

GN

The Good News



**GOD'S
WORK IN
canada**

JUNE 1974



ABOUT OUR COVER

This month marks the twelfth anniversary of the first meeting of a congregation of God's Church in Canada. This month's "Update" highlights the inspiring growth that has occurred since that time.

Don Lorton

GN

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 - *Canada*: P. O. Box 44, Station A, Vancouver 1, B.C.
 - *Mexico*: Institución Ambassador, Apartado Postal 5-595, México 5, D.F.
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Editor

Garner Ted Armstrong

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JESUS CHRIST kept the Feast of Pentecost. So did the apostles, disciples and the New Testament Church.

Why, then, do so few "Christians" keep this important feast? When and where did professing Christians stop following the footsteps of Jesus and the apostles?

Today, most professing Christians know very little about Pentecost. Yet many have heard of "Whitsunday" (or "Whitsuntide"), which is not even so much as mentioned in the Bible.

What exactly is *Whitsunday*? In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1973 edition, article "Whitsunday"), we read: "*Whitsunday (Pentecost)*, one of the three major festivals of the Christian Church, celebrated on the Sunday that marks the 50th day after Easter, to commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at the Jewish *Pentecost* following Jesus' passion, resurrection and ascension (Acts 2) . . ."

Whitsunday has usurped the place of Pentecost and obscured its true meaning. But Christ and His followers did not observe Whitsunday. This day is a mere invention of men — which, sad to say, has been instrumental in turning away the minds of believers from the all-important, God-ordained festival of Pentecost.

Notice how "Whitsunday" obscured and supplanted the original Feast of Pentecost which Christ and the New Testament Church kept: "*Whitsuntide* is the week beginning with Whitsunday or Pentecost (the seventh Sunday after Easter) . . . The name (Anglo-Saxon *hwita sunnandaeg*, white Sunday) derives from the white garments worn by those baptized on the vigil" ("*Whitsuntide*," *Collier's Encyclopedia*, 1972 edition).

But Whitsunday is not synonymous with Pentecost. Rather, Whitsunday is a *counterfeit* of the Day of Pentecost which God originally gave to His Church in the wilderness, and later to His New Testament Church (Acts 7:38).

It is certain that the early New Testament Church kept the Feast of Pentecost, for it was on that very day that God first chose to send the great outpouring of His Holy Spirit (see Acts 2). Had the disciples not been keeping Pentecost, they would not have been there to receive the "firstfruits" of the Holy Spirit which was given on that feast day.

"Peter preached his first sermon, converting and baptizing three thousand in the faith of Christ on this occasion. For this reason it [Pentecost] has been re-

what you need to know about the new testament pentecost

garded from earliest times as the birthday of the Christian church" ("Pentecost," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1973 edition).

But why has this important feast, the very "birthday" of the New Testament Church of God, been obscured? Why do many Christians not keep this feast today?

Meaning of God's Sabbaths

Isn't it time we went directly to the Word of God to see what it says about the important Feast of Pentecost? Should it be observed by Christians? What is the real *meaning* of this day? And what does it actually picture in the plan of God?

The truth is that much of the world's blindness, ignorance, superstition and misunderstanding is the direct result of its rejection of God's annual festivals and His Sabbaths — including Pentecost!

God gave His Sabbaths to be a "sign" between Him and His people: "Verily my *sabbaths* ye shall keep: for it is a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Ex. 31:13).

Most Christians utterly fail to understand that it was both the weekly and the annual Sabbaths which

God's commanded Feast of Pentecost has somehow become buried in modern Christianity. Why did Christ and the apostles observe this important feast, called the "day of firstfruits"? What does it picture in the plan of God? Should Christians observe this feast today? If so, on what day should Pentecost be observed?

by Garner Ted Armstrong
and Raymond F. McNair

were to be a "sign" between God and His people.

Remember, in Old Testament times the *Gentiles* were totally cut off from God. The Eternal had chosen *Israel* to be His people — to understand His purpose which He is working out here below on planet Earth: "Now therefore, if ye [Israel] will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests*, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6).

Had the nation of Israel obeyed God, they would have been used by Him to bring the knowledge of the true Creator to the far-flung ends of the earth (Deut. 6:6-8) — till the whole world would have been filled with the glorious understanding of the great Creator-Ruler God.

Furthermore, God gave Israel His "sabbaths" to be that identifying "sign" between Him and His people. God's Sabbaths (both *weekly* and *annual*) would have identified the true God and would have kept His people in the knowledge of God's ways.

Just as the *weekly* Sabbath was designed to keep man in remembrance of God as Creator (see Ex. 20:8, 11), so the annual Sabbaths were designed to unfold before mankind the great master plan which the Creator devised for the purpose of working out His will here on earth.

The Feast of Firstfruits

All of God's Sabbaths (weekly and annual) are given in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus. The third annual Sabbath listed is the Feast of Firstfruits (Feast of Weeks or Pentecost). It was the *first* harvest feast (see Lev. 23:9-22).

The second annual harvest feast was called the "feast of tabernacles" (Lev. 23:33-44), or the "feast of ingathering" (Ex. 23:16).

These two harvest festivals, the *Feast of Firstfruits* and the *Feast of Ingathering*, were both based on the annual harvests in Palestine.

The Feast of Firstfruits occurred at the end of a 50-day harvest period which commenced on the wave-sheaf Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

This *fiftieth day* ended the grain harvest in Palestine. It came at the close of the spring harvest of the "firstfruits." But the Feast of Ingathering occurred later — at the end of the great late summer and early *autumn harvest*.

What do these two feasts picture in the plan of God? We shall see the answer to this later, but let us first notice how we are commanded to *count* Pentecost.

The Eternal commanded Moses: "When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the *harvest* thereof, then ye shall bring a *sheaf of the firstfruits* of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath [Hebrew, *mi-mohorat ha shabbat*] the priest shall wave it" (Lev. 23:10, 11).

The high priest waved this firstfruits of grain (probably barley) on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath. This wave sheaf was always waved on what we call a *Sunday* during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Notice what happened next: "And ye shall *count* unto you from the morrow after the sabbath [*mi-mohorat ha shabbat*], from the day that ye brought the *sheaf* of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the *seventh sabbath* [*mi-mohorat ha shabbat*] shall ye number fifty days . . ." (verses 15, 16).

The New American Bible translates this more accurately: "Beginning *with* the day after the sabbath, the day *on* which you bring the wave-offering sheaf, you shall count seven full weeks, and then *on* the day after the seventh week, the *fiftieth* day, you shall present the new cereal offering to the Lord" (verses 15, 16).

Then the priest was to take "two wave loaves." "They shall be baked

with *leaven*; they are the *firstfruits* unto the Lord" (verses 17).

What did the high priest do with them? He waved the various offerings, including "the bread of the firstfruits," as a wave offering. "And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day [Pentecost], that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations" (verses 20, 21).

This commanded holy convocation was held on what in New Testament times was called the Day of Pentecost. And remember that this fifty-day harvest of firstfruits began on the day of the waving of the *wave-sheaf firstfruits* and ended with the waving of the *two* (leavened) *loaves of firstfruits*. Can you now see why Pentecost was called the "day of the firstfruits"? "Also in the day of the firstfruits . . . after your [seven] weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation . . ." (Num. 28:26).

The second annual harvest festival was called the "feast of ingathering." "And [thou shalt keep] the feast of harvest, the *firstfruits* of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the *feast of ingathering*, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field" (Ex. 23:16).

These were the two great annual harvests in Palestine. The first annual harvest began with the offering up of the wave sheaf (the first of the firstfruits) during Unleavened Bread, and ended with the offering up of the *two loaves* made from the *firstfruits* grain — on the "day of the firstfruits" (Pentecost).

The second annual harvest festival, called the "feast of ingathering," occurred in the late summer or early autumn — near the end of the harvest year — at the time of the great *gathering in* of the summer fruits.

Both of these annual harvests contain great symbolic meaning. Christ spoke of Himself as being a

“sower,” and the people who were ready to receive that word and act upon it were likened to a “harvest.” In Matthew 9:37, 38, we read: “Then saith he unto his disciples, The *harvest* truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the *Lord of the harvest*, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Who is the “Lord of the harvest”? None other than Jesus Christ.

The Master Plan of Salvation

Few realize that God has a great master plan of salvation. And still fewer realize just what that plan is.

The majority of Christians assume that God is *now* trying to save the whole world. Nothing could be further from the truth!

God is not *now* desperately trying to save all mankind. He is not engaged in a fierce contest with a sinister devil, who is constantly striving to deceive and destroy humanity.

If a great contest is on between God and Satan, then who do you think is winning that struggle?

God is now leaving man to his own devices, under the sway of the devil — so that man might learn that Satan’s way of deceit, sin and greed will only produce a bumper crop of woe, misery and death.

One reason so many think God is now trying to save the world is that they have lost sight of God’s annual feasts; they don’t *understand* what these festivals picture in God’s master plan of salvation. It is only by keeping God’s commanded festivals, which were intimately connected with the two annual harvests in Palestine, that we can understand this plan of God.

Also, before we can understand that plan we need to get a few facts straight.

Salvation Not Offered to All in Old Testament

First, God did *not* offer salvation either to *Israel* or to the *Gentiles* during the Old Testament period. True, God prophesied that the time would come when salvation would

did Christ and the Apostles keep pentecost?

IT MAY come as a surprise to many to learn that it was Jesus Christ’s “custom” to observe the Day of Pentecost.

Notice this surprising truth in Luke 4:16: Jesus “came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, *as his custom was*, he went into the synagogue *on the sabbath day*, and stood up for to read.” The Greek words translated “sabbath day” read literally “day of weeks.” This is a different expression than is used when an ordinary Sabbath is meant.

What is the “day of weeks”? Deuteronomy 16:9 and 10 gives us the answer. It is the “feast of weeks,” otherwise known as the “day of firstfruits” (Num. 28:26) and Pentecost day (the *fiftieth* day — see Lev. 23:16).

After everything that was abolished on the cross had been done away, the true New Testament Church of God was assembled in a holy convocation on the first Pentecost after Christ’s death and resurrection. We read in Acts 2: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (verse 1).

Pentecost pictures the first part of God’s spiritual harvest — the calling out of the Church — the called-out ones — which for the New Testament dispensation began on this Pentecost in A.D. 31. On that day the Holy Spirit came to dwell within flesh, as prophesied

earlier by Joel (Joel 2:28, 29).

Years later we find the New Testament Church continuing to observe this day. In Acts 20:16 we read: “For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.”

And in I Corinthians 16:8: “But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.” Paul was following the example of Jesus Christ Himself.

But this is not all. Two more Bible references show that Christ’s *custom* was also Paul’s custom. We read in Acts 13:14 that Paul and his companions “went into the synagogue *on the sabbath day*, and sat down.” And in Acts 16:13, “And *on the sabbath* we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made: and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.” In both these cases the original Greek expression is the same as in Luke 4:16, which is discussed above. Both refer to the Day of Pentecost, an *annual* Sabbath.

It was the unvarying practice of the New Testament Church to keep the Day of Pentecost.

For proof that the New Testament Church kept the other holy days of God, write for our free booklet *Pagan Holidays — or God’s Holy Days — Which?* □

the true pentecost day

WHAT is the true day for Pentecost? Even in the days of Christ and the apostles there was disagreement among the Jews as to which was the correct day. The *Pharisees* believed Pentecost should be reckoned from the first annual Sabbath, to the 6th of Sivan. The *Essenes* believed Pentecost should be kept on the 15th of Sivan. But both of these dates were incorrect.

The *Sadducees* "counted" Pentecost correctly — counting *inclusively* from the wave-sheaf Sunday during the Passover season.

The Bible reveals that all of God's

commanded annual holy days, with the exception of Pentecost, are on fixed days of the sacred calendar.* These annual holy days (except Pentecost) were divinely set to fall on *fixed days of the month*. And just as God has preserved the "oracles of God" (Word of God) through the Jews (Rom. 3:2), He has also preserved the sacred or Hebrew calendar through them.

Pentecost (also called the "feast of firstfruits") is the only holy day which has to be counted, figured or calculated each year.

But how was it to be counted?

Notice God's instructions in Leviticus 23:15, 16: "And ye shall count unto you *from the morrow* [Hebrew, *mi-mohorat*] after the sabbath [Hebrew, *ha-shabbat*], from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even *unto the morrow* [Hebrew, *mi-mohorat*] after the seventh sabbath shall ye number *fifty days . . .*" (Lev. 23:15, 16).

This Hebrew prepositional phrase *mi-mohorat* is used only twenty-eight times in the Old Testament. In the eleventh verse of this twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, it is translated as "on the morrow." And it is rendered "on the morrow" in twenty-five other places. Only in verse 15 is it rendered "from the morrow" and in verse 16 "unto the morrow."

We are plainly commanded to

"count" the fifty days to Pentecost "from the morrow after the sabbath." But which "sabbath" is meant?

All agree that it is a "sabbath" during the Passover season. But there are usually *three Sabbaths* during this period. Example: when the *first* day of Unleavened Bread (an annual Sabbath) falls on a Thursday (as in A.D. 31, see calendar below), the *last* day (also an annual Sabbath) is Wednesday. But the weekly Sabbath comes between these two annual Sabbaths. Thus, there are normally three Sabbaths during the seven-day period of Unleavened Bread.

God commanded that Pentecost be counted from the day following a particular "sabbath" — but *which Sabbath?*

It is clear that God meant for us to count Pentecost beginning with the wave-sheaf Sunday during Unleavened Bread. This wave-sheaf Sunday must always follow the *weekly Sabbath*.

But how can we know that a weekly Sabbath is meant rather than one of the *annual Sabbaths*? If God had intended us to count the fifty days to Pentecost beginning with one of the *annual Sabbaths* — then there is really no way to know (from the Bible) which of the annual Sabbaths was intended.

Both biblical and secular history show that during the days of Christ and the apostles Pentecost was offi-

*1) *Passover* — 14th of Nisan or Abib (1st month). 2) *Unleavened Bread* (seven days) — 15 Nisan through 21st. 3) *Pentecost* — Always occurs in the 3rd month (Sivan), but on different days of the month. It is the only annual holy day that is not set on a fixed day of a particular month in the sacred calendar. 4) *Feast of Trumpets* — 1st of Tishri (7th month). 5) *Day of Atonement* — (Fast Day) — 10th day of Tishri. 6) *Feast of Tabernacles* (seven days) — 15th through 21st of Tishri. 7) *Eighth Day* (Last Great Day) — 22nd Tishri.

