form of music was presented to God during the worship of the church for over 1000 years and was so normal and so understood that the term acapella was coined to describe “church music”. The term acapella means “church music”.

Today almost all denominational churches use many types of mechanical instruments in their various forms of worship to God. Only members of the mainstream and traditional church of Christ even care what the Bible has to say about the type of music we present to God as worship. We still use acapella music without instruments in our worship, just like the original church used acapella singing without instruments. This is the type of music we find recorded for us to use in the Bible in the New Testament. God’s word is binding on this subject.

However, it is very hard, and for some people almost impossible, to continue to follow a path that is so counter cultural to the society in which we live. It is just human nature to want to follow the crowd. The average person can be quickly overcome with “peer pressure” and just cannot bear to be or to look different than the rest of the people around them. And so there is a great desire to use musical instruments in the worship of the church of Christ and to be like all the denominations around us. And therein comes into our midst the attempt to redefine words and phrases to try to find some way for the Bible to “authorize” the use of instruments in our worship.

A common way that this has been done is to take Greek words and look through history to find meanings that can be used and manipulated to appear to make the Bible say the things you want it to say. Now it is commonly known that Greek words, (just like English words) have multiple meanings depending on the context where they are used. One part of the Bible where this is done is in Ephesians 5:19. “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” Now for over a thousand years the New Testament church understood what this meant. To “speak to one another” uses the voice and not mechanical instruments. “Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”, tells us the types of songs we are expected to use in our worship. That rules out rock and roll and dance music and “making melody in your heart to the Lord” tells us that our emotions are involved in our worship to God in song. So it was understood for over 1000 years that the Bible only authorized acapella music in the worship to God.

But along came the instrument, eventually. But even so, it took several hundred more years for this desire for the instrument to affect the church of Christ. But, alas, eventually it did. Of course there was rebellion over its introduction into the worship of the church. So much so that the church of Christ had a major split. In 1906 “The Christian Church” was recognized as a definite new religious group because of their use of instruments in their worship. Of course there were many other differences but this was the most recognized and notorious difference in the two groups.

But the “non-instrumental” church of Christ stood firm and strong for many years after this split. Unfortunately, in recent times a new group has begun to emerge. A group who would consider themselves highly educated and progressive. It has been their mission to introduce the instrument into our worship services and to do it under the cloak of superior education and learning. They love to quote the Greek and they can do it so effectually that the common member of the church just has no defense or counter explanation for their explanations.

In using the words found in Ephesians 5:19 (which have been so clear for more than the first 1000 years of the church), a search was done and a new definition of the Greek word “psallo” was used to alter the Scripture to make it appear to authorize the use of instruments in the worship of the church. There are several definitions for the Greek word “psallo”. It can mean “make melody” (which is how it is translated in Eph. 5:19) but there are other definitions for the word as well, depending on the context where it is used. One definition can be “pluck strings”. Now we know that would not harmonize with the first part of the verse that says “Speaking to one another”. There are no plucking strings when you are using the voice. And yet the “well educated teachers of false doctrine” have been very successful in convincing the members of the church that the proper use of the Greek word psallo in Ephesians 5:19 means “to pluck strings” that they are trying to find any way they can to make “pluck strings” “fit” this context and still forbid the use of musical instruments. Unfortunately they have fell in to the trap set by the false teachers and they have defined psallo as to pluck the “strings of the heart”. This becomes indefensible since the heart has no strings.

The following is an example of why this sleight of hand with the definition of words is not proper exegesis of the Scriptures.

Suppose there was a recipe written in a book that said “This cake is made from scratch”.

We all know what scratch means in this context. But there are many definitions of scratch. It could mean “to scratch off a list”. It could also mean “a sports game without using a handicap”. It could even mean “a scratch on your car’s paint”. There are many other definitions of the word scratch depending on the context where you use it.

Now, suppose 2000 years went by and someone in another country with a different language tried to translate this recipe. How would they translate this word “scratch”? Suppose they picked the wrong definition. They might say, “This recipe was never used for cooking” because it was “scratched off of the list” and never used.

