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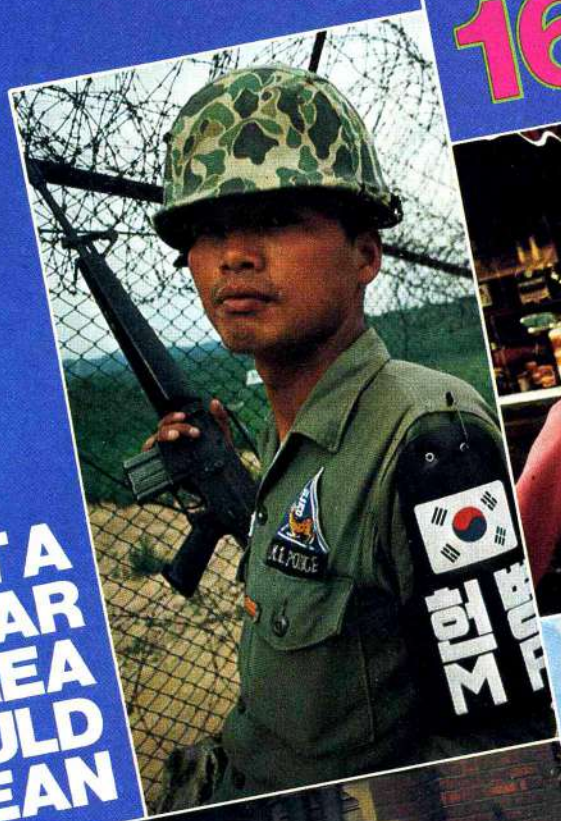
PLAIN TRUTH
a magazine of understanding

DECEMBER 1977



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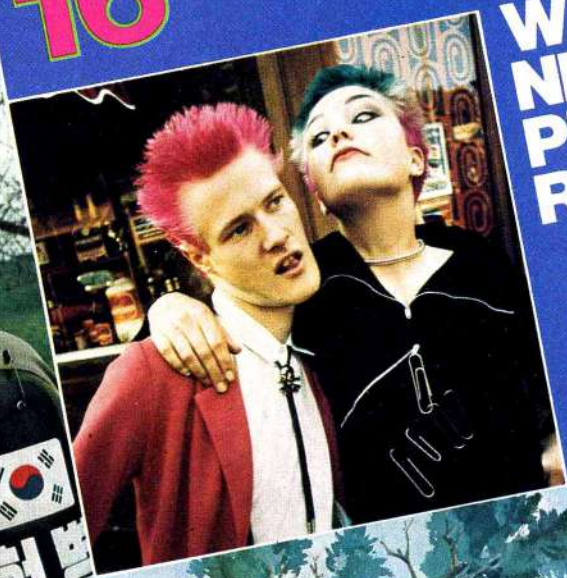

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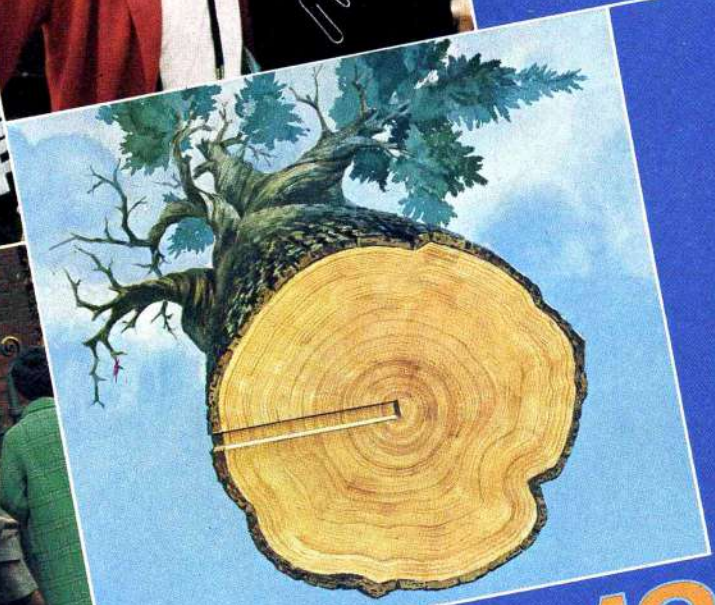

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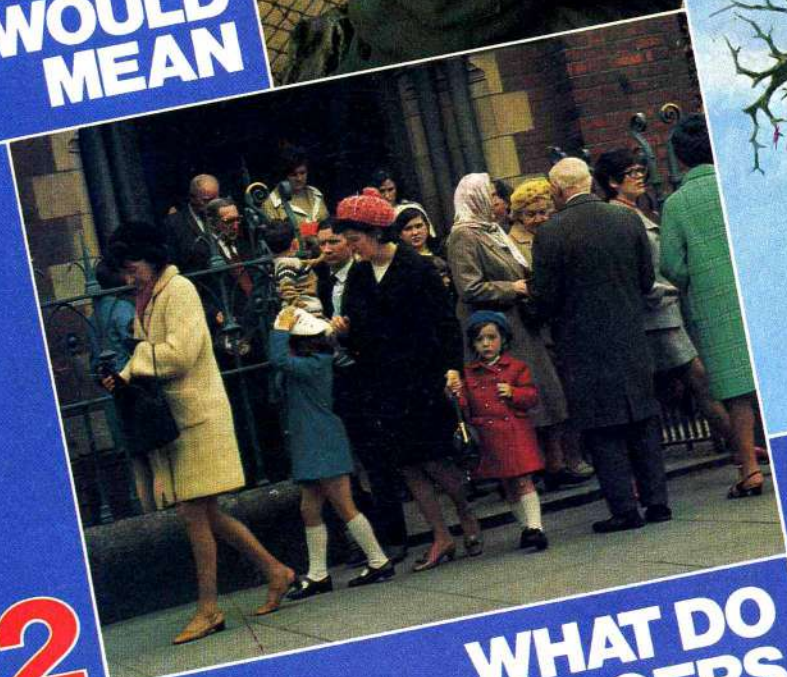

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WHAT DO CHURCHGOERS BELIEVE? AND WHY?

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ARTICLES

FEATURES

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Personal from...

Hope for the Future

Do you see a bright future ahead? For you? For humanity? Personally, I do—and if you can join me in saying that, you are one in a hundred thousand!

Where is any *good news* today? Where is any future to be found in nations developing nuclear weapons which can erase all human, animal and plant life from the earth? Where is any hope to be found in the wretchedness, ignorance, poverty, squalor and filth in which more than half the world's population lives? Where is any joyous anticipation to be found in prosperous "have" nations where sources of drinking water—the rivers and lakes—are being polluted, where the air we breathe is being befouled, the soil is worn out and contaminated, and the foods are being robbed of nutrition in food factories; where homes and families are being broken up, crime is rapidly increasing, racial problems and violence are erupting, and sickness and mental disturbances multiplying?

Where is happiness today? Sixty years ago, driving along country roads in Iowa, I saw and heard farmers plowing behind teams of horses, singing happily as they walked. Today, the farmers ride tractors—but where did the singing and the happiness go?

Can we find encouraging reassurance for tomorrow on university campuses where the leaders of tomorrow are consigning morality to the limbo of an outmoded past, where suicides are on the increase, and where unproved doctrines are being absorbed by impressionable minds?

Where do we find inspiration in the assertions of world leaders and the so-called "great," who are warning us that we must adjust to a future of growing problems and dangers where there are NO SOLUTIONS?

Well, for those who hold the above prevailing concepts, the future must indeed appear discouragingly bleak—if they take a look at it instead of kidding themselves into assuming that by ignoring the dangers they will somehow go away.

There is a CAUSE for every effect.

There is a CAUSE for the state of the world today. And there has to be a CAUSE that will produce the peaceful and happy world tomorrow. There had to be a first cause for the very existence of matter, of life, of forces and energies. But today, it is considered "intellectual" to be willingly IGNORANT of that. I have said before, that in the first two centuries of the so-called Christian era, it was popular to embrace gnosticism—meaning, "we know." But today, it is popular to embrace agnosticism—meaning, "we don't know—we are ignorant." Today, ignorance is embraced and labeled "knowledge."

Is it IGNORANCE to recognize the facts of the great First Cause who reveals the true cause of all of today's ills? Is it wise, intellectual and knowledgeable to be deliberately ignorant of basic facts and truth?

There are two main ways of life—two basic principles—two fundamental philosophies. One is the way of GIVING, the other of GETTING. One is LOVE, the other LUST. One believes it is more blessed to give than to receive. The other insists that acquiring, taking, accumulating, through the ways of competition, leads to progress and happiness.

The one way is God-centered, the other is SELF-centered. The one accepts the golden rule, the other says, "Do it to others before they do it to you." The one is the way of the divine nature; the other, the way of human nature. The one is the way of humility; the other, of vanity.

This world—all civilization—this world's society—is based on the hostile, competitive, SELF-centered way. It has produced every wail of human woe. It is the way that now threatens the extinction of humanity.

This all means one thing. Man, imbued with human nature, is utterly UNABLE to solve his problems. He can only worsen problems and create new ones. By the "knowledge" and efforts of man, this world is doomed and hopeless.

Is there, then, nothing to live for? Is there no hope for the future? Not within the knowledge, the skills and abilities of this world's great minds. Of self-professed "great" men, God says, "Professing themselves to be wise, they have become fools!"

But there emphatically is a bright future ahead! The world tomorrow—which *The Plain Truth* proclaims—will bring world peace, universal prosperity, universal right education, universal good health. *(Continued on page 45)*

A very large segment of the population of the Western world attends church on Sunday mornings. Why do they go? What do these churchgoers believe, and why? The plain truth is a little shocking—and illuminating!

WHAT DO CHURCHGOERS BELIEVE? AND WHY?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Nothing is so astonishing as the truth! It *is* often stranger than fiction. Most people who attend church regularly, or even occasionally, would be really surprised if they should probe into their own minds far enough to ask why they go, and just what is their religious belief—and why?

Do You Know?

As a baby, I was taken to church. As a child, I was taken to Sunday school and church. It was a Quaker church. I attended church until I was eighteen. Then I began attending the theater, athletic contests, and dances instead. But when we were married, my wife and I felt we ought to attend church. We looked over the churches in the general area of our home, selected one that was convenient and respectable, with a modern building, a friendly and personable pastor, and members we liked socially.

But WHY did we join? WHY did we attend church?

Well, we just felt we ought to—that's about all. Did we stop to analyze *why* we ought to attend church? Well, no. We supposed all people *should* attend church, should they not? Hasn't everybody always *heard* that one should go to church? It seems we had.

Most people simply assume, take for granted, and accept without question what they've always heard. Usually they don't know why.

What Did We Believe?

Did we have a definite religion? Reflecting back, my answer would have to be "No." How about you?

What did we believe? Well, we had no deep-rooted convictions. We believed, of course, those things we had most often heard in church. We supposed there was a heaven and a hell—an ever burning hell. We believed—or supposed we did—in the immortality of the soul. We believed in observing Sunday as the weekly day of worship, in celebrating Christmas, New Year's and Easter. From boyhood I had heard the pastor talk about a few weird things, or names, that had absolutely no meaning to me—"Pentecost," "grace," "Antioch," "sanctification," "justification," "dead in trespasses and sins." Of course I knew all those things came out of the Bible—but then, I always said: "I just can't understand the Bible."

And, speaking of the Bible, what *does* the average churchgoer think about the Bible? I think that in those years I was typical of many. It was "the *good* book." I did, in a way, regard it with a certain superstitious awe. It was beyond my comprehension. Of course I assumed our church got its beliefs out of the Bible. The preacher alone could understand it.

Did I look on the Bible as "the Word of God"? Well, yes, I suppose so. But then I never thought of it in *specific* terms as the message, the instruction of God, to give man the explanation of what he is, why he is here, where he is going, how he ought to live, and how he can be happy, prosperous, and enjoy life more.

Somehow religion was for Sunday morning—except that I had been taught that its prohibitions lasted all day Sunday. It was sin to go to the theater on Sunday—and probably at any time, since it was regarded as worldly—and it was a sin ever to dance, smoke, swear, or drink. Playing cards was sin, too. Aside from a few such things, I had no idea what my church *believed.*

Except for a few such church teachings, religion was for Sunday morning and had no connection whatever with my life otherwise. Of

course church membership often supplies a portion of one's social life, and many men attend to make valuable business contacts.

Religion? Well, I vaguely remembered hearing that Adam was the first man, and that he sinned, and "fell"—whatever that meant. As a result I hazily conceived that life was like a one-way trip on a train. Because of Adam, the switch in the track at the end of the line was thrown to shoot us all down to hell. So I supposed we needed to "get saved," although I had been taught that I had a "birthright membership" in the church, so I guessed I probably was already "saved"—at least I don't remember that I ever worried about it. When one was "saved," the switch in the track at the end of life's journey was then thrown so that when one got to the end of the line he would be shot instantly up to heaven, "to be with the Lord in mansions above," "over the river," or "on the other shore," wherever all that was. Anyway, it was "up yonder," and when they called the roll, I took it for granted I was going to be there.

And what was my idea of God—and of Christ—and of the devil? Well, God was One to fear and be appeased, in a way—and yet, if we pleased Him, He could make things break our way for us. If we faced a frightful tragedy and possible death, crying out to Him might save us. But generally, I think I rather took it for granted that God didn't want us to be happy or enjoy life—He certainly frowned on all worldly pleasures. Christ, however, was more kind and loving—He was our Savior. Above all, neither God nor Christ were REAL to me—they were in reality "far off."

Now these were not definite, concrete beliefs or deep-rooted convictions. They were just ethereal, vague assumptions. I never gave them deep or specific thought. I just took them for granted, supposing everybody believed these things. My mind was focused on the material interests of the moment—things closer to hand. As I said, religion was for Sunday. It had no relation to or connection with the rest of life as a whole—my school, fun, play, hobbies, and, as I grew older, business, philosophies and beliefs.

What a "Bible Christian" Is Like

But when I was 34 years of age, my religious nonchalance was rudely jolted. My wife and I were visiting my parents in Salem, Oregon. Mrs. Armstrong returned from a visit with one of my mother's friends—a neighbor. This woman seemed to be a sort of "Bible Christian." She had handed her Bible to my wife and asked her to read a certain passage aloud. Then, without any comment whatever, she asked my wife to turn to another passage and read it aloud—then another and another. All these passages seemed to connect in an orderly sequence.

"Why!" exclaimed my wife in astonishment. "This is not what I've always been taught! Have I always been led to believe *just the opposite* of what the Bible teaches?"

"Well, don't ask me," smiled my mother's neighbor. "I didn't teach you a word. You just read it yourself out of the Bible."

Mrs. Armstrong came running to tell me what she had discovered. Suddenly her religious belief had been changed. To me, she had become a religious fanatic. What she had read out of the Bible was diametrically contrary to the general teachings of the churches. I was angered, furious. Argument did no good. She had all the answers—and right out of the Bible. This was the incident that challenged and angered me into the first real study of the Bible of all my life.

I said, "You can't tell me that all these churches are wrong. I know they get what they believe out of the Bible!" So I devoted six months to intensive, almost night-and-day research and study to try to find, *in the Bible,* what I had been taught in church. I, too, was astounded to find just the opposite. I obtained the literature of churches supporting their beliefs. I searched the commentaries, the lexicons, the Bible encyclopedias. I searched out the arguments of higher criticism on these points. I tried my best to overthrow my wife's new Bible beliefs—but they definitely were in the Bible.

Now I was no longer carelessly assuming or taking for granted without question what I had heard or what others accepted. I was *proving* what was true. And it was *not* what I *wanted* to accept. Rather, it wounded my pride. It was humiliating. It was traumatic. It brought me to the most difficult decision of my life—to admit not only that I had been wrong—but to see my own self, for the first time, as I really *was*—an abhorrent, rebellious, vain human who was guilty of sin and unworthy of God's grace and mercy and love.

It was a bitter decision—I now felt my life was worthless—but I told God that if He could use such a worthless life, I would give it to Him in unconditional surrender.

At last, once I swallowed my pride, admitted defeat, was humbled, had repented, and accepted the Christ of the Bible—a different Christ than I had previously pictured—I had found the true SOURCE for belief.

What a difference there is between professed "Christians" who are churchgoers, and true BIBLE Christians! I *know* that difference because I have been both!

An Honest Approach

Regardless of whether one has been *angered* into an honest study of the Bible, as I was, or whether he has never been to church or heard anything else in the first place, regardless of WHY he looks into the Bible for himself, he will find the same thing there that I found—*if* he is honest and willing.

If a person born and reared on a faraway uninhabited island in mid-ocean, who had never heard *any* religious belief, had a Bible and was able to read, he would be a total stranger to many of the things I was taught in church. He would see, in the Bible, just what everybody else does who looks into it *honestly.*

What's wrong, then? When today's "enlightened" clergy, and the theological seminaries where young ministers are educated, spend more time trying to determine how much of the Bible they wish to classify as myth, and how little as truth; when only one percent of theological students, by actual survey, believe in any second coming of Christ which is stated and affirmed repeatedly in the Bible;

(Continued on page 45)

From Garner Ted Armstrong's new book

THE REAL JESUS

THE GREATEST STORY NEVER TOLD

"Jesus was born sometime in the late summer or early autumn of 4 B.C." The first time I ever made this statement I was received with a combination of doubt, incredulity, hostility and outright pity. "How in the world could Jesus have been born before Christ?" I was asked. This article, excerpted from my new book* The Real Jesus, *will show you just how Christ could have been born B.C. and recount more of the fascinating circumstances surrounding His nativity.

by Garner Ted Armstrong

From early on, Mary understood that she was pregnant—after all, hadn't an angel told her this would happen?

And naturally, she and her new husband Joseph had been living with the pain of growing notoriety ever since it became obvious to friends and relatives that she had "jumped the gun." They were fully prepared to accept this social disgrace, but still it was tough—they were as human as you and I.

There were, though, close friends and relatives who knew the truth. Joseph and Mary could spend time with such people, away from the smirks and knowing stares of the others. For example, Elizabeth and Mary were cousins, and Elizabeth was carrying a baby who would grow up to become John the Baptist. Both remembered the remarkable occasion when this unborn child had reacted so obviously when the two expectant mothers met (Luke 1).

Even though Mary and Joseph had probably spent many sessions poring over the scriptural prophecies referring to the baby within her body—explaining this remarkable transformation in their own private lives which had turned their world upside down—they did not have perfect understanding of many vague scriptural references which only later came into focus after the events they referred to had transpired.

So they suffered when friends talked behind their backs; they hurt when former friends shunned them; they probably had second, or even third, thoughts about the tremendous burden they had assumed. Still they had the courage to see it through.

But now yet another trial faced them: the need to travel to Bethlehem, Joseph's family's city of origin, to be counted in the vast worldwide census decreed by the Roman government.

Since Joseph was of the lineage of David (as genealogical records in both Matthew and Luke prove), he had to journey with his wife in an advanced state of pregnancy from Nazareth to Bethlehem, which is called the "city of David."

It may have seemed a cruel twist of fate—to be required by the Romans to travel all that distance during Mary's final, crucial month of pregnancy. It is clear that Joseph and Mary were not deliberately acting out any Old Testament prophecy, or, knowing that the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, they would have tried to travel earlier, at an easier time, and would have arranged accommodations more suitable than the hasty, last-ditch improvisation of a stable.

Neither could they have known that at the end of a terribly difficult trip they would become exiles in a foreign country, waiting for Herod the Great to die.

Christ Was Born B.C.

The census in Palestine took place, according to faulty modern chronological reckoning, about the year 4 B.C.

It so happens that in the Western Christian-professing world the

present system of counting years as either prior to or subsequent to the Savior's birth was established by Dionysius the Little six centuries this side of the event. Most early Christian sources place the birth of Christ anywhere from one to five years "before Christ." (See part two, section III A 1 of the *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* by Jack Finegan.)

And Christ was not born on December 25, either.

Abundant evidence exists proving Christmas is utterly pagan in origin; as pagan as belief in Dagon, Vishnu, Baal, or Isis and Osiris.

Jesus was born in the autumn, though the exact date has been carefully concealed. Even Herod didn't know exactly when Christ was born, or he would not have risked a massive uprising by the people as a result of his brutal edict to butcher helpless babies up to *two years of age!* (For more on this subject, write for the free booklet *The Plain Truth About Christmas* and the free reprint "When Was Christ Born?")

Most people have never heard the true facts surrounding Christ's birth; lodged in their minds is a purely mythological tale based on fantasy and erroneous religious tradition.