Sacred Calendar of A.D. 31

Historically, different Jewish sects have begun their count to Pentecost on different days. All, however, counted from the morrow after a Sabbath, and all counted inclusively. The *Sadducees* counted from the morrow after the weekly Sabbath (Nisan 17) during the days of Unleavened Bread (15th-21st) as does the Worldwide Church of God. The *Pharisees*, in contrast, would have counted from the morrow after an annual Sabbath (Nisan 15), the first of the days of Unleavened Bread. The last day of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 21) was also an annual Sabbath.

NISAN						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

cially observed (up until about A.D. 65) according to the Sadducees' way of reckoning this day. During that time of the early New Testament Church, the Sadducees and the priests took the *weekly Sabbath* of the Passover season as the bench mark from which to reckon the fifty days to Pentecost. It was not until a very few years before the fall of Jerusalem that the *Pharisees* finally got control of the Temple and changed over to reckoning Pentecost from the morrow after the first *annual Sabbath* during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

It is clear that Christ and His apostles did *not* observe Pentecost annually on a set or *fixed* day of the third month, the 6th of Sivan. But following the priestly way of reckoning, they kept Pentecost the *fiftieth* day of the spring harvest, reckoning the first day as the day on which the wave sheaf was offered.

How, then, are we to count Pentecost?

We are commanded to begin counting the "seven weeks" or "seven sabbaths" *from* (figuring inclusively), or beginning with, the wave-sheaf Sunday which must always fall during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The wave-sheaf Sunday was the first day of the fifty-day count. Counting forty-nine days (seven full weeks) will bring you through seven Sabbaths. The very next Sunday is therefore the fiftieth day. This fiftieth day is to be observed as the Feast of Firstfruits (or Pentecost).

The Sadducees and most Christian scholars throughout history have concluded, erroneously, that the wave-sheaf Sunday could sometimes fall *outside* the Days of Unleavened Bread. But this is incorrect. This year, the wave-sheaf Sunday fell on the first day of Unleavened Bread — just as it did in the year of Israel's entry into the Prom-

ised Land (see Joshua 5:10, 11).

We are told in the King James Version that the Israelites ate the "old corn" (the Hebrew is, more correctly, "produce") of the land of Canaan on the 15th of Nisan. This was expressly forbidden unless and until they had offered to God the wave sheaf of their firstfruits (see Lev. 23:10-14). Since the wave sheaf was always offered on a Sunday during Unleavened Bread, the Passover during that year had to have fallen on the weekly Sabbath. The fifty days to Pentecost were reckoned beginning with the Sunday after Passover day, the 14th of Nisan.

In the twentieth century there are only *eleven* instances in which the last day of Unleavened Bread coincides with the weekly Sabbath — thereby producing a double Sabbath.

Many English translations of the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus (for counting Pentecost) are ambiguous or misleading. By using "from," which in English can be used either inclusively or exclusively, some confusion has resulted.

There is, however, one modern English translation which renders Leviticus 23:15, 16 in plain, understandable English: "BEGINNING WITH the day after the sabbath, the day *on* which you bring the wave-offering sheaf, you shall count seven full weeks, and then *on* the day after the seventh week, the *fiftieth* day, you shall present the new cereal offering to the Lord" (*The New American Bible*, 1970 edition).

If we begin counting the fifty days to Pentecost, "beginning *with* the day after the sabbath" (Sunday), then we will always wind up keeping Pentecost on the right day — on a Sunday — just as did Christ, His disciples and the Sadducean priests.

This year Pentecost will be on Sunday, May 26th. □

be offered. But you will search the entire Old Testament in vain to find one promise of eternal life given either to Israel or to the Gentiles. God's promises to Israel were primarily material, physical — rain in due season, plenty of corn and wine, physical health, material wealth — and, in addition, peace and happiness.

It is true, however, that God did grant salvation to a very few during the Old Testament dispensation — to such men as Abel, Enoch, Noah, the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. But salvation was not offered to the masses. It was, however, prophesied to come later.

Who first brought immortality to light? "... Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought *life* and *immortality* to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10).

Second, Jesus Christ did not try to save the vast multitudes while upon this earth — shocking as that may sound. He cast out demons, healed the sick, preached the gospel and went about "doing good." Christ plainly said that He spoke many of the parables in order to *hide* the true meaning from the multitudes — whom He was *not* calling at that time (Matt. 13:10-15).

Furthermore, Christ showed that He did not come to send "peace" on the earth at His first coming (Matt. 10:34). The Prince of Peace *will* bring peace to all mankind at His second coming in the not-too-distant future.

The eleventh chapter of Romans clearly shows that God is not now trying to save "all Israel." "God hath given them [Israel] the spirit of slumber... unto this day" (Rom. 11:8).

The Apostle Paul said "that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel *shall be* [future] saved..." (verses 25, 26).

During Jesus Christ's three-and-one-half-year ministry on this earth countless thousands heard Him speak, but very few really believed His message.

At the time of Christ's ascension

into heaven, there were only "about one hundred and twenty" disciples (Acts 1:15).

Why were there so few faithful believers at that time — after Christ's entire ministry of three-and-a-half years?

The answer is revealed only in the annual feasts — and in the Feast of Pentecost in particular.

God had ordained that the very first real "harvest of human souls" would occur *after* He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within the believers. And remember that while Jesus walked on this earth as a mortal human being "the Holy Ghost [Spirit] was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).

God had decreed, according to His great master plan of salvation, that the first real harvest of humans would begin on the Day of Pentecost, exactly fifty days after Jesus' ascension to heaven after His resurrection.

In ancient Israel, the Israelites could not "touch" or use any grain until the wave-sheaf firstfruits were offered up to God (Lev. 23:9-14). In fulfillment of this Old Testament type, no human could "touch" Christ until after His ascension and acceptance by the Father as the "firstfruits" of all humanity.

Christ told Mary: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (John 20:17). This important event occurred on the wave-sheaf Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Before a single human could be saved (or reaped), Christ, as the first human wave sheaf, had to ascend to heaven in order to be accepted as the "firstfruits" of humanity by the Father.

Notice that Christ's disciples kept the Feast of Pentecost: "And when the day of Pentecost [the Feast of Firstfruits] was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues [languages], as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1, 4).

Christ had previously commanded the disciples: "... But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). They were to "wait for the promise of the Father," which was that Jesus would send the Spirit of God ("the Comforter") to guide them into all truth (John 16:7, 13).

We Are the Firstfruits

What does the Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost) picture in the plan of God? It portrays this present New Testament Church age in which God is only calling out the "firstfruits" — a comparatively few in number. The vast majority of humans are still "blinded" — still deceived by Satan into following his way of deceit, hypocrisy, sin and death.

And so it was that on the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 31) the "firstfruits of the Spirit" came to dwell within the believers, transforming their lives from within so they could become the divinely begotten sons of God.

The period of time from Pentecost in A.D. 31 until the second coming of Jesus will constitute the "harvest of the firstfruits" unto God.

This is clearly taught throughout the entire New Testament. The Apostle Paul revealed that Christians have received "the *firstfruits* of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23).

When Christ returns to this earth, the living and revived dead are to be caught up to meet Jesus in the air (I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-54). When will this occur? At the *seventh* or "last trump" (I Cor. 15:52).

This same momentous event is described in Revelation 11:15-18. When the "seventh angel" sounds, God will give "reward [eternal life] unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great . . ." (verse 18).

These saints, given immortality at the second coming of Jesus Christ, are the very first to receive glorification as sons of God. They will com-

prise the "firstfruits" — the very first to be glorified with eternal life in God's everlasting Kingdom.

Among those who will comprise the firstfruits are the 144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation: "These were redeemed from among men, being the *firstfruits* unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4).

But who was to be the "first" of the "firstfruits" of all humans — the first to be raised from the dead to receive immortality?

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the *firstfruits*; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (I Cor. 15:22, 23).

Christ is called the "firstfruits" because He was the very first human to be "reaped" — to be changed from mortal to immortal, from human to divine.

We have seen that the 144,000 are also referred to as "the firstfruits unto God." During this Church age Christians receive freely of the "firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23).

Notice James' confirmation of this important truth: "Of his [the Father's] own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of *firstfruits* of his creatures" (James 1:18).

All converted believers during this New Testament Church age comprise the "firstfruits unto God."

Jesus Christ is called "the *firstfruits* of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20). He is also called "the *firstborn* from the dead" (Col. 1:18), "the *firstborn* of every creature" (verse 15), and "the *firstborn among MANY BRETHREN*" (Rom. 8:29). This shows that others are to be born later. God's Church is called the "church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:23).

If today's churches observed Pentecost (just as did Christ and the apostles), they would understand God's plan of salvation. They would realize that God is not *now* trying to save the world. He is merely calling out the "firstfruits" so they can be

used by Him to rule this earth during the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ.

The Only Day of Salvation

Some believe, erroneously, that this is the only day when salvation will be offered. "Probation" will soon be over, and all who have not accepted Christ, according to this teaching, will be forever lost. What colossal error!

"Behold, now is *the* day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). This verse is quoted from Isaiah 49:8, where it is rendered as "*a* day of salvation."

Now is certainly not *the only* day of salvation! Now is *a* day of salvation for the "firstfruits" — those who are called now to be the very first to receive salvation and to be changed from mortal to immortal at the second coming of Jesus.

If those who profess to follow Christ really followed His example — if they kept the Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost) — they would realize that now is the time when only the "firstfruits" are being called out of the world. God now gives the "firstfruits" of His Holy Spirit only to those who are to be the *first* actually to be born into His family — born of the Spirit, with Godlike powers and prerogatives.

The second great harvest feast, the Feast of Ingathering (or Feast of Tabernacles), which occurs in the late summer and early autumn, pictures the time *during the millennium* (1000-year reign of Christ on earth) and a short period afterward. It is *then* that the whole world will receive their opportunity to learn of God — to repent of their sins and grow in grace and knowledge. And after a sufficient period of time, they, like the "firstfruits" of this New Testament Church age, will finally be clothed with immortality and eternal glory.

That is God's true plan of redemption, as taught from Genesis to Revelation! And how contrary to the popular teaching! But it is the plan, nevertheless, pictured in God's annual holy days. And had the

churches continued to keep these holy days, they would never have lost sight of this plan, and come under the deception of false religionists!

Follow Christ's Example

Unfortunately, many have looked on the Feast of Pentecost as "Jewish," and have therefore assumed they should not observe this important festival.

But Pentecost is not "Jewish." It is *God's* festival. God calls these commanded festivals "*feasts of the Lord*"; and He also says, "even these are *my feasts*" (Lev. 23:2).

Christ and the New Testament disciples and apostles understood that Pentecost was one of God's commanded feasts; and they kept it. Had they not kept it, they would have missed out — would not have received the "firstfruits" of the Holy Spirit on the "day of the firstfruits" — just fifty days after Christ's ascension to His Father after His resurrection.

Think about that for a moment. We are commanded to follow Christ's "example" (John 13:15) — to "follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21).

Is it not time for all true Christians to get back to "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"? (Jude 3.)

It is high time that Christians really began *following Christ*. He and His disciples kept *Pentecost* — and so should we.

Those who keep *Pentecost* understand that God is not *now* trying to save the world. The Feast of Firstfruits reveals that God is now calling out only a few (the "firstfruits") in order that they can partake of the "*better resurrection*" (Heb. 11:35) and live and reign with Christ during the soon-coming millennium.

For a complete exposition of the other holy days of God, be sure to request our free booklet *Pagan Holidays — or God's Holy Days — Which?* It explains in detail the meaning and importance of God's holy days in His master plan of salvation. □

How your Good News subscription has been paid

Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached [and published — Mark 13:10] in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. 24:14) at this time, just before the end of this age. A price must be paid for this magazine, the Correspondence Course, booklets and other literature.

But how? Christ forbids us to sell it to those who receive it: "Freely ye have received, freely give," said Jesus to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim His gospel. "It is more blessed to give," He said, "than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

God's way is the way of love — and that is the way of giving. God expects every child of His to give freewill offerings and to tithe, as His means of paying the costs of carrying the gospel to others.

We, therefore, simply trust the Living Christ to stir the minds and hearts of His followers to give generously, thus paying the cost of putting this precious gospel truth in the hands of others.

The faithful, tithe-paying members of the Worldwide Church of God and our ever-growing family of co-workers gladly give of their incomes that we may give this precious gospel to an ever-widening number of readers.

The living, dynamic Christ Himself enables us to send you this *Good News* magazine without charging a price. God's way is right — the way of giving to others.

Part Two

THE GOD FAMILY

THROUGHOUT
SPACE AND TIME



PRESENT estimates — no doubt *underestimates* — put the size of the universe at over 20 thousand million light years in diameter. That's about 120,000 million million miles.

Present estimates — also no doubt *underestimates* — put the number of galaxies in the known universe at over 100,000,000,000. Since each galaxy has roughly 100,000,000,000 stars, that means the universe has over 10,000,000,000,000,000,000 (ten thousand million million million) individual stars or "suns."

Why did God design such an immense universe? And why did God create such an innumerable number of stars?

For *no* reason? For *some* reason?
For an *incredible* reason!

The Purpose for Human Life

God the Father and Jesus Christ are reproducing themselves. They are enlarging their God family. They are begetting sons. *Real* sons. Literal members of the God family.

That's the purpose for human life. That's the purpose for this earth. And that very well could be the purpose for the *entire universe*. But where in the Bible does it say that?

Now we recognize that there is no single, specific place in the Bible which explicitly states that God created the entire universe for the purpose of populating it with His growing family.

So we *cannot* be dogmatic. We are journeying, at least in part, into the realm of possibility. But not the idle, fanciful and foolish "possibilities" — which are, in fact, *speculations* — that have from time immemorial gushed forth from the minds of men. Rather we are dealing with possibilities founded on *solid* biblical principles — indeed on specific biblical verses.

But even this foundation does not give us license to run amuck into mythology and mysticism. We must meticulously restrict ourselves to the rigorous rules of sound *logic*. And, perhaps even more important, we must cautiously restrain ourselves

by the sound guidance of *common sense*.

But how could we possibly postulate that God could well have created the universe for the purpose of its eventually being used in God's overall plan to create new members of the God family? And how could we possibly base this postulation on the Bible, logic and common sense?

The Entire Universe

First of all, God is not the author of confusion, but of *order* (I Cor. 14:33, 40). Everything that He does is for a purpose. He created the universe (Gen. 1:1) — and He undoubtedly will use it. God our Father knows *every* star by its own individual name. "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them *all* by their names" (Ps. 147:4). Think what that means! Remember how many stars there are.

At the end of the book of Revelation, we read about the much-discussed, but little-understood "new heavens" and "new earth" (Rev. 21-22). There is just the briefest amount of information. (God whets our appetites. He piques our curiosities — but there is little indication that He gives us more information than we need.) Nonetheless, we can learn quite a little about God's overall plan by carefully examining certain scriptures.