This is just a simple example and the consequences of a mistake here does not make much difference in anyone’s life. Not so with the definition of the Greek word psallo. This mistake creates a major problem for many people’s lives. It has the potential of altering the worship of the church which God, Himself, has designed.

Isn’t it amazing that during the first 1000 years of the church, Christian people had the same words of Scripture we have today and it was written in the original Greek language which they spoke and understood very well. And although the Bible was not written using numbered verses like we see today, the same words were there in Ephesians 5:19 and they were well understood by the church. The Greek word Psallo was there and it was very well understood that the music designed by God to be presented by the worship of the church was to be “make melody” using the voice and acapella vocal singing. The other definitions of the word psallo were never a problem and the church did not translate psallo to mean “pluck strings”. It has taken another 1000 years for men to decide that they were more educated about the Greek language than the original church and to “place the meaning of psallo as plucking strings into the Scriptures of Ephesians 5:19”.

Don’t let someone deceive you by placing meanings on Greek words that do not fit the context.

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CHURCH LISTINGS

The congregations listed are either advertisers in *The Gospel Journal* or they have purchased Congregational subscriptions to *The Gospel Journal*.

ALABAMA

Brantley—Sasser Church of Christ, 4 miles south on Hwy. 29. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Jeff Grimes, preacher, email: jeff.grimes@sasserchurchofchrist.org.

Bridgeport—Rocky Springs Church of Christ, 209 County Road 574, (just off Hwy 72). 256-495-2460, Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m. Alabama's oldest congregation. Henry Camp, preacher.

Bryant—Glendale Church of Christ, 532 Co. Rd. 308, 35958 (near Chattanooga, TN). Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 6:30 p.m. (CT). Daryl Haynes, preacher, 256-597-2207.

Fairhope—890 North Greeno Rd. (Hwy. 98), POB 1525, 36533, 251-928-9053, Fax: 251-928-9033. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6:30 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Mike Ray, preacher.

Jacksonville—Church of Christ, 321 Nesbit St., 36265, 256-435-9356. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Webster, preacher, www.house-to-house.com.

Tuscaloosa—East Pointe Church of Christ, 1 block from exit 76, off I-20, I-59. Sun. 9, 10, 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Abiding in God's Word—the Old Paths. LJ of A student, visitor, resident? Welcome! 205-556-3062.

ARKANSAS

Crossett—Church of Christ, 301 Pine St. 71635. 870-364-2721. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m.

Swifton—Church of Christ, 313 Ashley, Swifton, Arkansas 72471. 870-485-2472. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mac Ballard, evangelist.

CALIFORNIA

Galt—330 N. Lincoln Way 95632, Sun. 9, 10 a.m. 6 p.m. (12:30—2nd Sun): Wed 7 p.m. http://home-page.mac.com/dan22/Menu17. Html; Dan Morris, preacher 209-745-3512. email dan22@mac.com (cong. sub. given by Dan and Sheri Morris)

Norwalk—Church of Christ, 15333 Pioneer Blvd. 90651, 562-664-2204, Sun. 9:30 10:30, 6 p.m. Thurs. 7p.m.

Visalia—West Visalia Church of Christ, 4525 W Caldwell Ave, 93277. Sun. 9:45 a.m. 10:45 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Cliff Sabroe, preacher Website; www.westvisaliachurchofchrist.com

COLORADO

Aurora—East Alameda Church of Christ 13605 E. Alameda 303-344-4050, Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7p.m. Nathan Liddell, preacher.