The traditional picture of Jesus' birth includes the loveliest manger imaginable on the face of the earth; sadly smiling shepherds leaning on their crooks; Magi, gorgeously arrayed in kingly robes and crowns, opening up little gold boxes containing precious spices; a tiny baby nestled in the arms of a mother who stares reverently at Him with a halo around her head and a sweet smile curving at her mouth; cherubs flitting through the heavens; and a bright star hovering in the distance outside the stable. All of this is repeated endlessly in millions of Christmas cards, religious books, journals and magazines, illustrated pages in Bibles, on people's front yards, rooftops, and in displays and plays in churches at Christmastime—yet it bears little resemblance to the way it really happened.

The shepherds were not there at the birth; they came later—and there is no reason to suspect that the shepherds and the wise men ever crossed trails.

There is no way to determine the exact length of time that transpired from the moment the "star" (an angel, as shown by Scripture) appeared to the Magi "in the east" (most authorities believe Persia) until their arrival in Jerusalem. It could have been several weeks, or even months.

Following their interview with Herod, and his request that they "search diligently for the young child," the Magi went outside, saw the "star" again, and followed it until "it came and stood over where the young child was" (Matt. 2:8-9). This was in Bethlehem, a short distance over steeply plunging trails from Jerusalem. Contrary to the assumption of millions, Jesus and His parents had found more permanent accommodations following the hasty emergency quarters in the stable, and the Magi came "into the *house,* [and] saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him . . ." (verse 11).

Escape to Egypt

That night, the wise men had a "bad dream," a warning from God, and sneaked out of the country without going back to Jerusalem. After they left, Joseph also had a dream. "And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him" (verse 13).

Joseph got up, hustled Mary and the baby and any other servants or family members who might have been with them into their clothes, packed and loaded the animals and took off *that same night,* hitting the caravan route to Egypt. They probably stopped at little-known campsites, avoiding the usual watering places and towns or villages along the way. Little did Joseph know that inadvertently he was fulfilling another prophecy which said, "I . . . called my son out of Egypt" (Hosea 11:1).

Since it was the major trade and commercial capital, Joseph probably had business interests in Jerusalem. His own building trade required that he deal from time to time with importers, distributors and craftsmen who were located there. So he and his family may have remained in Jerusalem up to about one year following Jesus' birth, though there is no actual proof. However, the murder of the children by Herod, risky even for a despotic king, offers some proof that Herod suspected Jesus would have been about one year of age, or even slightly older.

After Joseph and his family had been somewhere in Egypt for a time, another dream occurred. An angel said to Joseph: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life" (Matt. 2:20).

The following verses indicate Joseph probably would have gone to live in Jerusalem or its environs as his first choice. "But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (verses 22-23).

Being a "Nazarene" merely meant Jesus was a citizen of the city of Nazareth. He is called "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" several times in the Bible. Jesus was not an uncommon name (only the Greek form of *Joshua*); no doubt there were any number of individuals bearing the same name. It was quite common to name children after various attributes of God, or to include names of God (the prefix *El* and the suffix *Yah* were very commonly applied) in a person's name. The real Jesus was a Nazarene in the same sense a citizen of Chicago is a "Chicagoan," or someone living in Los Angeles is an "Angelino," or those in Paris are "Parisians." It was not a religious title of any sort, but a geographical and political term.

His Coming Predicted

But let's ask a few questions about Jesus' birth. How did God manage

to convince the lowly and humble classes that in fact a Savior was that day being born?

He did so by a number of divine miracles, intricately inverwoven into the fabric of history, extending so far back in time that it boggles the mind.

Although we cannot cover them here in detail, the miracles having to do with Jesus' birth—the decree of Augustus, the building of the Temple, the beginning of His ministry, the decrees of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, and many other events (see Daniel, chapter 11)—are tightly meshed into a network of Old Testament prophecies, and testify incontrovertibly to one fact: Jesus Christ of Nazareth was in truth the Son of God.

All the religious leaders knew, and the common folk believed intensely in, Isaiah's prophecy: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel [which means 'God with us']" (Isa. 7:14). They knew Isaiah had said: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor [wonder of a Counselor], The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:2, 6-7).

But how would God manage to avoid the contemptuous slander of "impostor" heaped upon Jesus, not only by His detractors, persecutors and religious antagonists, but even by His own closest disciples and personal friends? How would the common people be convinced utterly that Jesus was in fact fulfilling the many prophecies of Isaiah, Daniel and elsewhere, and was in fact the promised Messiah, that "Prophet" who would come to deliver Israel and to qualify to inherit the throne of David?

First, God sent a humble group of shepherds from sufficiently far away so that no one could claim collusion.

An angel appeared to them and said, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). They were not given any address—only a sign that they would find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. This meant He would be so newly born that there would be no opportunity for either the purchase or making of clothes for Him, that He would still be wrapped in a soft blanket, lying on a bed of straw, and would not yet be moved to an inn or a private home.

They were no doubt quite excited about the vision they had seen, and it is inconceivable that they were not elated with a combination of awe, fright, and yet subdued joy over having actually heard the voice of an angel, and seen an overwhelmingly bright light seemingly coming very near to them out of the heavens. Because of these miracles they fully expected to find the Savior of mankind lying in swaddling clothes in a manger. They probably asked any number of people around the streets and marketplaces of Bethlehem where they could find a baby who had been born in a manger, and repeated time and again to the excited questions they were asked precisely what had happened.

Finally, with the question having been asked sufficiently about the town, perhaps one servant at a nearby inn recalled that Joseph or a friend had come urgently asking aid and that one of the women in the kitchen had rushed off to help during the birth. Several of them may have exclaimed about the fact that a woman had to be turned away from the inn in such an advanced state of pregnancy when a lot of other people had been put up in more suitable accommodations, and there no doubt was some tongue-wagging about the unfortunate circumstances that led to her giving birth in a stable.

Actually, the Creator was succeeding in announcing the birth through three separate groups of individuals: the shepherds themselves, all the citizenry and townfolk they queried and who subsequently became involved, and Joseph and his own family.

Herod's Persecution

The events of the first few weeks after Jesus' birth caused widespread attention. It is evident that Herod was terribly shaken by what he had heard. The Bible says "he was troubled, *and all Jerusalem with him*" (Matt. 2:3), and claims he "gathered all the chief priests [who probably were Sadducees] and scribes of the people together" and "demanded of them where Christ should be born" (verse 4). All of the scholars were aware that this very likely was the time of the birth of Christ.

Pious frauds and sincere scholars—astronomers, astrologers, seers and soothsayers alike—were almost universally expecting that some great event would occur at about this time in history, and were looking for the Messiah.

When Herod called together the "chief priests and scribes of the people," this was tantamount to the President of the United States having a combined meeting of the Cabinet and Supreme Court. The "Supreme Court" of the Jewish nation, the Sanhedrin, the greatest religious body of the nation, declared in unanimity that Jesus the Savior would be born in Bethlehem, a city of David! (This they determined from the prophecy of Christ's birth found in the Old Testament book of Micah [5:2].)

Herod waited awhile, and then, in a fit of insane rage, "sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men" (Matt. 2:16).

But by that time it was too late. Joseph and Mary had escaped to Egypt, taking the young Jesus with them and remaining until this vicious despot passed from the scene.

From the young lad's return with His parents from Egypt to the northern Palestinian city of Nazareth, there is no further mention of Jesus until the moment He is seen sitting in the Temple at Jerusalem, both listening to questions and asking His own questions of the most learned doctors of the law, and astonishing them with His understanding and His answers (Luke 2:46-47).

(Another excerpt from *The Real Jesus* will be coming next month.) □

David Burnett—Contact

WHAT A NEW WAR IN KOREA WOULD MEAN

UPI

"Korea serves as the front line of the United States. This should be the last place to pull out U.S. troops." Former Prime Minister Paik Too-chin, now a delegate to the Republic of Korea's National Assembly, leaned forward in his chair in his spacious office and added: "I am very worried. I oppose the [U.S. ground force withdrawal] schedule of Mr. Carter. Without continued U.S. participation and determination"—he placed heavy stress on "determination"—"peace cannot be maintained." President Carter, of course, earlier this year announced that the present 33,000-man U.S. ground force in South Korea would be withdrawn in stages over a five-year period. About 8,000 air force men and technicians would remain in the country.

Mr. Paik spoke from profound and broad experience. He served the first of his two separate terms of office as prime minister during the Korean War.

by Gene H. Hogberg *and* Keith W. Stump

For nearly a quarter century American ground forces have served as the "finger in the dike" in maintaining an uneasy peace in northeast Asia. Now they are to be systematically withdrawn. The result could shake world power relationships to their very foundations.

He was present at the signing of the armistice on July 27, 1953, which terminated three years of bitter and destructive fighting. However, his signature is to be found nowhere on the treaty. South Korea, preferring to fight on to victory but overruled by the United States, was not a party to the cease-fire.

No one knows more than Mr. Paik that nothing substantial has changed in the relationship between the two Koreas since the armistice of 24 years ago. The overriding aim of North Korea's dictator Kim Il-sung—who has been the Pyongyang government's head of state throughout its 32-year existence—is to communize the South by force of arms, hopefully in his lifetime. To Kim, the war of 1950-53 was merely a round-one standoff. The final round with his intended knockout blow is yet to come.

Yet with the U.S. Second Infantry Division positioned astride two valleys leading to the South Korean capital of Seoul, which lies a scant 30 miles south of the border, the North Koreans would have to fight their way past American soldiers during the initial attack. The frustrated Mr. Kim has not risked inviting an all-out retaliation from the U.S. military. Thus, for nearly a quarter century, the strategically placed "trip-wire" U.S. ground forces have prevented a second Korean War from taking place. Little wonder dictator Kim has demanded repeatedly since 1953 that U.S. ground forces leave South Korea.

Booming Economy

While nothing has changed in the political relationships between the two Korean states, the same can't be said for their internal economic conditions. During our recent visit to the Republic, we were amazed at the furious pace of nation-building. In Seoul, despite that city's precarious location, high-rise office buildings and luxury hotels are springing skyward. Traffic jams are becoming increasingly common as more and more automobiles take to the streets. Subway and highway construction further add to the congestion. International bankers and foreign businessmen move through the country in hordes.

David Burnett—Contact

NORTH AND SOUTH *Korean soldiers eye each other at Panmunjom.*

Looking at the country today, it is difficult to realize that 24 years ago the Republic of Korea lay in near-total devastation, numb from three years of warfare against Chinese-supported North Korean invaders. But following the bloodless military coup staged by General (now President) Park Chung-hee in May 1961, South Korean industrialization forged ahead in earnest. The results in the years since have been nothing less than spectacular.

Though South Korea is a nation poor in natural resources, its hard-working citizens are determined to catch up economically with their chief rivals in free Asia, the prosperous Japanese. "Our *human* resources are abundant and well educated," Tae Wan-son, president of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told us. "This is our wealth."

Mr. Tae, a former economic-planning minister, outlined to us in a one-hour interview the current economic state of affairs of South Korea. Per capita GNP now stands at over $700, up dramatically from a mere $83 in 1961. By 1981 it is expected to hit $1500. South Korean exports have increased over 200 times since 1961, now standing at over $10 billion. Total trade is twice that figure. By 1980, exports alone are expected to reach the $20 billion mark. This year's target growth rate is ten percent, but it will probably be higher.

In stark contrast, Communist North Korea's economy is a shambles. Its GNP—$6 billion in 1976—is barely one-fourth that of the South. Its economic performance is so poor that its diplomats in Europe have reportedly been reduced to trading in black-market drugs and cigarettes. The North is intensely jealous of South Korea's success—adding to Kim Il-sung's compulsive obsession to communize the South by force of arms.

The authors recently returned from a three-week, six-nation fact-finding trip in Asia. This is the second report in their series on current conditions in that part of the world.

Putting "Human Rights" in Perspective

Mr. Tae assured us the U.S. ground forces are still necessary to *deter* war launched by the North Koreans—a war which, even if won, could set the Republic's hard-earned prosperity back many years. And the surest way to deter war is to leave the American troops right where they are. "They make Kim think twice," he said. South Korea, he added, is one of the few nations that has said "Yankee welcome" rather than "Yankee go home."

Mr. Tae said Americans obviously find it difficult to understand the precarious position the Republic of Korea is in, and has been in, for 27 years. "Korea is still in the stage of *protecting* freedom, not enjoying it as you are in America," he said. "You have no Communist enemy directly facing you, say, in Canada," he reminded us.

One National Assemblyman we talked to drew a similar parallel: "If Communists took over one-half of the United States—up to the Mississippi River, for example—do you think the other half could maintain its present type of democracy?"

(Continued on page 10)

Laffont—SYGMA

PANMUNJOM

Not Even a Nice Place to Visit

A taste of North Korea is available by means of a visit to the truce city of Panmunjom in the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ), the only place in Asia where American and Communist troops directly confront each other on a daily basis. About 30 miles north of Seoul, Panmunjom lies astride the demarcation line that divides the two Koreas.

We were driven there in a private car by a representative of the Korean Chamber of Commerce. (It is also possible to visit the village, as do about 1,000 tourists a month, via one of the daily, six-hour bus tours arranged by the Korean Tourist Bureau and conducted under the supervision of the U.N. Command.)

The atmosphere in Panmunjom is tense. An eerie quiet pervades the area. Stern-faced, jack-booted North Korean guards carefully scrutinize all incoming visitors, watching closely for any actions which they might construe as a "provocation" against the North. For example, inside the Military Armistice Committee (MAC) building, in which most of the talks between the two sides take place, we were solemnly warned by a U.S. officer against touching even the microphones on the table, since they were North Korean property.

A few yards south of the MAC building is South Korea's Freedom House, complete with a tower one may climb to see over into the North. Not to be outdone, the North Koreans not long ago erected a counterpart building of their own. It is exactly one meter taller and one meter wider than the Freedom House. Nevertheless it is a sham building, as phony as the facades on a movie lot at Universal Studios. Ostensibly two stories tall, it has only one room downstairs, we were told, that has actually been completed. The nonrooms on the second story are all covered with drapes. Otherwise one might peer through to the rolling North Korean countryside.

It was in the DMZ near Panmunjom that two unarmed U.S. officers were axed to death by North Korean soldiers in August 1976, while attempting to trim a tree near the "Bridge of No Return," which links North and South Korea. Last July, tensions were again heightened along the DMZ when North Koreans shot down an unarmed U.S. helicopter which had inadvertently strayed over the border. A total of 57 Americans have died in incidents along the DMZ since the signing of the 1953 armistice.

The abrupt and drastic reactions of trigger-happy North Korean troops in these incidents bear witness to the "shoot-first, ask-questions-later" mentality instilled into them by a regime filled with irrational and all-consuming hatred of both South Korea and the American "imperialists."

After having visited Panmunjom, we could well appreciate the sentiments of Glasgow L. Reynolds, an American teacher in Seoul, who wrote recently in the *Korea Herald:* "I have seen such spitting, maniac laughter and gesturing by the brainwashed North Korean soldiers [at Panmunjom] to convince me that we cannot expect Kim Il-sung [North Korea's dictator] to act rationally to a troop withdrawal. Will my country's leaders and decision-makers be so naive as to expect a rational response? The only way to deal with irrationality is to restrain or subdue it, which has been the role of the American forces since first setting foot on Korean soil. Polished language in Washington will never solve anything. It will never make the withdrawal safe and right."

Keith Stump

***SEOUL'S SKYLINE** reflects booming South Korean economy.*

Another Assemblyman, Mr. Oh Jung-keun, observed that in this precarious position the Republic of Korea simply cannot be expected to live up to America's high standards of human rights at this time. National security has to be the number-one priority. There have to be more controls against subversive and disruptive elements in the society. Agents of the North are constantly trying to infiltrate the South.

Moreover, the picture of life in South Korea often painted by the Western press gives a completely false impression of the true state of affairs. South Korea, for all intents and purposes, is a free and open society. Travel within the country is unrestricted. Few soldiers are seen in the streets or at airports. And speaking of airports, it has been estimated that more foreign visitors pour through South Korea's Kimpo Airport in one day than have been permitted to enter North Korea in the past decade!

Despite some limitations, Korea still retains all the basic elements of a democratic government—an elected president, a plural political party system, the people's participation in the political process through representation, and the division of power among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. Freedom of press and speech are also guaranteed to the maximum that the Korean government feels it can afford under the circumstances.

But the situation in the North—virtually ignored in statements by Washington and in the Western press—is another matter altogether. Above the demilitarized zone, there are *no* human rights whatsoever. North Korea is one of the most brutally regimented and repressive police states in the world. Every aspect of life in the North is rigidly controlled. Education concentrates on one principal theme—hatred of the South and of American "imperialism." (Kim Il-sung once told Harrison Salisbury of the *New York Times:* "The most important thing in our preparation for war is to educate all the people to hate U.S. imperialism.")

Humanitarian ideals simply are not taught up north, we were told by South Korean legislator Shin Sang-cho, who holds the portfolio of education in his government. That's why the North Korean soldiers acted so viciously when they attacked American soldiers in the notorious tree-trimming incident in the demilitarized zone last year. Two Americans were hacked to death with axes.

***COLLAPSIBLE OVERPASS** is designed to impede enemy wartime advance.*

Keith Stump

What else can we expect from robot-like human adults? As little children, they had been taught to sing such songs as, "We will mutilate any American soldiers we catch today."

Yet, despite the day-and-night differences between the two Koreas, there is hardly a peep of human rights criticism of the North's regime emanating from Washington's highly selective human rights activists. This puzzles men like Mr. Shin, who asks: "Why is it that they are silent about North Korea, where even a semblance of civil liberties has long ceased to exist, and are both nosy and noisy only about South Korea, where people enjoy more liberties and human rights than do the people of most of the Third World countries? What restrictions we might have are self-imposed because that is the only way to avoid greater misfortunes.

"Why is it that [certain] elements in the United States, who are so concerned about the human rights of the Koreans, do not care about the fate of 35 million Koreans who face a greater risk of a war as a result of the withdrawal?"

Talking about human rights and suggesting troop withdrawal in connection with them—as some U.S. congressmen have done—is a "great hypocrisy," says Mr. Shin.

Not a Question of "One on One"

For a quarter century, U.S. forces have succeeded in keeping the peace on the Korean peninsula. Coupled with more than $10 billion in U.S. military and economic aid—most of it in the form of grants—America has an enormous stake in the future of a peaceful Korea.

Why change a winning game now, South Korean officials ask? What is the reason for the troop withdrawal? It can't be economics, they say, because it is far less expensive for Washington to maintain the troops in Korea than elsewhere, and cheaper than spending billions

in compensatory military aid (assuming the aid plan isn't scuttled altogether by the essentially unrelated question of Korean lobbying in Washington).

From all indications the U.S. withdrawal has been justified on the estimation that South Korea will be able to successfully confront North Korea on its own in the event of another Korean war, and that its own formidable forces could henceforth act as enough of a deterrent.

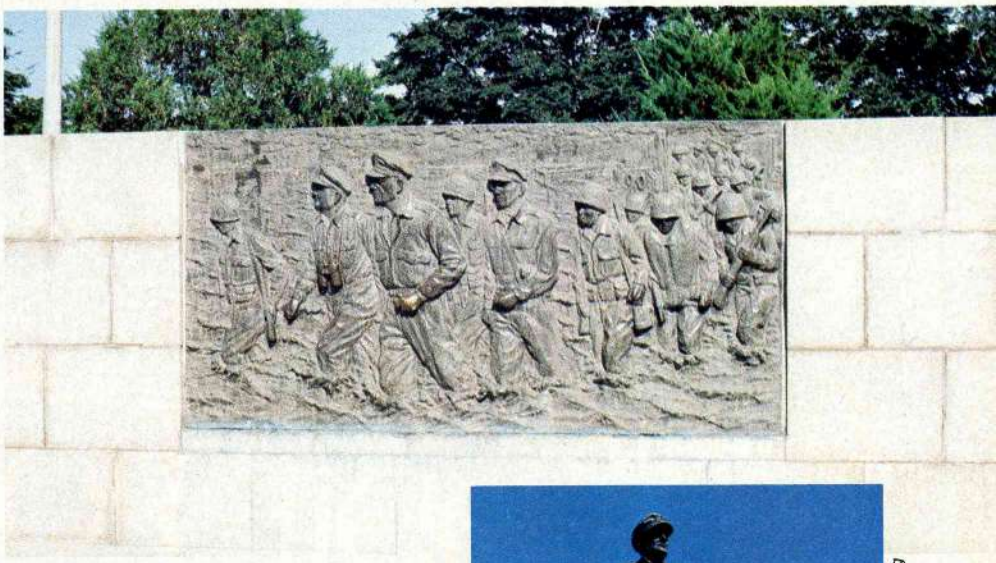
The big fear in South Korea, however, is that the North's allies—Communist China and the Soviet Union—would be forced to intervene on Kim's behalf in the event of another war. Thus the Korean equation is not really "one on one" but actually "three versus two." And if the American deterrent vanishes it would be "three against one."