In the "new heaven" and "new earth," those who have qualified — and who will by then have been changed into the God kind — will still be living on *this* earth (Rev. 21:1-2, 24).

But man will NOT be forever *limited* to the earth.

"Thou [God] hast put all things [and "all things" means *all things!*] in subjection under his [man's] feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But *now* we see *not yet* all things put under him" (Heb. 2:8).

What are "all things"? God tells us in Hebrews 1:10 (quoting Psalm 102:25): "... The *heavens* are the works of thine hands."

by Robert L. Kuhn

What will it be like once we are born into the family of God? What will we be doing? How long will it last? What is the purpose of it all? In this article we will explore some of the most awesome questions that the human mind can pose.

Psalms 82:6 and John 10:34

"I have said, *You are gods* [*Elohim*]; and all of you are children of the most High." Can anything be clearer? *You are gods!* Plain and simple.

Of course, people have interpreted this basic three-word statement (just *two* words in the Hebrew) as they have wished, transforming the meaning of "You are gods" into *everything but* what it really says.

Here are a few choice examples: "You are righteous judges," "holy people," "godlike beings," "angels," "men invested with a Divine prerogative," "representatives of God," "Heavenly appointed princes," "sons of the Covenant," etc. *Anything but* what the text actually says! It says, "*You are gods.*"

The highly reputable *Soncino Books of the Bible* commentary introduces Psalm 82 with this circumspect appraisal: "The interpretation of the Psalm depends upon the meaning attached to the word *Elohim* . . ." (A. Cohen, ed., [London: The Soncino Press, 1960], p. 270).

We heartily concur. Simply consider this same word in the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God [*Elohim*] created the heaven and the earth." What is the "interpretation" of *Elohim* here? Why should it be any different in Psalm 82?

Certainly it ought to be clear when *Elohim* creates mankind in *Elohim's* "likeness" (Gen. 1:26) and then says to His creation, "You are *Elohim*."

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ quotes Psalm 82:6 and corroborates its obvious meaning. Read John 10:34, "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, *You are gods?*" Now notice the declaration which immediately follows in verse 35: ". . . the scripture cannot be broken."

In other words, Jesus states that the purpose of human life is to become God. He then quickly establishes this fundamental point — for those who thought that perhaps they didn't hear quite right — that the scripture cannot be broken!

The heavens — the entire universe — is "all things." And "all things" will eventually be put under man's subjection and control. Man is destined to assist God in administering the whole universe!

What will we ("the saints" in biblical language) do with the universe? As an initial project, we — under the Father's and Christ's direct and personal authority, of course — will restore all things (Acts 3:21), the whole universe to its originally created orderly arrangement.

Once the universe is put back into physical shape, the God family will begin implementing the next stage in the Father's overall plan. What it will be, we can only suggest. God does not reveal what we do not yet need to know. However, we can point to certain concepts which set the predominant purpose and fundamental character of the Kingdom of God.

"The Increase of His Government"

The greatest goal that God can set His will to accomplish is the reproduction of Himself — the creation of new sons in His God family. That's what God is doing here on earth — *that is* the great purpose being worked out here below. No work could be greater.

The generation of even *one* new member of the God family infinitely surpasses everything else in this whole physical universe all multiplied together and squared. And, possibly, the Father will beget *billions* of new members here on this earth.

And it is entirely possible that the Father will continue to beget new sons even after His 7,000-year plan for earth has been completed.

Why do we say this? Because by reproducing themselves, God the Father and Jesus Christ manifest the very highest form of spiritual love — giving, sharing, selflessness, outgoing concern. Creating new God-plane Beings is the supreme act of selfless, outgoing love. It pales everything else into insignificance by comparison.

God will never become "Creator Emeritus."

Even though an eternally increasing number of new sons in the God family is impossible for the limited human mind to comprehend, it makes *more* sense than permanently closing the God family to new members at the end of the 7,000-year plan. An eternally increasing God family makes more sense no matter how large that family will have become.

Because once God's family stopped growing — no matter how many trillions of eons and septillions of sons into the future — there would still remain an eternity of time for only *second-rate* activities.

It would make no difference if there were a googolplex (the largest number that has a name) of universes ($10^{10^{100}}$) and a googolplex to the googolplex power of sons. "Eventually" it would be finished, and then comes eternity — what would seem to be an eternity of stagnation — *forever after*. Consequently, we may suggest that the family of God will *increase* forever.

And that is what Isaiah 9:7 seems to indicate: "Of the *increase* of his government and peace there shall be *no end* . . ." Notice that this verse does *not* emphasize that God's *government* shall have no end — as do other scriptures (e.g., Dan. 2:44; Rev. 11:15).

What it does emphasize is that the *increase* of God's government shall have no end. The key word is *increase* — the family of God forever increasing in number, area, power, responsibility, creativity, happiness, excitement, fullness of life, etc.

Is it possible, then, that this is what the enormity of this universe is for: territory — or growing room — for the continuous expansion of the family of God?

A Fully Occupied Universe

What happens when the *universe is fully occupied*? This question goes far beyond our present meager understanding because we are as yet unable to comprehend it. Suffice it to say that the known universe can

be *infinite* in size. Some astronomers postulate that the physical universe is infinite with space expanding and matter continually coming into existence. If not, it can be made so. Or "other universes" — whatever that may mean — may exist. Or can be created. Or other "dimensions." Or anything! There is nothing impossible for God (Matt. 17:20; 19:26).

But here's the point: The question is myopic — nearsighted — it is only looking at *physical* reality. God and His family are *spiritual*! Therefore all physical reality becomes inconsequential. (Remember, all physical reality is *temporary* — II Cor. 4:18.)

Physical reality is merely patterned after — and perhaps even formed from — the much more real *spiritual* reality. Consequently, it is absurd to straitjacket God's overall spiritual plan by the confines and limitations of His own physical creation as comprehended by our finite human minds. "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (I Cor. 13:12).

Psalms 89:1-5 alludes to the unending plan of God to increase His family throughout the universe: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, *Mercy shall be built up for ever*: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints."

Take special note of the following words and phrases: "for ever" and "to all generations" in verse 1; "built up forever" and "in the very heavens" in verse 2; "for ever," "build up" and "to all generations" in verse 4; and "the heavens" and "the congregation of the saints" in verse 5.

"The congregation of the saints" are those converted human beings who will have been born into God's family. Observe the context in which the congregation of the saints (God's family) is mentioned: the heavens (the universe), building up (continuously increasing) and forever (eternity).

Especially note the concept "built up forever" in verse 2. The Hebrew word translated "built up" is in the *imperfect* tense — meaning *incomplete* action or, in other words, a continuous, unending process of *forever* building up. This could well be the magnificent future of God's family.

Now once again read Isaiah 9:7. What is the key word used to characterize the never-ending *increase* of God's government? *Peace!*

Family Organization and Structure

If the increase in God's family were to continue indefinitely, wouldn't organizational structure become unwieldy and cumbersome after "a while"?

If it would, we're all going to be in for a pile of trouble. But this can *never* happen. First of all, every son will have been proven absolutely loyal and obedient. Secondly, and directly interrelated, God has designed a clear-cut, orderly, governmental organization for His family.

The basic concept is a pyramid. *Authority will always be from the top down — not from the bottom up* (as in many human governments).

God the Father will *always* be at the very top, with Jesus Christ directly under Him. Then will probably come Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as an overall executive team — followed by other "holy men of old" in specific administrative positions.

There are some biblical indications that Moses could be involved in governmental matters, Joseph in economics, Elijah perhaps in education. David *will* be over Israel (Ezek. 37:24), and the twelve apostles will each be over one of the tribes (Matt. 19:28). Perhaps Daniel will rule over the Gentiles, with

Was Christ Always the Son of God?

There was a time when Jesus Christ was not the Son.

He existed. He was God (John 1:1; I John 1:1-2).

But He had not yet been begotten as a Son.

"And the [preexisting spirit being called the] Word was *made* flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Nowhere in all the Bible is the second member of the God family shown as having been "the Son" before His physical conception in the womb of Mary (see Matthew 1:18-25). But He was God. Verse 23: ". . . They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us.*"

Does the Bible tell us plainly that God's Son was begotten at a certain specific moment? It does. And this is quoted in Hebrews 1:5: ". . . Thou art my Son, *this day* have I begotten thee. . . ."

The fuller account is found in Psalms 2:7-9: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; *this day* have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The above-mentioned verse in Hebrews continues: "And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

This part of Hebrews 1:5 was cited from Psalms 89:26-27: "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him *my firstborn*, higher than the kings of the earth."

— Lawson C. Briggs

Paul under him. (Request our free booklet *The Wonderful World Tomorrow — What It Will Be Like* for a more complete discussion of this fascinating subject.)

As each new generation of physical beings is changed into God-Beings and comes into God's family, they will be added to the base of the pyramid. As a result, the base of the pyramid continues to grow progressively wider as God's family grows progressively larger. In this manner everyone has a specifically assigned position, and the government of God can expand in an orderly, well-structured manner — no matter how large it becomes.

Please do not misunderstand. God's systematic form of government is not like some super-strict military academy where irrational discipline is a fetish, or some hierarchy-obsessed mega-corporation where people are not individuals. God will not beget a son to make him into a spiritual cog in a monstrous spiritual machine.

God's family is a *family*. Everyone in it — and that means *everyone*, no matter how large the family grows — will have an intimate, personal relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ, Abraham, Moses, David, etc.

As a matter of fact, *everyone* in God's family will enjoy a *much closer* rapport with God the Father than any human son today enjoys with his human father. All the innumerable members of God's constantly growing family will always remain a more tightly knit group than even the smallest, most tightly knit human family. That sounds impossible, but with God, *all things* are possible (Matt. 19:26) — and God's personal relationship with all of His children is perhaps *the* most fundamental building block of His eternal Kingdom.

One very basic point: We should recognize that even if the family of God were to continue expanding throughout an infinity of space and an eternity of time, the earth — *this earth* — will always remain the

headquarters of the universe. We can hypothesize that there will be many "regional headquarters" strung out throughout the universe. But *this earth* will always remain God's overall master headquarters — from which all governmental decisions and organization will emanate. Because this earth — *our earth* — is where God the Father ("God himself") and Jesus Christ will permanently reside (Rev. 21:3, 23).

At the Top of the Pyramid

One final question: How do we know that God's plan for this earth is the very *first* time that He has set His hand to reproduce Himself? As a matter of fact, can we even be sure that our God is indeed the *top* God — with no other personalities in the God family over Him? How do we know that we are, in fact, literally in "on the ground floor of eternity" — or, more accurately, in "at the very top of the pyramid of infinity"?

It is surprisingly easy to deduce from the Bible that *we* humans on *this* earth will be the *first* new members of God's family and, consequently, its top executives forever:

1) Colossians 1:15; Romans 8:29 — Jesus Christ is the *firstborn* among every creature and among many brethren.

2) John 3:13 — *no man* has ascended into heaven except Christ.

3) Revelation 4 — no other member of the God family except Jesus Christ is around God the Father's throne.

4) Genesis 1:1 — our God created *the heavens* — the entire universe — as well as the earth.

5) Revelation 21 and 22 — in the "new heavens" and "new earth," *only* the Lord God Almighty (that's God the Father) and the Lamb (that's Jesus Christ) are mentioned.

Together, all five points — and there are others — biblically prove that there are only two members of God's family at the present time, and that we humans on this earth have the incomprehensible privilege of qualifying for the very top executive positions in God's family, under the Father and Christ, for eternity.

There are many other scriptures which confirm the fact that human beings on this earth have been given what amounts to an immensely spectacular, imagination-staggering opportunity: *we are slated to be the top executives of the universe for all eternity.*

To begin to understand what this means, we describe the following very rough analogy: All the people who have *ever* lived on the earth are represented as one small pebble on top of a very large pyramid. The pyramid represents the future members of God's family. *Incredibly*, this one pebble will eventually (we make the basic assumption that God will utilize *at least* the entire visible universe as presently known) be sitting on top of, and governing, a colossal pyramid at least the size of the earth — and possibly the size of our solar system — reaching to the orbit of Pluto!

Remember, as time goes on, the family (from the biblical indications) must grow larger and larger — so that the small pebble, representing *all* the original physical inhabitants of earth, will be ruling over an increasing pyramid of incredible, unbelievable, unimaginable size. (Remember, the "pyramid" is the analogy; the reality is the *family*, the *God* family where each and every member knows the Father and elder brother Jesus Christ far better than any human children know their father and elder brother.)

The human mind cannot even conceive of, much less verbalize, what our future responsibilities will be. (And to think how we quibble over nothing.)

How many galaxies and how many sons will be involved?

The largest number imaginable (a googolplex to the googolplex power to the googolplex power — a googolplex number of times!) is still essentially zero when compared with infinity.

And infinity is *exactly* what God is offering us.

Infinity for eternity! □

A LEADING Jewish rabbi recently stated on a Los Angeles radio station: "I have always been very much interested in the whereabouts of the lost tribes."

Why? Because the rabbi, like other leaders of Judaism, is very much aware that the Jewish people are not the whole of Israel.

The Jews know they are basically descended from just two main tribes, Judah and Benjamin, with perhaps lesser increments of Simeon and the priestly tribe of Levi.

But when it comes to the question "Where, then, *are* the rest of the twelve tribes today?" — they are as much in the dark as anyone.

The ancient united nation of Israel was divided into two nations — called Israel and Judah — almost immediately after the death of Solomon. This division came about as a God-ordained punishment for Solomon's disobedience. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, triggered the actual split by refusing to lighten the Israelites' heavy tax load. Indeed, he threatened to make it much heavier. As a result most of the tribes revolted (I Kings 12).

From that time on, four whole books of the Bible detail the separate national histories of the House of Israel (the so-called ten tribes) and the House of Judah. But the House of Israel ceased as a nation when it was completely overrun by Assyria in 721-718 B.C.

What Happened to the People?

The Bible records: "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria [Israel's capital city], and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes" (II Kings 17:6; 18:11).

But were all the people really removed? A contrary view is expressed by the late archaeologist William F. Albright: "We now know that the Israelites continued to occupy most of [the allotment of] Ephraim and parts of Galilee and Gilead, and that there were Israelite minorities in Ammon, Syria and Phoenicia" (*The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra*, p. 74).

But how do "we know"

WAS ALL OF ANCIENT ISRAEL REALLY CARRIED CAPTIVE?

Most Christians assume that all the ancient Israelites became Jews. Others suppose the "House of Israel" — the so-called "lost ten tribes" — simply lost their identity and ceased to exist as a people by becoming merged in the mass of Middle Eastern humanity. Clouding the issue in both suppositions is a widespread assumption that those tribes (except a few) were never really removed from the Holy Land.

by Lawson C. Briggs

this? And *how long after* the Assyrian conquest may some of Israel have remained in the Promised Land?