Denver—Bear Valley Church of Christ. 2707 S Lamar St, 80227. 303-986-2707 Sun 9 a.m. 10:15 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Preacher Neal Pollard. Home of Bear Valley Bible Institute, www.bearvalleycocf.org

FLORIDA

Jay—Jay Church of Christ, 4034 FL-4 32565. Sun 10:00 11:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. 850-675-6443 Joshua Holloway, Preacher

Kissimmee—Kissimmee Church of Christ, 921 W. Vine St. 34741. Sun 9:00 10:00 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m.. 407-847-5749

Milton—Margaret St. Church of Christ, 6745 Margaret St. 32570. 650-623-6191, Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Troy Sosebee preacher, Website www.margaretstreetchurchofchrist.com

Pensacola—Innerarity Point Church of Christ, 13250 Gulf Beach Highway, 32507 (Perdido Key area) 850-910-5942, Sun 9:00, 10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Andy Cates, Preacher

Wewahitchka—Church of Christ. 2247 Hwy. 71 South (1/4 mi N of CR 386, 2 mi. S. of town), Po Box 929, 32465, 850-639-5401 Sun 9,10 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. CST Eddie Nichols preacher, email wewachurch@outdrs.net

GEORGIA

Bremen—Bremen Church of Christ, 650 Alabama Ave S. 30110. 770-537-3013, Sun 9 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 pm. Sidney White, preacher

Cartersville—Cartersville Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Hams Pkwy NW 30120-4222. 770-382-6775, email coreybarnette@bellsouth.net; Sun 10, 11 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m. Corey Barnette, preacher.

Dalton—Highland Church of Christ, 901 Chester St. 30721, 706-226-4126 Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Barry Gilreath Jr, preacher Home of GBN, www.gbntv.org.

Dublin—Bellevue Rd. Church of Christ, 2214 Bellevue Rd, Dublin, GA. 31021. 478-272-7515, Sun: 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 6:00 pm, Wed. 7:00 pm. Johnnie Scaggs, Jr. preacher.

Fairmount—Fairmount Church of Christ 265 South Ave. Fairmount 30139. Sun, 10, 11 a.m. Wed. 6 p.m. Bobby D. Gayton, preacher. 678-431-1884. bdgayton@gmail.com

Fayetteville—Fayetteville Church of Christ, 870 Redwine Rd. 30215, 770-461-3617 Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Website: www.fcocom. Dave Rogers, Minister, Greg Nash, Associate/Youth Minister

Kennesaw—North Cobb Church of Christ. 885 Shiloh Rd. 30144, 770-424-6611 Sun 9:00 10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. Lee Davis, preacher

McClaysville—McClaysville Church of Christ, 134 Bridge St. PO Box 699, 30555, 706-455-2793 Sun 10,11 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Bill Johnston and Keith Ritchie preachers, email kritchie@ellijay.com

Villa Rica—Villa Rica Church of Christ, 515 Dallas Hwy, 30180,770-459-3478 Sun. 10 a.m. 11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Preacher Patrick Gray

ILLINOIS

Zion—23rd St. Church of Christ, 2218 Hebron Ave 60099 Sun 10:30, 11:00 a.m. Don Fianagan, preacher, 847-672-6097, email, dmflanagan@webtv.net. We invite you to attend a growing Biblically sound congregation.

INDIANA

Crown Point—Church of Christ, 660 Burrell St. 96307, 219-671-0561 Sun 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. Thurs 7:00 p.m. Jeff Collet preacher.

Evansville—Westside Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr 47712, 812-421-8645 Sun 9 a.m. 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 6:30 p.m.

Muncie—Towne Acres Church of Christ, 2411 E. Riggins Rd 47303, 765-269-5138 Sun 9:30,10:30 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed 7 p.m. Brian Howard, preacher.

KENTUCKY

Hickory—Spring Creek Church of Christ, 970 State Rt. 1684, 42051, 270-658-3381 Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m., DST (5:00 p.m. CST), Wed 7:00 p.m. Ty Barnette preacher. www.springcreekcoc.org

LOUISIANA

Chalmette—Chalmette Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St. 70043, 504-279-9438, Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Mark Lance, preacher

New Orleans—DeGaulle Drive Church of Christ, 4700 DeGaulle Dr. 70131. 504-392-4110 Sun 9:00,10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. www.degaulledrivecoc.com email office@degaulledrivecoc.com

West Monroe—Bawcomville church of Christ, P.O. Box 3057, 2325 Jonesboro Rd 71294, 318-323-2945, Sun 9:45, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Bill Schooley elder 318-396-7296, email schoofeb@bellsouth.net.