It is known that both Peking and Moscow have strongly counseled Kim to avoid military adventures on the peninsula. But the North Korean dictator knows he has a free hand. He is confident of the support of his two allies, however reluctant they may be to give it. As rivals for influence throughout the Communist world, Communist China and the Soviet Union would be forced to *competitively* help Kim in a war against the South, lest one of them be accused of refusing to aid a Communist brother in a "war of liberation." Moreover, the Korean peninsula is strategically important to both of the major Communist powers, and neither could afford to allow the other to gain the upper hand there.

Thus, by playing one ally against the other, Kim would be able to enlist massive support whenever he chooses to launch his drive south.

How Trustworthy Is America?

Pentagon and Defense Department officials—and President Carter himself—have repeatedly assured South Korea that despite the troop withdrawal the U.S. will respond promptly to aggression against the South. A letter from President Carter to South Korean President Park Chung-hee assured Park that the 1954 U.S.-Korean mutual defense treaty will remain "firm and undiminished."



Gene Hogberg

DOUGLAS MacARTHUR STATUE *(right) and brass relief sculpture (above) at Inchon commemorate U.N. troop landing there during Korean War.*

But South Koreans remain unconvinced. The 1954 mutual defense treaty gives the U.S. a loophole by stating that each side "would act to meet the common danger *in accordance with its constitutional processes.*" In other words, action by the U.S. Congress. The NATO charter, on the other hand, provides for *unconditional intervention.* The South Koreans would at least like a similar ironclad assurance of immediate and automatic assistance from the U.S. in case of war, without prolonged congressional haggling over whether or not to send the troops back.

Yet, in case of war, even if the U.S. ground troops set out for Korea immediately from other bases in Asia, the North Koreans, only 30 miles from Seoul, would very likely overrun the South Korean capital long before the Americans arrived. Military analysts estimate that a massed armor attack launched at night would have a good chance of reaching Seoul by dawn, even against American air force opposition.

This is why one official after another with whom we talked in South Korea urged the United States to keep its small but strategically pinpointed ground forces right where they are so that *there will simply be no aggression to have to respond to!*

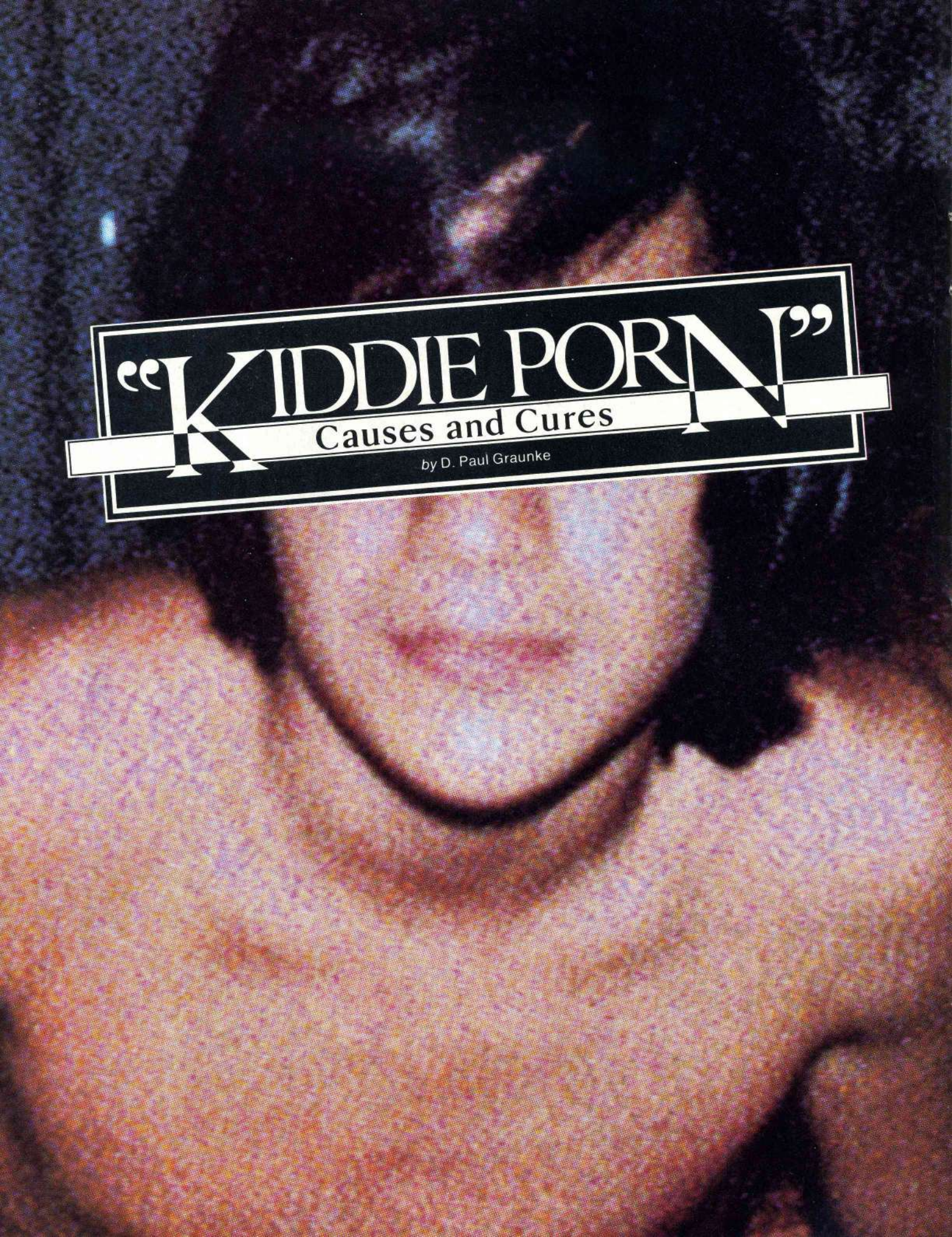
Moreover, the American troops now stationed at the border—the very cream of the U.S. military—have shown the utmost restraint and caution in the face of frequent provocations from the North. Would replacement South Korean soldiers be able to exercise as much control and avoid emotional reactions which could quickly plunge both sides into another war?

Overall, the gains of withdrawal are nonexistent, but the risks enormous.

U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has said: "The United States is and will remain an Asian and Pacific power." But South Korean officials, in effect, say: "Prove it." They counter that U.S. *actions*—more telling of its true intentions than mere words—indicate it is steadily retreating from the Pacific!

In the event war breaks out after the U.S. troops are withdrawn,

(Continued on page 35)



"KIDDIE PORN"

Causes and Cures

by D. Paul Graunke

As was reported in the last issue, one of the persons most responsible for the current furor over child pornography is Dr. Judianne Densen-Gerber of New York City.

About a year ago she began to beat the drum over the sexual exploitation of children by staging a news conference in Times Square, New York, which in recent years has become infested with pornographic bookstores, X-rated movie houses, massage parlors and the like. She displayed kiddie porn purchased just a few yards from where she was speaking. On St. Valentine's Day, 1977, she traveled to Washington, D.C., with her collection of dirty magazines and movies and held another press conference.

Her tactics were, frankly, a publicity gimmick to get attention. But she really didn't think she would have much impact. After all, when she had gone up and down the land decrying child abuse by showing photographs of little corpses—children bashed to death or bitten to death or burned and boiled to death at the hands of their parents or custodians—the response was less than overwhelming.

In a year, she had accumulated a few hundred thousand signatures on a petition for a new cabinet office to deal exclusively with the concerns of children. But there was no public outrage, no great cry from across the land for immediate legislation and programs to deal with the problem. If anything, she upset a lot of people who thought it wasn't very nice to display these grotesque examples of parental cruelty. She had struck too close to home for comfort.

Instant Outrage

So Dr. Densen-Gerber was somewhat surprised when a nation became outraged about kiddie porn overnight.

Within weeks, a cry went out from one end of the country to the other for something to be done to curb this obscenity. Reporters invaded adult bookstores and movie theaters to report on the presence or absence of kiddie porn in their communities. Editors editorialized, TV commentators commented, policemen policed the local vendors of smut with fresh fervor, and lawmakers proposed more laws.

Two almost identical bills were submitted to the U.S. Congress with the support of more than 100 sponsors. Each proposed 20-year terms for nearly anyone trafficking in child pornography. Similar measures were quickly offered in more than 20 state legislatures.

The fate of these bills is still pending as of this writing. Action in some cases has been slowed by a debate over the implications of the proposed laws. Strict interpreters of the U.S. Constitution cite its First Amendment, which guarantees: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press. . . ." They argue that freedom of expression extends to peddlers of child pornography. Prosecute the producer, the child recruiter, they say, but what they produce—what is in print—must have the full protection of the Constitution.

Win Some, Lose Some

Whatever the outcome of the proposed legislation, the immediate effect of the outcry has been to drive pornography featuring preadolescents off the shelves. Efforts have also been made to curtail the flesh markets where young people sell themselves for sex. On June 1, for example, the Los Angeles Police Department started a campaign to eliminate male prostitution along Hollywood's notorious Selma Avenue (described in the last issue). The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce is spurring a campaign—with some measure of success—to close down pornographic bookstores and movie houses and lure legitimate business back to Hollywood.

Score 2 for an outraged public, 0 for the sexploiters.

But the game is far from over. There is still a flourishing black market for kiddie porn. "Those who know" can readily obtain the literature and movies they desire. Also, pornography featuring teenagers is still being sold above the counter at adult bookstores. And the cleanup campaigns in such places as Hollywood have not depressed the sex market—at best they have only dispersed it to other areas and made both the "chicken" (young male prostitute) and "chicken hawk" (adult solicitor) more discreet. The net demand for sex is still there and so is the supply of young bodies.

So score 2 for an outraged public and 2 for the sexploiters.

Children—"Our Last Slaves"

What will it take to break the deadlock? More laws? Stricter enforcement? More cleanup campaigns?

Yes, but these measures are of limited value. According to authorities dealing with the problem, what society needs to do is recognize that kiddie porn is but one despicable aspect of a much larger problem of child abuse and alienation between parents and children on a massive scale. It is this abuse and alienation that create the demand for kiddie porn and prostitutes by warping the sexuality of untold thousands in their formative years. It is child abuse and parental alienation that create the supply of children who run away from homes too violent or loveless to live in, only to become victims in an equally violent and loveless world.

Dr. Peter Decourcy declared in a report to the American Psychological Association: "Children constitute the most oppressed minority group in this country. It is a minority group whose members are regularly humiliated, beaten, mutilated, killed or sexually abused and who have little effective legal recourse or police protection."

"Children are our last slaves," declares Dr. Densen-Gerber. "They are the property and chattel of their parents."

The true magnitude of child abuse has only recently become noticed. According to Douglas Besharov, director of the National Center of Child Abuse and Neglect, over a million children each year are sexually abused, physically abused or severely neglected to such a degree that they suffer permanent physical or psychological damage. At least 1,000 of them die. The culprits, in most cases, are parents.

Child abuse is not unique to the United States. It exists in most other countries of the world as well. In England, there are estimates that 700 children are battered to death

yearly and another 400 left permanently brain-damaged.

In Germany, the situation is grimmer still—1,000 deaths a year. In 1972 it was reported that a national poll conducted by the Bielefelder Emnid Institute in Bonn showed that 72 percent of Germans interviewed felt obedience and respect for order to be the most important principles for child-rearing. This emphasis on obedience to authority is considered by some to be the reason for Germany having the highest rate of child abuse in Europe.

Vicious Cycle

Pediatrician C. Henry Kempe, director of the National Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse in Denver, Colorado, states that most parents who abuse their children were "significantly deprived or neglected in their earliest years."

In other words, like an infectious disease, child abuse is transmitted from one generation to the next. The sins of the parents are visited upon their children. The mother or father who as a child was severely beaten for "disobedience," or for failing to measure up to expectations, will likely become a parent who repeats the pattern of abuse on his own offspring.

Likewise, sex offenders often have a background of sexual abuse as children. Surveys of prostitutes have revealed that up to 25 percent of those questioned were sexually abused as children.

Dr. Dorian Rose, psychologist at Atascadero State Hospital in California, where 20 percent of the patients are child molesters, believes that almost any kind of sex offender—from the child abuser to the rapist—himself has a background of sexual abuse. Explaining what causes a person to molest children, she says that "usually he's been sexually abused as a child by an older adult, often a family member."

Treat the Home

The cause of the sexual exploitation of children, then, lies close to home—in fact, in the home.

Recent studies into incest indicate that the magnitude of the problem is far greater than previously imagined. An article in the April issue of *Ms.* magazine asserted that one girl in every four in the United States experiences some form of sexual abuse before she reaches the age of 18. Three-fourths of the abusers are known by their victims. And about one-third of the incidents of abuse take place in the victim's home. In at least ten percent of all *reported* cases, the victim is a boy, but in virtually all cases, boys and girls, the victimizer is male.

Compounding the tragedy of incest is the fact that, unlike an isolated incident of rape, incest is a crime that may continue for years. Its victims are trapped not only by brute force but by loyalties and dependencies.

Even when incest is not a factor, Dr. Avedis Panajian, director of psychological services at MacLaren Hall (the juvenile hall for Los Angeles County), believes that the family of a child who is involved in pornography is usually the cause of the problem. "What is needed is treatment of the child *and* his family," he believes.

In recent years a number of therapies and programs have been developed to deal with the problem. The emphasis now is on preventing child abuse and rehabilitating family relationships. A number of programs involve the use of what are variously called parental aides, lay therapists, or surrogate mothers. These aides attempt to establish a relationship with the parents that has the warmth and understanding that were never learned or experienced in the parents' own childhood. They build a feeling of trust, enabling the parent to acquire a more positive self-image. Low self-esteem is one of the most common characteristics of an abusive parent—and, needless to say, of their abused offspring.

Another modality of treatment uses temporary care centers and foster homes for children while their parents recover their equilibrium.

One constructive breakthrough has been the development of a nationwide network of telephone crisis centers where parents can call for immediate counseling or concerned neighbors can report cases of child abuse.

A fast-growing organization designed to help abusing parents is Parents Anonymous, begun in 1970 by a woman in California who had abused her own child and had been unable to find help without a long struggle. Parents Anonymous is modeled on Alcoholics Anonymous; it provides for weekly meetings where parents can express their feelings in an atmosphere of understanding and confidentiality.

"Turn the Hearts of Fathers to Their Children"

In ancient times, the prophet Malachi equated a loving family relationship with human survival itself. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a *curse* [marginal reading: *utter destruction*]" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Modern civilization is most certainly under a curse today because so many parents have become alienated from their children. The curse is reflected in skyrocketing juvenile crime, the breakdown of school systems, jails filled to overflowing, and obscenities such as child pornography and teenage prostitution.

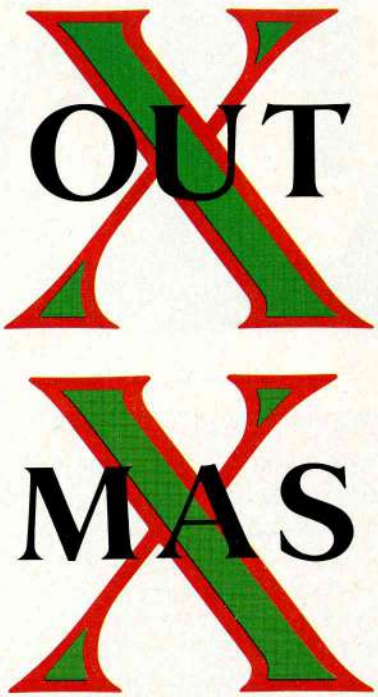
The time must come, *will come,* when, in the words of noted psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, "There will exist a well-informed, well-considered and yet fervent public conviction that the most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit; for such mutilation undercuts the life principle of trust, without which every human act, may it feel ever so good, and seem ever so right, is prone to perversion by destructive forms of consciousness." □

RECOMMENDED READING

What makes sex "moral" or "immoral"? Is society completely without guidance where sex is concerned? Or are there moral codes which are living—absolute? Our booklet *Is Sex Sin?* is unique in proclaiming what God says about the subject of sex. Also request a brand-new publication entitled *Building a Happy Family.* Both are sent free of charge upon your request (see addresses on inside front cover).

WHY NOT?

by Jon Hill



Sour grapes? A bah-humbug Scrooge? Anti-establishment? Irreligious? No!

Practical. Logical. Truthful. And, believe it or not, biblical! Here are my reasons for deleting Christmas from my budget. Try it—you might like it!

The average yuletide spender squanders nearly ten percent of his annual income on this overdone holiday, and keeps paying for it—no doubt at 18 + percent interest—for about two hundred shopping days *after.* And then it's time to start shopping and charging for the next "nativity." In short, I can't afford it!

Materialism and commercialism so dominate this "season to be jolly" that many businesses depend on it for their survival. One *good* thing to notice—for those who didn't waste money they didn't have *before* December 25—is that on the 26th of December, the same things you paid (?) terrible prices for are on sale for 30 to 50 percent off! That's the time to buy—what you *need.*

Giving is special to me. I resent being expected, commanded, coerced, cajoled, beggared into giving. My gifts go to my family and loved ones spontaneously, with love and *freedom*—spaced by natural events that occur throughout the year. The total cost is far less, and the gifts are *appreciated.*

"I hate Christmas," said one department store manager. "I hate the hypocrisy, the one-day Christianity of Christmas; I hate the commercialism—and I'm part of it!" The "spirit of Christmas" all too often comes from a bottle. Hypocrisy and frustration stand as the hallmarks of this season.

A famous physician says that the Santa Claus myth is a fantastic web of lies which can cause your child—when he finds out—confusion of mind, possible schizoid splits in his personality, or even a physical ailment resulting from the emotional letdown of "losing" so close a friend as Santa. Truth is most precious—why lie to your kids? You *know* they'll find out sooner or later. And when they do, they'll always doubt a little about what you say from then on. As one kid was overheard to say: "Yea, and I'm going to check into this Jesus Christ stuff too!" Is that the kind of seed you want to sow? I hate to lie to my kids—how about you?

More murders, divorces, family arguments, enemies made from friends, depressions, suicides, drunkenness, fights and just plain orneriness occur at this time of year than any other period. The Xmas tree bears bad fruit.

Intellectual honesty is another victim of Xmas. You can search in vain and you will not find corroboration for the birth of Christ on December 25th.

"Let's put Christ back in Christmas," many say—because they see the evils I have just enumerated. The difficulty is that Christ never was in Christmas in the first place. Nowhere will you find Him commanding or even suggesting that we notice His *birth*day—though He does command observance of His *death* day. In fact, it wasn't until many centuries after His death that the practice became "Christian."

In fact, it's plainly pagan! Read *Four Thousand Years of Christmas* by Earl Wendel Count sometime and see. Then read Deuteronomy 12:30-31—or maybe read that first; it's more easily available.