While we may grant the possibility of *individuals* having found asylum in Ammon, Syria, Tyre, etc., the evidence is that no significant number of Israelites in Israel ultimately escaped the Assyrian drag-net.

Probably the best-known extra-biblical account of deportation from Israel is found in the annals of the Assyrian king Sargon: "At the beginning of my royal rule, I... [conquered] the town of the Samaritans... I besieged and conquered Samaria (Sa-me-re-na), led away as booty 27,290 inhabitants of it. I formed from among them a contingent of 50 chariots and made remaining inhabitants assume their social positions" (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, third edition, edited by James B. Pritchard, p. 284). Here only 27,290 people were taken, all specifically said to be from the capital city. Evidently others in the city at that time were left behind. But this is only what Sargon did in his first year.

Did Israelite deportation end there? Assuredly not! Nor in fact had it begun there. Leaving aside the question of how many Israelite slaves the Assyrians may have taken from other localities during the long three-year siege of Samaria, notice that a great portion of Israel had already been completely removed by a previous invasion. The fragmentary annals of King Tiglath-pileser III tell us: "... -nite, Gal'za [Gilead?], Abilakka [the plain of the upper Jordan River] which are adjacent to Israel (*Bit Hu-um-ri-a* [the House of Omri, Assyrian name for the House of Israel since the days of powerful King Omri]) and the wide land of Naphtali, in its full extent, I united with Assyria. Officers of mine I installed as governors upon them.... All its inhabitants and their possessions I led to Assyria. They [the people of the remaining western regions of the kingdom]

overthrew their king Pekah and I placed Hoshea as king over them..." (*ibid.*, pp. 283, 284).

Notice in this case that the entire population of Israel east of the Jordan, in the upper valley and as far south as Galilee, was removed.

Parallel Bible accounts word it: "And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria [the Babylonian and Assyrian names of the same king], and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day" (I Chron. 5:26).

And also: "In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria" (II Kings 15:29).

About half of the House of Israel had been taken away as a result of this earlier invasion. Sargon removed an additional number. And the removal process continued yet for many years. Some further facts will help to explain what happened.

The Empty Land

The Bible tells us that the Assyrians brought other settlers to Palestine to replace the vanished Israelites — "men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria..." (II Kings 17:24).

They were placed in all the cities of the land. But we must not assume that this all happened immediately. The Bible does not tell us which Assyrian king was responsible for this colonization. Instead, from the vantage point of a later time, it speaks of the entire process as an accomplished fact. The truth is whole decades were involved.

King Sargon, who claimed the capture of the capital city, also tells

us who *he* brought into the land. And they were *not* the city-dwelling Samaritans just mentioned. Those came later.

Sargon warred with the Arabs of the desert. "Upon a trust-inspiring oracle given by my lord Ashur, I crushed the tribes of Tamud, Ibaidi, Marsimanu, and Haiapa, the Arabs who live far away in the desert and who know neither overseers nor officials and who had not yet brought their tribute to any king. I deported their survivors and settled them in Samaria" (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, *op. cit.*, p. 286).

Perhaps those "survivors" were few. And the native-born Israelites continued to be deported, for the land became seriously underpopulated. Then, with no one to keep them in check, predatory wild animals increased drastically. The later-arriving Samaritans found them to be a dangerous plague (II Kings 17:26).

How long did Israelites remain in the land? Are there any clues?

Numbers of people from the northern territory came south to Jerusalem to keep the great Passover of King Hezekiah of Judah (II Chron. 30:10-11, 18). But a comparison of II Chronicles 29:3 with II Kings 18:9-10 shows this occurred three years before the siege of Samaria.

Why does II Chronicles 30:6 speak of the Northerners as the "remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria"? These people had escaped that first great deportation of nearly half the nation performed by Tiglath-pileser. Note that these people went back home after the Passover (II Chron. 31:1).

Were there, however, say 20 years later, still Israelites in their land? Certainly there were. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, mentions a "Menahem of Samsimuruna" — obviously an Israelite — among other rebelling rulers in the lands of Israel, the Philistines and Phoenicia (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, *op. cit.*, p. 287).

As a result of this rebellion, Sen-

nacherib marched his army back into the area, mopped up the opposition and even besieged Jerusalem. Though God delivered King Hezekiah and Jerusalem out of his hand, he also swept into captivity over 200,000 *Jews* from the surrounding parts of Judah. No doubt the rebels of Israel were also taken away.

How Much Integration with Judah?

It would be surprising, in such times of trouble, if many Israelites did not take flight to safer lands — to Egypt, across the sea to Crete, Asia Minor and Greece, and to other places. In the stress of those times, others experienced a revival of true religion, returning to the worship of YHVH at Jerusalem (II Chron. 34:6-9; 35:18). Some of these perhaps ultimately moved southward and blended into Judah.

The Bible hints at this also. Hezekiah's son — the wicked king Manasseh who finally repented — married a woman from Galilee who became the mother of his son and successor Amon (II Kings 21:19). So did good king Josiah, Amon's son (II Kings 23:36). Josiah's Galilean wife became the mother of King Jehoiakim.

Even earlier some had left Israel and joined Judah for reasons of religion (see II Chron. 15:9).

Before the captivities began, the Prophet Isaiah had prophesied this result: "And in that day it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob [Israel] shall be made thin And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn" [the harvesters (Assyrian conquerors) will have gathered everyone, except for a few in hiding they might accidentally miss] Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel. At that day shall a man [those who are left] look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel . . .

In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough . . ." (Isa. 17:4-9).

But the fact that a few Israelites intermarried into Judah does not mean Israel and Judah ceased to be two separate peoples. That would be like saying that because a minority of Japanese settled in the United States there is no more a distinct Japanese nation! Luke 2:36 mentions *one* woman of the tribe of Asher resident at Jerusalem in the first century A.D. We have no indication whether she or her family had come to Jerusalem recently or centuries before. But one thing is certain. The bulk of the tribe of Asher was not there.

As late as Assurbanipal, whose reign over Assyria spanned the middle of the 600's B.C., additional settlers were being brought in to replace the now totally missing Israelites. ". . . The Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Assnapper [Assurbanipal] brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria . . ." (Ezra 4:9-10).

This may be an indication that the final contingent of Israel had been removed only shortly before.

A scant generation later, Ezekiel recorded the attitude of Judah toward the lands formerly occupied by Israel: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and *all* the house of Israel *wholly*, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far [geographically] from the Lord: unto us is this land given in possession." They wanted to possess that land.

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary [that is, God would watch over them for good] in the countries where they shall come" (Ezek. 11:14-16).

They never returned. And when later the nation of Judah was taken away too, the Jewish people were placed in a *different* location in the Babylonian Empire — *not* including the areas of Israel's captivity. Those areas in Assyria had become part of the Median Empire.

The Israelites were carried away "unto this day" (I Chron. 5:26), the time when the books of Chronicles were written after the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah.

What Josephus Said

The noted Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote of the lost tribes of the northern House of Israel just after the time of Christ. Even in the latter half of the first century A.D., Josephus was able to report: ". . . Wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while *the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers*" (*Antiquities*, book XI, chapter V, section 2).

This is further confirmation that the houses of Israel and Judah were still not united even as late as the first century A.D. It was in part a preparation for later reaching some of these separated Israelites that Jesus commanded the apostles as He sent them on their first "trial run" during His earthly ministry:

". . . Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but *go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (Matt. 10:5-6). It was the Apostle Paul who was later sent to the Gentiles (see Acts 13). He went to the cities of Asia Minor such as Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc. These were *not* Israelite cities, though contingents of Jews dwelt in each. The Gentile Samaritans were still occupying Israel's former land.

Though it is prophesied to occur in the future (Ezek. 37), the House of Israel and the House of Judah have never been reunited. □

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GOD'S WORK IN

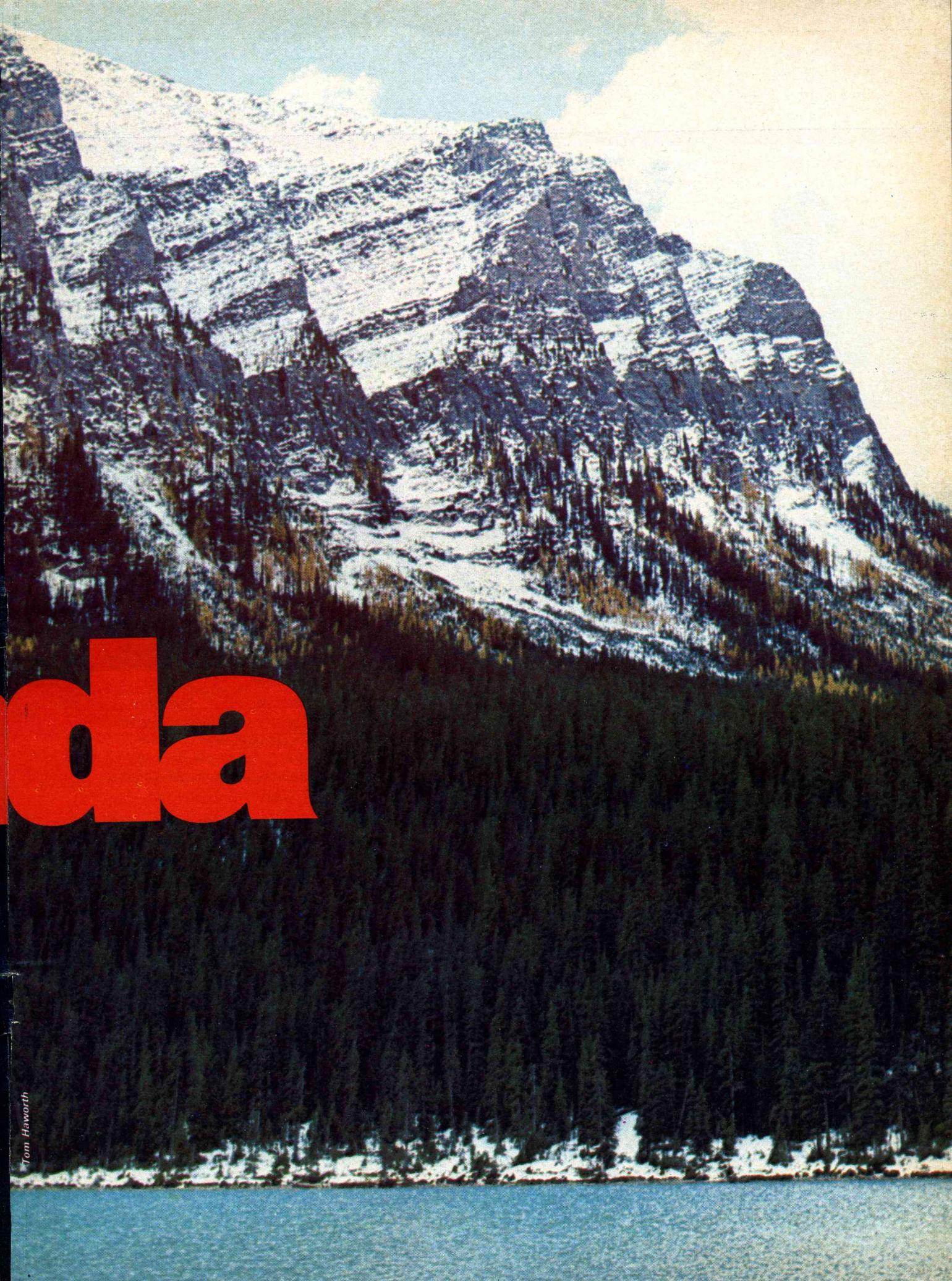


Canada

12 YEARS OF PROGRESS

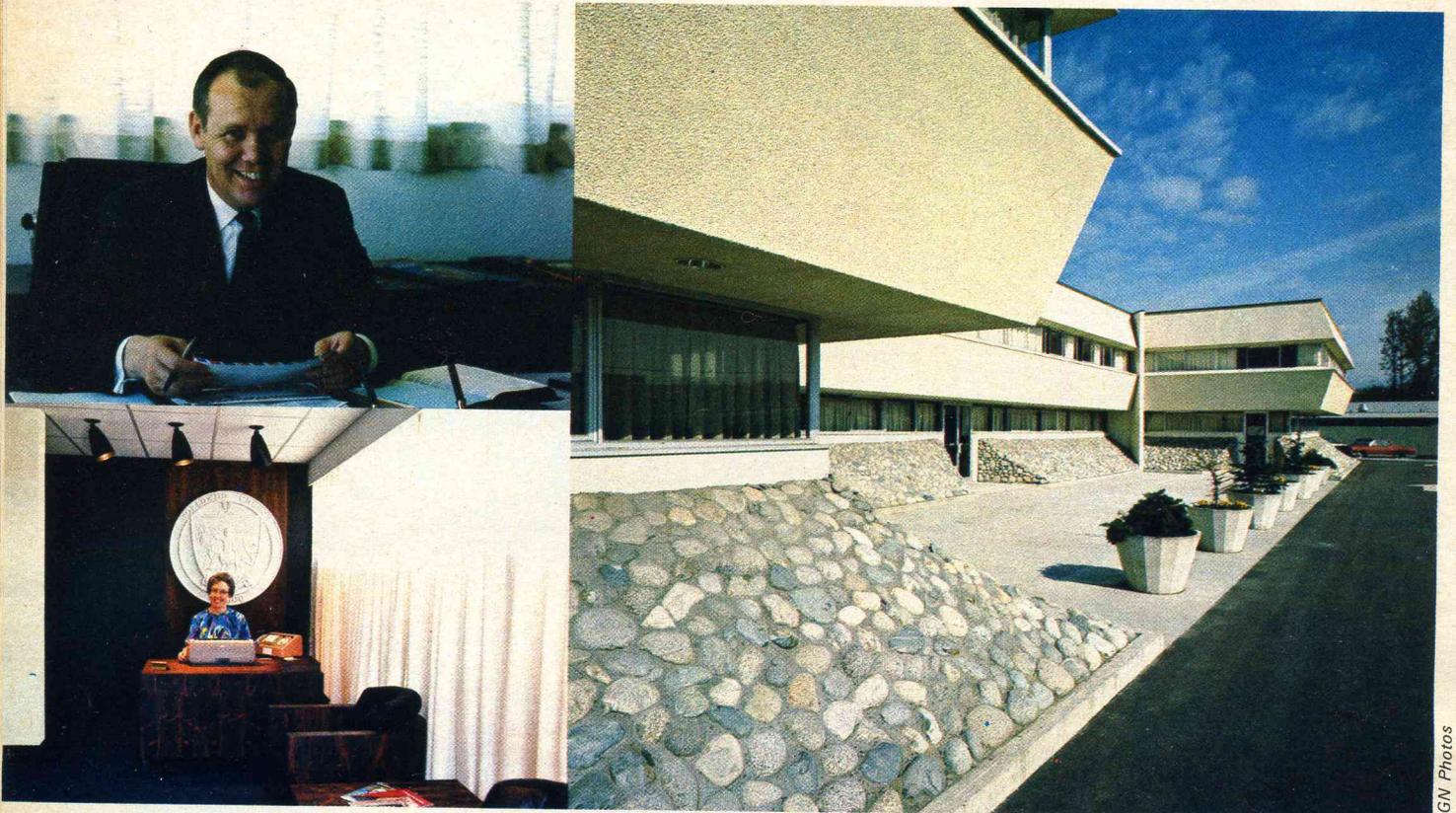
The modern phase of God's Work in Canada began as far back as the 1930s. It was then that a few scattered Canadians were first able to hear Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong broadcasting The World Tomorrow program from the west coast of the United States. Those early prewar Marconi and RCA-Victor radios were sometimes able to pick up the weak or fluctuating signal of some of the very first stations ever to carry

(Continued on page 18)



oda

Tom Haworth



GN Photos

Top: Mr. Dean Wilson, Director of the Canadian Work, in his office. Above: Visitor is greeted with cheery smile from receptionist. Right: The Noresco Building in Vancouver, British Columbia, houses our office, warehouse and church hall.

