

# The Sabbath Sentinel

January–February 2015



**When People Pray, God Hears  
No Matter How Young**

**BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association**

Jesus said, "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

# The Sabbath Sentinel

January–February 2015 Volume 65, No. 1 Issue 571

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The Bible Sabbath Association is dedicated to promote the seventh day Sabbath. As a nonsectarian association for Sabbath-observing Christians, BSA accepts members who acknowledge Jesus Christ (Yeshua the Messiah) as their Savior, believe the Bible to be the Word of the Eternal, and uphold the seventh-day Sabbath. BSA takes no official position on other theological issues, and publishes *The Sabbath Sentinel* as a forum to promote understanding and to share items of interest with Sabbath observing groups and individuals.

Opinions expressed in *The Sabbath Sentinel* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Staff or of *The Bible Sabbath Association*.

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For the 2015 Directory ...

**From Calvin Burrell, President of the BSA**  
**Seventy years of BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION**  
**1945 to 2015**



The Bible Sabbath Association (BSA) has a 70-year history of bringing God's people together across the lines of doctrinal and denominational difference that too often divide them.

The founders of BSA, George A. Main and his wife Mabel D. Main, were members of the Seventh Day Baptist Church. The first BSA office was in their home in Pomona Park, Florida, for more than ten years (1945-1955).

The longest-serving editor of BSA's *The Sabbath Sentinel* magazine was Eugene Lincoln, a Seventh Day Adventist Church member from Indiana, Michigan and Maryland. His quarter-century as BSA editor was from 1960 until 1985, and he also served a term as BSA President.

The longest tenure for any BSA secretary-treasurer was a Church of God (Seventh Day) couple—Lawrence and Lottie Burrell. They served from their farm home near Fairview, Oklahoma, the national BSA office address from 1955 until 1995. The BSA service of the Mains, Lincoln, and the Burrells was mostly or all voluntary, a true labor of love.

More recently, servant leadership in the BSA has been provided by several persons who came from a Worldwide Church of God background and experience. These include Richard Wiedenheft, Ken Westby, Richard and Shirley Nickels, and others.

In addition to the four Sabbatarian organizations high-lighted in paragraphs above, BSA membership and leadership has been valued and exercised by persons from the Sacred Names movement, from the Hebrew roots movement (a.k.a. Messianic Judaism), from other organized groups of Sabbath-keepers, and by some Sabbath-keepers without any such affiliation. Seven Sabbath-honoring segments of the larger Christian community are recognized in separate articles elsewhere in this Directory.

Three commonalities have allowed and encouraged BSA collaboration among diverse peoples of faith: (1) belief in the Bible as God's Word; (2) belief in Jesus Christ (Yahshua Messiah) as the Savior and Master of men; and (3) belief in the weekly seventh-day (Saturday) as the Lord's Day and true Sabbath of Scripture.

As an early issue of *The Sabbath Sentinel* magazine put it, the BSA's primary goal has always been "Sabbath promotion and defense...laying special stress on the purpose to make and maintain the Association wholly undenominational and non-sectarian."

What strategies has the BSA employed over the years to achieve this goal and purpose? Perhaps the most

recognizable tool of our Association in seventy years is *The Sabbath Sentinel* (TSS) magazine. Beginning publication in 1950, TSS celebrated its 500<sup>th</sup> issue in the spring of 2003, and has added another 70-plus issues since then. For the past years, it has been sent without subscription charge to all BSA members and to any others who request it.

Second only to TSS magazine in familiarity among BSA ministries is the "Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups," which has been published every few years since 1955. The tenth edition was issued in 2010, and the book or online device from which you now read is the eleventh edition. The number of Sabbath-keeping people and non Sabbath-observers who have gained helpful information and who've found precious fellowship within the varied Sabbatarian faith community through the pages of our "Directories" is known only to God.

Other services and projects of the Bible Sabbath Association over the years include the production and distribution of a variety of Sabbath literature, books, cassette tapes, CDs and DVDs, and wall calendars with Sabbaths in red (or another contrasting color). We've sponsored an "Echoes from Eden" radio ministry with Elder Frank Walker, the field-work of a BSA Executive Secretary, and youth essay contests on the importance of the Sabbath. We've helped to foster public seminars called "Friends of the Sabbath," and other local fellowship activities. We maintain a BSA website and Facebook discussion boards.

We thank God for those who have been BSA members and front-line soldiers in the effort to defend and promote seventh-day Sabbath observance for seventy years. A partial list of BSA Presidents and TSS Editors appears below. On behalf of the countless people who have been blest by one or more BSA ministries, we say thanks to those of you who willingly continue to shoulder this gospel responsibility and Sabbath outreach that has meant so much to so many.

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BSA Presidents:

George Main: 1945-47

Albert Gearhart: 1947-53 and 60-71

Terrill Littrell: 1971-79

John Bevis:

Eugene Lincoln:

John Kiesz:

Leroy Bass: 1984-87

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*Continued on Page 8*



# Jesus: In 3-D

by *Kenneth Westby*



How do you “see” Jesus? For most people Jesus is a one-dimensional historical character from the New Testament. His story is told by others including quotes attributed to him. He was historical but after his death and resurrection he ascended to heaven where he apparently has remained for the past two thousand years. Some believe he will return to earth at an unknown future time. So the story goes. Devout believers might even perceive of Jesus as a two-dimensional being—divine spirit and personal savior in active spiritual communion with his followers. Is there more to the complete and vivid vision of who Jesus truly is?

