

MARCH-APRIL 2000

# The Sabbath Sentinel

**Our Choice**



**Life or Death!**

THOU SHALT HAVE NO  
OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE  
UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN  
IMAGE OR ANY LIKENESS  
OF ANY THING ...

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE  
THE NAME OF THE LORD  
THY GOD IN VAIN ...

REMEMBER THE SABBATH  
DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY SIX  
DAYS SHALT THOU LABOR  
AND DO ALL THY WORK BUT  
THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE  
SABBATH OF THE LORD ...

HONOR THY FATHER AND  
THY MOTHER ...

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT  
ADULTERY

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR  
FALSE WITNESS AGAINST  
THY NEIGHBOR ...

THOU SHALT NOT COVET ...

**BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association**

***"The Sabbath was made for man..." — Jesus, the Christ***

# The Sabbath Sentinel

March-April 2000 Volume 52, No. 2 Issue 482

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## Editorial

# Cooperation—Myth or Reality? The Choice is Ours!

When I look at the incredible diversity God has placed in His Church, I am amazed. We recently attended the BSA Conference in St. Louis, and it was encouraging to see the comradery that existed between members of very different Sabbath keeping groups. Has the time come when we can put aside our small differences to work for the goal set before us by God, through His Son? It certainly appears that way!

Even within the pages of this issue, we have articles written by members of many different Sabbath keeping groups, yet it is likely that nobody could take exception to anything that any of the authors wrote within the articles. I know that God must be pleased when we demonstrate His attitudes of tolerance and love.

An interesting juxtaposition of manna with God's Sabbath is presented for our understanding by BSA's First Vice President this issue. Further, we see the relationship of faith, hope and charity placed for our consideration by John Conrod and Doby Petrovic.

Has anyone wondered exactly what the Gospel brought to us by Christ actually was? Was it the message of believing on Him? Was it acceptance "just as I am?" Was there a more significant point that Christ was trying to drive home? Why would we need to be "Reclaiming 'Gospel,'" anyway?

We give you a glimpse into a problem of faith that arose last century in Sabbath keeping congregations in Europe. What some of our brothers went through, at the hands of their brethren will astound you! Could this happen again? You might find it hard to believe that this happened in the first place.

What went through your mind on the day of your baptism? We find out the thoughts of a recently baptized sister in this issue. We also find from Darl Arbogast that we have common ground, despite our differences. This article is an encouraging look at how we are alike, rather than different.

As we are entering the Passover season, we are encouraged to take a look at how we can serve one another in the coming Conference of Sabbath Keeping Congregations. We are given a schedule as well as some background on this coming conference. God must certainly be pleased when He sees His children put aside differences to work together

toward His goals, instead of their own agendas.

Cooperation is indeed an intriguing idea, and one whose time has certainly come amongst the various brethren who are Children of the Most High God. How did Christ feel about our cooperating with one another? In Matthew 18, we find Christ telling us that if even two of us could agree on what we ask for that the Father would give it to us. He also tells us that where two are gathered in His name that He would be there. How much more so would He desire to be among us when many of us put aside our differences and look to each other as brothers, and ask Him to be with us?

When His disciples saw others casting out demons in His name, what was His attitude toward them? Did He not tell them that those who are not against Him are for Him? Here we see that Jesus displayed an incredible attitude of cooperation. Is it within us to display such an attitude? I believe it is, and I am encouraged to see it coming to pass.

Does God cooperate? That is an interesting question that perhaps we have not thought about before. When Christ was praying in the Garden on the night before His death, He asked God to take the cup from Him. Why did Christ do that? Was it because He knew that the Father was easily entreated, and that He might be able to think of another way that His purpose could be fulfilled, short of the horrible death that awaited Christ? Could it be because our Father is cooperative? Such things make for interesting meditation and Bible Study.

There is coming an opportunity to demonstrate our unity in Christ this summer. We are asked as leaders in the Christian Sabbath keeping community to attend a conference in Tulsa Oklahoma in July. Encouraging news is that there have been many responses already, and it has only been advertised a few weeks! The Bible Sabbath Association already has several Board members committed to attending this event, including your editor. If you would like to attend, see the article on that event beginning on the back cover. As our front cover illustrates, we have a choice. We can choose life or death, and God allows us to do either.

*Royce E. Mitchell Jr.*

# The Sabbath — Worthless Manna?

## The President's Message from BSA's First Vice President Kenneth Westby

To complain is to be human. Long lines, cold french fries, bad weather, high prices, and rotten traffic are a few of the things that I instinctively complain about. Occasionally, I find myself among a chorus of fellow complainers crowing about the same things, apparently drawing comfort from shared dissatisfaction.

If my life were threatened by sickness, starvation, or an attacking enemy, none of these petty complaints would likely come to mind. Cold French fries to a starving man would be an indescribable, lifesaving treat. Would we complain about a gift of free food that keeps us from starving in the desert? This makes the manna/murmuring episodes of our forefathers the more striking.

Recall how the newly freed slaves of the Exodus were quick to complain to their benefactor — God. One would expect these ex-slaves to be appreciative of every gesture their deliverer made. Some were, but it appears a large number were not.

Old Testament scholar Brevard S. Childs notes: *“In the books of Exodus and Numbers the murmuring traditions occupy a large portion in describing the complaints, rebellions and unbelief of the people in the face of the threats from hunger, thirst and attack. The gracious gifts of God of food, drink and protection are all turned to dust.”*

### God's Gifts Turned To Dust!

What was wrong with these people? How could they complain about a gracious gift of God like manna. What were their choices? Where was the Wilderness Supermarket? How could they take this miracle bread for granted? God even made it taste good — something like honey wafers or butter cakes.

Not all were so stupid. This food evoked great wonder in and praise from the faithful. The Psalmist describes the manna as bread of angels from the heavenly granary — divine ambrosia fit for gods.

***“He rained down manna for the people to eat, he gave them the grain of heaven. Men ate the bread of angels; he sent them all the food they could eat.”*** (Psalms 78:24-25, NIV)

But a loud, complaining element of rabble within Israel rejected “this worthless manna” and craved

the diet of melons, meat and garlic like they enjoyed in the good old days as slaves in Egypt. ***“But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!”*** (Numbers 11:6)

Manna, was it ambrosia or appetite-ruining worthless food? Surely everyone could see the value of fresh food in the desert. How could manna be viewed as anything but a marvelous gift from God? How could people view the same thing so differently? How could the people be so divided over what clearly was a blessing from God?

### The Sabbath Manna Crisis

Some of us see the Sabbath as a divine gift from God that sustains and promotes a relationship with Him and our fellowman. Others see the same day as a dinosaur relic from an ugly past — a day of freedom-robbing restraints and legalistic burdens. Some see it as ambrosia, while others view it a worthless thing to be ignored or forgotten. Again, how can people be so divided over what clearly was and is a blessing from God?

In fact, it was the Sabbath which prompted the first manna crisis in Israel. God precisely laid out the food schedule and rules: daily manna delivery, gather what is needed for that day only, and don't try to store it. Naturally, people gathered more than they needed and attempted to hold it over until the next day — apparently not confident God would provide tomorrow's daily bread. However, this miraculous bread from heaven would not allow its owners to use it beyond the day of delivery: if saved, it quickly rotted and began to smell. It was as if manna possessed an intrinsic timing device that couldn't be boiled or baked out of it.

Yet when Friday arrived God added one more important instruction concerning manna. ***“Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.”*** Numbers 11:8 indicates that manna was hard, like grain and could be milled and used in a variety of ways. It should be noted that manna wasn't Israel's only food. They had small amounts of meat and some milk from their flocks

and probably some grain from planting or trading. Manna was the daily staple. But as we'll see, Israel wanted more meat than their herds could supply.

So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. ***“Eat it today,”*** Moses said, ***“because today is a Sabbath to the Lord. You will not find any of it on the ground today. Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.”*** Now here it comes, true to form... ***“Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he give you bread for two days’... So the people rested on the seventh day.”*** (Exodus 16:23-30).

#### **“Bear In Mind” Two Great Gifts**

Did you notice what Yahweh told the people (via Moses) to “bear in mind”? ***“The Lord has given you the Sabbath.”*** God is drawing a relationship between two of his great gifts — manna and the Sabbath. The Sabbath was to take precedence over the need to spend hours out on the desert floor gathering little grains of manna. God knows people have to eat, but He knows better that they need to rest and to learn from Him the purpose of life. This was not an either/or situation. The Sabbath, after all, was a feast day. So God provided both food and rest — His way.

The test wasn't over whether to eat or to keep the Sabbath. It was whether to simply take God at His word and trust Him enough to obey Him. God would then provide a double manna portion on Friday and give them Saturday off for worship and rest.

In order for His people to enjoy His Sabbath gift, God had to perform another miracle with the manna. That imbedded timer which made it rot and stink after 24 hours was programmed to ignore that parameter set for Friday deliveries only. Consider that. Additionally, the angels who send the manna are instructed to drop a double portion on Friday in order for the nation to enjoy a restful Sabbath. Fathom God's elaborate Sabbath preparations!