The World Tomorrow broadcast.

But the real impact of Christ's gospel was not felt in Canada until about the year 1960. At that time *The World Tomorrow* program began to be carried on three Canadian radio stations — in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Quebec, the latter in the French language. These broadcasts helped generate a mailing list of about 5000 people, most of whom subscribed to *The Plain Truth*.

Canadian Office Opened

By February 1961 the time had come to open an office in Canada to serve the people there. Garner Ted Armstrong journeyed north to Vancouver, British Columbia, and located suitable office space in the beautiful United Kingdom Building in the heart of the downtown section of the city.

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Prather were sent to Vancouver to manage the two-room office suite. Later that

same year, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pinelli were added to the office staff as assistants.

Growth Seemed Minimal at First

In March 1962, Mr. Ted Armstrong wrote Mr. Prather: "Have you thought at all about obtaining additional office space — about the future need for it — or analyzed the rate of growth so as to have any idea whatsoever about the time when we *might* need additional floor space in that building? I know that the present volume would certainly look as if such expansion would perhaps *never* be needed — but bear in mind that we still have virtually *no* radio outlets in that area!"

Since that letter was written, office and warehouse space requirements have greatly increased. They have expanded from those two small rooms in the United Kingdom Building to such an extent that they



now encompass three fourths of a newer building in the suburbs of Vancouver — covering about 28,000 square feet of floor space and housing a staff of 38 people.

The mailing list of *The Plain Truth* magazine has jumped from that early 5000 to over 200,000 in both English and French editions! Such growth is little short of phenomenal.

From the small beginning of three radio stations carrying *The World Tomorrow* in 1960, the broadcast is now heard on over 61 radio stations covering most of Canada.

And the *Garner Ted Armstrong* telecast is also a tremendous boon to the growth of the Work in Canada; it is now viewed on some 265 television stations.

Monthly ads are also placed in *TV Guide* in both the English and French editions.

First Canadian Church

The initial responses to *The World Tomorrow* radio broadcast were handled by the office personnel and summer baptizing teams sent from Ambassador College in Pasadena.

In February 1961, Mr. James Friddle started a small Bible study in Vancouver. By June of 1962 there were some 40 people who attended regularly.

It was decided that Mr. Dean Wilson, an Ambassador College graduate, should be sent to Vancouver to manage the office and begin the first Church of God congregation in Canada. Mr. Roderick C. Meredith (now Deputy Chancellor of the Brickwood campus) was sent to conduct the first Sabbath service, accompanied by Mr. Wilson.

Beginning with 39 zealous brethren on June 18, 1962, the Church of God has grown to encompass some

40 congregations — covering the length and breadth of Canada. In addition, 13 outlying Bible studies have been established. At the present time over 8000 people attend services or Bible studies in Canada.

To serve these congregations, there are 56 ministers and 22 ministerial assistants (at last count). Many of these ministers drive tens of thousands of miles every year in the service of their congregations. Present plans call for 20 ministerial assistants to be assigned to the Canadian Work from the 1974 graduating class of Ambassador College.

The year 1973 saw the addition of 13 new congregations to the Church of God in Canada. Several additional congregations are expected to be added in 1974.

Canada Is Bilingual

Fully one third of the Canadian people are French speaking. Over the years Mr. Dibar Apartian, our French-speaking evangelist, has been able to reach many through the French broadcast, *Le Monde à Venir*. But growth has also been pro-

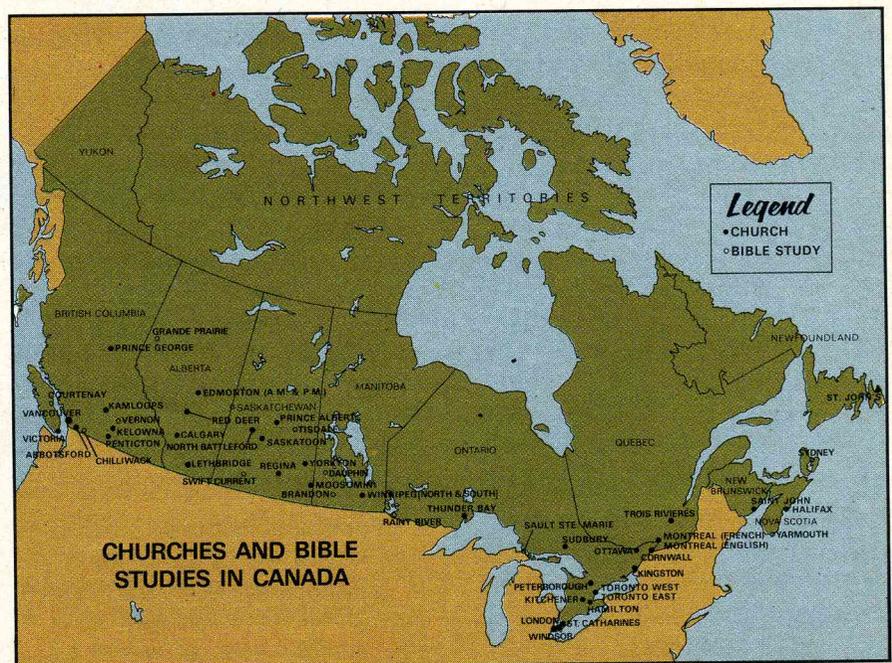
duced among the French Canadians by the English broadcast and literature, because many of these people also speak English. At present, the French mailing list is about 30,000.

The first French-language church began in June 1972 (exactly ten years after the first English-speaking congregation). Mr. Carn Catherwood moved from Paris, France, to Montreal, Quebec, to pastor the new congregation of 110 people. Since that time the Montreal church has more than doubled in size (to 280), and another congregation of 70 people has been added in Trois-Rivières, Quebec.

Right now there are only four bilingual ministers and a single bilingual assistant in all of Canada. But it has been projected that in the next two years, just the province of Quebec alone will need at least ten French-speaking ministers.

This month marks the twelfth anniversary of that fledgling congregation in Vancouver. But, hopefully, if God is willing, it will only be the *beginning* of even greater growth and progress in getting the gospel to the Canadian people. □

Map by Roy Lepeska



CAMPAIGN

Cincinnati, Ohio:

Cincinnati recently hosted Garner Ted Armstrong's second campaign of 1974. Capacity crowds attended the three nights (March 1, 2, 3) in the 3600-seat Cincinnati Music Hall.

A total of 10,740 persons attended the three-night campaign. On Saturday night, nearly 4,000 attended — with almost 400 persons standing in aisles and corridors to hear the message.

Mr. Armstrong's topics included the need for Jesus Christ in each of our lives, and the dangers of Satanism, spiritism and the occult. The concluding message on Sunday night ended with a strong appeal to repent and change before this nation sinks.

The musical portion of the program was provided by the Ambassador College band and singers. The soloist was Mike Lord.

In July 1970, Cincinnati was the second city reached in the "America Listen" campaigns. Thus for some of the band and singers, now graduates, it was their second appearance at a campaign in Cincinnati.

Sherwin McMichael, master of ceremonies for the campaign and

Director of the Personal Appearance Department, commented: "The campaign in Cincinnati was one of the smoothest campaigns we've had yet. Mr. Armstrong was at his best and delivered what I believe to be one of the most powerful messages he's ever given."

This was the second of six campaigns scheduled for Garner Ted Armstrong this year — including one to come in Sydney, Australia.

Wichita, Kansas:

Kansas' largest city and a major center in the production of wheat and beef hosted another successful campaign — the seventh of 1974.

Sherwin McMichael spoke to a total of 1,961 interested persons attending the two-night campaign in the beautiful Century II Concert Hall. Mr. McMichael's message outlined the problems confronting the world today — showing that man's only hope is in turning to God. Over 13 percent of *The Plain Truth* and *Good News* subscribers in that area attended.

Through garage sales and local projects, members of the Worldwide Church of God in Wichita were able to help in financing the campaign.

The musical support of the campaign was supplied by the Wichita church choir. Soloist was Bronson James, a senior at the Pasadena campus of Ambassador College. Emceeding the program was Steve Martin, assistant to the Director of the International Division of the Worldwide Church of God.

Knoxville, Tennessee:

This southern city, the gateway to the Appalachian Mountains, was the site for another interest-filled campaign by Sherwin McMichael (February 23, 24).

Mr. McMichael sounded a warning concerning the crises currently facing this nation and then focused on God's solutions for a peaceful world tomorrow. About 2,000 attended the two-night program in the Civic Auditorium-Coliseum in Knoxville.

John Beaver, Pasadena faculty member, was the soloist. Carl McNair, area minister of the Worldwide Church of God, was the master of ceremonies.

Canadian Personal Appearances

A number of personal appearances have been held in Canada by Garner Ted Armstrong and other evangelists and ministers. These personal appearances have added to the growth of the churches in Canada. A number of invitational

Bible studies in various towns and cities across the nation have also proven highly successful in getting the truth of God to more and more people. It is hoped that further personal appearances will be held in Canada. They will be announced in

advance in *The Good News* magazine. If you desire more information concerning where you may attend a local (Canadian) Bible study held by ministers of the Worldwide Church of God, please write to the following address:

**Worldwide Church of God
Box 44, Station A
Vancouver, B.C. Canada**

QUESTION: "I noticed the cover and the center-fold spread of the March Good News, and my reaction was 'there goes the salesman of God.' I don't think it proper to use the caption 'And You Shall Be Brought Before Kings,' because the original context was directed to incidents involving saints being brought into courts to testify for the reason of their faith when it is, or seems to be, contrary to government (civil edicts)."

Ed M.,
Tarzana, California

ANSWER: The practice of taking a phrase or sentence from the Bible or other literature for use as a "catchy" title is common practice in the world of literature and journalism.

The caption on the cover of the March *Good News* was simply a title for the article in "Update" concerning Mr. Armstrong's visits to world leaders. It was not meant to imply fulfillment of the specific scripture (Matt. 10:16-18) which the context is describing (God's servants going before kings in unfavorable circumstances).

Mr. Armstrong is being brought before kings and world leaders in the service of the gospel! It may well be that in the future, such visits could result in rejection and persecution. At the present time, however, God has granted Mr. Armstrong great favor in the sight of the leaders with whom he is acquainted.

In the past, the Holy Spirit has always led God's servants to communicate His message *directly* to the leaders of nations. The Apostle Paul was brought before kings in the service of the gospel: "... He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles [nations other than Israel], and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). It appears that the living Christ is using Mr. Armstrong in much the same way.

Q: "In the January 1974 GN, it seems there is a small error in the



otherwise superb article by Raymond F. McNair on 'The Resurrection in the Old Testament.' Near the top of page 21 it says: 'The word "resurrect" literally means "to stand again from below" - "re" (again); "sur" (below); "rect" (to stand).

"Should this not be: 're' (again); 'sur' (above); 'rect' (straight)? See the use of 'sur' in surface, surcharge, survive; and the use of 'rect' in rectangle, linea recta, rectify."

Peter W.,

Drumbo, Ontario, Canada

A: You are correct. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* agrees with your definitions of the prefixes "re," "sur," and "rect." The primary definition of the word "resurrect" itself is "to raise from the dead: restore to life."

In the *Arndt-Gingrich Greek Lexicon*, the Greek word translated "resurrection" is *anastasis*, which means to "rise" or to be "resurrected" from the dead. In Hebrews 11:35 it is translated, "Women received their dead raised to life again..." This translation tends to clarify the meaning of the original Greek term. To be "raised to life again" after having once experienced death is to be resurrected. *Raised* has to do with being elevated out of the grave.

Q: "I would like to submit a very important question to your magazine. Do you know where God originated from?"

Sandy L.,

Minneapolis, Minnesota

A: As human beings we usually view things purely from a physical basis alone. We think of everything as having an origin. And, on a strictly physical basis, that's true.

However, God Almighty is a spirit (John 4:24). And a spirit being is *not* bound by laws of time and

space. All physical things have a beginning and an ending, but spiritual things are eternal (II Cor. 4:18).

God Almighty inhabits eternity (Isa. 57:15). *He has no origin.* He was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life..." (Heb. 7:3).

The very Hebrew name for "Lord" in the Old Testament - YHWH - means "Eternal," or the God that has always, and will always, exist.

These concepts are explained in greater detail in our free reprint article, "Has God Eternally Existed?" It is available upon your request.

Q: "Ever since I was a little girl, I've heard that we all have guardian angels. Now that I read your magazines, I take second thoughts on a lot of things. Is there any truth to the guardian angel bit?"

Teresa T.,

Pine Hill, New Jersey

A: The guardian angel concept probably originates from the following scripture: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones [newly converted Christians]; for I say unto you, That in heaven *their angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).

This verse does definitely show, as do other scriptures, that all *true* Christians have God's angels watching over them. But whether each individual has a personalized guardian angel (or angels) is purely an academic question. The Bible simply isn't that technically specific on this point.

The important thing to remember is that God does dispatch His righteous angels to oversee and protect those who obey Him (Ps. 34:7; Heb. 1:13, 14).

As a cautionary note, we would *not* encourage people to attempt to become familiar with some personal "pet" angel. Rather, allow God to provide the invisible protection of His angelic host in His own way. □

THE PARABLES OF JESUS



Part 2

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the first article in this series, we learned just what parables are and why Jesus used them. We also saw that there are three distinct sets or groupings of parables, each having a different theme. This revealing article examines the first six parables of the first set.

by Brian Knowles

AS JESUS sat in a small fishing craft just offshore on the Sea (or lake) of Galilee, He began to address the large crowd assembled on the shore. He spoke to them in parables about the Kingdom of God.