If one has already made up his mind who Jesus is and is satisfied with the traditional and ancient creeds of Christendom describing him, he may not be open to changing or expanding his perception. He may even avoid reading this article. This is a normal reaction as we humans tend to resist new information if it challenges our comfortable beliefs.

When Galileo used a new device, the telescope, to see things not previously seen, he pointed it at Jupiter and to his surprise observed four satellites revolving around it. The commonly held notion that the earth was the center of the universe and everything revolved around it now came into question. The telescope opened up a new dimension of information and it challenged previously held dogmas.

Galileo shared his discoveries with his colleagues, but they were unwilling to let go of their geocentric views of the universe or even willing to look through the telescope. “In a letter to his friend, Johannes Kepler, Galileo expresses his wish that they could have ‘one hearty laugh together! Here at Padua is the principal professor of philosophy whom I have repeatedly and urgently requested to look at the moon and planets through my glass which he pertinaciously refuses to do.’”<sup>1</sup> If you don’t want new information simply shut the door of your mind.

I’m sure you’ve experienced Galileo’s dilemma if you shared your strong evidence challenging the Trinity doctrine, or that Saturday is the true Sabbath, or that the Bible doesn’t teach that we are immortal souls which immediately upon death flit to heaven or sink into a burning hell to be tormented forever—or whatever the erroneous doctrinal issue. Sometimes cherished and tenaciously held beliefs are more important than evidence to the contrary.

## **The Cosmic Christ**

It may be important to see the Bible through the telescope—see the big picture—a dimension that will provide

context to our normal close-up view. We will then see that we are not the center of things. God is.

In the life of Jesus there is a cosmic dimension to the fullness of who Jesus is. He is much more than a great teacher of truth who brought a message of hope two thousand years ago. He was that, but he is also the true Adam that God had in his divine plan from before creation. Jesus now sits with God upon the Almighty’s throne from which the entire cosmos receives its direction and life. Jesus has not yet saved all humanity in his Adam/Messiah role but we must look to the heavens for he is still about his Father’s business.

Jesus, prototype for mankind’s destiny, will soon restore the human race and its world. The heavens will open and the groaning creation will joyously welcome the archetype of the Image of God. His kingdom will fill the earth with the knowledge of God as the oceans fill the sea beds and the victorious consummation of God’s Grand Plan will bring billions of sons and daughters into eternal life.

## **The Microscope**

Another knowledge revolution was pushed forward by Louis Pasteur and his use of the microscope. Considered the founder of microbiology, he proved that most infectious diseases are caused by microorganisms that cannot be seen by the naked eye.<sup>2</sup> As with Ebola and a thousand other diseases, we now know scientifically that they are lurking beyond our sight. But this was not the case in Pasteur’s day. His colleagues insisted that “you can see there are no germs.” They resisted the notion that unseen germs caused disease. Yet the germs were discoverable if the proper tools were used to find them. Once discovered, ways could be invented to battle them and this path has saved millions of lives and alleviated suffering beyond calculation.

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*Continued on Page 18*

# Respecting Roman Catholics, Protesting Roman Catholicism

*Daniel Botkin*



Christians who are not Roman Catholic are usually referred to as Protestants. The word *Protestant* comes from the word *protest*, so another word for Protestants could be protesters.

So, what are the Protestants protesting against? Most of today's 21<sup>st</sup>-century Protestants probably do not think of themselves as protesters against anything, but the Protestant Reformers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century were certainly protesting against some things. That's how they got their name. The Protestant Reformers were protesting against certain doctrines and practices in Roman Catholicism, doctrines and practices which they considered erroneous, because those doctrines and practices contradicted the Scriptures.

There are many differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestant Christianity — different doctrines, different practices, different customs and traditions, etc. All these differences, however, all boil down to just one single difference which is the basis for all the differences. That one single difference is in regards to the question of the authority of the church versus the authority of the Scriptures.

In Matthew 16:19 Christ gave authority to church leaders "to bind and to loose" (i.e., to forbid and to permit things, to establish *halachah* for members of the church). He said that whatever church leaders bind or loose on earth will be bound or loosed in heaven. In other words, heaven will require church members to abide by the church leaders' decisions.

The important question is this: When Christ gave this authority to the church to bind and to loose, did He mean the church has authority to forbid even things which the Scriptures permit, and to permit even things which the Scriptures forbid?

The Roman Catholic Church says, in effect, "Yes. And this is why we can forbid priests to marry and why we can permit working and conducting business on the seventh-day Sabbath."

Protestants, on the other hand, say, in effect, "No. The authority of the church must operate within the boundaries of the written Scriptures. Church leaders have no right to make decrees or to teach doctrines which contradict the written Scriptures."

The motto of the Protestant Reformers was *sola scriptura*, "only the Scriptures." For Protestants, the Bi-

ble is the supreme and final authority for establishing doctrine and worship.

The various differences that exist between Roman Catholicism and Protestant Christianity are the result of this difference of opinion about the authority of the church versus the authority of the Scriptures. Do the Scriptures have authority over the church, or does the church have authority over the Scriptures? If the Scriptures contradict church teaching, should members obey the Scriptures and disobey church leaders, or should they obey church leaders and disobey the Scriptures?