MISSISSIPPI

Coldwater—Coldwater Church of Christ, P.O. Box 321. 2006 Hwy 306 @ Golden Way. 38618 Sun 9:30 10:30 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Clifton Angel, preacher, www.Coldwatercofc.com

Courtland—Church of Christ, Hwy 51 N. 38620, 662-563-5100 Sun 9:30 10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m.

Southaven—Southaven Church of Christ, 681 Church Rd East, 662-393-2690 Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. www.southavencoc.org Robert Jeffries, preacher.

MISSOURI

Farmington—Sunnyview Church of Christ, 2801 Hwy H, 2 miles south of town. 573-756-5925 Sun 10:00 10:45 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m.

NEVADA

Las Vegas—Boulevard Church of Christ, 4000 W Oakey Blvd. 69102, 702-877-9629 Sun 9.10 a.m. Wed 7 p.m. Preacher, Randy L. Mabe, Home of Southwestern School of Religion www.churchof-christlasvegas.com

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque—Northeast Church of Christ 11000 Paseo del Norte NE, 87122. 505-797-3025 or 292-3856, www.giftofeternallife.org Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. John Phillis, preacher

Jal—Jal Church of Christ, 200 E Utah Ave, PO. Box Drawer N. 88252, 575-395-3010, fax 575-395-2303, Sun 9, 10 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed 9:30 a.m. (Ladies) 6:30 p.m. e-mail jalcofc@valomet.com, Daryl Micham, minister

NEW YORK

Syracuse—Kimber Road Church of Christ, 408 Kimber Road, Syracuse NY 315-446-5732

NORTH CAROLINA

Rocky Mount—3309 Sheffield Dr. 27801 (take S. Winstead 2 mi from US Highway 64, turn right on Sheffield Dr.) 252-937-7997 Sun 10. 11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m. Jack Tittle, preacher, email jacktittle@hotmail.com

March 2022

CHURCH LISTINGS

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Congregational subscriptions to The Gospel Journal.

OHIO

Fairborn -- (NE of Dayton)—WPAFB and AF Museum, Central Ave. Church of Christ, 922 S. Central, Fairborn, 45324, 937-878-0452. www.cachurchof-christ.com Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m.

OKLAHOMA

Porum -- Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy. 2, Warner Exit. Sun 10, 11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Alien Lawson, preacher, 918-683-6633

SOUTH CAROLINA

Greenville -- Augusta Road Church of Christ, 5315 Old Augusta Road, 29605, 864-277-5717, Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. www.arcoc.org.

North Charleston -- North Charleston Church of Christ, 8415 Patriot Blvd. 29418, 843-552-7733, Sun 9, 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Don Blackwell, preacher, Website: www.northcharlestonchurchof-christ.com

TENNESSEE

Bells -- Crossroads church of Christ, 2587 Crossroads Rd. (2 miles off 88 Hwy), PO Box 295, 38006, Sun 10, 11 a.m. 5/6 p.m. Win/Sum.; Wed 7 p.m. Elders: Ray D. Nanny 731-663-2144, T.J. Warren 731-663-3438

Chattanooga -- White Oak Church of Christ, 2229 Lyndon Ave., 37415, 423-877-9762. Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m.; Wed 7 p.m.; Rick Owens, preacher, email: whiteoakcoc@gmail.com.

Collierville -- Collierville Church of Christ, 575 West Shelton Rd, 38017-1190, 901-853-9827, Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Chad Ezelle, preacher

Cordova -- Cordova Church of Christ, 7801 Macon Rd., 38018, 901-754-9893, Sun 9, 10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed 7 p.m.; Rick Owens, Preacher, email: crdvacoc@bellsouth.net

Crossville -- Crossville Church of Christ, 423 Main St, 38555, 931-484-5297, Sun 9, 10 am, 6pm; Wed 6pm. Barry Kennedy, preacher.

Englewood -- Liberty Hill Church of Christ, 121 Co. Rd. 470, 37329, 423-887-5614. Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6pm; Wed 7pm. Mike Williams, Preacher.

Memphis -- Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, 38125-2560, 901-751-2444. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Home of Memphis School of Preaching. Scott Cain and Evan Manning, preachers.