In this first group of parables, Jesus gave to the people six parables without any explanation. Later, He privately explained the meaning of all these to His own disciples. He also gave the disciples four additional parables which were self-explanatory. These last four parables contained a special message within the overall theme pertaining directly to the disciples' future apostolic ministry.

The Parables Contained Doctrine

It is important to realize that the parables were *doctrinal* in nature: "And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his *doctrine* . . ." (Mark 4:2).

A "doctrine" is a biblical principle, teaching, or truth which is accepted as authoritative. It constitutes part of the dogma of real Christianity. Therefore, we cannot underestimate the importance of seeking understanding of the parables of Jesus!

The first parable Jesus gave is of special significance because it is a pacesetter of sorts. It is typical of all such parables, and the method of explanation also follows the same basic pattern.

Speaking of the first parable in this group (that of the sower), Jesus

said to His disciples: "... Know ye not this parable? and *how then will ye know all parables?*" (Mark 4:13.)

The Parable of the Sower

"Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred."

Mark 4:3-8

This first parable is a simple story liberally laced with local color. It is found in three of the four Gospel accounts — Matthew, Mark and Luke. Each Gospel mentions a point or two not found in the other accounts. We will use Mark's more concise Gospel as our basic reference.

Jesus describes a scene very familiar to His audience: A sower went out to sow grain in his field. The seed falls on four different types of ground: 1) the wayside, 2) stony ground, 3) among thorns, and 4) good ground. Each represents a different category of person who hears the Word of God at some point in his life. Each responds differently.

We are not told who the sower is, but it is explained that "the sower soweth *the word*" (verse 14). We must assume that whoever disseminates God's Word (God or one of His human instruments) is the sower. The seed in the parable, then, represents the gospel message and all that it includes.

Each person who hears it reacts differently. Not everyone responds

with equal enthusiasm. Nor does the Word of God bear the same fruit in each individual it touches.

Those by the Wayside

The people in this first category hear the gospel message, but they are immediately dissuaded from *doing* anything about it. God's truth is never allowed to take root in their lives. They are easy prey for the devil, who subtly convinces them to disbelieve what they hear. "*Satan cometh immediately*, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts" (verse 15).

There are many ways by which this happens: A snide remark about the message from a "friend" who is supposedly "in the know" about such things. A sudden change of personal circumstances may lead to a "temporary" diversion — which becomes permanent. A minor disagreement about a small point can lead the prospective Christian to "throw out the baby with the bath water." It could be any number of things, but the result is always the same! The person rejects the gospel of the Kingdom of God before it gets a chance to take root.

On Stony Ground

Persons in this particular grouping advance somewhat further than those in the first category. Their initial reaction to the Word of God is enthusiastic. They are happy to hear the truth preached. They welcome it and may even become baptized. "Then they that *gladly* received his word were baptized . . ." (Acts 2:41).

But unfortunately, their enthusiasm soon wears thin. They "have no root in themselves, and so *endure but for a time*: afterward, when *affliction or persecution* ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended" (Mark 4:17).

These "babes in Christ" never allow their spiritual roots to go down quite deeply enough to draw on the pure, nourishing water of God's spiritual power (John 7:38, 39; Acts 1:8). When persecution comes along, they are not strong

enough to withstand it. They have no persevering power in the face of the ridicule and derision of those who do not share their beliefs.

Such people are only willing to obey God as long as it does not cost them anything in terms of personal prestige and respect. Loss of face means loss of everything to them. They are willing to compromise the Word of God rather than suffer for it.

Did not Jesus say in another place: "... If any man will come after me, let him... take up his cross, and follow me"? (Matt. 16:24.)

Among Thorns

The third type of person in this parable progresses somewhat further. He too begins to bear fruit and live a life of obedience to Christ. His life changes as he yields to the Word of God. But he too has a "hang-up." At some point in his Christian life, "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it *becometh unfruitful*" (Mark 4:19).

In order to become unfruitful, he must have at one time *been* fruitful. Here is someone who has actually begun to bear substantial fruit as a result of God's Word. He has made spiritual progress. He may have been in the Church for some time. Others may even consider him well established in the body of Christ.

But sooner or later, plain old *materialism* or sensuality creeps in and smothers his spirituality.

Perhaps it is a craving for material success in the world of business or industry. A desire to be at the top of the financial heap can divert a person's focus of attention from spiritual to material things.

For this reason, the Apostle Paul warned the Colossians about drifting into materialism: "Set your affection on things above, *not* on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). He also said that "to be carnally [physically] minded is death..." (Rom. 8:6).

There are many pitfalls which can tear a person away from the abundant life to which God has called him. It could be money, the desire for financial success, another woman or man, a job, or an inordinate desire of any kind. It could be a craving for liquor or food (not that eating and drinking are wrong, but drunkenness and gluttony are) or possibly even narcotic drugs.

Whatever it is, it diverts one from his life in Christ — choking out the influence of God's Holy Spirit and stifling any further bearing of good fruit.

On Good Ground

This category describes people who are converted and who make continual growth and progress in the faith. They bear the good fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

But not all bear the same amount of fruit. Some are much more productive than others. Many do not realize their maximum potential as Christians — they merely get by with a modicum of effort.

Yet it is Christ's will that we bear *much* fruit. Those who are *closest* to Jesus Christ bear the most fruit. Jesus said: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth *much fruit*: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Which category are *you* in?

Summation of First Parable

In briefest summary, this first parable is a simple, earthy story drawn from daily life in Galilee. While the audience did not understand its meaning at the time it was given, Jesus later privately explained it to His disciples. It can *now* be understood by anyone to whom God wishes to reveal its meaning. The story is *timeless* in its application.

It applies to four types of people who hear the Word of God. All respond differently. The fourth group bears fruit until the day they enter into the Kingdom of God at Christ's

return. A simple, yet profound, message concerning the Kingdom!

The Wheat and the Tares

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:24-30

The second parable is also taken from a description of typical rural life in the province of Galilee. Any farmer of the day would have known about tares (darnel). They were weeds which grew with the wheat and looked very much like it as long as the wheat remained in the blade stage. When they grew to maturity, however, they were readily distinguishable.

This is a simple illustration pointing out the fact that both the converted and unconverted have to coexist in the same society until the time of the great harvest of lives at Christ's return. During that time Jesus Christ will make a separation between those who are His and those who are not.

The best account of this parable is found in Matthew 13:24-30. (The explanation is given in verses 36-43.) Each element of the parable has

vital meaning. Notice Matthew's explanation:

"The field is the world; the good seed [true Christians] are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one [Satan — compare John 8:44, I John 3:8]; the enemy that sowed them is the devil [the god of this society, II Cor. 4:4]; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [Greek: *aionos*, meaning "age"]."

This parable graphically shows the fate of those who insist on following the devil when *they know better!* Those who are incorrigibly wicked will be thrown into a lake of fire — and be *burned* into ashes (Mal. 4:3).

John spoke of this in the book of Revelation: "And death [the dead] and hell [the grave — hades] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the *second death*. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14-15). In order to die twice, one must first *live* twice (James Bond notwithstanding). This means a *resurrection* must occur.

This is not immortal *life* as a "soul" in an ever-burning hellfire — it is complete extinction and oblivion *forever!* And this is *doctrine!* (If you have never proved that the concepts of an immortal soul and an ever-burning hellfire constitute *false* doctrines, then please write for our two free booklets entitled *Do You Have an Immortal Soul?* and *Is There a Real Hell Fire?*)

The Lamp Under a Bushel

"And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

Mark 4:21-23

This parable had an especially significant meaning for the disciples. Jesus had told them earlier: "Fear them [the people] not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. *What I tell you* in darkness, that *speak ye* in light: and what *ye* hear in the ear, that *preach ye upon the housetops*" (Matt. 10:26-27).

The gospel message is the light that shines in a dark place. Christ was the Light of the world (John 1:9). Christians are to light the world with their example and with their *message* (Matt. 5:14-16). It is the *work* and the *duty* of God's Church to proclaim the mysteries of the Kingdom of God to all the world.

Christ illustrated this important point by showing that if a person bought a candle it would be ridiculous to hide it (or snuff out its light) beneath a bushel basket! So it is with the message of the Kingdom. It is not something for a Christian to clutch to his breast as a personal talisman; it is not his alone to have and to keep.

It is a message that must be proclaimed. As Paul said, "... Woe is unto me, *if I preach not the gospel!*" (I Cor. 9:16.)

God has revealed to His Church truths that were kept secret from the beginning of time. Even the mighty prophets of old were not granted the same insight into the plan of salvation that lay members of God's Church may have today.

Even *angels* desire to look into some of the things we may readily know (I Pet. 1:10-12). "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But *God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:* for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:9, 10).

Can we hide such truth and light under a "bushel"?

God forbid!

The Grain of Mustard Seed

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Matthew 13:31, 32

Again, we use Matthew's account. This parable shows that the preparation for the Kingdom of God has the smallest of beginnings. Yet that ruling Kingdom will ultimately fill *all* the earth.

Daniel wrote: "And there was given him [Christ] dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14).

The saints will inherit this Kingdom with Christ. "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (verse 18).

What a magnificent destiny! What incredible glory! This is the mind-boggling future of all true Christians — to inherit *all* things as a part of the universe-filling Kingdom of God.

But look how small it all began! In all of Old Testament times, only a comparative handful of people were called to inherit the Kingdom of God. Men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Daniel and David. Women like Esther, Rahab, Sarah and others. (Those who have never been called *will* have their first chance for salvation *later* — by a resurrection from the dead. For a full explanation write for our free booklet *After Death — Then What?*)

It was not until shortly after the death and resurrection of Christ that substantial numbers of people

were called to the Kingdom of God.

On the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, three thousand people were added to the Church; and from then on it grew or contracted in varying degrees throughout the centuries (Acts 2:41-47).

At this present time, God is adding to the Church those who are called to eternal life. By the return of Jesus Christ, thousands upon thousands shall have been added to that ever-growing body of Christ. It will then constitute the ruling family Kingdom of God. Eventually, all Israel and every human being who has ever lived will have had an opportunity for salvation. God is not willing that *any* should perish (II Pet. 3:9).

Think of all the *billions* of people who have ever lived and realize that most of them will ultimately be added to the Kingdom of God. When it's all said and done, that Kingdom will finally *fill the earth!*

How appropriate is the parable of the tiny mustard seed which grows into a large shrub or bush in which the birds of heaven find shelter. That tiny seed produces a plant many thousands of times its own size — and so it will be with the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom Like Leaven

“Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

Matthew 13:33

The fifth parable illustrates essentially the same point as the previous one, but by a different analogy. The entire parable is contained in Matthew 13:33.

Leaven is the substance used to make bread dough rise by expansion. Most homemakers will be familiar with its qualities. Even those who have not used yeast, have at least made cakes, biscuits, pancakes, or a similar product with baking powder, which is also a type of

leaven. A *little* leaven is all that is necessary to leaven the whole lump of dough (Gal. 5:9).

So it is with the Kingdom of God. What God has started with a comparative few at this time will ultimately result in the entire earth being blanketed with the knowledge of God. “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [nation]; for the earth shall be *full* of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9).

The Seed Growing of Itself

“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”

Mark 4:26-29

We do not understand the precise mechanism by which the Word of God produces fruit in human lives. But we certainly can plainly see that it *does!*

God's human ministers are very much like those who plant seed and then care for it while it comes to fruition. Paul made such an analogy when he referred to himself and Apollos: “*I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.* So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (I Cor. 3:6-7).

God causes each member of the Church to grow in grace, in knowledge and in character. This growth is brought about by God's Holy Spirit working in each individual life — not by the minister (husbandman). It is also *God* who adds to the Church as a whole (compare John 6:44 and Acts 2:47). *He* increases it quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

Those who are called in this age are the “firstfruits” of that great harvest of lives (James 1:18). And it is God who will reap His own harvest in the end of this age of growth.

Summary

This completes the first six parables which were given *to the people* without explanation. Later they were *all* explained to the disciples: “... And when they were *alone*, he expounded *all* things to his disciples” (Mark 4:34).

The predominant theme of these particular parables is plainly the *Kingdom of God*.

By these parables Jesus showed that most people who are called pass through several stages. Those who endure to the end — continuing to bear the good fruit of God's Spirit — will ultimately achieve salvation and glory for all eternity.

The rest will be cast into a lake of fire, which represents their second — and final — death. But the righteous and the sinner will have to live side by side in this society like the grain and the weeds — that is, until the final harvest of souls at the end of the world. Then Christ's angelic servants will make a separation.

Also, it is God who gives the growth in His Church — both numerically and spiritually. And the example of the lamp under the bushel teaches us that the Church of God *must* preach the gospel of the Kingdom as a beacon of light shining in a world of darkness.

In addition, we have learned that what God is starting so small in us *now* will eventually fill the entire earth! The Kingdom will grow and flourish to become millions of times its starting size.

And you and I have been given a vital part in all of this. What profound truths these simple parables contain! What glory is revealed in them!

In the next installment we will analyze and examine the remaining four parables in this first Galilean grouping — those given only to the disciples. □

games christians play

by D. Paul Graunke

OK, SPORTS fans. Today's chalk talk is about a special kind of game. You'll never read about it on the sports page or hear Howard Cosell talk about it on TV. Yet it is the most popular game in the world. It isn't a spectator sport; it's the kind of game everybody can — and does — play. In fact, it's the most widely played game of all time.

The name of the game is "Hypocrisy."

Hypocrisy a game?

Absolutely! And we know this thanks to a special breed of sports analysts known as psychiatrists. We are particularly indebted to the observation and analysis of Eric Berne, who reported on this most popular sport in his best-selling book, *Games People Play*.

The games Berne wrote about weren't the kind people play in their leisure time or watch on TV on weekends. They are the kind people play every day of their lives — at work, at home and even at church.

We all know that the object of a game like football is to score points. And if it's professional football, there are other payoffs, such as prestige, a fat three-year contract, and bonuses for making it to the playoffs and the Super Bowl.

The object of games in everyday life is also to score points. But these

points are measured in terms of human emotions and feelings — not numbers. Typical payoffs are feelings of pride and superiority.

The major difference between games on a playing field and games in real life is that in the former, the player's true motives are obvious and aboveboard; while in real-life games the player's motives are ulterior — hidden to others, and, as we shall see, even to himself.

In games of hypocrisy, people strive for points by deception and cover-up. On the surface it appears that they are talking and interacting with other people for the sheer fun of human companionship and conversation. But this is only a front for ulterior and interior motives. In reality they are striving for an emotional payoff.

Counterfeit Christians

Christians play games, too.