For me, this is a no-brainer, because I look to Yeshua (Jesus) as my example. He constantly pointed to the written Scriptures as His authority, saying things like "It is written" and "Have ye not read...?"

When Yeshua was on earth, He was in a situation very similar to ours. God's people had the written Scriptures. They also had their traditions, which were based on decisions and rulings that had been made by religious leaders in the past. The Pharisees insisted that their established traditions were just as binding as the commandments of the Scriptures. Some of them went so far as to claim that their traditions had even more weight and authority than the written Scriptures. And if anyone questioned their right to establish traditions which were contrary to the Scriptures, they could appeal to Deuteronomy 16:18 & 17:8-13 as the proof of their God-given authority.

Yeshua recognized the fact that the religious leaders had been given authority: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat [i.e., seat of authority]. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:2f).

Yeshua recognized the authority of the religious leaders, yet He rebuked them for abusing their God-given authority: "For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men... Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:8f).

The Pharisees, as the religious leaders of Israel, did indeed have authority from God, but when they went beyond the written Scriptures and replaced the commandments of God with their own traditions, they overstepped that authority. The Roman Catholic Church made that very same mistake. If you doubt this, I suggest you read the book *Catholic Customs and Tradi-*

tions, *A Popular Guide* by Greg Dues, a Roman Catholic (ISBN 780896 225152). This Roman Catholic writer, like other Roman Catholic writers have done, freely talks about the pagan origins of just about every Roman Catholic custom that exists.

Because Roman Catholics believe that Christ gave absolute authority to the church, authority to decree anything at all, even if it contradicts the Scriptures, Roman Catholics feel no need to deny the fact that many of their traditions contradict the Scriptures and/or are borrowed from pagan idolatry.

The Roman Catholic view leads not only to the abolishing of some of God's laws written in the Scriptures and to the establishing of laws which contradict the Scriptures. The Roman Catholic view also leads to some very bizarre claims.

The most widely-known bizarre claim by the Roman Catholic Church is Transubstantiation - the claim that the communion wafer becomes the actual, literal flesh of Christ, even though it still looks like a wafer.

But there are other bizarre claims. In the latest issue of *Media Spotlight*, Albert James Dager, a former Roman Catholic, writes about his Roman Catholic upbringing. Dager talks about his wearing of the Scapular, "a devotional icon typically consisting of two rectangular pieces of cloth, wool or other fabric, connected by bands. One rectangle rests on the chest, while the other rests on the back, with the bands running over the shoulders." On the rectangles are images of Mary and the words "Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire."

Dager began wearing a Scapular when he was a high school student, and never took it off, not even to shower. "We were told that Mary would take us from Purgatory to Heaven on the Friday after our death," Dager says. "Naturally we all hoped to die on a Thursday night, as close to midnight as possible."

I first saw a Scapular in the mid-1980s. A Protestant Christian friend of mine had gotten a few from a Roman Catholic lady who had a whole bag of them, and my friend gave me one. I mailed it to a missionary friend of mine in Mexico, and jokingly told him, "Hey, I've got great news. You won't need to evangelize Mexicans anymore to get them saved. Just get a bunch of these Scapulars and tell them to wear them."

Another bizarre claim the Roman Catholic Church makes is that the capybara, a furry mammal which is the world's largest rodent and resembles a giant guinea pig, is actually a fish. Why is it a fish? Because the Vatican declared it to be a fish. Why did the Vatican declare it to be a fish? Because Roman Catholics in Venezuela love capybara meat, and they couldn't stand giving it up for the forty days of Lent, when faithful Roman Catholics abstain from meat but are allowed to eat fish. The Vene-

zuelan Catholics appealed to the Vatican to declare it a fish so they could eat it during Lent, and the Vatican complied with their wishes.

I'm not making this up, nor did I read it on the Internet nor in some tabloid. This information was in an Associated Press story by Bart Jones, "Venezuelans say, 'Pass the rodent dish, please.'" I read it some years ago in our local newspaper the *Peoria Journal Star*. If you doubt me, send me a SASE and I'll mail you a photocopy of the article.

In the Roman Catholic versus Protestant debate, if you ask me which one has the more correct form of worship and doctrine, I will answer that the Protestants do, because theirs is more Biblical than that of the Roman Catholics. Therefore in regards to worship and doctrine, I have more respect for Protestants. However, in regards to *honesty and consistency of beliefs*, I have more respect for Roman Catholics than I do for Protestants. Let me explain why.

Even though I strongly disagree with the Roman Catholic view of the authority of the church versus the authority of the Scriptures, the Roman Catholics are at least honest and consistent in their beliefs. Informed Roman Catholics believe and do the things the Roman Catholic Church leaders tell them to do because they believe that is what God wants them to do — even if it contradicts the Scriptures. Roman Catholic Church leaders are honest about abolishing the Sabbath commandment and sanctifying Sunday as a substitute. They believe the church had authority from Christ to do that, just as they believe the church has authority to say that wearing a Scapular will save the wearer from eternal fire, or to say that a sanctified communion wafer is the actual flesh of Christ, or to say that the furry capybara is a fish. Even though I strongly disagree with them, I can't accuse them of dishonesty or of inconsistency between what they do and what they say they believe.