This was no minor event, but a major episode featured prominently in the *Torah*. Consider how God marshaled the heavenly host and the physical elements to provide a way for his people to keep the Sabbath — and still be nourished by grain grown in heaven. Utterly amazing! God graciously gave His

people two gifts — the Sabbath and manna — and He was determined they would enjoy both. Can we ever doubt God's willingness and ability to involve Himself in all the details necessary for us to obey Him?

#### **Manna Becomes “That Worthless Bread”**

A year after the ***“bread from heaven”*** (Exodus 16:4) began falling, the people were tired of it, as we read at the beginning of this article. The initial source of complaint was the “rabble”: that group which followed along but didn't know God or his mercies. Their complaints incited those who knew better than to take up a rebellion against the diet God provided. All that God had done to liberate the nation from slavery sunk into the shadows and on center stage was this dreadful, monotonous, appetite-ruining bread. Who cared if it rotted or came in double portions in preparation of the Sabbath! Diet now defined their lives and people were getting more worked up by the day:

***“Moses heard the people of every family wailing, each at the entrance to his tent,”*** (Numbers 11:10). Wailing!? Israel's rejection of their heavenly bread and their demand for a changed diet pushed Moses to the breaking point. The fomenting complainers had successfully romanticized the pleasures of Egyptian cucumber salads and effectively minimized the discomforts and misery of slavery. ***“We were better off in Egypt!”*** they cried (vs. 18). God was angry. Moses, disgusted and at wits end, was throwing in the towel, saying to God, ***“...put me to death right now...”*** (vs 15). As it turned out, God put the complainers to death.

Again I ask, how could such a crisis erupt over a gracious gift of God? Didn't these unfaithful, ungrateful people realize that when they rejected the manna, they were rejecting the God who gave it?

#### **The Deeper Meaning**

I'm struck with the several similarities between manna and the Sabbath. Both came as divinely created ***“miracles,”*** the Sabbath when God created the world, and manna when God created a nation. Both picture deliverance and salvation. Both point to Christ who is the ***“bread of life”*** and ***“Lord of the Sabbath”*** — the way to life and rest in the Paradise Kingdom of God.

When Christ walked through the grain fields on the Sabbath his disciples ate and fellowshiped with their master. When criticized, he justified his actions

by David's eating of the "consecrated bread" that symbolized God's provision of daily bread, like the manna. It was on that occasion that he declared himself Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-28).

The deeper meaning of the manna episodes was not lost on Moses. To the new generation about to enter the land of promise, Moses reviews the highlights of the forty years of wandering that tested the hearts of God's people. **"He humbled you causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."** (Deuteronomy 8:3).

This manna was a *new thing* God did. A surprise with no precedent. It behaved "strangely." It "kept the Sabbath," even if the people did not. It responded to its maker. To enjoy it the people had to follow God's words regarding its harvesting and handling. Following God's words proved key to having enough to eat. Living by, trusting, and believing God's words proved the only path to the promised land.

Manna, like bread, sustains but does not guarantee life—even though it comes from heaven. God had a greater point to make with manna — a fundamental truth — that life comes from God, from His obeyed words, imparting life to those who follow Him. Jesus, like Moses, understood the profound spiritual meaning of the manna. At His great temptation, when hunger threatened His life, the devil challenged Him to do as Israel did: give in to His food cravings, forget trusting His Father, demand food now, command the desert stones to become bread. Do it now...Eat!

How did Jesus, in the grip of starvation, respond to this overwhelming temptation? He gives as His answer the words of Moses concerning the lesson of the manna. **"It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"** (Matthew 4:4).

Manna here becomes the Word of God. At that very moment Jesus was living God's words by loving His Father with all His heart (Deuteronomy 6:5): a single-hearted trust that God would sustain Him — and God did. After the battle was over and Christ was victorious, angels were sent to feed Him and attend to His health and needs. He too received manna from heaven in the wilderness.

Later, during His ministry, Christ would perform many "food miracles" to demonstrate that He was like the manna that saved Israel in the desert. He had compassion upon the crowds that often followed Him to remote places. He would feed them by

miracles of multiplying a little into a lot — a *new thing* never before done. New manna miracles. Christ revealed the profound spiritual meaning they contained by declaring: **"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty."** (John 6:45).

### The Manna That Is and Is Not

As a reminder to Israel of God's daily food, Moses had some of the manna put in a jar and kept in the ark. The ark is long lost and we can assume the manna is too; no matter — there is no present power in either. Three-and-a-half millennia ago, manna was a life-giving gift from God that many in Israel treated with contempt, calling it *"that worthless manna."* They choked on the meat they craved, never entering the land of promise.

The manna of Moses' day no longer is. An eternal manna sustains us today: the Son of God, the living bread of life — the Word. Living by every word of God was and remains the only Way to life.

That other gift of God, the Sabbath, unlike manna, was not lost in history, but continues its weekly cycle. It is time: it doesn't spoil and can't be put in a jar and saved. Yet, it passes and can be wasted.

Still, the Sabbath comes fresh again every week, open to be enjoyed with God or ignored as common. Like manna, it too contains a great and profound lesson — a fundamental truth: God is the Creator and Deliverer (Exodus 20:11; Deuteronomy 5:15) — our ultimate calling is to be at rest and in fellowship with Him. The Sabbath pictures that future rest as the Kingdom of God.

Jesus confirmed the Sabbath was made for man (Hebrew, *adham*). It was made when man was made and was the first holy thing, a gift from God to man, with love. The Second *Adam*, Christ, has declared Himself Lord of the Sabbath. Through Christ the Sabbath becomes our day of rest and a symbol of His promised Kingdom. He calls, **"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"** (Matthew 11:28).

It disturbs me that many people regard the Sabbath as undesirable, like our faithless forefathers did of the manna. I believe they disrespect a gracious gift of God — rich in meaning and abundant in benefits. They deprive themselves. Perhaps we in the BSA can help those folks change their view. Isn't that why the BSA exists? Would that please our leader, the *Bread of Life* and the *Lord of the Sabbath*?

# Picture Perfect Passover

by  
Doby

All of us have an interesting thing in common: ... we were all born in the same “state.” ... While this makes for an amusing pun, there is still a literal truth to it.... It is certain that all of us came into the world in the very same “state” which Adam and Eve were created by God: naked and unashamed.

For Adam and Eve, sin brought with it the knowledge of their nakedness and they, being afraid, hid from God. ... After this, we see the Scriptures correlate “nakedness” to the “shame of sin.” In Jeremiah 13:26-27, God says to Jerusalem ***“I myself will lift up your skirts over your face, and your shame will be seen. I have seen your abominations, your adulteries and neighings, your lewd harlotries, on the hills in the fields. How long will it be before you are made clean?”***

Almighty God is not only omnipotent, omnipresent, and omnificent — He is omniscient. He is “aware” of all. Before God, we are physically and spiritually naked. Indeed, if He so chooses to, God can “see” everywhere — whether it be into and beyond the grave or even through the blackness of the abyss. He knows everything. Proverbs 15:11 states, ***“Hell [meaning the grave] and destruction lie open before The ETERNAL, how much more the hearts of men!”*** ... Truly, how much more!

Hebrews 4:12-16 reads, ***“For the word of God [is] living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight: but all things [are] naked and opened to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] confession. For we do not have an High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses; but [who] was in all points tempted as [we are, yet] without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”***

These beautiful words bring to mind the first line from Act III, scene 1, of Shakespeare’s Henry V: where King Harry turns to his army and yells, ***“Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more!”*** To

us, this quotation should bring to mind a completely different context: how privileged we are that our Saviour’s sacrifice has torn the dividing veil — giving us access through the breach — and into the Holy of Holies (our Eternal Father’s mercy seat), where our Mediator Jesus Christ now sits at His right hand.

It is by the life, death, and *everlasting* life of Jesus Christ that we have redemption — from our carnal, mortal bodies — by the grace of God. Yes, Salvation is by grace, nevertheless, it is the law that lets us know (to our shame) that we, of ourselves, are spiritually naked and in need of God’s righteousness. ICor 15:53-54; ***“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”***

Romans 3:21-26; ***“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God [which is] through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference: For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God has set forth [to be] a propitiation [a lawful, fully atoning sacrifice] by His blood through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed to demonstrate, at this present time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”***

We know that this Godly faith, if it is without works ... is dead (James 2:17, 18, 20, 26). Our faith must be alive in the Spirit of our Saviour Jesus Christ; He did His Father’s works. In our lives, we must emulate His works — because, although Salvation is a free gift of Grace — yet, God’s reward is given according to works.... This reward is *recompense*: wages for good deeds — or evil (Romans 6:23).

These “good deeds” are not “works of the law” per se, but our God-inspired works of faith and righteousness. Through the fruitful gifts of His Holy Spirit,

we emulate God's own righteousness! In love, God sacrificed (for us) the pure sinless life of Jesus Christ — that we might Spiritually receive (and thus grow in) His "mind" and His love.... This, for God's purpose: that we might live.