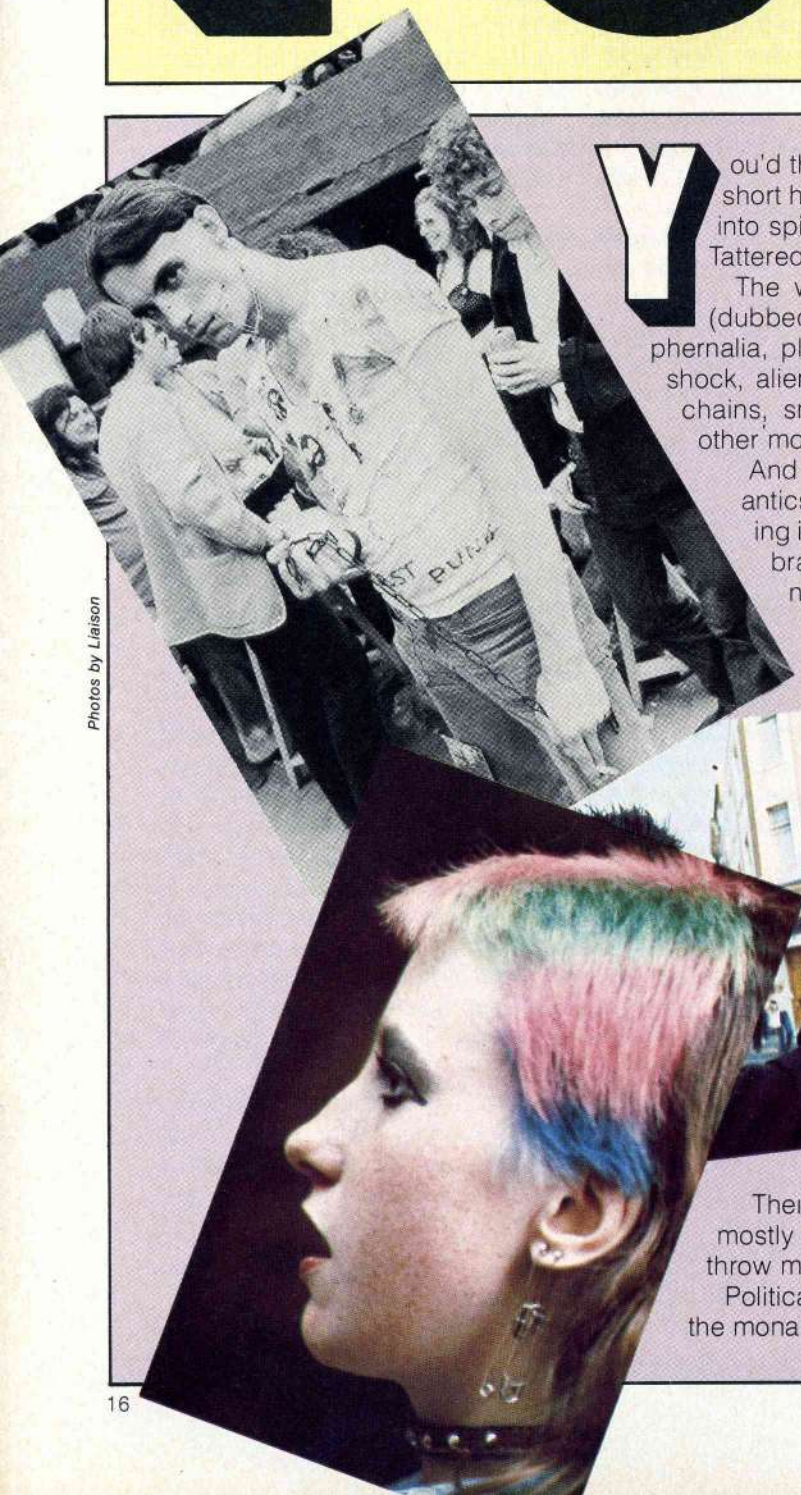
To give to every Tom, Dick, Alice and Mary and NOT to give to Christ, particularly at a season which claims Him as its center, seems to me the greatest hypocrisy of all. If people came to *your* birthday party and exchanged gifts among themselves, leaving *you* completely out, how would *you* feel? If you are going to give to anyone at Xmastime, how about to Christ and His Work?

When I gave up Christmas, I didn't give up anything but debt, materialism, hypocrisy, lying, bad fruits, intellectual dishonesty and paganism. The freedom of the truth is rich and gets richer every year. I wouldn't trade it for anything. Why don't you join me in my freedom?

Why not X out Xmas?

Nate Cutler—Globe

PUNK WHAT



Photos by Liaison

You'd think the older generation would be grateful to see a little short hair for a change. But green and pink crew cuts combed into spikes? Pierced noses embellished with gold safety pins? Tattered T-shirts and stencilled swastikas?

The wardrobe of the new wave of youthful music/protest (dubbed "punk" or "punk rock") includes all the above paraphernalia, plus a wide array of accessories specially designed to shock, alienate, or "gross out" establishment types: iron crosses, chains, smelly tennis shoes, garter belts, knives, and various other more X-rated accoutrements.

And if people don't find punk looks repulsive enough, punk antics include spitting, vomiting, using vibrators onstage, hurling insults at audiences, and screaming out a gut-wrenching brand of elemental rock consisting more of overwhelming noise than music.

The punk movement began in Britain among jobless working-class youths frustrated by an aimless lifestyle. Devotees display a great deal of inward-directed violence. They pierce lips, ears and noses with safety pins joined by chains. Punk-rock performers have in their more outlandish moments slashed themselves with needles, burned themselves with cigarettes, and bashed their hands into guitars onstage.

Their personal life-styles reflect a similar attitude. Concerned mostly with "getting it on" — behaving promiscuously — they throw most convention and order out the window.

Politically, of course, they are devoted to anarchy — deposing the monarchy, smashing the establishment, ignoring all authority.

NEXT? ROCK

One young punker, advocating the violent overthrow of parliament and the monarchy, believes that England "needs another Hitler" to bomb the country and re-create the anarchical ambience of the last world war.

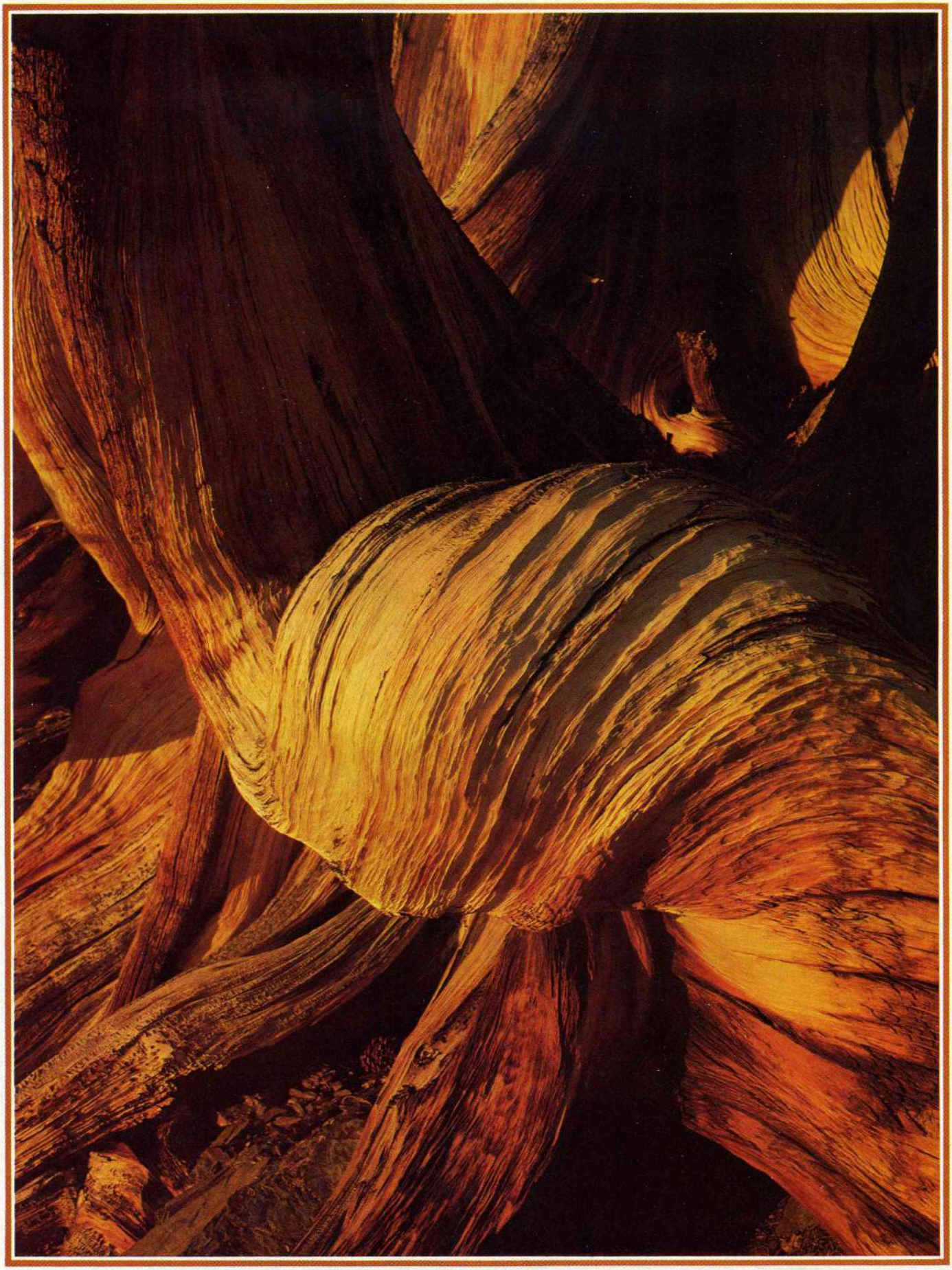
Punk-rock groups have been banned from appearing many places in Britain, their records going unplayed on top-forty stations. Nonetheless, the punk group Sex Pistols' first album, *God Save the Queen* ("She ain't no human being"), sold 1,800 copies the first day it was released.

Punk has already spread to the colonies. Los Angeles and New York have a dozen or so groups each, and the phenomenon is gaining momentum now due to a minor barrage of media hype.

Retailers across the U.S. are gearing up for a consumer run on punk items like ripped and pinned T-shirts, and one New York store features $100 gold safety pins.

Perhaps musically and politically conservative folks thought things were getting better when hard metal rock mellowed into disco music. But apparently a vacuum existed — and punk, with its underlying philosophy of anarchy and nihilism, filled that empty space in the hearts of youth looking for a new way to rebel.

Perhaps American punkers are only following another commercialized British fad. But if this "new wave" of music does indicate a significant social undercurrent, it could be echoing the mindset of a generation who feel they have no frontiers, goals or challenges to stir them to productive action. □



An ancient bristlecone *pine still clings to life, its twisted torso sculptured by the elements.*

REWRITING HISTORY

THE WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING THING

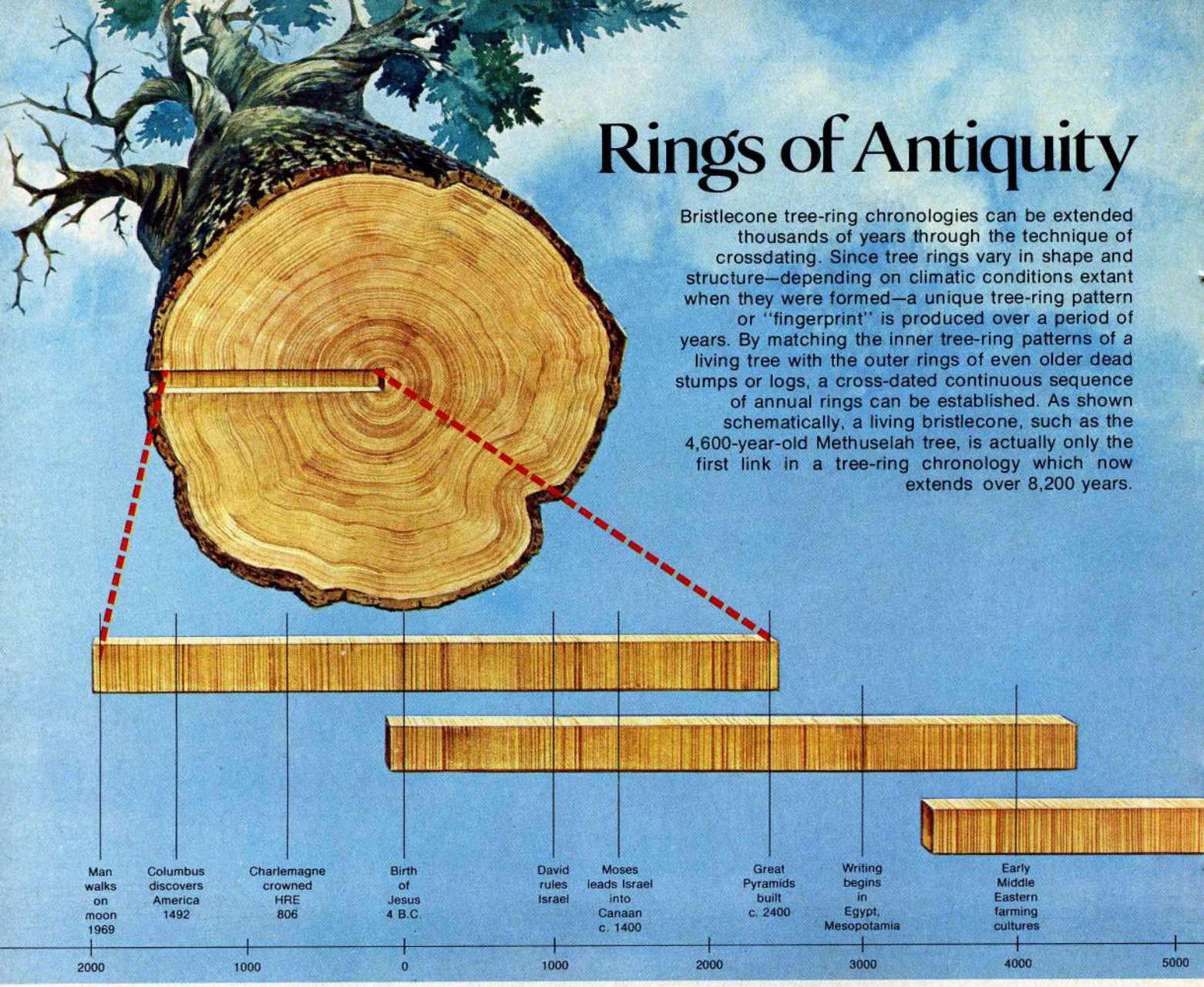
At nearly 5,000 years of age, bristlecone pines are revolutionizing man's understanding of climate, history and archaeology.

by Robert A. Ginskey · Photos *by* David Muench

High in the mountains of the southwestern United States, the twisted, misshapen and battered forms of bristlecone pines cling precariously to the sparse soil that somehow sustains them. But the stunted, gnomish appearance of the bristlecones belies their incredible age—an awesome antiquity that antedates recorded history. Indeed, in the White Mountains of California, nearly 20 bristlecones have lived more than 4,000 years. One tree, known as Methuselah, is over 4,600 years old. The Methuselah tree was already hundreds of years old when the Egyptians built the Great Pyramid. It had lived over a millennium when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. And it had survived over 3,000 mountaintop winters when Charlemagne was proclaimed emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in A.D. 800. An even older bristlecone pine, growing in Nevada, was

Rings of Antiquity

Bristlecone tree-ring chronologies can be extended thousands of years through the technique of crossdating. Since tree rings vary in shape and structure—depending on climatic conditions extant when they were formed—a unique tree-ring pattern or "fingerprint" is produced over a period of years. By matching the inner tree-ring patterns of a living tree with the outer rings of even older dead stumps or logs, a cross-dated continuous sequence of annual rings can be established. As shown schematically, a living bristlecone, such as the 4,600-year-old Methuselah tree, is actually only the first link in a tree-ring chronology which now extends over 8,200 years.



regrettably cut down in 1964. Its age: at least 4,900 years! In addition, dead bristlecone logs and stumps have been found that were living over 8,000 years ago.

How do we know the bristlecones are thousands of years old? The answer is quite simple: Every year most trees add a growth ring of new wood. By counting these annual rings, the tree's age can be determined.

Under ideal conditions, trees may grow quite rapidly, leaving easily discernible annual rings. But bristlecone pines grow in arid, hostile environments where growth can literally be microscopic. In fact, bristlecones may grow so slowly that the annual rings may be only a few thousandths of an inch thick—requiring a microscope to be clearly seen!

Matching Trees: Cross Dating

Perhaps even more amazing is that tree-ring chronologies are not limited by the age of the oldest tree. By cross-dating the inner tree rings of an old living tree with those in dead stumps and logs, scientists have built up an impressive sequence of bristlecone tree rings extending over 8,200 years into the past (see accompanying box).

Dendrochronologists (scientists who measure time by counting growth rings) have found that tree-ring chronologies extending back hundreds or thousands of years are very useful in historical and archaeological studies. For example, when an archaeologist finds a wooden beam that was used in an ancient building, he can often date the dwelling by matching the pattern of tree rings in the beam with a master tree-ring chronology for that area. This technique has been especially helpful in dating Indian ruins in the American Southwest.

Tree rings also provide a natural source of information about localized weather and climate patterns prior to man's records. The date can be found by counting the tree's rings, and the climate is determined by studying the size, density and other characteristics of those rings. Obviously, when the rings are small,

Illustration by Frank Germain

we would expect their growth was limited by some climatic factor—usually rainfall.

Dendrochronologists Dr. Valmore C. LaMarche and Dr. Harold C. Fritts have demonstrated that we can acquire a greater understanding of climatic fluctuations and weather patterns over the past several thousand years by examining bristlecone tree-ring patterns. Such studies, they believe, give valuable insights into future climatic trends, such as the potential for a new ice age.

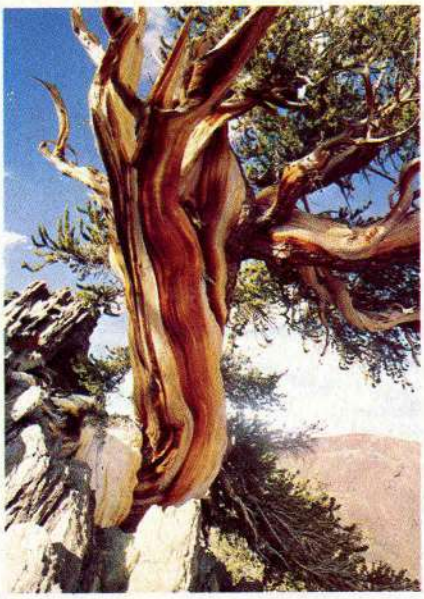
Recalibrating Carbon 14

Yet perhaps the most significant result of the bristlecone pine tree-ring chronology is its revolutionary implications for the carbon-14 dating method and our understanding of prehistory.

What do bristlecone pines have to do with carbon 14? All living things, including the bristlecone pine, contain a small amount of the radioactive element carbon 14. When an organism dies, the carbon 14 begins to decay at a known rate. By measuring the amount of remaining carbon 14 in a once living organism, scientists can closely estimate when that organism died.

But the radiocarbon dating technique is based on the questionable assumption that the amount of carbon 14 available to be incorporated into living organisms has remained constant for thousands of years. Since carbon-14 concentrations have been measured only in the past four decades, scientists could only *assume* that the same carbon-14 concentration applied to those past eras where no historical data was available as a check. Indeed, without that assumption, or at least some method of calibration, the radiocarbon dating method would be largely worthless.

Enter bristlecone pine. The 8,200-year sequence of bristlecone rings has provided a remarkable check on the primary assumption of radiocarbon dating. As each ring in a sequence grew, it recorded the carbon-14 concentration in the atmosphere at that time. By measuring the carbon-14 content of various rings, scientists were able to check the accuracy of the radiocarbon dating method. The conclusion of many years of research at the Universities of Arizona, Pennsylvania, and California is that the basic assumption of radiocarbon dating is *not* grossly in error. Indeed, the bristlecone studies have shown that radiocarbon dating is generally accurate over the past 3,000 years.



Older by 900 Years

But the bristlecone calibration also produced something unexpected: As we go back in time prior to about 1,000 B.C., the amount of carbon 14 in the environment was somewhat *greater* than at present. This means that certain samples dated by radiocarbon will be dated *too young*. In other words, the bristlecone pine calibration has shown that some archaeological samples should actually be dated up to 900 years older (earlier) than conventional carbon-14 analysis would indicate!

The bristlecone calibration of radiocarbon has drastically changed the archaeologist's understanding of some early cultures, especially in Europe. A leading British archaeologist, Colin Renfrew, believes the bristlecone pine will revolutionize our chronology of the development of early European civilization. Using the calibrated radiocarbon dates, Renfrew contends that megalithic tombs of western Europe are actually *older* than the Egyptian pyramids (which are usually thought to predate the European tombs). He also asserts that Britain's Stonehenge, once thought to have been inspired by Mycenaean (Greek) builders, actually was completed well before the Mycenaean civilization began. "Now it is clear," says Renfrew, "that megalithic chamber tombs were being built in Brittany . . . a millennium before monumental funerary architecture first appears in the eastern Mediterranean and 1500 years before the raising of the pyramids."

Multiple Rings and the Appearance of Age

According to Renfrew, the bristlecone calibration makes obsolete the formerly accepted theory that prehistoric culture began in the Near East and was only later diffused into "barbaric" Europe.