Such is not the case with Protestants, though. Protestants claim that they have rejected the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. They claim that they base their doctrines and traditions and worship on the Bible, without recognizing the authority of the Vatican. If that is true, then why do the great majority of Protestants continue to hold on to so many un-Biblical Roman Catholic traditions, traditions which were for the most part borrowed from pagan idol worship?

Protestant Christians who say they do not recognize Rome's authority, yet continue to follow Rome's un-Biblical traditions, are inconsistent at best and hypocritical and dishonest at worst, if they are aware of the facts. Roman Catholic writers point this out. Consider these quotes from Roman Catholic writers:

*"Question:* How do you prove that the [Catholic] Church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

“Answer: By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same Church.” (Daniel Ferrer, ed., *Manual of Christian Doctrine*, 1916, p. 67)

“Regarding the change from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, I wish to draw your attention to the facts: That Protestants, who accept the Bible as the only rule of faith and religion, should by all means go back to the observance of the Sabbath. The fact that they do not, but on the contrary observe the Sunday, stultifies them in the eyes of every thinking man ... It is always somewhat laughable, to see the Protestant churches, in pulpit and legislation, demand the observance of Sunday, of which there is nothing in their Bible.” (Peter R. Kraemer, *Catholic Church Extension Society*, 1975, Chicago, IL)

“I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ The Catholic Church says: ‘No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week.’ And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in a reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church.” (T. Enright, C.S.S.R., in a lecture at Hartford, KS, Feb. 18, 1884)

The three above quotes are taken from the pamphlet *Roman Catholic and Protestant Confessions About Sunday*. For a copy, send a SASE.

A Roman Catholic Sunday substitute for the Bible’s seventh-day Sabbath is not the only area where Protestants are inconsistent. Other Roman Catholic traditions borrowed from pagan idol worship include Lent, Easter, and yes, Christmas, the tradition that is the hardest to forsake, even though it is saturated with more customs borrowed from pagan idolatry than any other Roman Catholic holiday.

A member of our local Messianic congregation works at a Christian ministry based here in Peoria. Nearly 100% of his co-workers are Protestant Christians, many of whom proudly claim that their faith is based on the teachings of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Protestant Reformers who broke away from the Catholic Church.

During this Messianic brother’s first year working there, he was asked by a Protestant co-worker, “What are you going to be doing for Christmas?”

“Oh, I’m not Roman Catholic,” the Messianic brother replied. “I don’t celebrate Christmas.”

A great answer!

I love my Protestant brothers. I just wish they would take *sola scriptura* to its logical conclusion and entirely shake off the shackles of Rome. For years, I’ve told Protestant Christians that we Messianic disciples are just continuing the Protestant Reformation that the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformers started. We are just taking *sola scriptura* to its logical conclusion, which results in abandoning Roman Catholic customs and holidays and coming back to the Biblical holy days of God’s calendar as summarized in Leviticus 23.

I also love my Roman Catholic brothers. Yes, I said brothers. I certainly do not believe that all Roman Catholics are saved, but I believe that some of them are. Why? Because in Revelation 18:4 God says to those in Babylon, “Come out of her My people.” So obviously some of the people in spiritual Babylon are God’s people. Yes, they need to hear the call to come out and they need to come out, but until they do, they are in the meantime still God’s people. If not, God would not call them “My people.” In spite of all the error in the Roman Catholic Church, sincere seekers can hear the gospel and be saved while still in the Roman Catholic Church.

I met a brother from Malaysia about ten years ago He was raised as a Sikh. He met a Roman Catholic who told him about Jesus and shared the gospel with him. He believed and was baptized and became a Roman Catholic. Some time later, he met a Jehovah’s Witness who showed him from the Bible why the Roman Catholic Church was in error. So he got baptized a second time and became a Jehovah’s Witness. Some time later, he met an Assembly of God preacher who showed him from the Bible why the Jehovah’s Witnesses were wrong. So he got baptized a third time and became a Pentecostal. Some time later, he met a Seventh Day Adventist who showed him from the Bible why the Assemblies of God were wrong about the Sabbath. So he got baptized a fourth time and became a Seventh Day Adventist. Some time later, he met a Messianic brother who showed him from the Bible that the Seventh Day Adventists were wrong about some things. So he got baptized a fifth time and became Messianic.

This Messianic brother’s pilgrimage started with a Roman Catholic telling him the gospel. So don’t think that God cannot or will not use a Roman Catholic to bring someone to saving faith. And don’t think God cannot or will not use a Jehovah’s Witness, or a Sunday-keeping Pentecostal, or a Seventh Day Adventist to bring more light to someone who is walking in the light they have.

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Ken Westby: (interim president of the BSA before Sydney Davis)  
Sydney Davis: 1999-2003  
Richard Nickels: 1996-1999  
Ken Ryland: 2006-2007  
John Paul Howell: 2008-2011  
Calvin Burrell: 2012-2015

**TSS Editors:**

George Main (1950-???)  
Eugene Lincoln (1960-85)  
Richard Wiedenheft (1985-93)  
Sydney and Sherry Cleveland (1993-98)  
Lars G. Harrison (1998-99)  
Royce E. Mitchell, Jr. (1999-2001)  
Ken Ryland (2001-2015)

## **Sabbath-Keepers Pledge**

As a follower of Jesus Christ...