Consider all of this, starting at 2Corinthians 5:14, ***"For the love of Christ constrains us [meaning holds us together]; because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died: And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them, and rose again." . . . Verse 17; "Therefore if anyone [is] in Christ, [he is] a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things [are] of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."***

What greatness God is working out in those who love Him! Without the italicized "extras," verse 1 of 2 Corinthians 6 reads, ***"We then, workers together, plead also that you do not receive the grace of God in vain."*** ... Working all together, we must be fruitful in good works for God, with His righteous character growing in us. Wearing the armour of God's righteousness, we are to bear the fruits of His righteousness in us; ... thus, we will receive our crown of righteousness from Him.

Not by our works of the law nor by *our* works of righteousness, but by our Saviour's sacrifice have we been given this promised capacity to grow into God's own righteousness: working in His faith — through us. ... Titus 3:4—8; ***"But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [This is] a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those***

***who have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."***

Notice the awesome significance in how everything flows with such a full and beautiful tapestry of God's glorious meaning! ... ***"For you are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ"*** (Galatians 3:26-27). Consulting Thayer's Lexicon, we see that the meaning of the Greek for "put on" suggests a great deal more than just "being clothed in." It also indicates that we are sunk into, enveloped in, and covered by Christ. Indeed, we should understand that ours is a monumentally significant baptism!

Regardless of whoever that person that actually performs our baptism is, we are all baptized into our the Body of our Saviour.... Our baptisms are inexorably tied to His holy FAME.... Take a moment to think on that.

Our common English usage of the name "Jesus" has different renderings in many languages — but, from the Hebrew ("Yehowshua" — Strong's #3091) it means "the Eternal is Salvation." That meaning is His fame.... "Emmanuel" meaning "God with us" and "Christ," meaning "anointed" (the same as the Hebrew for "Messiah") were also our Saviour's fame.

Jesus' unparalleled fame stands as the anointed Son of God, the sacrificed Lamb of God, the Word of God, the Lord of the Sabbath (which was made for us), ... our Creator, our Messiah, our Saviour, our Redeemer, our High Priest, our elder Brother, our soon coming King, our Bridegroom, and so much more! His fame is that awesome and significant! ... We must never forget that the great authority of Jesus' name is dependent on the truth of His unique and monumental FAME as our Passover.

The sanctified ceremony of Passover commemorates Jesus Christ's sanguinary sacrifice for us. We must take it worthily.... Indeed we must look deep within ourselves, and we must remember His holy fame.

Thus, we are all baptized into Him — our Saviour, and begotten into His Body: God's Church, which was born in His blood. We, who are the begotten children of God, are defined by the indwelling Holy Spirit of God — which is not divided! ... It is not drawn and quartered! ...

God's Flock is to be One Spiritually-begotten organism with One true Shepherd (John 10:16). We

*(continued on page 21)*

# FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

by

John Conrod & Doby

"And now abide" Paul wrote, "faith, hope, love, these three...." (1Cor 13:13). The word "abide" is from the Greek (Strong's #3306) **meno**, a root word meaning- 1) to remain, abide: 1a) in reference to place, 1a1) to sojourn or tarry, 1a2) not to depart, 1a2a) to continue to be present, 1a2b) to be held or kept, continually, 1b) in reference to time, 1b1) to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure, 1b1a) of persons, to survive, live, 1c) in reference to state or condition, 1c1) to remain as one, not to become another or different, 2) to wait for, await one.

As long and complex as the definition is, it does seem to give the meaning of this clause some extra clarity. In addition to this, the Scriptures show a special connection to "these three" qualities in the overall view of a Spirit filled life. We see that they work well together for our edification.

In a sense, faith must come first. Jesus compared faith to a mustard seed (Matthew 17:20, Luke 17:6). It's not difficult for us to see the analogy between the true Christian life and that of any growing flora. As the plant begins life as a seed, so our walk with God begins with faith. In fact, we see that the Eternal tried to teach faith to the first people that He created and placed in the Garden of Eden. Faith was their first test....

After our loving Creator instructed Adam and Eve in the necessities of life (with what they should and shouldn't do), He then gave them some space. God left them alone- so that they might have the opportunity to exercise living by faith. (That meant putting their trust in Him during His absence.) ... The purpose of this was to allow their development past a childlike obedience, which merely relied on the sight of God's Parental presence.

Our original human parents failed that first test of faith — and thus lost God's trust.... Throughout God's dealings with Israel, He likewise tested the nation's faith. The Scriptures tell us of times when Israel was blessed with miracles that they could see, as well as other times, when they were expected to remember these, and to live by faith — not by sight.

Verse six, in Hebrews 11 (the faith chapter), is important. It says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him." This is a reason-

able statement, saying that God expects us to initially believe in His existence before we come to Him.

Without faith in His existence, we can't even begin to please Him! Since our first parents failed their test of faith in the Garden of Eden, this was an extra requirement of faith. (Adam and Eve could see God — therefore, they knew that He existed. The test was whether they would have faith in His Word.) We must not only have the faith (of Hebrews 11:6) that God exists, but we (as they should have) must also put our trusting faith in His Word. It's quite simple: first, we must **believe in Him** — then, we must **believe Him** and His Word.

God's Word is truth. Jesus Christ came and gave His life for the forgiveness of our sins. He earned our love, respect, and trust. For us, He is God's Word (John 1:14) — in whom we must have faith.

This step of faith is summed up in one of the most memorized Bible verses — often called "the Gospel in a nutshell": John 3:16, ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."*** We must have faith in what Jesus did for us; ... and, since He died almost two thousand years ago, we must believe it without seeing it.... To "doubting" Thomas, He said, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29.)

There is much more to say about faith, but let us now look at a verse of transition — Hebrews 11:1- "Now faith is the substance [*realization or confidence*] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In this verse faith is connected to hope. ... There, in the book of Hebrews, chapter 6, verse 19, we find hope describes as "an anchor of the soul...." As we'll see, it is that — and more.

We need to understand that faith and hope have a symbiotic relationship. They are mutually dependent. Certainly, you can not have a healthy one without the other. Faith and hope grow in grace and are both to the glory of our God and Saviour.

Notice, as well, the further connection here in chapter 6 of Hebrews; verses 10-12: ***"For God is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love, which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minis-***

*ter. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end: 12 That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”*

Reading here of God’s perfect and sworn counsel of promise, we continue in verse 18, *“... that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”*

Our hope for eternal salvation is through faith in God and His Word. That faith in our Messiah’s promised return, which brings us true and everlasting life in the Kingdom of God, must be undeniable. In fact, the Scriptures call this sure and steadfast hope of True Believers **“blessed”**: *“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,”* (Titus 2:13).

If we continue with the analogy of a plant for illustrating the Christian life, we could say that faith and hope can be compared to a plant seed taking root and growing. Through God’s Holy Spirit, the seeds for His Kingdom are sewn within us. (Indeed, Jesus uses the analogy of the mustard seed to describe both true Christian growth and God’s soon coming Kingdom! Read Matthew 13:18-32).

In Colossians 1:27 Paul wrote *“... Christ in you, the hope of glory....”* Hope takes root and our faith grows to bear fruit. Colossians 2:6-7 says, *“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”* This Hope abides in Christ.... Note Jesus’ use of a plant to illustrate this in John, chapter 15:5 — *“I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit for without Me you can do nothing.”*

We start with Faith likened to a plant seed; out of this seed, the roots of Hope grow, which in turn nourish the trunk and branches of our Faith tree to grow- that we might produce Godly fruit. In Ephesians 3:17-19 the Apostle Paul was inspired to write, *“... that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in*

*love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”*

We are trees in God’s garden of grace. Love is our fruit and the source of our seeds. Consider this amazing analogy: in Love, through His Holy Spirit, God plants the seed of Faith; Hope takes root, then the seedling Faith grows into a mature tree and bears the fruit[s] of Love. In Galatians 5:22 Paul said, *“the fruit of the Spirit is love....”* Thus we see that these three things abide/remain/... for true Christians: to continue their walk of Faith with Christ, growing in Hope (being rooted in Christ), and to soon produce Love as the product of this growth.... (The fruit of Love itself indeed bears seeds for endless cycles.)

Although Paul gave to the church of Galatia what appears to be a whole list of spiritual fruits, the Corinthians were told that Love was all of the spiritual fruits and more. Some think that the translators should have put a colon after “love” in the Galatians list. Galatians 5:22-23 would thus read *“... the fruit of the Spirit is love: joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance....”*

What do you think? Is joy a fruit? (Love makes Christians rejoice.) Is our peace a fruit? (Love is not easily angered.) Is patience a fruit? (Love is patient.) Is kindness fruit? (Love makes one kind.) Is goodness a fruit? (Love does not delight in evil.) Is faithfulness a fruit? (Without love, even the faith that moves mountains is nothing.) Is gentleness a fruit? (Love is not rude.) Is self-control a fruit? (Love is not self-seeking.)

Even hope is used to describe love. Love always hopes. By all means — in Romans 13:10 Paul said that love fulfills the law.