(Continued on page 37)

HOW THE FLEA GETS A BIG KICK OUT OF LIFE

by George Ritter

Russ Kinne—Photo Researchers

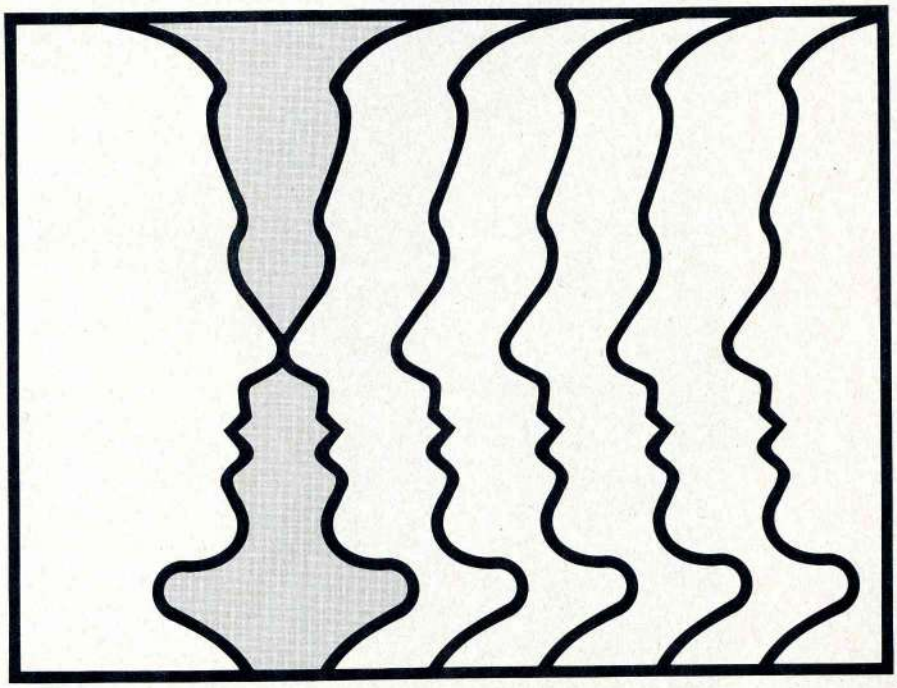
For a moment picture yourself resting comfortably in a kneeling position at the base of the Washington Monument. Suddenly you have the urge to jump as high as you can. Summoning all your muscle power, you thrust your body upward and in no time at all you find yourself sailing over the top of this mighty obelisk with plenty of room to spare. Impossible, of course, unless you happen to be the bionic man or woman. But not if you are a human flea. Millimeter for millimeter, the flea's leaping ability pales into insignificance all Olympic high-jump, broad-jump, and pole-vaulting records. For all of its one to two millimeters in body length, the flea is able to perform prodigious leaps 90 millimeters vertically and twice that distance in a horizontal direction. Humans would have to hurtle over 600 feet to equal the flea's performance. One reason for the flea's amazing success is a remarkable protein substance called resilin that is built into what we might consider its "hip joint." It's the kind of material that would make a super bouncing ball. When it "bounces," it can release 97 percent of its stored energy. By comparison, commercially made rubber has only an 85 percent efficiency rating. Whenever a flea prepares to jump, it assumes a "kneeling position" by drawing its hind legs tightly up into a bent position. In the process, a socket on its abdominal parts engages a catch or latch protruding from its thorax. In this position the flea is now "cocked" and ready for launch. Relaxation of various muscles disengages the latching mechanism and allows the potential energy stored in the compressed resilin to propel the flea off into space through the kicking motion of its powerful hind legs.

Since fleas don't have wings, evolutionists claim they "developed" their remarkable leaping abilities as a substitute for flight. Presumably this might be possible if the typical flea were a genius in mechanical engineering. But looking at the intricacies of the flea's anatomy—and its well-coordinated and highly effective leaping apparatus—one can't help but wonder if perhaps God didn't have something to do with its remarkable design. □

In The Image of God

All of us bear the image of the God who created us. If all of us realized what that meant, the world would be a far different place in which to live.

by Brian Knowles



So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.... And God saw *everything* that he had made, and behold, it was *very* good" (Gen. 1:27, 31). Perhaps the above is the most profound and inspiring theological statement in the entirety of the Bible. Man had been created in the express image of the living God! What an incredible, awe-inspiring thought! What implications it has!

Consider for a moment what it means to bear the image of God. Every human being who has ever walked the face of this good green earth has borne the likeness of God—no matter how tall, short, maimed, crippled, sick, healthy or whatever. No matter what race or ethnic group one has sprung from—he or she bears the image of God. Eve is described as "the mother of *all* living" (Gen. 3:20). Eve bore the image of God equally with Adam. And she was created "very good."

All races sprang from the womb of mother Eve. Adam is the father of the human race. Theologically speaking, we have all descended from that "one blood" (Acts 17:26), and we are all, in that sense, the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:29). The mingled blood of Adam and Eve runs in the veins of every living human being, and that blood bears "the image of God."

The implications of that statement could revolutionize the whole of human relationships on this planet—if we could only understand and embrace them!

What does it truly mean to be in God's own image? Is this merely talking about the physical resemblance of man to God? Or does it imply much more?

Much more indeed!

Of all God's created creatures man is truly unique. Man alone has humor, creativity, imagination. Man was created transcendentally higher than any other life form. Man stands at the head of the creation, bearing qualities unheard of in the lower animal world. Man is the very apex of God's creative acts, the Creator's pinnacle of achievement. And as such, man stands alone in the universe. Man is above it all. Man alone is "the offspring of God"!

Even the angels of God were created as "ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those [humans] who are to obtain salvation" (Heb. 1:14). Man was created to rule, to have *dominion.* He was given authority to rule over this planet now, in this life. But his potential was even greater: "For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified some-

where, 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou carest for him? Thou didst make him *for a little while* lower than the angels, *thou hast crowned him with glory and honor,* putting everything in subjection under his feet' " (Heb. 2:5-8).

Did you catch that?

God *has* crowned man with glory and honor—*now, in this life!* And how has He done so? By placing him at the head of His creation—by giving him dominion over the rest of the world. Man has been given authority and power to rule *because* he reflects the image of his ruling Creator. God is a ruler, a governor, a king.

Man is not an animal, because he bears his Creator's image. Man's intrinsic human qualities place him on a far higher plane of existence than any in the animal world. Man is the child of God, the finest product of the ultimate Mind. God is seen in man in a way that He is seen in no other aspect of the Creation.

Man was not meant to grovel. Man was not meant to be subjected to indignities at the hands of his fellowman. Does God insult God? Yet man's inhumanity to man is a massive insult to the image of God which he bears.

Racism an Affront to God's Image

Racism is an insult to the image of God. *Every* race of man bears equally the image of the Creator! There is no "master race," Adolf Hitler's obscene theories notwithstanding. In the sight of God we all came from that one blood. And all of mankind was intended to enter into a relationship with the Creator whose image it bears: *"And he made from one* [*blood*—KJV] every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, *that they should seek God,* in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:26-27). God is no less distant from the black man than from the white. All human beings, no matter their skin color or ethnic origin, were intended by God to ultimately enter into a relationship with Him.

The Church is the body of Christ, and its doors are open to all. The apostle Paul explained that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

God is not exclusively a God of the Jews, or the Christians, or the Caucasians. God is the God of the whole universe! He is the Creator. He is the life-giver and the source of salvation.

God has opened the way, through Christ, for every human being, all of whom bear His image, to enter into a one-on-one relationship with Him. In Old Testament times, only the Israelites were given national access to God. Others had to enter the community of Israel before they could become adherents of the true faith.

This is no longer the case.

The Church is the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). It is the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). And its doors are open to all. The apostle Paul explained: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; *for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal. 3:28).

What a liberating statement!

All are *one* in Christ! All have access to God through Christ—Jews, Greeks, blacks, whites, Indians, Orientals. God is an "equal opportunity salvation granter"! *God rejects no one* from His Kingdom. All may enter into the body of Christ who bear His image!

Woman Not Inferior

God does not consider women inferior beings, second-class citizens. They bear *equally* with men the image of God. The human race was created "male and female" (Gen. 1:27).

And God is not concerned with human status and class structures. To Him there is only *one* class of human beings—those who bear His image. There are no slaves, no subhumans. Such distinctions exist only in the human realm. It is man who has subjected man to indignities. It is man who has made man grovel and suffer—not God. God offers salvation from suffering. God offers emancipation. God offers man the opportunity to fulfill his own incredible potential.

No man has the right to subject his fellow to the indignity of racism, torture or pain. No man has the right to insult the image of God in his fellowman. Man was created with dignity, with dominion, with a brilliant creative mind that reflects that of his Creator.

Man Is Deceived

But man has degenerated. Man has lost sight of who he is. Man has groveled because he has listened to the spirit of error. Man has been influenced by that deceptive spirit called "the devil" (Rev. 12:9; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1-2). Satan has sought to destroy man's dignity; to cause him to lose sight of his own potential. And to a large extent he has succeeded. But the brilliant light of God's truth is breaking forth into a darkened world. The plain truth is that man bears the image of God. He is not an animal. He was not made for indignity and insult. Someday man will rule over the angels (I Cor. 6:3). Someday man will ascend to the height to which his Creator intended him to rise. Man must bear his cross for a while, but someday things will be different: "Now in putting everything in subjection to him [man], he left nothing outside his control. *As it is,* we do not yet see everything in subjection to him" (Heb. 2:8).

Today man is crippled. Man has not yet come into his full, glorious potential. His progress has been withheld. He lives in a world dominated by "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). The light of God's truth about man has been all but snuffed out. Man has lost his way. He "gropes at noonday as

in the night" (see Isa. 59:10).

Stumbling along in a spiritually darkened world, man insults the image of God in himself as a way of life. Man kills. Man robs. He rapes and pillages. Man treats human life as if it were a cheap, expendable commodity meaning nothing. Dictators dictate and the masses suffer. Throughout man's history the world has been plagued by its Hitlers and its Stalins.

In the name of power, man tortures, maims and bludgeons his fellowman in a continual orgiastic violation of human rights.

In the name of God man practices racism. Bigotry and prejudice seep through the human heart like a deadly juice poisoning relationships and causing untold suffering. The bigots rise up in holy horror when their racism is labeled for what it is. "Not guilty!" they exclaim. "Guilty as charged!" counters God. Man is guilty before God. Guilty of violating God's own image, of insulting it, of blinding his eyes from seeing it in others.

Male man suppresses female man, who is equally the bearer of God's image. Male chauvinism is as old as the hills of Mesopotamia and Palestine. Yet those who are most guilty will justify their posture by using the Bible: "Wives, obey your husbands," said the apostle Paul. Yes, he did say that. But he also said, "Husbands, *love* your wives." He did not say to suppress them, squelch them and treat them as second-class citizens. Husbands and wives are described in the Bible as *"heirs together* of the grace of life" (I Pet. 3:7).

No Excuse

Barriers based on feelings of superiority and inferiority should not exist between members of the human race. One race should not feel inferior to, or superior to, another. One sex should not be made to feel inferior to another. Nor should a person's occupation, or lack of one, cause him to feel lower than some other human being. Yes, physical differences do exist between races and sexes. And people do live at different levels of human achievement and economy. But all of this is *within* the greater context of God's image which has been impressed upon the whole of the human race.

Man has no justification for insulting the image of God in his fellowman. As Paul said, "They are without excuse. . . ."

Man should be able to see the image of his Creator in the created universe. He should be able to see it in himself—the very apex of that creation. Paul pointed this out to the Romans: "Ever since the creation of the world *his invisible nature,* namely, his eternal power and deity, *has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse"* (Rom. 1:20).

Man stands indicted by the very creation of which he is a part. God's personality is everywhere! It is to be seen in the magnificent design of the universe. It can be seen in the vast size and scope of the cosmos and in the microcosms of the earth's ecosystems. His power, His wisdom, His incredible intelligence, His deity is to be seen everywhere in His creation. But nowhere is the image of God to be seen more clearly than in man himself. Yet man has failed to recognize his own Father. Man has failed to see within himself a touch of the divine. Man has been blinded to the reality of his own intrinsic worth and to the vastness of his own incredible potential.

A Reprobate Mind

And so God gave man up to a base or "reprobate" mind (Rom. 1:28). In this state man daily insults the image of God which he bears. Man becomes "filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, *heartless, ruthless"* (Rom. 1:29-31).

Here is the sad picture of man cut off from God. This is "secular man," man stripped of the knowledge of who and what he is. Here is a graphic picture of humanistic man unaware that he is "the offspring of God."

Those upon whom the light of God's glorious truth has shone have an obligation to live up to their own image—to the image of God in themselves—and in others. The knowledge of who and what we are demands a change of outlook. It demands a response to God. It requires a shedding of the "old nature"—that blinded mentality in which we all did that which comes naturally. It requires a new outlook, a new respect for the divine image in ourselves and in others. Paul put it this way: "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge *after the image of its creator.* Here [in the body of Christ] *there cannot be Greek and Jew,* circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but *Christ is all, and in all"* (Col. 3:9-11).

In the knowledge that we are all created in the express image of God, the barriers fall like tenpins in a bowling alley. The artificial barriers that have divided man from man throughout his whole history are broken down in Christ (see Ephesians 2:14). Man, in Christ, is emancipated from his own ignorance. Man now begins to comprehend who and what he is, and where he is going. Man begins to see God, in Christ, in himself. Man gains dignity and self-respect. Man is in God and God is in man.

And when the white light of this realization breaks through with full import, behavior changes drastically. A new nature—the divine nature (II Peter 1:4)—begins to assert itself. Man is compelled, by virtue of his knowledge, to treat his fellowman with love and dignity, recognizing in him the image of God. Bigotries dissolve like morning fog before a rising sun. Hatreds disintegrate. Violence is transformed into gentleness and concern.

The beauty of God's image breaks through like an exotic balm, like a precious spiritual ointment, soothing, cooling, healing the mind of man. Man is transformed. His mind is renewed. His self-image is changed.

When fully understood for all of their power and import, it is perhaps true to say that the Bible contains no greater words than those found in Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image. . . ." □

DON'T SPEND TIME—INVEST IT!

Time is the unique and universal element available to each living individual in exactly the same amount. Each day brings a full bank account of 24 hours—and the quality of your life depends directly on how you use those hours as they inexorably pass by. Don't just spend them—invest them.

by Jon Hill

Time marches on." "Time and tide wait for no man." "Time is of the essence." "Time is money." "A stitch in time saves nine." "There's no time like the present." "Procrastination is the thief of time." "Time passed me by."

Time Never Stands Still

Even during Joshua's long day—when the sun stood still—time continued "for about the space of a whole day." Time is an ever present element that is impossible to grasp and store, ever elusive but ever there. It is the most abundant resource available, inexhaustible, yet constantly rationed in the same frustratingly small amounts. A constant in an ever changing universe. Not something through which you pass, or which passes by you, but an ever present companion with which you live.

You can't touch, smell, hear, see or feel time—but you can sense it with your mind. You can't stop it, speed it up or slow it down. You can accept it as a friend or fight it as an enemy—or you can ignore it.

Whatever you do with time, as long as you live, you have a fresh supply to invest each day. You can't "save" time, but you can more properly *use* it so that what future time you have can be thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable. The time to improve the quality of your life is *always* NOW. Today is the first day of the rest of your life.

A Day at a Time

We are all only one heartbeat away from closing out our time bank account. Whatever long-range goals we may have must always be considered in the framework set by the apostle James: "Look here, you people who say, 'Today or tomorrow we are going to such and such a town, stay there a year, and open up a profitable business.' How do you know what is going to happen tomorrow? For the length of your lives is as uncertain as the morning fog—now you see it; soon it is gone. What you ought to say is, 'If the Lord wants us to, we shall live and do this or that'" (James 4:13-15, *The Living Bible*).

There is nothing wrong with planning for the future. Just be sure you recognize "God willing" *must* be the setting for those plans.

I'm sure you've heard the old saying, "Live every day as if it were your last." That's not from the Bible, but in principle it is biblically confirmed.

God's plan for mankind encompasses 7000 years—too long a span for any one of us to participate throughout. God encourages repentance—which in essence is a thorough recognition on our part that we have spent our *past* time unwisely, sinfully—so that we can dedicate our *new* life (still one day at a time) in a manner that will be pleasing to God, and us, and that will bring us to eternal life—when time will not be the limiting factor it now is.

So there is no question that God wants us to make long-range plans—eternity is the longest-range plan you can make!

The Bible records an important overview of the fantastically successful life of Abraham, the father of the faithful (who lived 175 years!): "And these are the *days* of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years" (Gen. 25:7).

Seventy-five "days of years" passed before God made His promises to Abraham. Another 25 long "days of years" passed, replete with trials, before the promised seed, Isaac, was born. Each of the three *days* Abraham spent taking Isaac to Mount Moriah to sacrifice him must have been a tormenting time. Of Isaac himself the Bible records: "And the *days* of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years [180]. And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died . . . being old and *full of days* . . ." (Gen. 35:28-29).

Moses prayed in Psalm 90, "Teach us to number our *days* and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should" (Ps. 90:12, *The Living Bible*).

The highest mountain is climbed one step at a time, and the longest life is lived one day at a time.

"Everything is appropriate in its own time. But though God has *planted eternity* in the hearts of men, even so, man cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end" (Eccl. 3:11, *The Living Bible*).

"There is a right time for everything: A time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant"; harvest, heal, destroy, cry, laugh, grieve, dance, hug, lose, find, tear, repair, speak up, be quiet, hate, love (verses 1-8).

"So I conclude," says Solomon, the wise man, "that, first, there is nothing better for a man than to be happy and to enjoy himself as long as he can [now I can't argue with that, can you?]; and second, that he should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of his labors, for these are gifts from God" (verse 13).

I am sure we all agree with these statements of wisdom, which are, after all, not just the sage advice of Solomon, but a major portion of the unbreakable and holy Word of God. The problem we all have as individuals is how to *apply* in our daily lives the principles observed here.

With Christ, nothing is impossible, Paul tells us. Pray for wisdom, we are admonished repeatedly. The beginning of wisdom is the fear (awe) of the Lord, Solomon states more than once—and then he comfortingly tells us, "The wise man *will find a time and a way* to do what he [God] says" (Eccl. 8:5, *The Living Bible*).

Start at the Beginning

If only the *wise* man can achieve his plans, and if wisdom *begins* with a healthy respect of our awesome God, then it looks like the place for us to start is with the recognition that God's loving guidance of our *daily* lives is paramount, and that true success without it is impossible.

Jesus gave us the key in what is commonly called "the Lord's Prayer." He said, "Pray along these lines: 'Our Father in heaven, we honor your holy name [the fear—awe—of the Lord]. We ask that your kingdom will come now. May your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven [recognition that there is no true success apart from God's rule and guidance]. Give us our food again today, as usual [or, as the King James Version renders it: "Give us *this* day our *daily* bread"—one day at a time], and forgive us our sins [*this* day, up to now], just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us' " (Matt. 6:9-12).

That last part is most precious of all: a clean slate for a new day! Forgiveness for our past sins so that they will not burden today's new life. There are *two* very important things to notice in this context and application: 1) Don't let yesterday's (or any accumulation of yesterdays') sins, mistakes, misspent time, hinder today's new life. All you have to do is repent, ask forgiveness, start fresh, and try again, unburdened, clean, guiltless. (My, wouldn't that solve a lot of hang-ups and complexes most of us insist on carrying around with us every minute of every day!) 2) Don't carry around the impossible burden of a grudge against other people who have done you wrong (or you won't receive the forgiveness you ask for in the first place!).

Now, with 24 fresh, new, unspent hours ahead of you, think what you can do! Clean before God, not angry or hateful toward any of your fellow human beings.

Now you have some time to *invest*—and every future minute will become more valuable, even though it won't be any longer or shorter. You don't have to waste time brooding over the past and eat up precious time, which *is* your life, feeling sorry for yourself. Again, Solomon put it beautifully: "The fool foldeth his hands together [immobilizes his capacity to act], and eateth his own flesh" (Eccl. 4:5).

A Whole New Day!

Now that you've begun, invest a little of that precious now-time *planning* what to do with the rest of the priceless new day. If you suddenly found yourself with a million dollars to spend (invest), you would probably use a few of those dollars to lay wise plans on how to spend (invest) the rest—or the fool and his money would soon be parted!

Planning sounds hard, but it isn't. Remember, it's just one day, one step. You can't do everything at once, but you can take *one* step in the right direction.

Certain investments of daily time are already planned for us just by the way we are made.

Sleep is going to require the biggest chunk. (That's why we usually think of the day starting when we wake up.) Don't begrudge sleep; it's a very important investment of your time. But don't waste, spend time sleeping that you don't have to. Edison was purported to need only four hours of sleep—but Einstein required *ten!* Think about it. How many hours of good sleep do *you* require?

Don't try to copy anyone else. You are unique. You have your own individual sleep needs. Live with them—don't fight them—and the rest of the day will go better. Cheat on your sleep, and you cheat yourself. Some people can't sleep because they worry—so, quit worrying and *rest* assured. Solomon says, "Just being too busy gives you nightmares" (find that one yourself; invest some time reading the Book—no better investment!).

Priorities

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet," Solomon says. So, if you want to get the most out of your hours of sleep (however many they need to be), you're going to have to put your hand to some honest work! (Beware the bear on the welfare rolls.) Work is something we all (most anyway) have to do. Too often we consider it "bad." God says it's "good." Take your pick.

Now, with God's viewpoint, we can enjoy our work—maybe for the first time in our lives! You have to work anyway, so why waste time fretting over it? You can't lick it, so join it with enthusiasm—it's more fun that way; you get more out of every minute. Besides that, you make money. And everyone needs money. Don't love it, or lust after it, and certainly don't waste time worrying about it—but *work,* and get some!