Munford -- Church of Christ, 435 South Tipton St., 38058. (901)837-8639. Sun. 10:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Randy Collum and Luke Gurchick, preachers. www.munfordcoc.org.

Newbern -- Glendale Church of Christ, 6739 Lanes Ferry Rd., 38059. 731.627.9050. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Ronnie Scherffius, preacher.

Pulaski -- East Hill Church of Christ, 509 E. Madison St., 38478.- 931-363-2777. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 pm., Wed. 7 p.m. Home of the annual Truth in Love lectures, second week in May. www.easthillchurch.org.

Red Boiling Springs -- Willette church of Christ, 1586 Willette Rd., 37150; 615-699-3768; Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m. Rob Whitacre, preacher, Jack Honeycutt, India Coordinator, e-mail: willettecoc@nctc.com; www.willettecoc.org http://www.willettecoc.org

Shipp's Bend -- Shipp's Bend Church of Christ, 944 Old State Route 50, Centerville, TN 37033; Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; Charles White, preacher.

Stanton -- Stanton Church of Christ, Hwy. 70, 38069 (exit I-40 at Stanton-Somerville, north on Hwy. 222 to Hwy. 70). 901.294.3831. Sun. 9:45, 10:40 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Niel Bennet, preacher.

TEXAS

Amarillo -- Bell Avenue Church of Christ, 1600 Bell Avenue, Amarillo, TX 79106, 806.355.2351, Sun., 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Glen Walton and Dean Whaley, ministers; email: bacoc@amaonline.com

Austin -- Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Rd., 78748, 512.282.2486. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m., www.swcfc.org. Home of Southwest School of Bible Studies, www.swsbs.edu. Cody Westbrook, preacher.

Beeville -- Adams St. Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams, POB 1148, 78104. 361.358.4428 or 358.5760. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

Blanco -- Blanco Hill Church of Christ, 4022 Hwy. 281S (1.7 mi. so. of Hwy. 32), POB 98, 78606. 830.833.5871, email: clifford@moment.net. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

Bryan/College Station -- Bryan/College Station Church of Christ, 11914 State Hwy 30, College Station, TX 77845, 979.774.7470. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 6:30 p.m..

Burnet -- Burnet Church of Christ, 2805 S. Water St., 78611, 512.756.1153. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 5 [stand.]/6 [day.] p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Truman Stinson, preacher. 512.693.2042.

Coldspring -- Coldspring Church of Christ, 118 Pinto Lane, Coldspring, TX 77331. 936.653.3447.

Corpus Christi -- Riverside Church of Christ, 4701 Cornett Dr., 78410. 361.241.4239. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Matthew Gibson, preacher.

Granbury -- Historic Downtown Church of Christ, 310 W. Pearl St., 76048. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Leo Ben Hurr, preacher. 817.573.9862,

Justin -- Church of Christ, 424 S. Snyder, 76247. 940.648.2482. Sun. 9:30, 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; email: jcoctx@yahoo.com. Shane Coleman, preacher.

La Grange -- Church of Christ, 646 E. State Hwy 71, POB 523, 78945. lagrangecoc@cmaaccess.com. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 10:30 a.m., 7 p.m. Jason Browning, preacher, email: ja-soncb@cmaaccess.com. 979.968.5676

Leonard -- Church of Christ, 206 E. Fannin St., POB 219, 75452. 903.587.2229; Sun. 9, 9:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m.

Lubbock -- Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., POB 64430, 79464. 806.794.5008. Sun. 9, 9:55 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7:30. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m., KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, evangelist, 806.798.1019.

Mathis -- Church of Christ, 407 E. Rockport, 78368 (exit off I-37 and go toward small water tower). 361.547.2016. Sun. 10, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 10 a.m., 7 p.m.

Mt. Pleasant -- N. Jefferson Church of Christ, 2311 N. Jefferson, POB 963, 75456. 903.572.1136. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Kris Groda, preacher.

Odem -- Odem Church of Christ, PO Box 660, 1101 Voss Avenue (HWY. 77), TX 78370. 361.368.2601, Sun. 9, 10, 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Patrick Hammack, preacher.