\*I pledge to give my first love and loyalty to the true God who reveals Himself best in Jesus. As Savior of men and Lord of the Sabbath, Christ does for me what no one else and no day of the week can do.

\*I pledge to be clear about salvation's source by confessing that my sins are forgiven and eternal life is promised me only by the grace of God through faith in Christ—not because I am a Sabbath-keeper.

\*I pledge to admit and agree that God's people may be in many religious organizations or in none of them. No longer will I judge people's faith based on the church group they do or don't belong to.

\*I pledge to emphasize that the seventh-day Sabbath is more than a law to be obeyed; it is also a unique gift of God to be enjoyed and celebrated with great benefit by all who receive it in faith.

\*I pledge to remember that the primary need of people is to know God's love and grace in the gospel, and that their need to know and observe His Sabbath is secondary to their need for Christ.

\*I pledge to recognize Sabbath-keeping Christians as a valued and respected family within God's household of faith, and to use what opportunities I have to encourage and support this diverse family.

\*I pledge to love my neighbors, my fellow-Christians, and my fellow Sabbath-keepers as myself, according to the second great commandment of the Lord.

(Composed by Calvin Burrell, this pledge was first published in *The Sabbath Sentinel* magazine of the non-denominational Bible Sabbath Association: [www.biblesabbath.org](http://www.biblesabbath.org)  
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# A New Year's blessing

*By Whaid Rose*



Here's something to warm your heart on a winter day. It's a prayer written by the beloved Billy Graham for *The Saturday Evening Post* back in 2008, still very relevant as we stand on the threshold of 2015:

Our Father and our God, as we stand at the beginning of this new year we confess our need of Your presence and Your guidance as we face the future.

We each have our hopes and expectations for the year that is ahead of us—but You alone know what it holds for us, and only You can give us the strength and the wisdom we will need to meet its challenges. So help us to humbly put our hands into Your hand, and to trust You and to seek Your will for our lives during this coming year.

In the midst of life's uncertainties in the days ahead, assure us of the certainty of Your unchanging love.

In the midst of life's inevitable disappointments and heartaches, help us to turn to You for the stability and comfort we will need.

In the midst of life's temptations and the pull of our stubborn self-will, help us not to lose our way but to have the courage to do what is right in Your sight, regardless of the cost.

And in the midst of our daily preoccupations and pursuits, open our eyes to the sorrows and injustices of our hurting world, and help us to respond with compassion and sacrifice to those who are friendless and in need. May our constant prayer be that of the ancient Psalmist: "Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end" (Psalm 119:33).

We pray for our nation and its leaders during these difficult times, and for all those who are seeking to bring peace and justice to our dangerous and troubled world. We pray especially for Your protection on all those who serve in our armed forces, and we thank You for their commitment to defend our freedoms, even at the cost of their own lives. Be with their families also, and assure them of Your love and concern for them.

Bring our divided nation together, and give us a greater vision of what You would have us to be. Your Word reminds us that "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12).

As we look back over this past year we thank You for Your goodness to us—far beyond what we have deserved. May we never presume on Your past goodness or forget all Your mercies to us, but may they instead lead us to repentance, and to a new commitment to make You the foundation and center of our lives this year.

And so, our Father, we thank You for the promise and hope of this new year, and we look forward to it with expectancy and faith. This I ask in the name of our Lord and Savior, who by His death and resurrection has given us hope both for this world and the world to come.

Amen.

My heart says Amen. I hope yours does, too. Happy New Year.

With New Year blessings.

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Whaid Rose is the President of the Church of God, Seventh Day

# The Temptation in the Wilderness

By R. Herbert

The Synoptic Gospels tell us that after he was baptized, Jesus fasted for forty days and nights in the Judean wilderness and that at that time Satan appeared to him and tried to tempt him (Matthew 4:1–11, Mark 1:12–13, Luke 4:1–13). The three temptations aimed at Christ (to turn stones to bread, to throw himself from the pinnacle of the temple, and to worship Satan) all have been interpreted in various ways.

The first temptation, that of turning stones to bread, is doubtless the easiest to understand. Anyone fasting for an extended period of time would have no difficulty comprehending the physical temptation to turn objects into food if they had such power. The second temptation (in the order given in Luke's Gospel) is more difficult to understand. Many scholars note that there were plenty of high points in the Judean wilderness, but simply jumping from a high point would not be a real temptation. They feel that the temptation must be understood based on the fact that if Jesus had thrown himself from a pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem, worshippers in the temple courts would have witnessed his being safely let down by angels (according to the devil's reasoning regarding Psalms 91:12) and would thus believe in him. The temptation occurred, of course, before the many legitimate signs Christ did give after his testing, but this temptation would be an appeal to his emotions and was perhaps offered to Christ as an alternative to the route of eventual crucifixion. The third temptation – to bow to Satan in order to gain power over the whole world, might then be seen as the psychological temptation to elevate the self by “going over to the other side.”

But however we interpret what was involved in these three temptations, it is clear that they all make inherently different appeals and that they may be seen as temptations to satisfy physical, emotional, and psychological desires. These are the underlying forms of temptation the apostle John warned against in writing about “...the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...” (1 John 2:16).