You can't enjoy your job, you

say? Number one, I bet you could if you tried. And number two, if you don't like the one you have, get one you do. Oh, yes you can! But be careful with this. *Try* number one first!

Work and labor, of course, are not confined to the on-the-job, money-earning time we invest. The actual definition of work is "moving an object a distance."

Let's face it, just getting out of bed in the first place is work (especially if your sleep-investment didn't pay off!).

A little time invested at work around home might well *save* you more money than an entire workday's time might *earn* you. Remember, "Procrastination is the thief of time." "Do it NOW" is a good motto—but also remember, "Haste makes waste." That's why planning is important. Use your mind, your wisdom to determine which "it" needs doing "NOW." But at least pick *one!*

Watch out though—because if you go to work with your new attitude on your new day, your boss may think you've flipped your lid, or you're sick, or you're scheming to get something. Don't worry about it though; just grin and bear it! If he makes water, you make like a duck, and let it pour harmlessly off your back. Try it; you'll like it!

Eat, Drink and . . .

Now, what's so bad about that?!

You have to invest *some* time in eating—why not enjoy it? If you *over*eat, you won't enjoy it. Just so much time *spent,* no investment. You are what you eat, so eat better and be better. From what I see of the TV ads, most people must be "waisting" their time, because relief, offered for sale, from stomach, head and bowel aches seems to predominate!

Invest some time and find out what kind of foods are best for you. The ones that taste good and *are good* for you. No wasted time and no suffering time afterward. ENJOY!

Drink is okay? That's what the Good Book says! Sorry about that (not really, of course!). If you think "drink" just means water and grape juice, you need to invest more time reading the Book! "Wine makes the heart merry," Solomon says. (*God* says; remember He put that in His Book.) "Take a little wine for your stomach's sake," Paul advises Timothy—not aspirin bicarbonates, painkillers and tranquilizers (which all cut down on the quality of life), but WINE. Invest some time and pick a *good* one.

But don't *over*drink, or get drunk. That's a waste of time. It takes too long to get that way; you can't remember how you were when you were that way, and afterwards it takes too long, sick and sorry, to sober up so you can invest some new time properly!

Beer is good too. After all, all of the wells in the Old Testament are called "Beer-something-or-other." ("It's the water," you know!—that's a joke, by the way.) Be sure you pick a good one. ENJOY!

Believe it or not, God even recommends a *little* "strong drink"—during His Holy Days, no less! (Deut. 14:26—read it and weep, WCTU!) And coupled with that God says: "Rejoice"!

. . . Be Merry

I heard a man say one time, "This steak tastes so good I'm afraid God is going to find out—and forbid it!" What an opinion of our loving Creator!

Did God make a *mis*take when He made steak? Back to the Book if you think so—invest more time. And who made taste buds anyway? God could have created us so we had to eat skunk-smelling slime to live—if He had been a sadist! But thank God, God is not like many people think He is. He's really nice! We don't see in black and white, like many animals. We see in living color—and we did even before color TV!

God is not against fun—He invented it! "ENJOY!" "Be merry!" "Rejoice!" God *commands.*

Our ears are capable of listening to a wide range of sounds, pleasant and unpleasant. You take your pick. Deafen yourself with 140 decibels of sound if you want, but when you can't hear things you'd like to after that, don't blame God. You just spent time, didn't invest it!

Touch. That's another goodie. We're so out of touch in this uncomfortable concrete-steel-glass world we've imprisoned ourselves in, we've lost a good deal of the wonderful sense of touch God gave us. Velvet or plastic, take your pick. Hug your children. Touch your wife, your husband. Feel plants, trees, animals—get texture in your life! ENJOY!

Smell! That word usually carries a bad connotation. But it need not. That's just our natural negative bent. (Ever notice how most people refer to traffic signals as "*stop*lights" without recognizing they are also "*go* lights"?!) Learn to smell again. Smell fresh air—you may have to invest some time getting there. Smell flowers, food and fawns. Smell the family—if you don't like it, have them invest some time in soap and water!

Solomon says, "The eye is never filled with seeing, and the ear is never filled with hearing." He might have added insatiable taste and touch and never filled nostrils.

Think about it. That's good news. What if you had a quota on all those senses? After so long, your eyes and ears would be full and you'd be blind and deaf. Your nose would plug up and you'd die! Then, forget the rest.

All that above is what we call "recreation." Invest a proper amount of time. ENJOY! Be merry! God commands it!

Learn

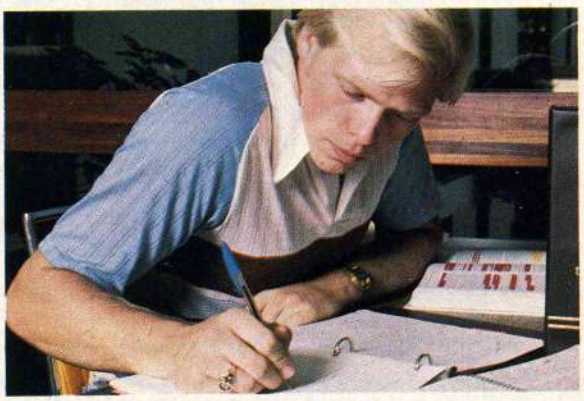
Invest some time in learning. It's more fun than you think. No, you are *never* too old to learn! That's a myth. Take some time away from what you waste on TV and invest it in learning. Surely there is *something* you'd like to know—unless you know it all!

Learn to think, for instance. Study, both secular and biblical, makes a good time-investment.

Prayer is time well invested. Try it—you'll like *it* too!

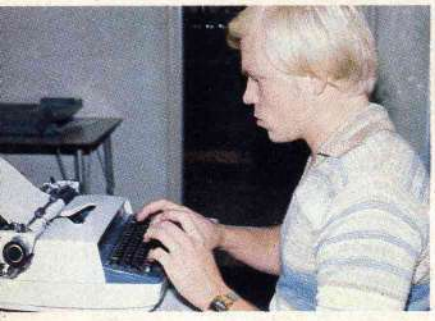
Meditate, roll over the day's events in your mind and plan how to invest better tomorrow. □

"Ambassador College gives me the kind of environment that makes getting an education as enjoyable as it is challenging."



Photos by Ken Evans

Joel Olson, of Fenton, Iowa, is happy to be an Ambassador student. He feels good about his experiences at college and the opportunities he's had to develop himself — like his term last year as sophomore class president. This year, Joel is serving as sports editor for *The Portfolio,* Ambassador's campus newspaper. With this valuable writing experience and his major in mass communications, he plans to enter the field of public relations journalism after graduation. Now in his junior year, Joel is well on his way to success, with growing confidence in his abilities, his character, and his God. Today more than ever, Ambassador College offers a wealth of opportunities for people who are turned on to life and want to get involved in making it better. Joel Olson is one of those people. . . . What about you? For information about admissions, call toll-free (800) 423-4444 [except in California, Alaska and Hawaii, call (213) 577-5000], or write: Ambassador College, Admissions Office, 300 W. Green St., Pasadena, Ca. 91123.



Ambassador College

Ambassador College admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin.

In accordance with Title IX of the Higher Educational Amendments of 1972, as applicable and not therefrom exempted, Ambassador College does not discriminate on the basis of sex in educational programs, activities, or employment.

"Please

by Robert C. Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Jones really had their "quiver full of arrows," as the book of Psalms puts it. With ten children, they could look forward to seeing a virtual community of their own offspring once the grandchildren began to arrive. They could expect to retire in the midst of that "extended family" for which they were responsible, and spend their waning years in the delight of giving, sharing, and relating to their progeny.

But it didn't work out that way.

Their large house is practically empty now. The frantic hubbub of just a few short years ago is only an aching memory. Phone calls are few and far between, as are cards and letters. Visits from their grown children are seldom and brief. Each of them has joined his own "nuclear family," has his own problems, his own pursuits, his own life to live.

Back when all the kids were home, there never seemed to be time for the whole family to get together. People came and went on their own unique schedules, and there were seldom more than two people in the same room at one time. The "dinner hour" stretched to four hours, and the kitchen seemed more like a cafeteria than a dining room, as the constant line of "customers" each catered to his or her own particular culinary desires.

There was rarely an assembly of the entire family around the large dining room table. There was no sharing of daily events, of joys and disappointments, of plans and goals. There was no camaraderie, no unity—just a group of individuals enduring the formative years of their lives in an atmosphere of incredible loneliness.

Father—the titular head of the family—was feared by one and all. Mother whined and complained, criticized and squelched, and the children gratefully welcomed every opportunity to either vacate the premises or lock themselves in stuffy bedrooms. Family conversation consisted of competitive wrangling, raised voices, challenging innuendos—and was generally completed within five minutes.

The kids have all moved away now, and they don't visit with each other or their parents all that much. In fact, the Joneses have a few grandchildren they still haven't even seen.

It was different with the Smiths. They, like the Joneses, had a large family—five children. They too raced off to school and work each day. They also had very little personal contact during the day, as each family member "did his or her own thing"—but unlike the Jones family, the Smiths almost ritualistically looked forward to the dinner hour, as a family!

In spite of lean years, they knew they could always expect a colorful, delicious, well-balanced meal. Not always steak or gourmet delicacies, but always scintillating conversation. Current school traumas, differences with friends, and family difficulties were freely discussed around the dinner table. Going steady, boy-girl frustrations, and proper planning for happy marriage were talked about frankly and openly. As the years passed and the Smith children slowly emerged as young adults, the fruit of those one- and two-hour dinner conversations became increasingly obvious. The family trusted each other. Honesty was the rule, not the exception. The children knew and understood their parents, and were able to share in the responsibilities of life in a large family. They were aware of the need for economy, frugality, thrift, appreciation, and consideration for others, because these subjects had all been regularly discussed during those precious dinner conversations.

As the children left home one by one, they began to put what they had learned into practice. Many important and subtle lessons had found their way into the children's minds and hearts.

They made beautiful, happy marriages and threw open their homes to the "old folks," making them welcome in every way. And to the joy of the Smiths, their children sought every possible opportunity to return "home." Backyard barbecues, swim parties and just plain fellowship filled most weekends. And there were still many times to sit as a family around the dining table and discuss plans and trials and goals.

Our Instant Society

In a hurry-up society such as ours, there is sometimes very little opportunity to relate together *as a family* like the Smiths. With each family member running off to his or her respective endeavor, sometimes dinner is the only time available to regroup and rendezvous.

Today nations communicate instantaneously via satellite-relayed television. The rise and fall of governments come to us live and in color on the evening news. We can place a call and in seconds converse with someone halfway around the globe. But in spite of these fantastic worldwide communications breakthroughs, it is becoming increasingly difficult to communicate on the home front. Here's one tried and tested way to improve your own family communications and reap tremendous benefits in the process.

Pass The Love..."

The family that eats together is a family which is aware of each member's dreams and goals, frustrations and accomplishments, fears and desires. It is a family characterized by closeness—by love and stability, by outgoing giving and concern. It is a growing, nurturing family which is preparing to become an integral part of the future of the world.

World authorities, philosophers, theologians and sociologists all agree that the basis for any strong community—whether local or international in scope—is a strong family relationship.

But today family communication is being eroded by incredible societal pressure to fragment, to go separate ways. People who pride themselves on being in the know about the stock market or world events might blush when asked a simple question like "Where are your kids tonight?"

Family members today race through life at an almost numbing pace. Time is the motivating factor in determining our daily modus operandi. We frantically gulp down instant breakfast, drink instant coffee, hear instant news, attend instant meetings, have instant temper explosions, and finally—at the end of our weary instant day—eat an instant catch-as-catch-can meal before watching the instant entertainment on our personal television set.

Kids today complain that parents just don't have any *time* for them. No time to sit down and answer those important questions that kids ask. Only time for an instant "Yes," or "No," or "I don't know." No patience to sit down and listen as an anxious teenager pours out whatever is in his or her heart.

Illustration by Mike Woodruff

If you're living in a family situation, what is your home like? Are your children being prepared to face the world that awaits them? Is there time to answer their earthshaking questions and listen to their miniature tragedies and triumphs? If the answer is "No," or only "Sometimes," perhaps you ought to consider the virtues of a regular family dinner hour—precious time in which to pass around some love. □

Invasion From Outer Space?

An invasion from outer space by aliens from another planet has long been good copy for science fiction writers.

War of the Worlds is one such well-known science fiction novel written by H. G. Wells, in which he envisioned Martians invading earth with superior weapons. Even our most sophisticated weapons could not stop the invaders' relentless, systematic drive to conquer our planet.

But sometimes truth is stranger than fiction!

Believe it or not, a thorough study of the Bible—the written Word of the Personage who says He is the Creator of both man and the earth—shows the Bible emphatically predicts that a great and powerful Being from outer space, together with a vast army, will soon descend upon earth and actually conquer it! As in the novel by H. G. Wells, the Bible tells us that the efforts of earth's armies to thwart these invaders will be utterly futile.

After subduing the nations, this great Being will set up a world-ruling government. The Bible also tells us that those who will rule with Him will be former earthlings who, unknown to the world, had been in rigorous training for this very purpose. For this great outer-space Being has been actively selecting and working with His future administrators for quite a number of years!

Astonishingly, some of these very earthlings who will soon become a part of this world-ruling government could be your own friends, relatives, acquaintances—or they could be men and women who have been sleeping in the dust of the earth in death. Even the grave is no barrier to this Super-being! He will merely call to His chosen ones to awake from the sleep of death and rise from their graves. It is also revealed that this Being will soon give His hand-picked cadre of world rulers the same type of body He presently possesses—a body inherently possessing great power, glory and immortality!

This great Being, as you have probably already guessed, is none other than Jesus Christ of Nazareth—a man who walked this earth about 2,000 years ago. Yet, He was much more than just a man. He was and *is* the very *God* who created the earth and mankind!

Those who will be made immortal and who will rule with Him at His coming are the ones who have diligently lived by the Word of God, after having *repented* of living contrary to God's will as revealed in the Bible. They were *baptized*—put into—the specially called-out group of Christians—the Church of the living God—having received His Holy Spirit during their physical sojourn on earth.

Then, with the miraculous help of the Spirit of God, they lived a life of overcoming their selfish lusts and the evil pulls of this world. They strove to resist the influence of the arch-ruler of darkness and the father of sin, Satan the devil and his realm of demon henchmen.

The government of Jesus Christ will usher in a thousand years of worldwide peace, happiness, abundance and prosperity for all earth's mortals. Warfare, poverty and unhappiness will have become past history. Most of this world's war machinery will be turned into farm equipment, which will be used to produce the bounteous harvests God promises to bestow upon the nations.

Warfare will be totally abolished in the wonderful World Tomorrow. Instead, men will learn to love their fellowmen and respect the rights of all people.

Love, joy, peace and happiness will fill that wonderful world, because men will have finally come to realize that the "give way" of the great law of God is truly the way to lasting peace and true happiness.

That world is just around the corner!

If you want to know more about the coming world government of Jesus Christ and His administration, as well as how to qualify for corulership with its coming King, write for the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*. This course of Bible study makes plain the teachings of Jesus Christ and the prophets of old—all of whom were inspired of God to write about our time and Christ's imminent return to establish His beneficent rule on earth.

There are twelve, 16-page monthly lessons in this absolutely *free* Bible correspondence course. The only "textbook" you will need is your own Bible. A certificate of completion will be awarded to those who pass a thorough final examination. (In addition, each lesson contains a quiz which the student can take to evaluate his progress for himself.)

So before you do another thing, why not clip the literature request coupon on page 45 and ask for the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course.* Do it now before you forget! □

Send your request to: Ambassador College Correspondence Course, Box 111, Pasadena, California 91123. Or, if you would rather, pick up the telephone and call our toll-free line: the number is 1-800-423-4444. Those in California, Alaska, and Hawaii may call 1-213-577-5225 collect.

KOREA

(Continued from page 11)

former Prime Minister Paik Too-chin said: "Of course we'll fight, but the U.S. will then face a very difficult decision: come back or forsake an ally in Asia. Will you abandon your friend?"

Many believe the United States, still reeling from its disastrous Vietnam experience, would likely shy away from a new Korean war, since it would be fighting an ally of the U.S.S.R. This could place Soviet-American relations on the confrontation level of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. And Russia is much stronger now.

Yet by withdrawing U.S. troops, the likelihood of such a war is enhanced. Inexplicably, the Carter Administration—while proposing an increase in NATO spending—has apparently forgotten that the Soviet Union is not only a European but also an *Asian* power, warranting an equal U.S. counterpresence in *both* spheres if war is to be avoided.

Horrible as it sounds, the U.S. would probably justify sacrificing an ally—an ally of 35 million people—rather than "risk" a nuclear World War III. Such reasoning is actually nothing new. Mr. Paik told us of his own face-to-face confrontation with former President Eisenhower over whether to arrange the cease-fire in 1953. Adamantly insisting the U.S. and U.N. forces yield to the combined North Korean and Soviet call for a cease-fire, Eisenhower shouted at Paik: "Do you expect me to start a global war over a small country like Korea?"

If that were the case in 1953, how much more so in 1977?

Even Russians Want Americans to Stay

Perhaps the strangest thing about the current situation in Korea is that no power (except for North Korea) directly or indirectly involved in the age-old dispute wants to change the status quo. And this even includes the Russians and the Communist Chinese, strange as that may seem.

From the Soviet viewpoint, there is no advantage whatsoever in a U.S. troop withdrawal, if that means war and a communized Korea. Moscow believes a Korea under total Red control would more likely lean toward Peking. By being forced to aid Kim Il-sung in a war, the Soviets would shatter any hope of detente with the United States. Furthermore, Communist victory in Korea would send shock waves throughout Japan, increasing the danger of full-scale Japanese rearmament. The Russians have enough trouble on their hands with China to worry about Japan, a nation that up until now they have pretty much been able to bully around.

Communist China, too, has no interest at this time in upsetting the applecart in Korea. In China's eyes, the United States must remain a credible power in Asia if the emerging relationship between the two is to develop. A U.S. defeat in Korea—or worse yet, a shameful abandonment of an ally—would likely drive China away from a "paper tiger" and into a rapprochement with the Soviets—something the Japanese would gravely fear.

Thus, for both the Soviets and the Chinese, "the American presence can be a stabilizing force on the peninsula in that the U.S. withdrawal might not only force them to confront the U.S. but also would promote further conflict between themselves. Hence, *contrary to their public statements*, Moscow and Peking are less interested in advocating the U.S. withdrawal from South Korea, and *the last thing they want at this time is a recurrence of a conflict in Korea"* (Yung-hwan Jo, "The Other Side's Views: Washington-Seoul Ties," *Pacific Community*, July 1977).

Doubts of U.S. Will

As a result of the planned U.S. withdrawal from Korea and the concurrent buildup of Soviet strength and influence in the Pacific, Japan is nervously debating the question of her national security with greater urgency than ever before.

Japan, whose American-imposed postwar constitution bans an offensive armed force, spends less than one percent of its GNP on defense, compared to over seven percent in the United States and six percent in South Korea. Indicative of Japan's defense preparedness, it has been estimated that Japan's air force could last about ten minutes in a war with the Soviet Union.

Observers now wonder whether Japan, the world's third-largest industrial nation, will reluctantly begin a military buildup as a result of the new Korean situation and accompanying doubts about American trustworthiness and willingness to honor its security treaties. A Japanese rearmament would almost certainly cause anxiety in other Asian nations which remember Japanese wartime aggression.

In the end the Japanese may be forced into making a Hobson's choice between rearmament (including nuclear weapons) or "Finlandization"—a meek submissive neutralization and domination by the Soviet Union and/or China.

The question of U.S. resolve and reliability as an ally may also be felt in Western Europe, where some politicians see the U.S. pullout from Korea as a further indication of the decline of U.S. will and power.

In effect, the U.S. ground forces have served as "the finger in the dike" of peace in Korea and all of northeast Asia. When they are removed, a flood of world tensions is certain to rise. Surely "wars and rumors of wars" will threaten as never before, and the temptation to "go nuclear" will intensify (even between the two competing Koreas).

Global U.S. Decline

The troop pullout scheme that nobody wants—not even Washington's chief adversaries—can only be viewed in the overall scope of the steady worldwide erosion of American power and influence. The United States is a power in contraction, a nation in decline, with a government that can no longer distinguish between friend and foe; a country consisting of a people that has lost its moorings to its own history and to the God that gave it national blessings beyond the measure of any in human history.