When Jesus was asked, in Matthew 22:37-40, what was the greatest commandment in the law, He offered two — both based on love: love for God and love for one’s neighbor. He said that on these two hung all the Law and the Prophets. Hence, we not only have to have faith in Him and believe His words — our faith and hope should be followed up by our loving actions. Truly, we must live His words.

The apostle John gave a good summary in chapter 4, verse 8 of his first epistle — “Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love.” Thus, these three things abide/remain for Christians- faith, hope and love; but the greatest is love.... Now go, as Jesus said, and do likewise.

# Reclaiming “Gospel”

by  
Ken Westby

The other day I tuned in to a cable religious program and was treated to some big muscle “gospel weight lifters” breaking boards and tearing telephone books in two . . . for Jesus. What was the point — “Follow Jesus and you’ll build intimidating bulk!” OR “Look, not all Christians are weenies!”? . . . The point seemed to be “ ‘Gospel’ sells.”

Drive down to the gospel book store and check out the “spiritual power” books on the rack under the sign “Gospel Sale 50% Off!” While you’re there, buy some “gospel” music by the hottest “gospel” artists. Pick up a “gospel” bumper sticker (“Honk If You Love Jesus!”) — and maybe a “gospel” wall plaque on your way out. Then, relax while listening to “gospel” radio on the way home.

## What is “the Gospel?”

Has the word “gospel” become generic, like Kleenex, for anything religious? Is “gospel” just another undefined punch word used by raspy-voiced TV revival preachers OR merely a common verbal condiment to be sprinkled liberally over sentimental church-talk? Has “gospel” become so trivialized that all sense of its original majesty of meaning is lost?

The biblical word translated “gospel” comes to us from the Greek (*euangelion*) and has a specific meaning: “Good News.” Its usage comes from the “good news” of victory proclaimed by a messenger returning from battle; the “good news” was the content of the message. We see that Christ used this standard Greek word to announce the revolutionary content of His Gospel/Good News; . . . the question is, “Good News” of what and for whom?

**“Jesus went throughout Galilee . . . preaching the good news of the kingdom”** (Mat 4:23). **“The time has come,” He said, “the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”** (Mark 1:14-15). The Gospel of the Kingdom of God was the central message of Christ and His apostles. It is the news that some day God will rule over all — that Christ will literally end all war and suffering, raise the dead, usher in a marvelous age of universal peace and prosperity, and rule on earth for one thousand years (a millennial Sabbath) — as the first step toward eternity; (See Isaiah 2 & 11, Rev 5:10, as well as chapters 19 through 22). That is God’s Good

News: there is a new world coming — His!

The biblical idea of the Kingdom of God is deeply rooted in the Old Testament teaching: that there is one eternal God who has a plan for mankind and that He has revealed Himself unto those whom He created in His image. Christ, as the Son of the Living God, came to reveal His Father more fully and with a mission to show men and women how they might enter the Kingdom of God (Matthew 20, 7:21). Christ’s mighty works proved that the King of that Kingdom had come among them; His parables illustrated truths of the Kingdom. On the eve of His death, He reassured His disciples that they would happily share His fellowship again — when He would bring the Kingdom.

After His resurrection Jesus did not swerve from this message: **“He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the Kingdom of God”** (Acts 1:3). At the heart of His model prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray to our Heavenly Father: **“Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”** This prayer petitions God to come and reign, to manifest His power and wisdom as King over all the world.

The fact is, the Kingdom of God is not one built by men. It is not voted in, nor gradually constructed in the hearts of men, nor brought about by religious revivals or massive socio-political change (on any human level). The Kingdom of God is the governmental rule of the Eternal Majesty and His divine Son. As an act of God, with splendor and great force, it will soon be brought to Earth.

God’s Kingdom is miraculous and supernatural. It is wholly of God’s design and working. It is also *holy* because it will be filled with the presence of God — just as, in the paradise of Eden, the *holy* Sabbath hosted God’s peaceful fellowship with man. What began on a Sabbath will be completed on a millennial Sabbath: the Kingdom of God — the heart of the Gospel.

Where do we fit in? To Christian men and women, the *Gospel* message has been entrusted. We’ve been commissioned with the high responsibility to proclaim the Good News of God’s Kingdom, complete with its salvation announcement of how one and all can now come under God’s loving rule.

At the personal level the terms for entering God's Kingdom are these: repentance of sin (which is rebellion against God's righteous rule and principles), acceptance of Christ as our Savior and King, and commitment to live a new life — now, under His rule rather than our own.

On God's part, He offers both to pay the cost of our sins and to forgive them. When we, in faith, accept His holy grace, God further gifts us with His Holy Spirit — to help us become like Him in righteous mind and character. The indwelling of God's Holy Spirit is our guarantee to His promised gift of eternal life: making us a son or daughter in His Family — the crowning blessings of great rewards and an eternal inheritance.

The Kingdom of God belongs to the present as well as the future; but, to enter the future realm, one must willingly submit oneself in perfect trust to God's rule here and now. This spiritual contract for citizenship into the Family and Kingdom of God is perfectly symbolized by the rite of baptism (see Romans 6). It is signed with the blood of the King Himself.

We do not know when Christ will appear in the heavens — bringing His rule (soon hopefully), but it is certain that we had better take seriously the charge to share God's Good News far and wide. Jesus said, **“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come”** (Matthew 24:14).

This true Gospel is spectacularly “great news” — both at the personal level (forgiveness, grace, salvation) and at the global level (crime, war, suffering, and injustice giving way to happiness, peace, and plenty). The whole world desperately needs this news — as it nervously moves into the third millennium AD. As our culture decays in sin and cynicism, young and old alike cry out for meaning and hope. Will they hear the Good News of the Kingdom of God — or just the sweet whine of Nashville “gospel”...and the sound of “Jocks for Jesus” tearing telephone books?

The best way to reclaim the word “Gospel” is to focus on sharing its Good News: The Kingdom of God — mankind's last, best and only hope.

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**Kenneth Westby** is Director of the Association for Christian Development and host of the weekly *Virtual Church*, live by phone (918-222-7158) 11 AM Pacific Standard Time Saturdays.

### **(Conference, continued)**

“As a servant and leader of God's people, would you be willing to attend a conference to discuss specifically how we could work cooperatively toward the biblical injunction to preach the Gospel to all nations? This conference will **not** be about local church programs or discussing doctrinal difference. It will **not** be about how we can join member lists or give up any sovereignty or corporate structures. It **will be** about discussing a major project of taking the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations!”

The invitation is directed to all ministers, elders, and church leaders who are interested in exploring a cooperative effort in the Cause of Christ. Initial response has been very good. The conference venue features round table discussions with short, topical presentations by C. Wayne Cole, David Antion, yours truly, and several others.

The Tulsa Church of God will provide complimentary refreshments and meals for participants during the conference. There will also be a special Sabbath service from 2-4 PM. To receive an information packet with reservation form write to Lawrence Gregory, PO Box 54621, Tulsa, OK 74155 or call 918-622-3448 (email: lgregory@ionet.net). Room reservations can be made directly with Sheraton Tulsa Hotel (918-622-5000).

### **The Coming Kingdom of God**

What better subject to ponder as we step into a new millennium. There is a sense of urgency to this business of preaching the Good News.

Is our generation ripe — meaning ignorant, lost and in need of God's saving — beginning with receiving the Gospel of the Kingdom of God? Jesus asks us to open our eyes and look at our generation. He doesn't hold us responsible to preach to generations past or future, but only to our own. Generations grow, bloom and die — they don't wait. Neither can we.

How would Jesus respond to the ripe harvest in our year 2000? Would he have us respond differently? As he views a culture full of churches and religion and a people languishing and lost for lack of truth, would he not send workers into his harvest field? He asks us to likewise have compassion upon the harassed and helpless awaiting the good news — and then do something about it. This will be our focus in Tulsa. Please join us and join me in praying that the Lord of the harvest will lead us.

—Kenneth Westby

# Unleavened Bread — Meaning for Today?

by  
Royce Mitchell, Jr.

Have you ever looked at some of the things that God has done and wondered to yourself, “Why did He do that?” As I have studied and learned more about God’s Way of life over the years, there are a number of things that have caused me to ask myself this very question. One of those “wonder-filled” things is His creation of a set of Sabbaths commonly known as “High Sabbaths” or “Holy Days.”

Whether or not one agrees with the idea that those days (listed in Leviticus 23) are still to be observed by a New Testament Christian, we can certainly agree that God ordained them and that their biblical significance remains. While scripture plainly states as much, questions still remain... What was God’s purpose for legislating these Sabbaths and what is their meaning?

We know that God has a purpose for everything that he does. In the January—February 2000 issue of *The Sabbath Sentinel*, the front cover pictured an impressive galaxy which is not visible with the unaided eye; yet, this spectacular spiral system of stars becomes observable with the focused help of the Hubble Space Telescope. We know that there is a wonderful *raison d’être* for all of God’s creation — whether distant galaxies or events on planet Earth.

God did not create those majestic “heavenly bodies” without a purpose. Such is likewise the case with the “Holy Days” found in Leviticus 23.