Portland -- Portland Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1274, 2009 Wildcat Drive, Portland TX 78374. 361-643-6571. Sun. 9 am, 10 am, 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm. Larry Delong, preacher; email: portlandcoc@juno.com—website: www.portlandxcocf.com

Richwood -- Church of Christ at Richwood, 1600 Hwy. 288-B, Randy Robinson, Preacher, 979-266-9926

Roanoke -- Roanoke Church of Christ, Rusk & Walnut, 817.491.2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Joey Davis, preacher.

San Antonio -- Northern Oaks Church of Christ on Red Land Rd., just inside Loop 1604. 210.496.1346. Sun. 9:30, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m. Mel Hutzler, preacher, www.northernoakschurch.org.

Schertz -- Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., Schertz, TX 78154 [exit I-35 at Schertz Pkwy., NE of San Antonio], 210.658.0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Stan Crowley evangelist.

Talco -- Talco Church of Christ, 5th and Lide Sts., 75487. 903.379.2582, pager: 575.4541, Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

UTAH

Price -- Carbon/Emery Church of Christ, 3300 E. Hwy 6, P.O. Box 299, 84501. 435.637.4407. Sun. 10 a.m., 2 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. John Temples, preacher.

St. George -- 1330 W. 750 N., P.O. Box 3010, 84790. 435.628.6060. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; Thur. (LBC) 4 p.m. Preacher: Paul J. Di-toro—435.986.4119.

VIRGINIA

Bristol -- E. Bristol Church of Christ, 340 Bonham Rd. (1 mi. off I-81 @ exit 7), P.O. Box 16038, 24209-6038. 276.669.6221. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. -276.466.0950.

Culpeper -- Culpeper Church of Christ, 1600 N. Main St., P.O. Box 863, 22701. 540.825.5897. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Bill Dilks, preacher—540.829.4008, email: billdilks@sysmatrix.net.

Salem -- Westside Church of Christ, 1705 Star-view Dr., 24153. 540.389.9139. Sun. 9:30, 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. www.westsidecofe-salem .com.

WISCONSIN

Rice Lake -- Rice Lake Church of Christ, 103 Reuter Avenue, Rice Lake, WI 54868. 715.475.8188. Scott Nedland, Preacher.

Webster -- Burnett County Church of Christ, 7425 Birch St. W, Webster, WI 54893. 715.866.7157. Garrett Derouin, Preacher

WYOMING

Buffalo -- Church of Christ, 1100 Fort St., 82834. 307.684.5141. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 7 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m., email: cocbuffalo@vcn.com.

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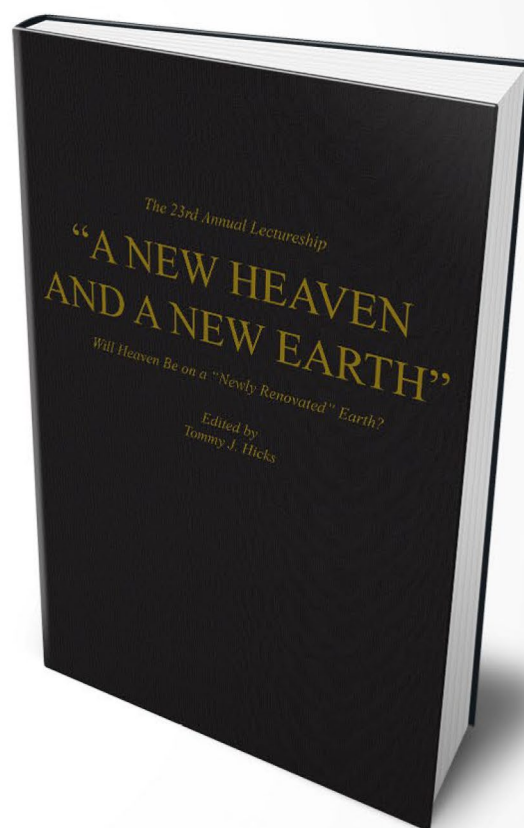
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