The impact of the troop withdrawal would be catastrophic enough for the Korean people. It could also be something from which a decaying America would never recover. □

IN BRIEF

MR. BEGIN AND PROSPECTS FOR MID-EAST PEACE

by Stanley R. Rader

Tokyo, October 18, 1977: As Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong improves each day from the illness that has confined him to his bed for the first time in more than 60 years, I have been spending the last three weeks fulfilling our commitments vis-à-vis projects that we have undertaken in the past, and have already embarked on new projects in Egypt, Israel, and here in Japan.

And speaking of Israel, that nation is sure to continue to be a major focus of the world's attention in the coming months. It appears that the Geneva Peace Conference is ready to be resumed after almost three years, and there is hope in many quarters that a settlement of the crisis that has made the Middle East the most explosive area in the world can be reached. Israel's foreign minister, Moshe Dayan, and Egypt's foreign minister, Ismail Fahmy, have each visited the United States and have had lengthy discussions with President Carter and Secretary of State Vance.

The problems confronting the parties at Geneva will not be easy to resolve, and each party will be subjected to internal pressures from home that will affect the negotiations, because all politicians are concerned about their own political future and too often, if not always, foreign political commitments are dictated by the internal situations that are extant at any particular time.

The new prime minister of Israel, Menachem Begin, is still a relative unknown, despite his successful trip to Washington and New York, and now it appears that his personal health is a serious question. It is this writer's opinion, however, that he may stand in a very unique position to bring about peace in the Middle East, if anyone can.

His coming to power bears a striking similarity to General Charles de Gaulle's return to power at the time that the Algerian question almost tore France apart. With civil war threatening and the bloody conflict in Algeria accelerating every day, de Gaulle was asked to lead the nation once again by those who were convinced that he would save Algeria for France and was the only man who would be able to do so. But within a very short period of time it was the same General de Gaulle who was able to extricate France from Algeria and to end the bloody conflict and bring about the real postwar recovery of his nation. Only he had the personal stature to make the kind of decision that was required at the time.

Again, Begin's rise to power bears a striking resemblance to the return of Richard Nixon to national power in 1968. It was Mr. Nixon, whose anti-Communist credentials were so eminently well-known and authenticated, who was able to bring about the rapprochement with Communist China. Anyone other than Mr. Nixon would have been attacked from the right to such an extent that it would have more than likely ended his political career.

Begin is known to be, among other things, an ideologue, as well as a firm believer in Israel's destiny to reclaim those lands which it controlled in biblical times. He has been described as a "hawk" and as uncompromising in his dealings with members of the opposition party in Israel and with any who are inclined to take a soft line vis-à-vis any of the Arab nations, particularly with respect to the return of the occupied territories commonly referred to as the West Bank. And even recently he has given fresh evidence that he does not intend to advocate a return of those territories as part of a peace settlement.

However, because of his political posture in the past, and his genuine credentials as a hawk, he stands, in this writer's view, as the one man who might be able to make the kind of deal with the Arab nations that would bring about a return of much of the occupied territory in return for the Arab nations' recognition of Israel as a state, which recognition alone is the only real basis for peace in the area, notwithstanding United States guarantees of any permanent cease-fire, armistice or peace treaty.

Until the Arab nations and Israel are able to stabilize and normalize their relations—relations which have never been normalized from the time of the creation by the United Nations of the state of Israel in 1948—there can be no real hope of a lasting peace. It is only when conditions become normal that people can learn to live with one another.

Let us hope that whatever happens at Geneva, we will all be able to look back this time next year with the feeling that at least one area of this troubled world is free at long last from the potentially explosive hatred, instability and unrest that makes it possible for the world's two superpowers to confront each other in an armed conflict that could lead to the destruction of the entire civilized world as we know it today. □

OLDEST THING

(Continued from page 21)

But could something be wrong with the bristlecone chronology and the resulting calibration of radiocarbon dating? And what of the common belief that God created the earth and all living things about six thousand years ago? How does this square with a reputed 8,200-year tree-ring chronology?

One explanation sometimes offered is that the bristlecone pines must have produced multiple rings in many years, thus appearing much older (by growth-ring count) than they really are. This explanation might be true for some trees in special environments, but Dr. C. W. Ferguson, the world's leading authority on bristlecone pine dendrochronology, maintains that it is *missing* rings rather than multiple rings that pose the greatest problem.

"Those who claim we're dealing with multiple rings are sadly misinformed," Ferguson told *The Plain Truth.* "The real problem is that these bristlecones grow in an arid environment where they sometimes fail to add a distinguishable annual ring."

Moreover, for at least the past three thousand years, the carbon-14 content of the rings is consistent with what would be predicted on the assumption that each bristlecone ring represents one calendar year. Thus it would seem unlikely that the apparent antiquity of the bristlecones is due to multiple rings.

Another possibility is that God created the trees with the appearance of age. After all, when God created trees, they certainly would have appeared to be at least several years old—and perhaps much older. But would God have created *thousands* of false rings? "If people are determined to make these bristlecones younger," observes Dr. Bryant Bannister, director of the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research, University of Arizona, "I suppose they might as well say God created them with thousands of rings already present. I personally don't believe it, but I guess it's a philosophical position that would be hard to disprove."

Bannister tells of an incident in Lebanon, when he was conducting tree-ring research near a mountain monastery. "One of the monks told me a 6,000-year-old tree had recently been blown down in a windstorm," recalls Bannister. "I was skeptical, but we went over and started to count the rings. It was soon evident that the tree was not nearly that old.

"'I'm afraid this tree is only about 2,000 years old,' I informed the monk. 'On the contrary,' he replied, 'it may *appear* by your count to be only 2,000 years old, but you must realize that it was decreed in the beginning that this tree would only add one ring every three years!'

"It was obvious," adds Bannister, "that nothing I could say would ever convince him that the tree was not 6,000 years old."

Of course, Bannister's example is not really the appearance of *age* so much as the appearance of *youth!* But the same kind of mentality is involved whenever one claims a tree's true age is other than what the actual number of rings indicates.

A more serious difficulty with the apparent-age theory is that some dead bristlecone logs have rings that indicate the trees lived and died seven or eight thousand years ago—*before* the supposed date of creation. If God created the earth only 6,000 years ago, this would imply that He also made "fossil trees"—trees that never actually grew but were only "planted" by God (perhaps to deceive man into thinking the earth was older?).

Whatever the merits of the concept of creation with the appearance of age, most people would agree it should not be pushed to the point where God becomes a cosmic practical joker. God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33), and His character makes it impossible for him to lie or devise a deceptive creation (Titus 1:2).

Dr. Paul Damon, chief scientist at the University of Arizona Radiocarbon Laboratory, is one of the principal investigators in the bristlecone calibration of carbon 14. "I know people say carbon 14 can't be accurate because it dates creatures long before 6,000 years ago," observes Damon. "But frankly, I think those who invoke 'apparent age' so they can keep believing the earth is only 6,000 years old are intellectually dishonest. Paul told Timothy to guard against the pitfalls of 'endless genealogies' and

(Continued on page 45)

Illustration by Brian Knowles

orchids & onions

LETTERS

Abortion

"The Case Against Abortion" (August/September* Plain Truth) *brought forth a great deal of comment—both pro and con—from our readers. Here is a representative sampling of the letters we received.

Absolutely Against Abortion

I read the interesting article "The Case Against Abortion" and I'm writing to say that I am absolutely against abortion, and that the article in *The Plain Truth* was timely and informative. I hope the message takes immediate effect upon women who are contemplating abortion. . . . In my opinion, there is a very important reason for the continuance of human life. And though I do not know the reasons for the many experiences we go through in this life, I do believe *someone* greater than any mortal surely does, and therefore human life should be protected.

Lila B. Komp,
Garden City, Michigan

Call to Action?

Thank you for your article "The Case Against Abortion." It was only unfortunate that you didn't follow up the statement that abortion is seriously wrong by urging Christians to work as citizens against this evil.

Douglas Hayman,
Reading, Massachusetts

What About Rape?

I agree with you in saying abortion is wrong aside from the fact the pregnancy may endanger the life of the mother. But what I would like to know is: Is that the only circumstance in which we can condone abortion? What I mean is, would it be wrong for a woman to have an abortion when she became pregnant after being raped? Please answer.

W. J.,
Brookshire, Texas

Quality of Life

It is perhaps fruitless to argue with someone who has concluded that abortion is murder and "to commit [murder] would be a worse evil than enduring even great amounts of suffering." What the writer is saying in his article is that the 14-year-old girl who is pregnant by her father must go through with her pregnancy, with all its attendant shame and anxiety.

He is cavalierly saying to the 50-year-old woman that she must undergo another pregnancy in spite of evidence that child-bearing in later life is a factor in the incidence of cancer. He is insensitive to the possibilities of broken marriages and heartbreak if some unwanted pregnancies are allowed to go to full-term.

He strains to interpret vague biblical passages to prove that the fetus is "a separate human being" from the mother—a person, even before it draws its first breath—and that to destroy this fetus or person is to commit murder. Now, the writer can give the fetus any definition he wants and may find from these elusive passages in Scripture buttress for his argument, but the Supreme Court, wishing to avoid the thicket of theological argument, had to conclude that the Constitution recognizes a human being becomes a person at birth. Genesis 2:7 would seem to underscore that view: ". . . then the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and he became a living soul." There is no question that at birth, when the infant draws its first breath, there is in being a human person and the Genesis account should suffice. No responsible person counsels infanticide, but Mr. Calkins, by pushing his definitions to the breaking point, labels abortion of the fetus as infanticide and murder, an absolutist position!

One of the best answers I have seen to this "logic" is supplied in *A Call to Concern*, issued by a group of religious ethicists, which states in part: "The most compelling argument against the inflexibility of the absolutist position is its cost in human misery. The absolutist position does not concern itself about the quality of the entire life cycle, the health and well-being of the mother and family, the question of emotional and economic resources, the cases of extreme deformity. Its total preoccupation with the status of the unborn renders it blind to the well-being and freedom of choice of persons in the community. We believe that abortion may in some instances be the most loving act possible."

In life, choices must often be made between evils. The decision to have an abortion is a tragic decision, not to be made lightly. But the alternative to the evil of abortion may be a greater evil. We would appreciate your publishing this rebuttal on behalf of 25 national religious organizations in the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, which share the belief that a woman has a constitutional right to a safe, legal abortion under guidelines established in the Supreme Court decisions of January 1973.

Robert E. Jones,
Associate Director,
Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights,
Washington, D.C.

Human Rights

I believe you have failed to take into account the most fundamental issue concerning abortion: that of human rights. Are the rights—the unalienable legal control over her own body—of a pregnant woman, a human being, to be sacrificed to questionable "rights" possessed by a "possible" legal human being, the fetus?

You state that "the burden of proof" is on those who claim that a fetus is not

a human being. I wholly disagree. The burden of proof is on you, those who try to prove that the fetus is a human being. Throughout history it has been self-evident that life begins at birth. It is only in some philosophies out of the mainstream (China, for example) that a human life is considered to have started at conception. Western tradition takes as self-evident the fact that a human being is not such until birth.

Secondly, in considering the question of when human life begins, we must examine what differentiates a human being from animal life. It is undeniably the human *consciousness,* the ability to introspect and think "as a human being." When does this consciousness begin? It is evidently when the primary sensory organs (such as the eyes) begin to function and begin to communicate vital nonmetabolic information to the brain, thereby starting it on its life of gathering conscious data. It is not until after birth that such nonmetabolic data begins to be processed. The individuality which exemplifies a true human being, the personality, the intellectual growth, and the consciousness of life cannot be present in a fetus where no input for the primary sensory organs is possible. There is a difference between murder and killing.

Biblical figurative language and analogies prove nothing. If you want to believe figurative language you'll end up believing God has wings because one passage implies that. The fetus can be a separate being without being a *human* being. Until human consciousness comes it is not human. These are just a few reasons why I am not against abortion. I have so many reasons why I am *for* abortion I could write a book. A true humanistic morality dictates a pro-abortion attitude. Abortion is necessary at the present time for the good of mankind.

W. R. Noack, Jr.
South Pasadena, California

Irresponsible Sophistry?

Your *Plain Truth* diatribe against abortion was one of the most irresponsible exercises in sophistry I have ever read. The author comes across like a frustrated would-be Catholic theologian, cunningly employing a form of Pascal's Wager to "prove" abortion is wrong. When all the rhetoric is stripped away, the author—following the good Catholic Pascal—is really saying that God just *might* disapprove of abortion (we can't absolutely prove otherwise); therefore we must renounce abortion as a method for limiting birthrates or face the prospect of being damned to hellfire.

By the same reasoning, we could reach the absurd conclusion that no amount of suffering can ever justify any action for which the slightest possibility exists that God *might* disapprove. Thus surely we should have let Hitler overrun the world, for, scripturally speaking, no one can "absolutely prove" that fighting in World War II was acceptable to God. And if God should judge such actions unacceptable, then the U.S. soldiers who died opposing Nazi tyranny will also be condemned for "killing another human being."

Stan Ulman,
Forrest Lake, Minnesota

Insulted Female

"The Case Against Abortion" is an insult to all of your female readers. An article about abortion written by a man is insulting enough; since men cannot become pregnant, their views tend to smack of the patronizing and holier-than-thou. Their stake in this issue is far less than ours! The author is no exception. After groping through the Bible, he couldn't find one clear anti-abortion statement. So he was forced to fall back on the tired is-the-fetus-alive-or-isn't-it argument. Since no one can agree on how to define "human life" this point should be dropped. The real issue is: Do women have the right to control their reproductive destinies?

There is much else I could say about abortion: the teenage unwed mothers who end up on welfare, a burden to the taxpayer; the unwanted, unloved kids who become juvenile delinquents and later hardened criminals; the whole issue of an overcrowded world with limited resources. But most important, the right to abortion is a personal ethical question for each woman. It is no one else's business.

S. Zukowski,
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

The author replies: The main problem in considering the morality of abortion is determining what the status of the fetus is in God's eyes. If God accords the fetus the status of a separate human being from the mother, then killing it is the same as killing anyone else. "The Case Against Abortion" presented the evidence that God does indeed accord the fetus that status. Hence, the article dealt with the theological question of abortion, not the political one. The two questions are separate: In the U.S. today the woman indeed has the *legal* right to an abortion, but that does not give her the *moral* right to one.

In the case of rape, the fetus is an innocent third party. Why should the great tragedy of rape be compounded by the murder of what is, for all intents and purposes, an innocent bystander? Fortunately, in our society today there is a great shortage of babies available for adoption: adoption is an infinitely more humane way to relieve the "human misery" associated with unwanted children than killing them.

Mr. Jones argues that such human misery outweighs the evil of murder. It doesn't. Murder is the worst possible action one can inflict on another human being (with the possible exception of prolonged torture). Murder is final. Harm to "the health and well-being of the mother and family," the lack of "emotional and economic resources," and even "cases of extreme deformity" do not justify the killing of a human being after he is born. Therefore they do not justify the killing of a human being before he is born.

Mr. Noack, on the other hand, builds his case on the argument that consciousness and individuality are the criteria for human life. We believe that the "spirit in man" is (I Cor. 2:11). Furthermore, the fetus is given attributes of individuality and consciousness: "And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb . . ." (Luke 1:41). The word "babe" here applies to a six-month-old fetus; the same word is used in the next chapter to refer to a newborn infant (Luke 2:12, 16).

Mr. Ulman's comments are amusing. Leaving aside his *ad hominem* arguments, one should realize that if God disapproves of anything He disapproves of murder. And no amount of suffering justifies murder. (Whether World War II is justified depends on whether there is any such thing in God's eyes as a "just war," in which the killing would not automatically be characterized as murder. But that is another question than whether the fetus is a human being with its own human rights.)

And in answer to Ms. Zukowski, I can only say that while I am not a woman, I was once a fetus. Since I could have been aborted, my stake in the issue, while retroactive, is still significant. Furthermore, one cannot remain indifferent to murder regardless of one's personal stake in the subject. And in this day and age of sexual equality, she of all people should realize that truth is the truth regardless of the sex of the one who says it.

—Jeff Calkins

Q&A

Questions and Answers

We invite you, our readers, to send in your questions on biblically oriented prophetic, doctrinal, historical and Christian-living topics. While we cannot promise that all questions will be answered in print, we will try to cover all those that are of general interest as space permits. Send your questions to the appropriate address listed on the inside front cover, care of **The Plain Truth.**

Q "Many of your articles effectively refute evolution and support the Bible. Yet you seem to believe the earth is a lot older than the 6000 years that Genesis indicates. Isn't this a contradiction? Or are you just giving in to pressure from the scientific establishment?"

Arthur P.,
Wilmington, North Carolina

A The Bible reveals that God is the Creator of heaven and earth "and all that in them is" (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11). We believe that the evidence from modern biology, geology, and paleontology strongly supports the concept of special creation and that evolution, as it is usually taught, is a mistaken interpretation of that evidence.

On the other hand, the Bible does not say *when* creation took place. Scientific evidence based on studies of radiometric dating, geological changes, and ecological succession strongly implies a very old age for the earth.

Some people have attempted to deduce the time of creation from the biblical ages of the patriarchs (the famous Ussher chronology dates creation at 4004 B.C.), but the date of creation does not necessarily coincide with the age of the earth. Though we may conclude that Adam was created about 6000 years ago, there is certainly no biblical proof that the earth—along with certain prehistoric creatures such as the dinosaurs—could not have been created long before 4000 B.C. Indeed, a pre-Adamic world is consistent with the scriptures dealing with Satan's role in God's creation. (Write for the free booklet *Answers From Genesis.)*

The exact age of the earth remains a mystery. But when the Bible is correctly understood, there is nothing to keep us from accepting scientific evidence placing the age of the earth at millions or even billions of years. We have nothing to fear from the truth, even if it comes from the so-called "scientific establishment."

Q **"After Judas died, the remaining eleven apostles chose another to take his place. Was this Saul, later named Paul, or someone else? If it was someone else, why is Paul referred to as an apostle?"**

Herb T.,
Clark, South Dakota

A The Greek word translated "apostle" in the New Testament can mean "an ambassador," "a messenger," "one who is commissioned," or "one who is sent."

During His ministry, Christ personally chose twelve men whom He worked with, taught and trained to fulfill the commission of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the world. After Judas' death following his betrayal of Christ, the other eleven drew lots and chose Matthias to fill that vacant office (see Acts 1:15-26). Thus Matthias was included in the commission and rewards given the other original apostles (Matt. 19:28; Rev. 21:14).

While the apostle Paul was not counted among the original twelve, he also occupied the office of apostle (see I Cor. 15:9-10; Rom. 1:1; I Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1, etc.).

Q **"I have just finished reading the best-selling book *Life After Life* by Dr. Raymond A. Moody, Jr. In it was the testimony of people who had 'died' and been brought back. They told of some fascinating experiences, including being out of their bodies, and seeing a 'being of light' who talked to them and flashed their lives in front of them. What are your comments?"**

Alfred G.,
Portland, Maine

A Though many of these happenings are understandably astounding and seem to contradict what the Bible says about death, the whole idea of such a "life-after-life" experience is based on the premise that these people actually died. According to the medical profession, these individuals were clinically dead. However, medical science has not yet agreed on what constitutes actual death in a human being, and the fact that these people are here to tell of their experiences can be put forth as evidence that they weren't *really* dead, after all.

Real permanent death, according to the Bible, is total and complete unconsciousness—without memory, feeling, knowledge or perception (Eccl. 9:5; Ps. 6:5). These biblical statements remain as our authority

on the subject. For a more detailed study, write for our free booklet titled *Do You Have an Immortal Soul?*

Q "You're always saying that this is Satan's world. If something is mine, I am free to do with it whatever I please. Yet you say Satan can only do what God allows, or else he would do what he liked and completely destroy God's human creation. Daniel 4:32 says, God "rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will." How can you then say that this is Satan's world, when he can't do what he wants with it?"

C.C.,
Columbus, Ohio

A When the Bible speaks of this as Satan's world, we must understand that the word "world" in the New Testament is usually derived from the Greek word *kosmos*, meaning "world" not in the sense of the planet Earth, but rather this world's organized system or civilization. The Greek word *aion* ("age") is also occasionally translated "world," again implying the system or civilization characteristic of this "age" in which humanity populates the planet.

Satan is the "god of this world [*aion* or "age"]" (II Cor. 4:4), and as such has guided, influenced and affected the thinking and culture of mankind. God as all-powerful Creator owns this planet as well as the entire universe. He has *allowed* Satan's control, generally keeping hands off for the duration of this age as a means of better accomplishing His ultimate purpose—but He retains the right to step in and overrule Satan at any particular time He chooses. This arrangement suits God's purpose for the present, but the time is coming when a new age will dawn "wherein dwells righteousness." Satan and his minions will be bound and the earth will be at peace for a thousand years, ruled by Jesus Christ, who qualified for that rulership when He overcame the devil in the cosmic battle of wills recorded in the Gospel accounts (see Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Mark 1:12-13). So although Satan is temporarily in charge, he has already been disqualified and will be deposed at Christ's second coming. For more on the subject of Satan, write for your free copy of the booklet *Did God Create a Devil?*

Q "Matthew 18:11 reads, 'For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.' And Luke 19:10 states, 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' Most preachers and theologians interpret these verses as applying to the general condition of all humanity brought about by Adam and Eve's so-called 'fall' in the Garden of Eden. What is your understanding of Matthew 18:11 and Luke 19:10?"