Of particular interest at this time of the year would be the days which directly follow the Passover. We read of them in Leviticus 23:4-8, where it is stated, **“These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD’s passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no**

**servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein,”** (KJV). God made no mystery of His desires for this day — ALL were to attend a sacred assembly!

We notice that two sacred assemblies were required: one on the first day and another on the seventh day.... But, what could God’s purpose have been for asking that those days be kept? Often will find the meanings of the symbolism, that is used in the Old Testament, explained in the New Testament. All scripture is useful for us today; (2 Tim 3:16, **“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”**).

1 Corinthians 5:7 states, in part, **“... For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:”** (KJV).

Indeed, the Passover lamb which was sacrificed under the Old Testament was merely a symbol of Christ. But, more importantly, we learn that *it was the blood of the Passover lamb* that caused the Israelites to be spared from the death of the firstborn by the angel of death. Once we see that Christ is that lamb, we can see that we, as the coming firstborn, are also spared from that same angel of death by His blood.

What then is the meaning of the Days of Unleavened Bread, the next set of Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23? Turning to the context of the last reference, we find in 1 Corinthians 5:8, **“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”** (KJV). We now see that these days of unleavened bread, that is, bread without a rising agent, relate to that forgiveness that we receive as a result of our acceptance, of the covering blood of the sacrifice on our lives. What, then, does the leaven represent? It is clear from the context that leaven is related to mal-

***“What, then, does the leaven represent? It is clear from the context that leaven is related to malice and wickedness.”***

ice and wickedness.

Wickedness is clearly a condition that is in opposition to the Way of God. Many verses of scripture tell us of the unpleasant end of those who practice wickedness. (What then does this tell us of this day?)

Here in Verse 8, notice the distinct contrast between bread without leaven — unleavened bread — and bread with leaven! We see that the unleavened bread is compared to sincerity and truth.... According to Christ's prayer the night of His capture, God's Word is truth.

How does that translate to useful information for us: His called and chosen people? Consider first, that we are called to repentance. Repentance brings with it a turning from our own ways to the Ways of God. But, we can not maintain this new path without help. The Scriptures and history have taught us that mankind does not know the way to peace. (Isaiah 59:8, Rom 3:10—18).

Peace is the condition into which God calls us. Because we are still carnal beings, we need help to continue on this new-found path. That guidance comes in the form of the Holy Spirit.

But, again from looking at the Old Testament, we know that God will not dwell in an unclean situation. So, how do we get cleaned up? We must be washed in the blood of the sacrifice that was made for us, the blood of Christ. That is the meaning of Passover....

Now we get a glimpse of God's reason for having created that set of Holy Days known as the Days of Unleavened Bread. Since leaven represents wickedness, and the Israelites were commanded to put it out of their lives, we can see that, once cleansed, we too must put leaven (sin) out of our lives. The physical leaven found in bread is symbolic of the spiritual leaven found in our lives.

We should search every corner of our lives for this leaven. When we find it, we are to get rid of it...While the wine of Passover represents Jesus

Christ's redeeming sacrificial blood, His broken body is our unleavened "bread of life."

What is it about leaven that caused God to use it as an example for us? Notice this: 1 Corinthians 5:6-7 states, **"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us..."** Even though we were washed clean by the Blood of Christ's Sacrifice, we see that even little bit of leaven if unchecked, can work its way through our lives and has the potential to return us to the soiled state of wickedness from which we were rescued.

Leaven has the effect of causing bread to rise, giving it that soft texture that we enjoy. It literally *puffs* the bread up. This analogy did not go un-addressed in scripture. 1 Corinthians 8:1-2 states, **"...we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but char-**

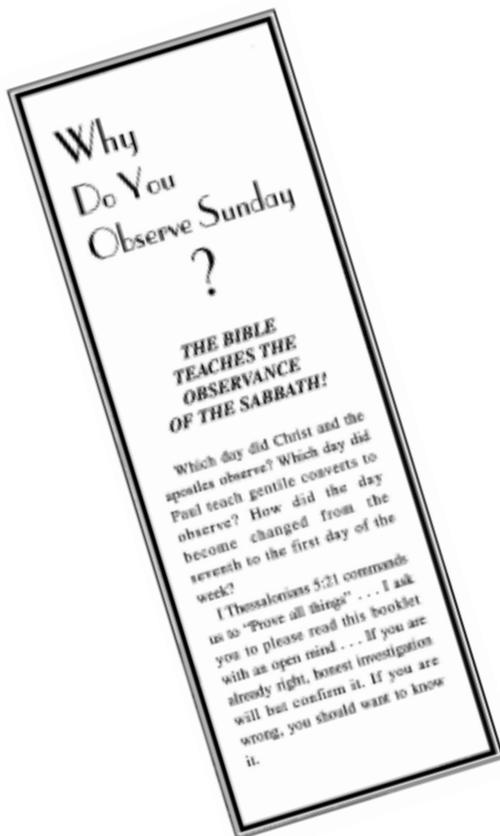
***"Saul had become puffed up, like a piece of leavened bread! He forgot that he was nothing without God. The first king of Israel stands as a lesson to us that if we forget where we were before He called us and taught us His Ways, we too will find ourselves rejected by God."***

***ity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."*** We see that even if we know and understand the things of God, that such wisdom, when not combined with love, tends to puff us up, as leaven does bread. That is a stern warning for us to see our knowledge in proper perspective, as a tool with which to better understand, serve and love God — but not to raise ourselves above our brethren. Indeed, we are warned not to think higher of ourselves than we ought.

Once again, we can look back into the Old Testament for some insight. Saul was rejected as king of Israel because he forgot the attitude that he had as a child. In 1 Samuel 15:17, we are reminded of that attitude: **"And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD**

(see "Unleavened Bread," page 19)

A stimulating and thought-provoking narrative discussing the trials of our brethren who stood for what God had taught them, in the face of trials and persecutions, even from their own brethren. A must read for all who want to understand what Christ meant when He said that our enemies would be those of our own household! Order today from the BSA! Only \$5, postage paid!



What would you answer to someone who asked you this question . . . "Why don't you observe Sunday?" Perhaps a better question is to ask why anyone would! This small pamphlet is designed for handing out to those who have questions about Sunday versus Sabbath keeping. It can be stamped with the name and address of your local Sabbath keeping congregation. They come in lots of 100 for a mere \$20. An inexpensive way for your congregation to spread the good word about God's Sabbath Day!

# Thoughts Upon Baptism

by  
Bonnie Williams

Standley Lake is in our city but it is removed from the buildings, houses and noisy roads. We (Erick, my husband, my Mom, Dad and I) had to walk about 5 minutes to the lake shore in the freezing cold wind. For some reason, the wind blew harder and colder the closer we got to the water ( I felt that Satan must have been upset!).

As Erick and I walked, we could see whitecaps on the lake's surface and we could smell the colder weather tumbling over the mountains next to us. The sun hid behind clouds and the clouds banded together, determined to keep us cold. The mud at the lake shore was almost like freezing quicksand. The more you walked, the more mud you accumulated on your feet.

Erick went first, since he would have to be wet and cold the longest. From where my mother and I stood, we could see the genuine pain on his face when he sat in the water.

He and my father were out about 30 feet, and with the backdrop of a cold gray sky, deep blue water and towering mountains, the effect was sobering and very real. One could almost imagine Christ being baptized in the river Jordan by his cousin, John the Baptist.

When it was my turn I realized just how cold this was going to be. As I began walking down to the water's edge, I prayed that God would somehow give me the strength to overcome the freezing

water.

By the time I was knee deep, a thought occurred to me. The whole reason I was standing in freezing water was because of my sinning. Then I thought, "Wait a minute, all I have to do is get REALLY cold for a minute. But Christ had to be beaten, whipped, tortured and die—for doing NOTHING!" That gave me the strength to endure the cold.

I felt like I was getting an easy way out. I mean, just cold water—and Christ died. What an incredible gift!

***"Wait a minute, all I have to do is get REALLY cold for a minute. But Christ had to be beaten, whipped, tortured and die—for doing NOTHING!"***

As I sat down in the water I completely lost my breath. I began hyper-ventilating and I could barely catch my breath. But I did it!!!

As cold and windy as it was, when I lost my breath, I really got the feeling of death. If not for my father helping me out of the water, I truly would have died.

I have been thinking about yesterday a lot. I am glad our baptism's went as they did. It is something we will never forget—that feeling of needing the help of our Father to pull us from death. There was so much meaning that day. It was truly unforgettable.

After the laying on of hands,

we turned to walk up that hill back to the warmth of the car. I was completely numb from my ankles down. I went up the dirt hill barefoot but it felt like I was walking on stumps.

We still couldn't see signs of civilization. If I closed my eyes, I could imagine how those death marches felt for the Jews in the Holocaust.

But as I walked up the hill my thoughts went back to the freezing water and the painful cold. My troubles seemed insignificant when I compared the sacrifice

Christ made for me.