In these games with God they may look and sound like Christians to other people. But the game players are living a lie. Their conduct is a *counterfeit* of real Christian virtue. They are passing spiritual three-dollar bills and plug nickels. They are Christian in outward appearance — but not in fact. The Apostle Paul describes them as people who "maintain a facade of 'religion', but their conduct will deny its validity" (II Tim. 3:5, Phillips translation).

So much for the game theory. Let's see how Hypocrisy is played in real life by people who consider themselves to be "Christian."

"Never on Sunday"

The first game we'll examine is called "Never on Sunday." The name is derived from the fact that Monday through Saturday the player drinks too much, argues with his wife and kicks his dog — but never on Sunday. Six days of the week, he does what he pleases; but on the other he rests from his sins, puts on his Sunday best — clothes and conduct — and goes to church. There he conducts himself like a Christian. He may even pretend to

be a Christian for the rest of the day. (Maybe he's hoping to get time off for good behavior.) But by Monday morning he discards his Sunday best and resumes his weekday worst. The masquerade party is over.

We know God sees through this hypocrisy. This person is only a pseudo-Christian. But does his Sunday performance convince the rest of the congregation?

Alas, he is foiled. It just so happens that his game has been exposed by someone in the congregation who is playing *another* game.

"The Splinter in My Brother's Eye"

He is playing the game known as "The Splinter in My Brother's Eye," or "Blemish." His object is to find the faults and hypocrisies in *other people* — not in himself, mind you, but in others. This game is called "The Splinter in My Brother's Eye" because of Christ's description of it in Matthew 7:1-5: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. . . . And why beholdest thou the mote [splinter] that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam [plank, log] that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou *hypocrite*, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

People who play "Blemish" either don't realize that they have any beams to pull out or they think they have pulled them out already. Since the only beam-free, perfect human ever to walk the earth was Jesus Christ, the chances are quite slim that they have done this. But this does not deter them from playing "Blemish."

A game very similar to "Blemish" is "Comparison Shopping." In this game the player realizes he has beams in his eyes — he has problems to overcome. But rather than concentrating on pulling them out, he searches for people whose sins are

worse than his — the darker and more X-rated, the better. In stark contrast and comparison to *their* sins, his own don't seem so bad after all. The lower his opinion of others can sink, the more his opinion of himself will be exalted.

Paul warned Christians in his day about this game: "But when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding" (II Cor. 10:12, RSV). He also instructed: "... In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3).

A great deal of busybodying, scandal-scouting, gossip, talebearing and slander is an outgrowth of games like "Blemish" and "Comparison Shopping." Key phrases of speech that identify a game player include: 1) "Isn't it a shame that...?" 2) "What's the world (people, teen-agers, etc.) coming to...?" 3) "I'm glad I'm not like..." (see Luke 18:10-14 on this phrase). 4) "They say that..." And 5) "Why, I would *never* do something like..."

"Shell-Game Crossup"

With three games in progress at once, there is lots of action. So much so, you probably missed the most crucial play of the game. This play is known as the "Shell-Game Crossup." It happened so swiftly,

was executed so adroitly, that you probably weren't aware it happened. So let's have an instant replay and view the game in slow motion.

Every game of Hypocrisy is like the man at the circus who conducts the shell game. He takes three shells, places a marble under one, and then moves them around, mixing them up. The object is to confuse others so they can't find the shell that has the marble under it.

Instead of hiding marbles, the people in the preceding games are trying to hide their *real* selves. They do this under their "shells," or facades, of righteousness and virtue, hoping no one will find out what they really are like.

But a crossup occurs: the hypocritical game player may try to shuffle his facades around to fool others — and fail (as did the "Never-on-Sunday" player) — but in the process he ends up confusing and deceiving himself!

That's right! The person who plays games to deceive others usually ends up deceiving no one but himself. He forgets about the marble he's playing and even the fact that he's playing a shell game.

If you don't think this can happen, then read Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is *deceitful above all things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" The mind is a master of

deceit — so deceptive that it usually ends up misleading itself more than it does anyone else.

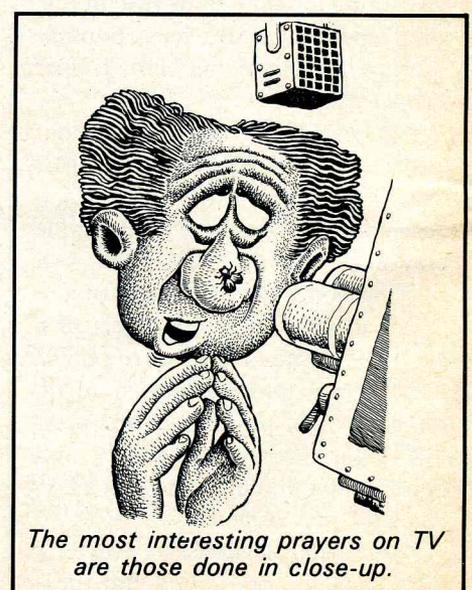
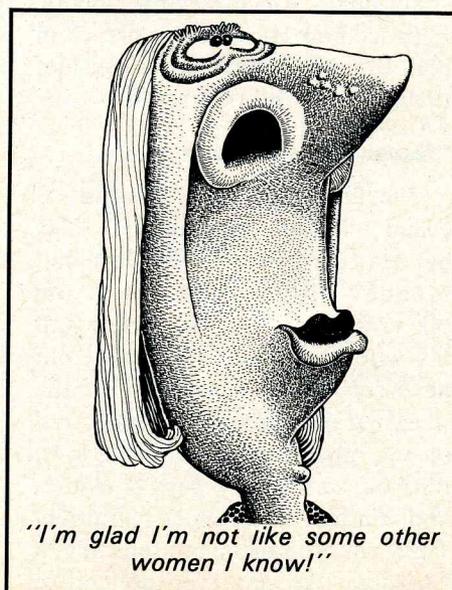
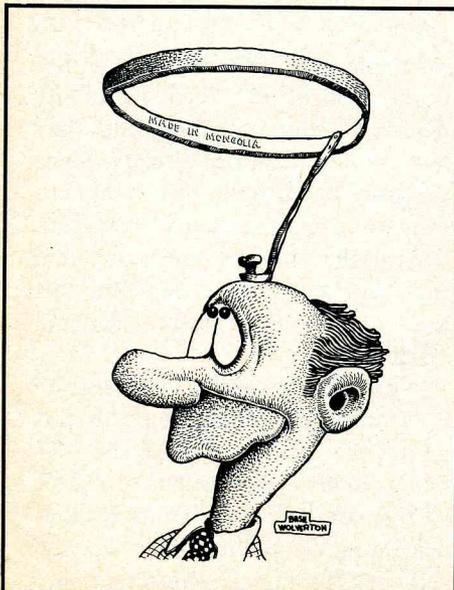
So it is easy to spot hypocrisy in others — but it is not so easy to spot it in yourself. This means *you* could be unconsciously playing games right now. God knows it. So do other people. But you don't.

It's entirely possible. In fact, it is very probable. So as you read about the following games, don't try to think of others who fit the descriptions. That's playing "Blemish" and "Comparison Shopping." Hold the mirror up to *yourself*. Apply the games personally. Use God's Word and Spirit to be honest with yourself. Outwit your deceitful mind.

"Show Off"

Jesus Christ was an expert at exposing games. In parables and personal encounters, He put down the religious pretensions and hypocrisies of His day. Let's examine some of them:

The games most often played with God come under the category of "Show Off." Their object is to demonstrate to God — and to others — the "righteousness" of the game player. The game may look convincingly godly at first glance. But this spirituality is only a disguise for human pride. It is actually an exercise in self-righteousness rather than godliness.



In these games the player can't detect his hypocrisy. Can you — in yourself?

The first game under this category is "Public Prayer." It was described by Christ in Matthew 6:5-6: "And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that *they may be seen of men*. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

The modern form of "Public Prayer" is most frequently played from the pulpits and radio stations throughout the land. It is characterized by fulsome, flowery phrases and archaic, seventeenth-century language like "thee" and "dost." The game player delivers it by shifting his voice into a special frequency and tone, reserved strictly for those occasions when the public is invited to eavesdrop on his "conversations" with God.

"This Is a Recording"

Another prayer game is found in verse 7 of the same chapter. "But when you pray, use not *vain repetitions*, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

The object of "This Is a Recording" is to pray from memory — not from the heart. Game players strive for spiritual Academy Awards by acting out prayer scripts written for

them by others. What the players say is not nearly as important as how well and how often they repeat it.

One of the favorite formulas which game players feel necessary to repeat over and over, word for word, is the so-called "Lord's Prayer" in verses 9-13.

If this were what Christ had in mind when He said, "After this manner therefore pray ye . . ." He was contradicting what He said two verses earlier.

Christ gave the prayer as an outline, a model, a pattern, to help us organize our own heartfelt, original prayers to God. But many people persist in sticking to each letter of the prayer rather than observing the spirit and intent. And then they wonder why their prayers are never answered.

Use prayer to tell God what's on your mind — not what's in some book or pamphlet. For some ideas and guidelines, write for our free article "The Answer to Unanswered Prayer." Learn to talk to God — not play games with Him.

Two other games are covered in Matthew 6: "Trumpet Tooting" (verses 1-4) and "Religious Advertising" (verses 16-18). By now you should be adept enough at game analysis to figure out how these games are played — and how to avoid them in your life.

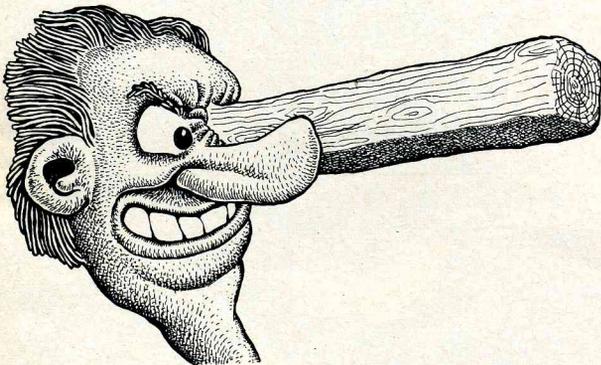
The Antidote — Humility

We have only scratched the surface of the games Christians play. The Bible is full of examples of games — from the very first game Adam and Eve played with God in the Garden of Eden ("Hide and Seek") to the ones Christ exposed among the religious people of His day. You'll find a few in Acts and even more in the epistles of Paul, Peter and John.

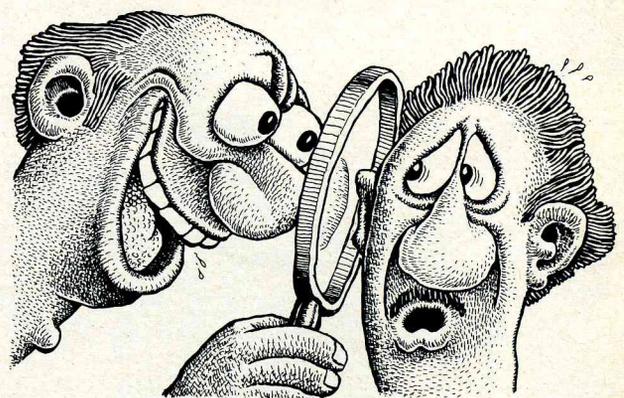
The cure for such games is spiritual honesty, objectivity and humility. It's realizing that all our human self-righteousness is nothing but filthy rags when compared to God's *true* righteousness (Isa. 64:6). The way to do that is to stay close to God in *real* prayer, don't neglect the study of His Word, and give yourself periodic checkups (II Cor. 13:5).

Three times Christ said that those who exalt themselves will be abased, and those who humble themselves will be exalted (Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14). It is the meek who shall inherit the earth — not the self-righteous and the game players (Matt. 5:5). So follow Christ's prescription — eat humble pie. Be honest with yourself and aware of your *own* faults and wrong motives.

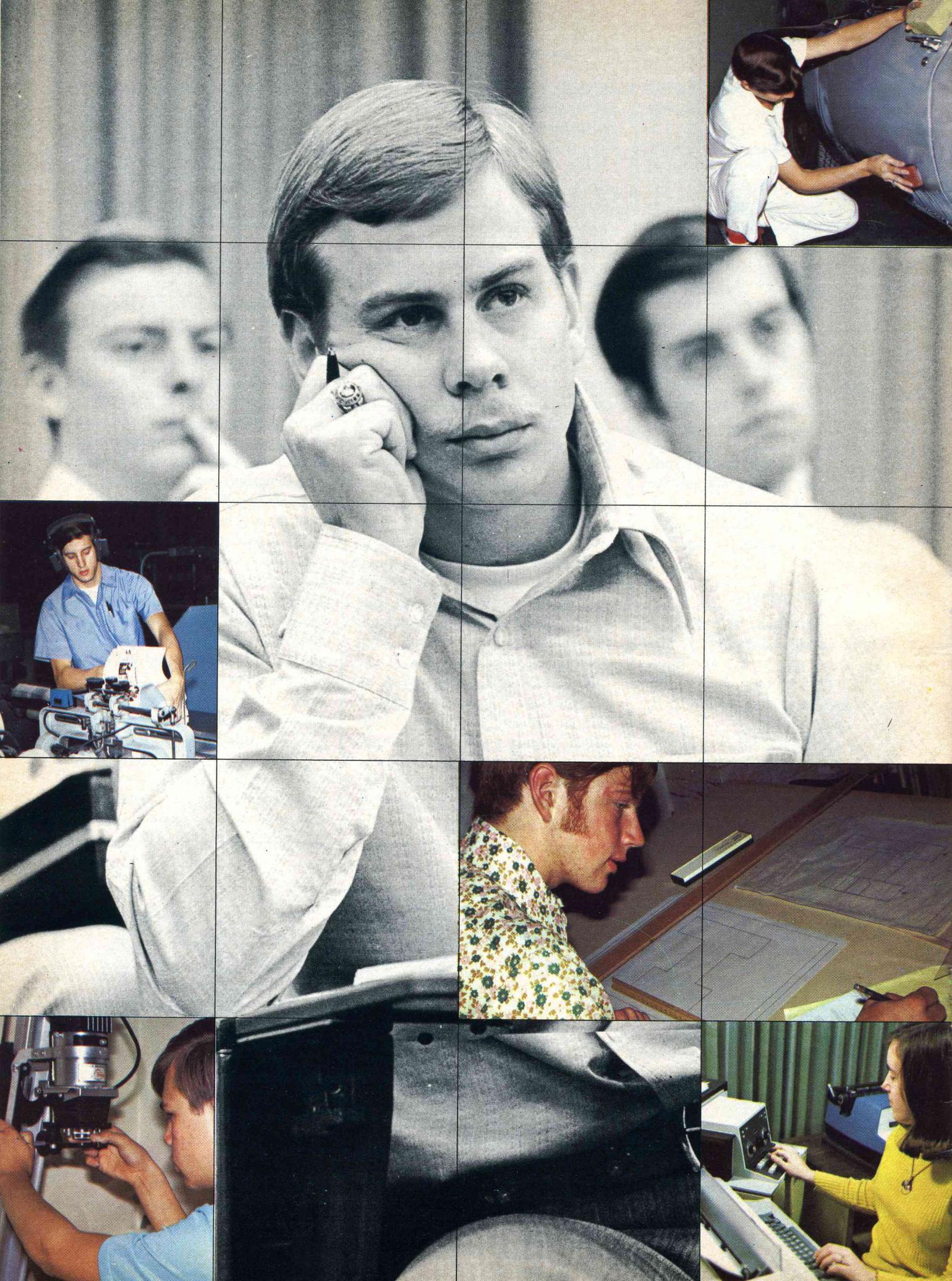
Be a true Christian — not a counterfeit. Don't play games with yourself — or with God. □



Some have splinters in their eyes.
Some manage whole beams;
others compromise with two-by-twos.