As such, the story certainly meshes with that of the Garden of Eden temptation story which suggests these same three types of wanting. Genesis 3:6 states that when Eve took the forbidden fruit she saw that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was “... good for food [lust of the flesh – physical desires], pleasant to the eyes [lust of the eyes – emotional desires], and a tree to be desired to make one wise [the pride of life – psychological desires].” This interpretation harmonizes well with the fact that Paul twice refers to Adam as a type of Christ (Romans 5:12–21 and 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45), and while these references have more to do with Christ being the “firstborn from the dead” (Revelation 1:4B), they also tie to the fact that Christ, like Adam, underwent the types of temptation experienced by humans (Hebrews 4:14).

But there is another way in which Jesus' wilderness temptations can be viewed which is even more directly grounded in the biblical record — as a reflection of the temptations of ancient Israel in the wilderness. Just as the people of Israel went into the wilderness after their figurative baptism in the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:2), and were there forty years, Christ spent forty days in the wilderness (the Bible frequently uses the equivalency principle of a day for a year), and communed with God just as Moses (a type of Christ – Deuteronomy 18:15) did during Israel's own time of wilderness wandering.

Notice the further important parallels between the two wilderness accounts. First, we see the Israelites gave into temptation regarding their physical desires in not trusting God for bread and

their rebellious complaining in the incident where God supplied manna for them to eat because of their lack of faith (Exodus 16:2–3 and Deuteronomy 8:2–4).

We also see the Israelites giving in to the temptation to argue or try to work out God's plan for them in their own way, when they did not see evidence of God's presence despite what He had done for them. We see this sin of tempting God repeatedly (Ex. 17:1–7, notice particularly verses 2 and 7 and Deuteronomy 6:16).

Finally, we see the Israelites falling to the temptation to worship something other than God in their bowing down to the golden calf and other idols and pagan gods (Exodus 32:1–4, Deuteronomy 6:13–15)

We know that these three failures of ancient Israel directly paralleled the temptations endured by Christ in the wilderness because Jesus quoted specific references to exactly the same stories from the Book of Deuteronomy in response to each of the three temptations he underwent. Jesus resisted the temptation to turn stones to bread by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3: “... man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord” — which comes from the section of Deuteronomy talking about the Israelites' sin regarding food. He resisted the temptation to tempt God by throwing himself from the temple pinnacle by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:16, in which Moses rebukes the Israelites for putting God to the test. Finally, he resisted the temptation to worship Satan by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:13–15 — the section faulting the Israelites for worshipping other gods.

In all his temptations in the wilderness, the responses of Jesus — in his words and actions — were directly opposite those of ancient Israel in their failure to handle temptation. In fact, we see in these verses from Deuteronomy the very core of what Jesus' testing was all about — that the temptation to push God and His way aside, and to choose our own desires over His, lies at the heart of all temptation. We see this in the temptation to not trust God with our physical needs, the temptation to tempt God regarding the fulfillment of our emotional desires, and the temptation to elevate something other than God in fulfilling our psychological desires.

Falling to these three types of temptation was a mistake that ancient Israel made repeatedly. But it was a mistake that Jesus did not follow in overcoming Satan's deliberate and carefully calculated attempts to destroy him. Jesus overcame temptation in the Judean wilderness not only by knowing and quoting precisely relevant scriptures, but also by understanding the nature of temptation and by acting on that knowledge through the power of the Spirit of God. We see this underlying truth in the words of Jesus himself: “By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me” (John 5:30). Unlike the ancient Israelites in the wilderness, Jesus' response to temptation was based on his desire to please God more than himself. If, with God's help, we are to successfully overcome temptation in our own lives, we too must know God's word, must want to please God more than ourselves, and must understand well what lies behind the choices every temptation offers.

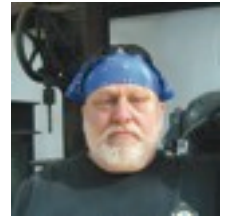
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# Love and Bliss

by Terrell Perkins



There are those who claim they know “the secret key” to understanding the scriptures. There is indeed a key that unlocks the scriptures and in some respects it is a secret...at least to some people. Do you want to know the key to understanding the scriptures? It’s love. Every page, every paragraph, every word, every punctuation flows with Gods love for His children. That the scriptures exist is proof of Gods love. He created us out of love. He gave us His law out of love for us. He allowed His only begotten son to become one of us, to suffer pain, humiliation and death at the hands of human beings out of His love for mankind.

The problem arises when we misunderstand what love is and what it is not. Love is NOT just what we feel...love is what we DO. Scriptures tell us the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and faithfulness. The fruits of the spirit are all qualities about dealing with someone else. Bliss is most commonly confused with love because bliss feels good. Bliss isn’t bad as long as it is not mistaken for spiritual growth. We can experience bliss while looking at a beautiful sunset or experiencing a “perfect moment.” Just like there are counterfeit gospels, there are also counterfeits for love. Bliss can also be a counterfeit for love. In Eastern and New Age religions bliss is often mistaken for love.

Bliss can be a counterfeit love for “spiritual” people. Bliss is what those who are “spiritual but not religious” most often feel. To show real love, there must be another. And the other is always imperfect. That’s what makes love so special. Love is getting into the trenches and getting dirty. We don’t love the perfect...we love the imperfect. Bliss doesn’t feed the hungry, visit the lonely, comfort the sick or give a coat to someone who’s cold...love does these things.