J.N.,
Saluda, South Carolina

A "Lost" in this context refers to all of humanity except for those individuals who have come under the blood of Christ. All have sinned, and the wages of sin is eternal death in a lake of fire (I John 1:8, 10; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Rev. 20:14-15). Therefore, everyone who has not yet accepted Christ as his Savior is on "Death Row," so to speak—awaiting the death penalty for sins. Those who have not accepted Christ are "perishing." This principle may be seen in II Thessalonians 2:10 (New International Version): " . . . and in every sort of evil that deceives *those who are perishing*. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."

Christ came to save sinners—those who would *admit* that they were sinners, such as Zacchaeus, and who made an effort to live righteous lives (Luke 19:5-10). This stands in sharp contrast to the attitude of the Pharisees, who labeled the publicans (tax collectors for the Roman government) sinners and believed themselves to be righteous.

So unless a person admits he is a sinner, repents, and accepts Christ, he is doomed to ultimate eternal death—he is "lost." But this does not mean that God will not give everyone a chance to be saved. That opportunity may not come in this life, however. It may come at a future resurrection to physical life. This is explained in our reprint article "Is This the Only Day of Salvation?" (Write for your free copy.)

Q "Could you explain somewhere in *The Plain Truth* how if someone is trying to find the real God, he won't unless God decides to 'call' him? I thought we were 'free moral agents' so therefore we choose; but this 'calling' seems like we have no choice."

Anonymous,
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

A The key to your question lies in the term "moral." Yes, we are free moral agents—we are free to act morally or immorally. We are free to obey or disobey the divine will. Even the Gentiles, said Paul, "do by nature the things contained in the law" (Rom. 2:14). God has not forced us to go one way or the other. All human beings have the capacity for good and for evil. We all sin (Rom. 3:23). But by the same token we all do good from time to time.

Our calling is irrespective of all of this. We are called to the Kingdom (Matt. 25:34). Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . draw him . . . " (John 6:44). God attracts or "draws" those whom He is calling to the body of Christ which is the Church (I Cor. 12:13). He *brings* us to repentance (II Tim. 2:25).

Once we have been called and placed in the Church by the Holy Spirit, we are still free moral agents. We are still "at liberty" to disobey the divine will—but the penalty for stubborn continuance in so doing is stern and certain. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Those who have been given the Spirit of God have a greater responsibility to "mortify the deeds of the flesh" through the power of the Spirit (Col. 3:5-8).

To further answer this question you might find our free reprint articles "How Does God Call?" and "The True Meaning of Predestination" helpful.

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SHREVEPORT — Channel 6, KTAL-TV, 10:00 a.m. Sun.

SIOUX CITY — Channel 14, KMEG-TV, 10:00 a.m. Sun.

SPRINGFIELD, IL. — Channel 20, WICS-TV, 12:30 p.m. Sun.

TOPEKA — Channel 27, KTSB-TV, 12:00 noon Sat.

WICHITA — Channel 3, KARD-TV, 4:30 p.m. Sun.

WILLISTON — Channel 8, KUMV-TV, 12 noon Sat.

Mountain Time

BOISE — Channel 6, KIVI-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sun.

CLOVIS — Channel 12, KFDW-TV, 9:00 a.m. Sun.

FARMINGTON — Channel 12, KIVA-TV, 10:30 a.m. Sun.

POCATELLO — Channel 6, KPVI-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sun.

ROSWELL — Channel 10, KBIM-TV, 10:00 a.m. Sun.

SALT LAKE CITY — Channel 5, KSL-TV, 12:30 p.m. Sat.

TUCSON — Channel 9, KGUN-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

Pacific Time

ANCHORAGE — Channel 13, KIMO-TV, 11:30 a.m. Sun.

FAIRBANKS — Channel 11, KTVF-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sun.

LOS ANGELES — Channel 9, KHJ-TV, 9:30 p.m. Sun.

PORTLAND — Channel 12, KPTV-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sat.

SAN FRANCISCO (Oakland) — Channel 2, KTVU-TV, 10:30 a.m. Sat.

STOCKTON — Channel 13, KOVR-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sun.

CANADIAN STATIONS

Newfoundland Time

SAINT JOHN'S — Channel 6, CJON-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

Atlantic Time

HALIFAX — Channel 5, CJCH-TV, 2:00 p.m. Sun.

MONCTON, N.B. — Channel 2, CKCW-TV, 2:00 p.m. Sun.

SYDNEY — Channel 4, CJCB-TV, 2:00 p.m. Sun.

Eastern Time

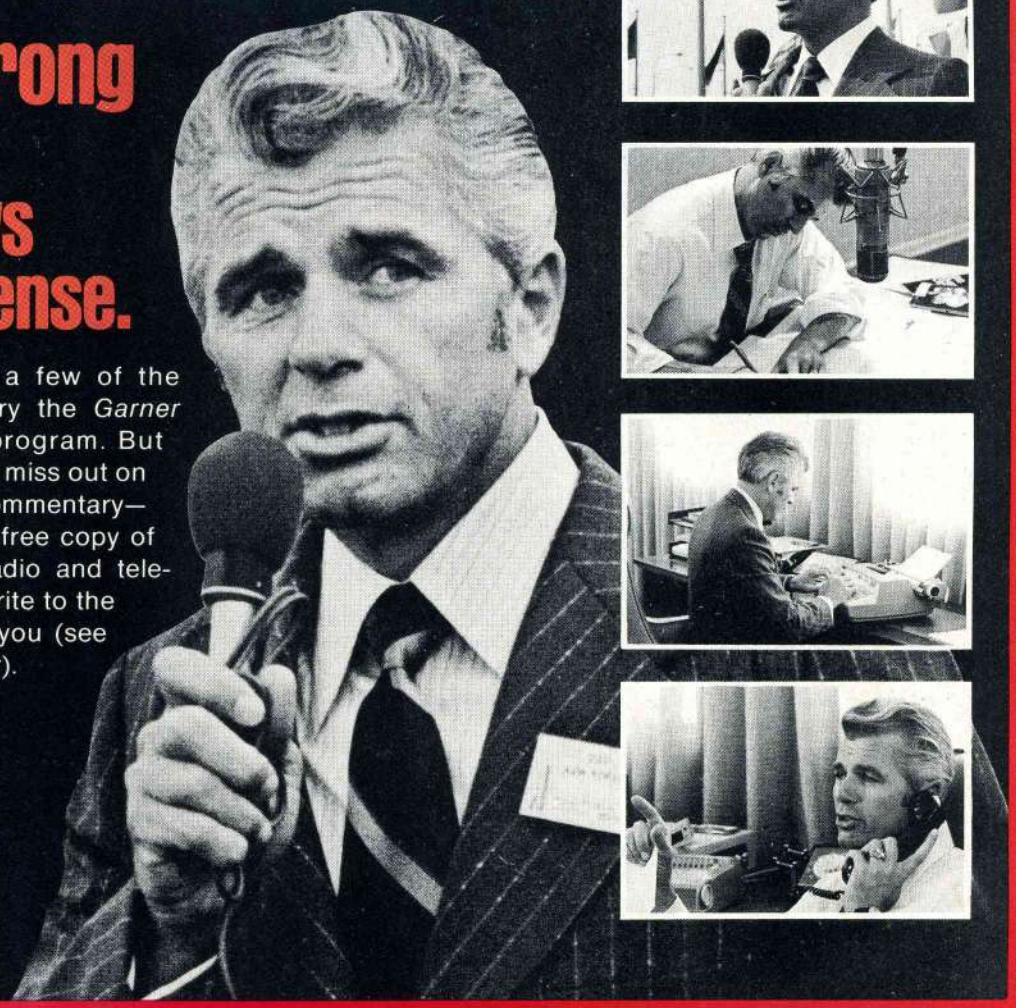
BARRIE — Channel 3, CKVR-TV, 12:00 noon Sun.

KINGSTON — Channel 11, CKWS-TV, 12:30 p.m. Sat.

MONTREAL — Channel 12, CFCF-TV, 5:30 p.m. Sun.

Garner Ted Armstrong makes the news make sense.

These are only a few of the stations that carry the *Garner Ted Armstrong* program. But you won't want to miss out on his fascinating commentary—so send for your free copy of the up-to-date radio and television log. Just write to the address nearest you (see inside front cover).



NORTH BAY — Channel 4, CHNB-TV, 1 p.m. Sun.

OTTAWA — Channel 6, CHRO-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

PETERBOROUGH — Channel 12, CHEX-TV, 12:30 p.m. Sat.

QUEBEC CITY — Channel 5, CKMI-TV, 12:00 noon Sun.

SAULT STE. MARIE — Channel 2, CJIC-TV, 9:30 a.m. Sat.

SUDBURY — Channel 9, CKNC-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

THUNDER BAY — Channel 4, CHFD-TV, 1:30 p.m. Sun.

TIMMINS — Channel 6, CFCL-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

Central Time

BRANDON — Channel 5, CKX-TV, 12:30 p.m. Sun.

REGINA — Channel 2, CKCK-TV, 12 noon Sun.

SASKATOON — Channel 8, CFQC-TV, 12 noon Sun.

SWIFT CURRENT — Channel 5, CJFB-TV, 11:15 p.m. Sun.

WINNIPEG — Channel 7, CKY-TV, 12 noon Sun.

YORKTON — Channel 3, CKOS-TV, 12 noon Sun.

YORKTON — Channel 8, CKSS-TV, 12 noon Sun.

YORKTON — Channel 7, CFSS-TV, 12 noon Sun.

YORKTON — Channel 6, CHSS-TV, 12 noon Sun.

Mountain Time

CALGARY — Channel 4, CFCN-TV, 1:00 p.m. Sun.

EDMONTON — Channel 3, CFRN-TV, 11:00 a.m. Sun.

LLOYDMINSTER — Channel 2, CKSA-TV, 9:30 a.m. Sun.

Pacific Time

DAWSON CREEK — Channel 5, CJDC-TV, 5:30 p.m. Sun.

VANCOUVER — Channel 8, CHAN-TV, 11:30 a.m. Sun.

VICTORIA — Channel 6, CHEK-TV, 11:30 a.m. Sun.

WHITEHORSE — Channels 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, WHTV-TV, 7:00 p.m. Sun.

Please check your local listing for possible time or day changes.
*denotes new stations or changes.

Garner Ted Armstrong

SPEAKS OUT!

What does it mean to be "Born Again"?

Millions upon millions of U.S. Evangelicals have always professed to have been "born again." But the "great awakening" in terms of the media's awareness of their numbers didn't take place until the election of a "born-again" President in 1976. That one event alone brought the whole movement out of the woodwork of religiosity and onto front-page prominence in the various vehicles of the modern news media.

Then came Charles Colson's best-seller entitled *Born Again.* The former Nixon aide convincingly recounted that the whole Watergate experience finally resulted in his personal repentance and conversion to Christ. And now on the book market is another best-seller by a famous American evangelist telling everybody *How To Be Born Again.*

Not taking anything away from the sincerity of anybody's claim to a "born-again" experience, do those two words really describe what actually happens to a person who is converted by Jesus Christ of Nazareth? According to the Bible, are you born again in an instant of time when you, in deep repentance, surrender yourself unconditionally to Jesus Christ? Strictly speaking, is the term "born again" synonymous with becoming a real Christian?

We all understand the literal meaning of the word, "born." It's the process by which we came to be on this earth—the moment of parturition from our mother's womb. Now suppose you had never previously heard the expression "born again." Just pretend you weren't familiar with the common American, evangelical, emotional, religious experience. What would your reaction be if Jesus Christ of Nazareth told you that you had to be born again or you could never enter the Kingdom of God? What would you think He meant?

Fortunately, we have a biblical case history that tells us exactly how a man named Nicodemus responded to that very declaration. Christ said to him: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Nicodemus reacted like a man who had never heard the present day, *de facto* meaning of "born again." He simply asked Jesus Christ: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" (Verse 4.)

Nicodemus was completely confused. So Christ went on to explain what He meant in a fair amount of detail. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the *flesh is flesh;* and that which is born of the *Spirit is spirit*" (verses 5-6).

You can take the old hatpin test and quickly discover you are flesh and blood and not spirit.

Jesus continued to explain to the befuddled Nicodemus: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth [wills], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*" (verses 7-8).

The meaning of these last two verses is made even plainer by another rather succinct biblical statement. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God . . ." (I Cor. 15:50). Being "born of the spirit"—being "raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44)—is something which occurs at the time of the resurrection, after an individual's death. So strictly speaking, to be literally born again does *not* mean to be converted while still in the human flesh. Remember Jesus said that *every one* that is born of the spirit has a body that can't be discerned by human sight and touch.

Flesh and blood composition simply cannot enter the spiritual realm of the family of God. But does that mean we cannot *now* be converted in the human flesh and eventually, at a specified time in the future, enter the Kingdom of God? Of course not. Paul clarified this matter to the Corinthian Church: "As we have borne the image of the earthy [human flesh], we *shall* also [at a future time] bear the image of the heavenly [a spirit-composed body]" (I Cor. 15:49). The rest of the chapter then goes on to explain exactly at what time and event this change from flesh to spirit is going to take place.

It's a vast subject and far more than can be explained in just one column. So write for our free booklet that thoroughly covers the ins and outs of this whole topic. It's entitled *Just What Do You Mean—Born Again?* And while you're at it you might write for the companion booklet, *Just What Do You Mean—The Kingdom of God?*

OLDEST THING

(Continued from page 37)

Scripture says a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. I just don't think the Bible should be used to deny what any honest person can plainly see—namely that the earth must be older than 6,000 years."

Indeed, as *The Plain Truth* has often explained, the Bible allows for a world before Adam and a universe that may be billions of years old. (Write for the free booklet *Did God Create a Devil?*)

But what of Noah's Flood, which the Bible chronology would date at between two and three thousand years B.C.? Did the bristlecones survive the Deluge?

The answer is obviously yes. The Flood described in the book of Genesis killed primarily animal life, not plant life. Because of Noah's Flood, "all *flesh* died that moved upon the earth" (Gen. 7:21). Yet plant life generally survived. For example, Noah sent out a dove which brought back an olive leaf growing on the newly emerged land (Gen. 8:11). Perhaps the bristlecones were (supernaturally?) preserved in the same fashion.

Beyond 10,000 Years?

According to Bannister, tree-ring chronologies will probably be extended even further—perhaps beyond 10,000 years. "In the next decade or two," Bannister told *The Plain Truth*," I believe the Europeans may develop a continuous tree-ring chronology even longer than what we've achieved."

But one thing is certain: If the bristlecone pine chronology is indeed accurate, then many traditional and conventional concepts in archaeology and prehistory are destined to be seriously challenged and perhaps revised.

Outliving even the giant sequoias by nearly 2,000 years, the bristlecone pine is proving to be a treasure trove of intriguing and useful information. Perhaps it is only fitting that the world's oldest living thing should also provide the key to so many fascinating riddles of the past. □

Personal from...

(Continued from page 1)

This coming utopia does not depend on the planning or doing of men. It will be produced *in spite of men.*

The greatest event of all history will be the coming of the *living* Jesus Christ again to earth. But this time, He is not coming as the gentle young man from Nazareth, bringing the announcement that led to His flogging and death at the hands of angry men. Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He went to the throne of the government of the vast universe to be GLORIFIED, and coronated as supreme RULER over the entire earth. When He returns, the world will know something of the meaning of *"the power and the glory!"*

His eyes will flash like flames of fire. His face will not be pale white. It will be like the sun shining in FULL STRENGTH. He will come with all the POWER that created the universe! He is coming to crush every government of men, as if to grind them into powder! He is coming as the King of kings, ruling over ALL NATIONS.

He is coming to *change human nature!* He is coming to enforce the way of outgoing concern, of love, of giving, serving, sharing, helping, instead of grasping, taking and self-centeredness.

Yes, I see a very bright future—just ahead! It's the only real GOOD NEWS in the world today! □

CHURCH GOERS

(Continued from page 3)

when theologians and the professional clergy "interpret" the Bible to mean the very opposite of what it plainly says, in order to pretend that it supports their pagan teachings, then you may *know* what is wrong.

If you will read Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 13 and 34, which are prophecies of conditions *now,* in our day; Christ's statement of Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24 of the false preachers that would deceive the MANY; and the many statements in the Bible that the whole world would be deceived, you will begin to understand. It is indeed hard for one born, reared, and steeped in this world's education, religion, customs and ways, to realize that this is *not* God's world, but Satan's. It comes as a jarring *shock!* I know. I've experienced it!

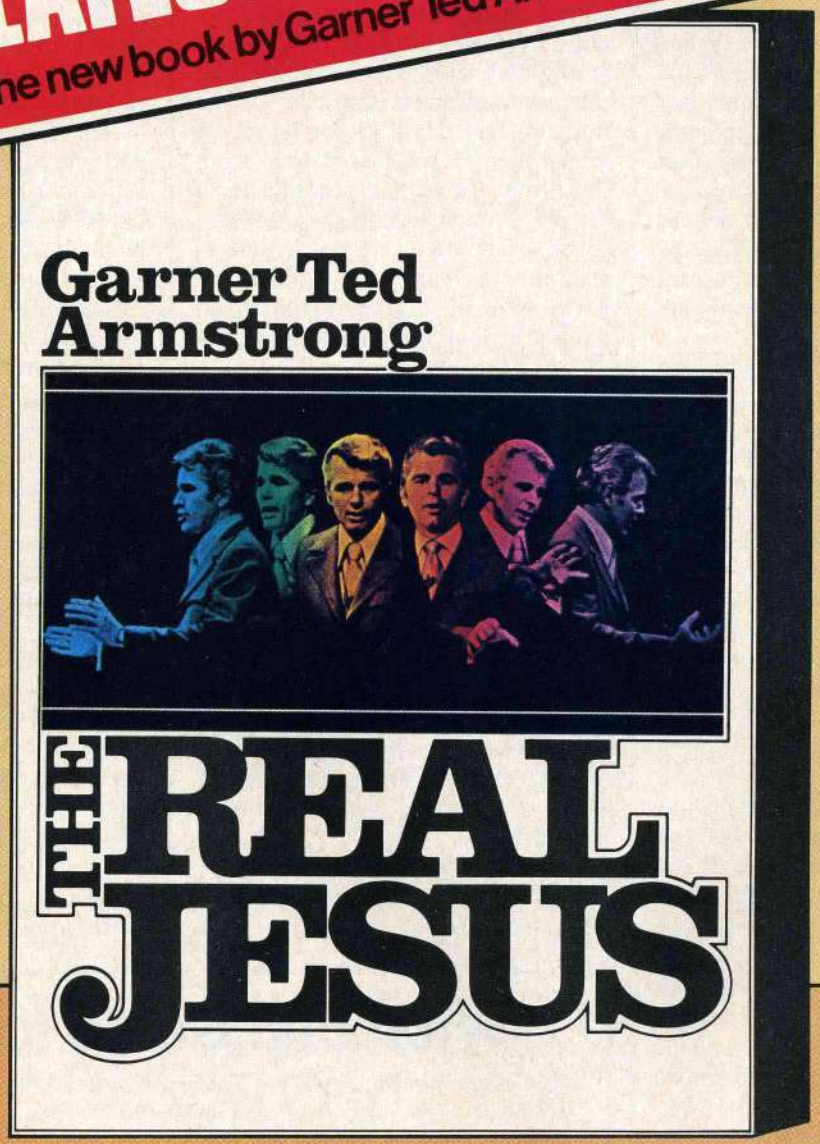
The Bible ought never to be interpreted. It means what it says, and it says what it means. Taken as it *is,* it *makes sense.* (We have two booklets to help you in your Bible study. They are titled *Read the Book* and *How to Study the Bible.* Request them by return mail.)

Don't be a spiritual coward. Look into it *for yourself.* It's full of surprises—it's full of TRUTH—it's full of the way to a positive peace of mind, to prosperity, abundant living here and now, and to salvation in joyous eternal life—FOREVER! God's world is soon coming—the peaceful, happy world tomorrow! □

IN THIS ISSUE:

"THE GREATEST STORY NEVER TOLD"

an excerpt from the new book by Garner Ted Armstrong about THE REAL JESUS



(Copies are not available through *The Plain Truth.* The book is on sale at bookstores everywhere in the U.S.A.).