It's easy to see hypocrisy in others.



TEENAGERS- how to choose your career

by Arch Bradley

IN A popular American news tabloid, Dr. Herbert M. Greenburg (a psychologist and president of the Marketing Survey and Research Corporation), recently stated: "Four out of every five working Americans today are misemployed. They are doing jobs they are not suited for and are thus miserable. These people hate to get up in the morning and go to work. Once on the job, they can't wait to go home."

As a result of interviews his firm has conducted with 250,000 employees from 4,000 different firms, he concluded that the real job problem in the United States is not unemployment, but *misemployment*.

Dr. Greenburg believes that if a person likes his job he will want to do it well. He will be a winner if he finds his niche.

Did you ever stop to think that upon graduation from high school you are going to be faced with one of the two or three most important decisions of your life — choosing your career — your life's work?

Make the right choice and you will find your job interesting and fulfilling — something to get wrapped up in, work that really "turns you on."

Make a *wrong* choice and your entire outlook on life, your level of happiness and personality growth can be seriously damaged.

Like the beer ad states: "You only go around once in life." And who wants to spend his forty or more working years so bored that most of the day is spent watching for the clock to strike five, signaling *freedom* — the *end* of another working day. What a bummer of a career if the coffee breaks at ten and two

o'clock are the most exciting extravaganzas of the day.

The Bible states that "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." (Prov. 29:18). Let's see how you can exercise vision in choosing your life's work and be among the 20% who actually enjoy their daily work.

First, let's identify the problem. Why do some succeed while others fail? Why are some happy in their work and others are not?

Mr. Herbert Armstrong pinpoints the answer in his autobiography. As a young success-minded businessman, he had observed numerous men begin in similar retail businesses with comparable capital and opportunity. In time some prospered, while others were constantly on the rocks.

Why did some succeed and others fail? His conclusion was "... that the most important cause of failures was the fitting of the proverbial square peg in the round hole — in other words, so many men are misplaced — in the wrong line of business, for them..." (*The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong* [Pasadena, Calif.: Ambassador College Press, 1967], vol. I, p. 128).

He summed it up. All too many people today are busily, but begrudgingly, toiling away at jobs for which they have little or no aptitude. And, of course, the best time for you to prevent this is *before* you step into the labor market!

How have some of your friends chosen vocations? Or how do *you* plan to decide when the time comes? Check the following list of reasons and ways people fall into jobs. If some of them look logical to you, then the greater the need for you to read the rest of this article.

1) You did well in high school in a particular subject and have decided to make that your major in college.

2) Someone you know liked his job so you think you will try it.

3) The career offers status and will prove to friends and foes alike that you have made it big.

4) The career offers very high financial rewards — you will be "rolling in dough" before you are 25.

5) Your parents want you to pursue a certain career because "we've always had one in the family."

Let me emphasize that most of these points are very *valid* factors to consider in your choice, but not the main ones. None of them should be principal, *deciding* factors. Then where do you start?

Aptitude Testing

Human Engineering Laboratories, which was set up by the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation and which has fifty years of research and experience in aptitude testing, has found that aptitudes (specialized talents or abilities) are present and fixed at birth. They are inherited, inborn traits — 19 of which they can isolate and measure.

Many of the people they have tested possess many high aptitudes, but use very few of them in their jobs. Some use none at all. The result: restlessness and discontent. Researchers have found that unused aptitudes cause unrest and dissatisfaction.

Remember, we cannot create totally new aptitudes within ourselves, nor destroy the ones we were born with. Therefore it only makes sense to find out our strong aptitudes and use them to our benefit. In other

words, use our *strengths* instead of our *weaknesses*.

Several sources of free testing exist. If you are in high school or college, by all means talk to your counselor first. Most public schools have an aptitude testing and counseling program. The General Aptitude Test Battery, or "Gatby," is the test you will most likely take.

Your school may also offer interest tests, such as the Strong's Vocational Interest or the Kuder Preference Test. These may be valuable when evaluated in conjunction with your aptitude test and the counselor's evaluation. This leads to the key factor in aptitude testing.

The Counselor

Without a highly trained and experienced counselor, an aptitude test can be useless — even misleading.

Here are three things to look for:

1) A competent counselor should be a specialist, usually possessing an accredited degree in psychological or vocational counseling.

2) The qualified counselor should also have work experience or practical knowledge of many careers and occupations.

3) A counselor should be uninfluenced by any personal likes, dislikes or prejudices he may harbor toward you. Your counselor should discuss your past successes and failures, your aspirations, likes, dislikes, hobbies, etc. — to get to know and help you as a unique individual.

Testing Agencies

If you are not in high school or college, you should be able to take the Gatby test (free of charge) at a state employment agency. The one weakness here is often the lack of personal attention and less experienced counselors.

Of course, many private organizations give varying versions and qualities of aptitude tests. They can be especially useful in determining specific aptitudes for the professions or for business careers.

These private agencies usually

test for more specific aptitudes such as deductive and analytical reasoning, creativity and abstract visualization. They analyze this data and then can suggest a number of vocations or careers which require specific abilities.

Many individuals find that the standard Gatby test helps them most. Others find that a private agency is more helpful.

A reputable one, such as Human Engineering Laboratories, charges about \$200 for fifteen to twenty hours of intensive testing. This includes personal and confidential counseling sessions, some of which can be tape recorded for a client's future reference. Some of the larger universities also offer extensive services which may be worth investigating.

If you live in a fairly large city, you should be able to find testing agencies under the heading of "Vocational Guidance" in the Yellow Pages of your telephone book.

You can also check with the American Personnel and Guidance Association; 1607 New Hampshire Avenue, NW; Washington, D.C. 20009 for a reputable agency near you.

Thoroughly check and compare before you pay a large amount of money for a test.

Interest Tests

If you investigate aptitude testing, sooner or later you will run into interest tests. They measure just what the name implies — not aptitudes, but your *interests*.

Many times these tests are given in conjunction with aptitude tests. Remember, interest tests do *not* measure aptitudes. Therefore, you should not base your decision about a career on an interest test alone. They are valuable to *verify* aptitude tests, however.

If you want to read an excellent book about the Human Engineering Laboratories' findings and approach to testing aptitudes, you might want to pick up a copy of *Be Yourself*, by Margaret E. Broadley, published by

Robert B. Luce, Inc. Margaret Broadley is a professional writer who took tests with Human Engineering Laboratories and then wrote a book about their work. Check your local library or bookstore.

In his book *Round Pegs in Square Holes*, Orison S. Marden quotes a writer as saying: "Nature has armed you with some faculty, some quality, some force which enables you to do one thing better than anyone else. Your business is to discover what that thing is and then discover its worth to society...the better you can do your work, the higher its quality, the greater the need it supplies, the greater will be your reward..." (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., p. 209).

You may already know your abilities. You may know exactly what kind of career you want to pursue. That's fine. But if you don't know or haven't even thought about it yet, you might want to look into aptitude testing — along with getting counsel from parents, high school counselors and others who you know and trust.

A Bible Principle

"... With the well advised is wisdom" (Prov. 13:10). Throughout the book of Proverbs, God stresses going into situations with your eyes open.

In other words, think things through, get advice from those who should know, evaluate the situation for yourself and count the cost after prayer and meditation concerning your background, character, personality, talents and abilities.

Be sure to pray to God to direct you during this whole procedure involving interviews, counseling and finding useful books and materials about suitable careers.

Remember, God very carefully chose the men He has used for specific jobs in the past. He is an expert in putting round pegs in round holes.

And aptitude tests can be an invaluable help! □

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Is It True That . . . ?

I received my third issue of *The Good News* last week. I must say it is really the very best. In the last issue I especially liked the article "Is It True That . . . ?" I have never read anything like it. I believe that gossip surely is a sin of utmost importance. The worst thing about gossip is that the story keeps expanding. By the time ten people have repeated it, the first person wouldn't even recognize it. I hate to admit it, but I have been guilty of gossip myself. I am trying to stop it, but it is not easy in the world today. I also enjoyed the other articles in *The Good News*. I haven't read all in the last issue, but I do want to say thank you for sending it.

George B.,
Virden, Illinois

Your article "Is It True That . . . ?" is most timely and I would hope that copies of this could be sent to and read to the press, Senate, and all those who are assassinating the character of the President. Thank you for your wonderful articles to help make this a richer life.

Don H.,
Hickory, North Carolina

It is surprising that a prolific, efficacious writer as Garner Ted Armstrong in his article "Is It True . . . ?" would delve into the realm of secular, mundane politics; admonishing us not to be like "spoiled children" in assessing talebearing in the light of mass controversy, but in the context of forgiveness. From this I receive the impression that people in high places somehow are privileged and entitled to a little chicanery and truth-stretching.

Merrill E.,
Laura, Illinois

• "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Prov. 11:13). Gossip and talebearing are the fuel of controversy and strife: "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" (Prov. 26:20).

How About the Teen-agers?

I enjoy your booklets and articles on religion, but I think you are leaving out the teen-agers. High school boys and girls need to know about nature, people, organized society, and most important, about God.

Joseph S.,
Darby, Pennsylvania

• We agree. See the article for teen-agers about "How to Choose Your Career" on page 31.

Astrology Wrong?

I want you to know that no where have I ever been able to get a straight answer regarding our good Lord's view of astrology. Today I read it in your story of "The King Who Tried to Forget." Manasseh lived by astrology and that was one of the many grievous sins God was holding against him. I hope you can publicize this so that a multitude of people will hear it. I heartily believe it is of dire importance to awaken the masses that have fallen into this evil.

May the Lord grant you the wisdom to project this information in such a way that it falls on every ear.

Mrs. J. P. G.,
San Francisco, California

• Have you read our booklet "The Occult Explosion - What Does It Mean?" It goes into much more detail on the subject of astrology; and, of course, the booklet is sent free of charge upon request.

The Fundamental Doctrines

Thank you so much for the February copy of *The Good News* magazine. After reading the articles under "The Fundamental Doctrines," I wish to be baptized. Also, yes, I would very much like to meet people in my area who read *The Plain Truth* and *Good News* magazines, and who are members of the Church of God.

Edith D.,
Baltimore, Maryland

"The Greatest of These Is Love"

I have just been reading this month's *Good News* and felt that I wanted to write and tell you that it has been an answer to a prayer. I have been praying very earnestly recently for God to teach me to love, in the way that He wants us to love Him and one another. "The Greatest of These Is Love" is truly magnificent. I am going over it daily for reflection and meditation, along with my continued prayers to God for His love. For this, truly, is the most important gift from God that any of us can seek. I have thanked God, and offer my gratitude also to all of you for this article.

Barbara J.,
Hamlet, Indiana

A House Divided

I wish to congratulate you on your March *Good News* article - "A House Divided." I must say it was an inspiration to read - and true in every sense. Although not a member of the Worldwide Church of God, I nevertheless am convinced that it is God's true Church. I was concerned and grieved to see local newspaper accounts of the grievous and severe charges attributed to certain member ministers.

Discounting the charges leveled by these men - even if true - they were entirely in serious error, in my opinion, by jeopardizing the ongoing work of Almighty God by voicing openly and in the news media their opposition to certain individuals, their alleged human failings and/or policies. Such action could in no way be construed as the will of God, or handling such a matter in a manner as He would have it. If in dissent or disagreement, sincere and prayerful approach within the confines of the ministry should have been exercised.

I am in complete accord that those in dissent erred seriously in their wrongly advised attacks. May the membership, as well as those of us interested in the ongoing of God's Work, be in prayer for those misguided in this matter - for such is the answer.

M. J. E.,
Ft. Worth, Texas

Italian Literature

I've just read my third issue of *The Good News* and I want you to know I read it from cover to cover. I just can't wait until it arrives because it's so helpful. In this recent issue I see where Italian literature is now available. My mother is a native of Italy. She married my father during World War II and came to live in the U. S. For months I've been trying to explain different things to her, but I feel as though she would be able to learn more by reading. That is why I am requesting the following booklets: *You Can Quit Smoking*, *What Kind of Faith Is Required for Salvation?*, *What Do You Mean . . . Salvation?*, *What Is the True Gospel?*

Linda H.,
Moscow, Pennsylvania

• Those interested in Italian literature should write: Italian Department, Box 111, Pasadena, California 91123.

Back Into Bondage?

I no longer wish to receive any of your "works," for the more I read them, the more I am convinced that you only wish to bring Christ's people back into bondage. You preach more of the law of Moses than you do on the law of Jesus. Please remove me from your mailing lists.

Edna S.,
Roland, Arkansas

• "The law of Jesus"? Jesus taught obedience to the Ten Commandments (Matt. 19:17-19). Jesus Himself kept these commandments - and He instructed His followers to do the same. Why? ". . . That your joy might be full" (John 15:10, 11). Christ said it is sin (transgression of God's law - I John 3:4) that brings people into "bondage" (John 8:33, 34). James, the brother of Christ, called this law "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25).

"Ye Are Gods"

Please explain the following scripture to me. John 10:34 states, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" How can we be gods? If we become gods, would not that negate the supreme God, the Creator of everything?

Sebastian L.,
Dunkirk, New York

• The answer to your question is found on page 10.

Meat, Not Milk!

I was afraid the GN was going to come out with milk instead of meat; watered down for the unconverted. My apologies! It was fantastic and did I ever get corrected by some of the articles. Keep it coming - I don't want to stay like I am. You help me to see where changes are needed.

Jill C.,
Johnson City, New York

While I'm on the subject of the magazine, *The Good News*, I might as well congratulate all those who cooked up such a fine piece of meat. It is a thick and lean piece of meat with all the fat trimmed. My compliments on a job well done.

Allan M.,
Peoria, Arizona

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