Love may be said to be like a pearl. Do you know how pearls are formed? You put something irritating in an oyster, like a grain of sand, and a pearl is its response. Love covers imperfections like a pearl covers a grain of sand.

Bliss is what we feel. Love is what we DO.

Bliss is about ourselves. Love is always about another.

Bliss is content to remain alone. Love always reaches out.

Bliss is not doing. Love is DOING.

Bliss can be completely self absorbed. Love is NEVER self absorbed.

Bliss is static. Love is dynamic.

Bliss can be like a stagnant pond...Love is like a river of living water.

Love always grows, always moves.

Christ didn’t condemn a fig tree to die because he didn't like trees... it is a lesson for us.

We MUST bear fruit! The fruits of the spirit are all about dealing with other imperfect people.

God’s Word defines what spiritual growth is the way DNA defines what physical growth is. True spiritual growth is always guided by the template of love like physical growth is guided by DNA.

Don’t be deceived. We don't grow by watching a sunset...we grow by reaching out of ourselves to others. We first have to learn to love ourselves then we have to learn to extend, to grow, our sense of ourselves. That’s what love is...extending our sense of ourselves to include others. Hurt doesn't stop it, misunderstanding doesn't stop it, disappointment doesn’t stop it, pain doesn't stop it...Love keeps coming like a pounding wave that eventually turns a mountain into sand. Love is what will transform the universe and us if we let it.

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# Happiness Is ...

By Terril D. Littrell, Ph.D.



“(Happy is anyone who becomes wise—who comes to have understanding” (Proverbs 3;13)” —Good News Bible.

As I write this I feel very strongly that God wants you to be happy.

Don’t be surprised, and don’t dismiss it.

We are called to reject the empty promises of the world. We are called to embrace the answers that even now lie within our grasp. We are called to holiness.

Anyone of us can be overwhelmed by the Presence of God in a beautiful cathedral while a choir is singing. Anyone of us can feel the special warmth of God that flows from an eloquent sermon or a powerful prayer service, but it takes holiness, a special grace to resist temptation and sin, to live a life that pleases God, and makes God happy.

A woman once said to me, “The problem with life is that it is so ... daily.”

Day in and day out, even as we are beset with the problems and questions of life, we are called to ask for that special grace of holiness. We are called to reject the empty promises of the world. We are called to embrace the answers that even now lie within our grasp. We are called to holiness.

## **GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY!**

It is vitally important that we be happy, because if we miss happiness we miss everything. The key here is having the right understanding of happiness. We must be careful not to fall into a very common mistake of confusion, mistaking false happiness for true happiness, or, less seriously, taking something which may be accidentally associated with true happiness for the substance of true happiness.

When we talk about happiness, then, we do not have in mind something like, for example, being in a jolly mood. Mind you, there is nothing wrong with being in a jolly mood, but that is not the same thing as being happy. In fact, being in a jolly mood has nothing necessarily to do with true happiness, taken as such. It is quite possible, therefore, to be in a decidedly un-jolly mood, and yet be truly happy. To be truly happy is to be properly ordered toward one’s final end, God, so that literally every act we do contributes toward the attainment of that final end.

The sad thing about this quest is that we human beings rather regularly get it wrong. Instead of pursuing true happiness we tragically, again and again, seek after false happiness. We worship at the altars of idols. Aristotle, and after him Thomas Aquinas, in discussing the subject of happiness, review the various ways we frail mortals miss true happiness and attach ourselves to false happiness. Two of the most common mistakes we make in this regard is to suppose that our happiness is to be found either in material possessions or in the pleasures of the flesh. These two mistakes are as old as the hills, and as new as this morning. When it comes to making mistakes about happiness, the progeny of Adam show little imagination and tediously repeat themselves.

How many people today are locked into the pathetic conviction that the key to their happiness lies in a full-fledged

devotion to materialism? They think that the more they have, the happier they will be. So, they accumulate and accumulate. And they discover that material possessions, instead of yielding happiness, yield only a desire for yet more material possessions. The desire becomes insatiable. They are consumed by their consumption, and remain totally unsatisfied. One thinks of the line from Francis Thompson’s “Hound of Heaven;” “All things betray you who betray me,” speaking of God.

And how many people today are effectively enslaved because they are in the throes of a relentlessly badgering sensuality? They have been deluded into thinking that their happiness consists in the mad pursuit of carnality. They are looking for happiness in all the wrong places and what they find is boredom. They seek after liberating experiences, they end up with the suffocating frustration that inevitably accompanies the flouting of the natural law.

Our obsession with sex has radically desensitized us, deadening us to the real and establishing us in a mock world of learning fantasies. The effects of an excess of sex are comparable to those of an excess of alcohol. We are off balance. The whole world becomes wobbly. The road of unrestrained sensuality seems at first a perfectly delightful one to travel, but it quickly degenerates into a tortuous trail of bitter disillusionments and it ends in despair.

One of the more subtle mistakes made concerning the nature of true happiness, discussed by Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, relates to the matter of honors. The essence of the mistake we make here consists in the belief that one’s happiness critically depends upon being properly honored by other people.