So I laughed my hurting feet away! I just thought of how ridiculous it was to complain about my frozen feet when someday I might be killed for what I

believe. Comparing the two still makes me laugh.

I wanted to share my experience with my new brothers and sisters in Christ. All my life I used to ask my Mom and Dad what would happen if Christ returned before I got baptized. I worried that I would be left back on the ground while my parents be changed into spirit beings.

FINALLY, I can look forward to that great day and know that I will be changed too!

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*Bonnie Williams, our new sister, is also recently-wed, residing with her husband in Colorado.*

# THE STRENGTH OF COMMON GROUND

by  
**Darl Arbogast**

The Anglo Saxon descendents of Israel seem to have been born with a lust for freedom. It has been a hallmark in our history, regardless of what land our ancestors occupied. On the other hand, just as strong as the lust for freedom, has been our legacy of disdain and contempt for tyranny and oppression.

Such, who are privileged to have been called and given an understanding of God's true Sabbath, can look back over the bloodstained pages of history to the first century, and trace a trail of tears. Those tears were poured out by the persecuted saints as they fled, bled and died, trying to escape the crushing hand of religious tyranny. After the government of Rome sanctioned the apostate church (which had fallen away from God's true Sabbath and the 14th Passover, and had adopted Sunday and Easter, among other pagan beliefs), that church became the Roman "Universal" Church, known to us as the Roman Catholic Church!

The imperial government of Rome ruled nearly all of the civilized world in the 4th Century, so their state religion was quickly dispersed into every province they controlled. They sent their priests in to assume control of all religious teaching to the uttermost parts of the world.

Jerome, a Hebrew and Greek scholar, was contracted by the apostate Roman Church to translate a Bible. This is where the Latin Vulgate originated. It is a Bible made to order for the Roman Catholic Church, to protect and give credence to their version of the truth!

There was also a Hebrew and Greek scholar in Damascus by the name of Lucian who operated a school for teaching and writing Hebrew. Lucian was not under pressure to bend the writings any certain way to satisfy those who paid his salary, as Jerome was. He was able to bring the Hebrew into Greek as accurately as possible. The Bible he produced became known as the "Greek Text" and as the "Recognized Text".

Recognizing this, we see the danger of Christians' looking to the "early church fathers" for instructions or guidance. By the time Jerome was contracted to translate a Bible, those apostate church leaders had fallen from the truth. They had inculcated so many pagan beliefs into their religion that they outnumbered the truths which remained.

Those Christians who remained faithful to God's Sabbath and the 14th Passover continued with the Greek text which was purer in its translation. The apostates clung to the Vulgate, which had been polluted and slanted in its translation to give credence to the false doctrines being taught by the apostate "church fathers," who were framing and establishing the Roman Catholic Church!

*"When we consider just how great the sacrifice of Christ has been for each of us, and how little most of us have done for one another, then we ought to wonder just where the love of God is in our lives."*

The faithful Sabbath keepers who observed the 14th Passover became known by their Greek nickname, which was Sabatarian "Quartodecimens." These Sabbath keeping

Christians ranged from the middle east through Asia Minor to Europe, on up through Scandinavia, and over into Scotland, Ireland, Wales and England.

For over 1,000 years they suffered heavily at the hands of the Church of Rome. They were driven from their homes and massacred by the millions. It was Satan's attempt to bury the true Spirit Body of Jesus Christ, which He had proclaimed could not be done in Matthew 16:18!

A man of whom every Sabbath keeping Christian in America should take note, and for whom they should give a silent prayer of thanks to God, is Stephen Mumford.... Persecution against Sabbath keepers in Europe grew severe in 1664. At the time Stephen Mumford and his wife came to America from England, scarcely a dozen known small congregations remained. They were in hiding for the most part, meeting in the homes of members, rather than meeting openly in public.

By 1671, Stephen Mumford and his wife had established the first Sabbath keeping congregation

on American soil. From that one congregation, today we have the Seventh Day Baptists, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Church of God Seventh Day, and literally hundreds of other branch-off groups. Many, if not most, of these groups are independent and unincorporated.... Filling one's lungs with the breath of freedom should be as much a right in one's congregation as it is in one's country.

Had the early American Sabbath keeping congregations pulled together and shared their common ground, instead of pulling apart and dividing up into various and competing camps, think of the witness to the world that they would have been all these years! America has had its chance to become a Sabbath keeping nation! God sent a teacher of this truth here, early on, while the nation was in its infancy.

Unfortunately, the politicians of America, as in virtually every nation on earth, resist the true Sabbath rather than embrace it. It did not help the situation that the Sabbath keeping congregations became divided. This diminished their influence on the law makers, and caused a great deal of struggle for those who took up the challenge to protect the fundamental rights of Sabbath keepers in this country.

Many Sabbath keepers have fought a valiant fight with the law-makers to maintain and defend the rights of Sabbath keepers in this nation. Our forefathers established it as a nation founded upon the principle of religious freedom. Today, it seems evident that the overwhelming majority of Sabbath keeping Christians live in nations occupied by the descendents of ancient Israel: those who do bear a double responsibility!

Not only are they very likely to be a biological Israelite — but also, possibly a spiritual Israelite, as stated in Galatians 6:16. A physical seed of Abraham and Isaac and and spiritual seed of Christ, also! What an awesome thought!

I visualize that our efforts ought to be one of "healing of a breach." If all the Sabbath keeping brethren in America had stuck together and pulled together, regardless of what their corporate name may have been, from 1671 until now, America might be a much better place than it is today! Year after year, our political system, and those who are involved in it, have both continually seemed to degrade resulting in what appears now to be a culture with little respect for law

or morality.

The people who serve our country are no longer expected to uphold the same high standards our leaders were in years gone by. Could it have been different? Could it yet be saved? Could this ugly shameful situation be turned around?

As for we Sabbath keepers, our Savior, Christ Jesus, did not create denominations or organizations, or corporations! He created a single plan of salvation, with one weekly Sabbath common to us all; He made the Sabbath for man, not man for the Sabbath. He is Lord of that Sabbath, and the only way to eternal life is through Him. This is why Sabbath observance is so important.

Let us review verse three of the book of Jude: ***"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."***

Today some Sabbath keeping volunteers are standing in the gap caused by the division that has

***"Today some Sabbath keeping volunteers are standing in the gap caused by the division that has continued among Sabbath keeping churches of America for well over one hundred and fifty years."***

continued among Sabbath keeping churches of America for well over one hundred and fifty years. Can the breach be

healed? We simply do not know! We do know that the public at large is prejudiced against Sabbath keeping churches. A stigma such as this is a definite hindrance to our being an effective witness.

The Bible Sabbath Association poses no threat insofar as recruiting pressures, etc. are concerned. It is on neutral ground, with volunteers from every group wanting to be involved. Can the Bible Sabbath Association fill this gap and be an effective witness to do the work which remains — a work that these churches have not been able to accomplish?

In Titus 1:4 we also see our common faith mentioned! All who are true followers of Christ are part-takers of the common faith! . . . Philipians 1:27 reads, ***"Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you, or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel..."***

How will this generation of Sabbath keepers be judged for striving together for the faith of the gospel? I sincerely hope that we will make a better

showing in the areas of commonality, of cooperation, and diligence than our previous generations have done.

What on earth is to be gained by Sabbath keepers alienating themselves and distancing themselves from one another? The answer to that is “nothing!” On the other hand, there is everything to gain by love, respect, and acceptance of one another, individually and by group.

When we consider just how great the sacrifice of Christ has been for each of us, and how little most of us have done for one another, then we ought to wonder just where the love of God is in our lives. What have we really done for our Saviour to help get the gospel out? Any such positive effort is also a service to the masses in society who have yet to experience His Way.

Keepers of the Sabbath, possessing the Holy Spirit of God, are called the “house of God.” We are admonished that “today judgment is upon the house of God!” This is a very sobering thought, but we can be glad and rejoice if we know that we are doing our best.

As we step forward into the new century, let us make the most of what common ground we find. Let us lock our arms together singing praises to our Heavenly Father for the privilege to know Him and to serve Him, and let us know each other, serving side by side with each other as we take the gospel to the world!

We are experiencing the true freedom — freedom from the entrapment of sin and Satan, and freedom to share the joy of such with as many as the Lord our God will call! *“From every mountain side let freedom ring.”*

*Darl E. Arbogast, a long time member of the Church of God, and a Sabbatarian, can receive comments at his mailing address: 4080 Due West Rd., Kennesaw, Ga. 30152 Phone: 770-428-5719. Or, comments may be sent to The Sabbath Sentinel at our mailing address on the inside cover. Email comments can be sent to the editor at [rmitchel@flash.net](mailto:rmitchel@flash.net).*

### ***(Unleavened Bread, cont.)***

***anointed thee king over Israel?”*** Saul had become puffed up, like a piece of leavened bread! He forgot that he was nothing without God. The first king of Israel stands as a lesson to us that if we forget where we were before He called us and taught us His Ways, we too will find ourselves rejected by God.

None of this is to say that we can be saved by anything we do. Salvation is a free gift of God’s grace, which works in us through His calling and merciful forgiveness. While the Israelites did pass through the sea (*symbolic of baptism*) and were forgiven ~ God still expected them to obey His commandments and judgments; the same likewise applies to us. *We must repent of our sins, become baptized by water, and start obeying and living by every Word of God.*

Even though we have been forgiven and washed in the blood of Christ, and have received the gift of His Spirit, we are still expected to obey His Laws! Failure to obey His Laws is the slippery slope of sin, which is degradation into wickedness and lawlessness. This is the lesson of the leaven that God was trying to teach us when He instituted the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Whether or not one believes that the keeping of these days is required of those who are called in these latter days, it is nevertheless clear that God at least intended for them to teach us a lesson. That lesson is easily understood, when viewing all of the scriptures on the subject. The OT Scriptures regarding the Days of Unleavened Bread are listed directly after the ones regarding Passover, which we know to be representative of the cleansing nature of Christ’s sacrifice....

They show us that since we have been cleansed from all sin, that we must now actively seek to remove sin from our lives. We might consider the keeping of those days as optional, but we dare not consider the prevention of sin through His Spirit as a mere option. If we do, we will too easily return to the state of being puffed up that we had once escaped. Having been freed from the evil which is in the world, we should be actively seeking to remove and avoid anything that might serve to return us to that state.

What a glorious lesson that the Days of Unleavened Bread have to teach us, if we will only learn from them!

*Royce Mitchell is your editor of The Sabbath Sentinel. He receives responses to his articles at [rmitchel@flash.net](mailto:rmitchel@flash.net). Response letters may be sent to him in care of the Bible Sabbath Association which has its address on the inside front cover. He, and his wife of 24 years, Susie, live in Texas and currently attend a variety of Sabbatarian congregations. They consider themselves a part of the Body of Christ, but of no one particular secular organization.*

## BSA 2001 Essay Scholarship Contest

The Bible Sabbath Association would like to announce the 2001 BSA Essay Scholarship Contest. The contest is open to all students who are in their Junior year in high school (or home schooled students that are one year away from being college-bound approximately age 16-17) and to all college age students up to the age of 25. To apply for this scholarship, the applicants need to request an application from the BSA office. Applicants will need to submit, along with their application materials, **a recommendation letter from their high school or college counselor AND a recommendation letter from their church pastor or elder, if they have one. Home schooled children can send in a letter from any adult figure (organizational, community leader, etc.).** The contest will be comprised of an essay entry per applicant. The essay must answer a question from the theme of this year's contest, "The Sabbath Community: Observance and Growth Issues". Applicants will be asked to answer two questions within an essay body format. Potential questions that might be asked include: 1) Why is the Sabbath Important to you and How do you keep it Holy? 2) How do you believe is the best way of promoting the truth of the Seventh Sabbath to local communities or the world at large? or 3) How do you think cooperation can be promoted among Sabbath keepers of different denominations or doctrinal positions? These questions are aligned with the mission and purpose of BSA. In the process of this contest, we hope to generate ideas from our youth of importance to the Sabbath community at-large.

The contest will start in August of this year, with applications being accepted through February 1<sup>st</sup> 2001. Each applicant will be requested to subscribe to The Sabbath Sentinel for one year along with their application entry. The winners of the essay contest will be awarded a first prize of \$750; second place \$500, and third place \$250. Scholarship money will be paid directly to the trade school/college or university the student has been accepted at for the fall 2001 school year. The contest is open to international students from other countries. It is also open to any Sabbath keeping Christian regardless of church or organizational affiliation. For more information please contact BSA board director/scholarship committee chair June Narber Harrison at [ejnarber@mindspring.com](mailto:ejnarber@mindspring.com) or write her at PMB 193, 6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC 27615. Applications will be available by mid summer. Children or close relatives of the Directors and Officers of The Bible Sabbath Association are NOT eligible.

## FUNDS being sought for the 2001 BSA Essay Scholarship Contest

The Second official BSA scholarship essay contest will soon be under way. We need financial support dedicated to the scholarship cause. All donations given to the BSA scholarship fund will be used 100% for the prizes awarded. No money received will be used for any other purpose. The BSA budget has no money allotted for the scholarship fund, so we ask money be donated specifically for this cause. Without donations, we do not have prize money to award to our worthy youth. The applicants to this contest will have to answer in-depth questions pertaining to the Sabbath and will require hard work on their part to creatively construct solutions to the presented questions-at-hand. Through this scholarship program, we support the educational objectives of our Sabbath-keeping youth. Our youth are very important to us, as they are the future of the Sabbath-keeping congregations. Please consider donating to the BSA scholarship fund. Send donations to our main BSA office. Donations can also be given over the telephone with a credit card; and they are tax deductible. The goal this year is to raise \$4,000 to give the scholarship program a firm foundation to build from. Please direct any questions regarding the scholarship program to chair of this committee, June at [ejnarber@mindspring.com](mailto:ejnarber@mindspring.com) or write her at PMB 193, 6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC 27615. ALL DONATIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE BSA OFFICE MADE OUT TO THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION AT 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. Please designate money donated is to be used for the scholarship fund, please.

*(“Picture Perfect Passover,” from page 8)*

must become One with God the Father, One with Jesus Christ our Saviour, and One in the Holy Spirit which dwells in all who have put on Christ (John 17).

The ancient commerce papyri that was used in the first century clearly evidenced the idiomatic sense in which Matthew 28:19 conveys being baptized “in the name of.” In this case, the idiom “in the name of” means, not merely “in the authority of,” but rather “into the possession of:” the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.... We are baptized into the possession of the Father — who put up the ransom; ... into the possession of the Son — who paid the price; ... and thus, into the possession of the Holy Spirit— which is simply the gift of God that makes us members in the One Body of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the power of God, (the gift of) which defines His Church.

Full of meaning, water baptism is a beautiful ordinance that has been ordained by God. Through this watery immersion we declare our faith in God the Father as our Saviour (this includes faith in His Holy Word, who became Jesus Christ our Saviour). We also express our acceptance of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection for us, and our repentance of the old life (the burial of the old man, and the new man rising to a new and higher-minded life from that point on)....

That is when God gave to us the begetting birthday gift of His comforting and counselling Holy Spirit, with the laying on of hands.... At this begetting/birthday baptism, we are (thankfully) not physically naked. While we were spiritually naked, in the shame of sin, yet we rose up, out of that watery grave: clothed in the fame of Jesus Christ.

Still, our purpose in life only begins with this baptism in the waters of God’s grace. It does not end there.... Indeed brethren, by the mercies of God, we must present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, who is our spiritual worship — not being conformed to this world, but being transformed by the renewal of our minds, that we may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom 12:1—2).

Throughout our lives we must bear fruits worthy of that noble repentance. With our characters, in who and what we are, we should strive to reflect our Saviour’s noble example in every way — remembering His holy fame — thus, partaking of the Passover worthily, and renewing and refreshing our sure baptism.... Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of

our confession, Christ Jesus! ...

Just before his own baptism, Jesus said “thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” The New English Bible translates these words as “we do well to conform with all that God requires.” Indeed, we are required to conform to God. It should be obvious that Jesus’ baptism was an example to us: He was sinless — and where there is no sin, no forgiveness is needed. Surely, it is we who have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory; it is all of humanity who need God and His forgiveness.

In the Old Testament, we have a foreshadowing of God’s Salvation through baptism, with the symbology of Israel fleeing Egypt through the parted waters of the Red Sea. Red, a symbol of blood; water, a symbol of the grave; Egypt, a symbol of sin and death.... We, likewise fleeing sin, are washed clean with the sinless red blood of the Lamb and buried with Him: being covered by and buried in the waters of baptism, and rising up from them, as He rose from the dead and is now alive forevermore.... Brethren, we are now God’s workmanship and His begotten children. We have chosen life (symbolized by our repentance and baptism), and now, with the gift of God’s Holy Spirit, we must continue to choose life (symbolized by the keeping of God’s Commandments).

(This is getting long, so please read **1Peter 1:13—22** for yourselves....)

Brethren, dear friends — we must indeed proclaim God’s Sabbath and His true Gospel *more* fully — for our cups do *overflow* with His abundant grace! ...Therefore, let us take the time now before this soon-coming Passover, to reflect back on our baptisms; ...and then, GO with our Saviour: ... *“Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more!”* ... Always give thanks and glory to God the Father, for His abundant fame and blessings — which He has so richly poured out onto us through His perfect Passover Lamb, our Saviour: in whom we have forgiveness, redemption, salvation, and life everlasting!

*Doby and his wife Kim reside in Westbank, British Columbia, and consider themselves fellow servants in the body of the “Greater Spiritual Church of God” (which is not distinguished by any man-made corporate boundaries, but is indeed defined by the indwelling gift of God’s Holy Spirit). They can be reached via their e-mail — DOBYandKIM@home.com.*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Nov. Dec. SS at hand reminds me — how blessed we are to have quality leadership.

(That was) one strong message from the President, understanding the challenges and responsibilities for us, who believe that ALL the commandments are valid today.

The article “The First Holy Thing” was refreshing — well, the entire Sentinel was especially helpful.

Allen R. Babcock

*Thanks Allen! Such high praise really belongs to our God and Father for making us able to lend ourselves to His use. But, it is very gratifying for me to have such high praise come from a former BSA Board member.*

ED.

I am pleased with your November — December issue of **The Sabbath Sentinel**. I would like at least a dozen issues of the same to distribute to my church and to other Sabbath keepers for them to become acquainted with the **Bible Sabbath Association**. I am enclosing an offering to help with costs and hope to help the Sabbath to be promoted. May God bless your efforts in (His) Sabbath promotion. Could you please send a few (Bible) Sabbath Association brochures?

Pastor W. H. McCann

*We are certainly humbled at your praise, and give thanks to God for His guiding Hand. By this time you should have received the brochures you requested. You should also have received the issues you requested. If there is any other way in which we can help you spread the word of His Sabbaths and Laws, please let us know!*

ED.

We really enjoy the Sabbath Sentinel and other literature you have sent us. May God continue to bless you.

Dorothy and Don Turrell

I find the BSA materials affordable and accurate. There is no way I could (afford to) get similar results from a commercial printer.

John Bouknight

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THE EXTENDED BODY OF CHRIST!

### **CHURCH OF GOD CONFERENCE**

As a servant and leader of God's people, would you be willing to attend a conference to discuss specifically how we could work cooperatively toward the Biblical imperative to preach the Gospel to all nations? Such a conference is being planned for late July of this year. The location is Tulsa Oklahoma.

The conference will not be about local church programs or discussing doctrinal differences. It will not be about how we can join member lists or give up any sovereignty or establish corporate structures. It will be about discussing a major project of taking the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations!

Tulsa is near the geographic center of the United States and is easily accessible from anywhere within the States. There are many suitable accommodations at reasonable prices. The Tulsa Church of God offers its support in this venture.

If you think that you would be interested in joining in the effort to publish/preach the Gospel to the world, please contact Elder Lawrence Gregory, Pastor, Tulsa Church of God, P.O. Box 54621, Tulsa Oklahoma 74155-0621. Please contact him by April 1, 2000 if at all possible!

### **PASTOR SOUGHT**

Congregation Beth El - A Messianic group in Western Washington (Puget Sound area) is seeking a full time pastor. Further details can be found on our website:

[www.shalom@congregationbethel.org](http://www.shalom@congregationbethel.org)

**classified ads . . .**

PHILADELPHIA. WHEN AND WHERE. POB. 26141 TEL AVIV 61261 ISRAEL (June 00)

**BIBLE TRUTH versus RELIGION, and COMING TRIBULATION!** \$1.00. CAL, Box 1035, Bellavista, CA 96008. (Apr00)

**OLIVE BRANCHES-** Web site provides links to many bible study resources, as well as items of special interest to the greater Sabbatarian community. Send for our free "Resource Guide." [www.olivebranches.net](http://www.olivebranches.net). Olive Branches, PO Box 1293, Fairview, TN 37062. (June 00)

**New Booklet: "God's Great Clocks."** God made the weekly cycle a template. He created a week of seven months, a week of seven years and the Jubilee cycle of seven weeks of seven years. Is there a week of seven millenniums? How should we interpret the time-periods of Daniel and Revelation? Send \$5 to: Wake Up America Seminars, PO Box 273, Bellbrook, Ohio 45305 or download it free at [www.wake-up.org](http://www.wake-up.org), or call 1-800-475-0876 for a credit card purchase. (Apr00)

**BSA DIRECTORY OF SABBATH KEEPING CONGREGATIONS-** If your group wishes to be included in the new edition, please let us have your information as soon as possible. Please send to 3316 Alberta Dr, Gillette, WY 82718, general information about your group or organization, such as name of group, leader, phone number, address. If you send an email address, we can attach a form and send it to you. You can fill it out and email back to us. Otherwise we will mail the form. If you have access to a computer, the best method of sending information to us is via email so that it doesn't need to be retyped. **Don't assume we have received your email unless you receive a confirmation back from us.** We will utilize Microsoft Word with a 12 point in Times Roman. The final Directory version will be done in Microsoft Excel.

Entries to the Directory are free for the first 250 words. We will edit any entries more than 250 words. Should you desire to include more information about your organization or group than will fit in the 250-word format, additional space is available. The cost will be \$50 for an additional 250 words, or \$100 for a full page. Photos, [black & white are better than color], can be inserted in your extra page for \$30 each. **(This is a correction to the ad that ran in our January/February issue)**

**FREE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER—** "The Fellowship Commentator; A quarterly Newsletter of Biblical Analysis and Commentary" edited by F. Paul Haney, an independent minister. Also free with this ad— "The Eagle & The Lion Christian Bible Study Guide" and "Study 32a: Keeping the Sabbath."

Christ Fellowship Ministries, P.O. Box 370, Watertown, CT 06795 USA (Apr00)

**FESTIVAL FARM** in Shady Valley, Tennessee is offering a few primitive campsites this year:

- Quiet, creekside locations
- Working farm atmosphere
- Organic Vegetables available
- Adults preferred
- Miles of hiking trails in Appalachian Mountains

Details and reservations: 423-739-9399 or [rliskow@preferred.com](mailto:rliskow@preferred.com). Brochure available. Suggested donation \$15 per day. (APR00)

**FREE REPORT--** How to Teach Your Children Biblical Work Ethics, and, The Principals That Guarantee Employment Success: The Road Map, PO Box 4154-SS, Kansas City, KS 66104. (Apr00)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE ABOUT THE EARLY JUDAEN-CHRISTIAN CHURCH. [www.cog-christianos.org](http://www.cog-christianos.org) (June 00)

**Mid-South Sabbatarians** — News, Events, and Directory. On the web at [www.sabbatarians.net](http://www.sabbatarians.net) (April 00)

**Classified ads** are available at the rate of \$1.00 per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address - telephone numbers count as one word) for each issue in which the ad is published.

**Display ads** are available at \$150 per quarter page for each issue the ad is published. Where possible your camera-ready copy will be utilized, or we will design your display ad for you. Send copy for all ads and payment to *The Bible Sabbath Association*, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718.

**Discounts-** 20% off for 2nd issue and 30% off for subsequent sequential issues.

**Ad copy** without payment will not be accepted for publication. Deadline is two months prior to publication. BSA reserves the right to reject or edit any ad copy. Publication does not imply endorsement by *The Bible Sabbath Association* or *The Sabbath Sentinel*.

## A Conference on The Great Commission

Tulsa Conference 2000

July 28, 29, 30  
Sheraton Tulsa Hotel

How do small, independent churches go about "proclaiming the gospel to all nations"? As more individuals and small groups spin out from larger organizations, it is a question that must be faced. Those larger organizations committed great resources to fulfilling their concept of the Great Commission. Lacking those resources, what is a small group to do?

Is taking the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all the world still a standing order of Christ to his church? Has it been modified? What does it involve? These and other related questions will be the focus of a summer conference hosted by The Tulsa Church of God and its pastor, Lawrence Gregory. Meetings will begin Friday evening and run through noon on Sunday.

The Tulsa congregation, like many other recently formed small churches, is looking for ways to share the good news beyond the local community. Corporate religion with its media superstars are not an attractive evangelism model for most independent congregations. The Tulsa Conference aims to consider other workable models to proclaiming the Gospel.

In his invitation letter Pastor Gregory asks:

***(Continued on page 12)***

### **TULSA CONFERENCE 2000 SCHEDULE**

July 28 - 30, Sheraton Tulsa Hotel, 10918 E. 41<sup>st</sup> St.

**Reservations: 1-918-622-5000**

**Friday Eve.: 7:00 FELLOWSHIP HOUR** (nonalcoholic beverages etc. complimentary by the Tulsa congregation)

**8:00** Opening Keynote Address: "***Why must the Gospel of the Kingdom of God be proclaimed to all nations?***" — C. Wayne Cole; 20 Min. Presentation: "***Nations of the Earth and the Word of God***" — Ron Willhoite and Maynard Kappel;

Open session: Introduction of ideas on how we can accomplish our objective

**Sat. Morn: 8:30-10:15** Opening 30 min. Presentation: "***Essential characteristics of the Kingdom of God***" — David Antion

**Sabbath:** Open Session

Discussion of the presented ideas from Friday evening

**10:15-10:30** Break

**10:30-11:30** Discussion period

**11:30** Lunch Break - Buffet - complimentary by the Tulsa Church of God

**2:00-4:00 SABBATH SERVICES**

**5:00-6:00** Open Session Continuing discussions of ideas

**6:00-8:00** Dinner

**8:00** Continuing discussion

**Sun. Morn: 9:00-12:00** Opening 30 min. Presentation: "***Overcoming obstacles to proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God***" — Ken Westby

Discussion: Implementing decisions and setting objectives.

Where do we go from here?

Conclusion

## The Sabbath Sentinel

**A Bi-monthly Publication of**

The Bible Sabbath Association  
HC 60 Box 8, Fairview, OK 73737 USA

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