That is completely beyond our control. It is entirely up to others whether they choose to honor us, or choose not to. We are quite helpless on that score. Therefore, if I were to base my happiness upon my being honored by other people I would be basing it on something over which I have no control. Just for that reason, then, I cannot allow my being honored by others to serve as the basis for my happiness.

The important thing is not to be honored, but to be honorable, that is, to live in such a way (virtuously) so that we are truly worthy of honor, whether or not we are actually the recipient of it. And as to whether or not, we are in fact honored.

What is most important is that our life brings honor to God; through being purpose driven. Yes God wants us to be happy. We were created by God for that purpose. That possibility however, is completely under our control. We choose to be happy by choosing God’s way of life.

## **You Can Be Happy**

It appears to me that there are too many unhappy people in this world—even some professing Christians appear unhappy.

Why? Self-centeredness. When a person lives a self-centered life, they quite frequently lose all proper perspective. Concentrating on their own problems, they often feel sorry for themselves which in turn leads to depression; and a depressed person never functions to their fullest potential or capacity.

Abraham Lincoln said: “people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” Since practice makes perfect, it is effective at times to claim happiness when you don’t “feel” happy. It is our choice as to where our life is headed. We can choose to be happy, or we can choose to play the game of “what if I had only,” which keeps us stuck in either the future or the past and makes us unable to live in the present.

I choose to be happy and to dedicate my time to making certain that my priorities are right, beginning with God being first place in my life!

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# The Gospel of the Kingdom of God

by Kelly McDonald



In Mark 1:15, Jesus said, “The time has come...The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” Jesus talked about a Kingdom that was coming. That was the central focus of His ministry. His sermons and teachings gave us intimate details about that Kingdom. What does the gospel of the Kingdom of God mean, and how do we experience that Kingdom today?

Before we can really understand this good news, we must understand the historical background behind Jesus’ words. The ministry of Christ began around 27 or 28 AD. Before His ministry began, the Romans had a time of peace and prosperity under the Emperor Augustus. All debts recorded in Rome were burned. There was plenty of food in the empire. They had peace from all of their enemies. This led many people to call Augustus the “Savior” of the Roman Empire. People began to proclaim the “good news” of the Roman Empire. The Greek term they used for good news was *euangelion*. There were songs written about Augustus, and his fame spread far and wide. Jesus preached the good news of the Kingdom of God. He used the same Greek word, *euangelion*, to describe God’s Kingdom. The term gospel is a word which simply means “good news.”

The gospel was not just a message with spiritual meaning; it also carried political ramifications. It stirred up the Romans because this gospel was about a different kingdom. This is why so many Roman Emperors over centuries have tried to destroy Christianity. They saw the gospel message about the Kingdom of God and its supreme ruler as opposition to their own kingdom. This was a true assumption on their part! The gospel message is in opposition to the idea that human governments can be supreme.

Today, the world thinks that it can solve all of its problems by human intervention. We think that by human government and effort, we can make the world a better place. We are trusting in man. Our political leaders are trusting that other nations will solve their problems peaceably and not resort to war. The Romans wanted to spread the message that the Roman Empire would take care of all their needs, provide military protection, and give them hope for their future. When the gospel of the Kingdom of God was being proclaimed, it was a challenge to Roman dominance in the lives of people. Instead of looking to people and human effort to provide for our needs, we are to look to the Almighty God. Instead of relying on human government, we are to rely on the Government of God.

Jesus was trying to focus people’s thoughts away from the earthly toward the spiritual, Heavenly realm. As Paul wrote, “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2, NKJV). By accepting Jesus Christ, we enter into a Kingdom where our needs are provided for by God’s intervention. Jesus said in Matthew 6:25-33, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.**”

When we seek the Kingdom of God, our needs will be provided for. We also learn from Jesus’ words a proof of God’s existence: God exists because He knows our needs and will meet them. People in other religions (which Jesus called pagans), have to constantly search for food and clothing. They are worried about their daily needs. Why is this? They do not serve the one true God that created all things. They are trying to achieve these things by human effort alone to meet their needs. We should always do our part, but those that belong to God’s government receive supernatural intervention for their needs!

Human governments obtain legitimacy by offering to provide for basic human needs. Instead of having to run after basic needs, they want to be your provider! Think for a moment about the things that human governments promise us: 1) food or money (food stamps and welfare); 2) healthcare to take care of you when you are sick; 3) protection from foreign enemies; 4) freedoms defined by Law. God’s Kingdom provides all of these things as well. Jesus made the promise in Matthew 6:25-33 that our physical needs would be met. There is a

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# The Death of the Sanctity of LIFE

by Brian Knowles

There was, it seems, a time when human life was more precious than it is today – at least in our culture. Times are changing. In a small, but growing, sector of college students, “post birth abortion” is becoming acceptable. Writes Mairead McArdle, “Anecdotal evidence by leaders of profile groups such as Created Equal and Survivors of the Abortion Holocaust said in interviews that not only do they see more college students willing to say they support post-birth abortion, but some students even suggest that children up to 4 or 5 can also be killed, because they are not yet ‘self-aware.’”

Mark Harrington, director of Created Equal, says, “We encounter people who think it is morally acceptable to kill babies after birth on a regular basis at almost every campus we visit. While this viewpoint is still seen as shocking by most people, it is becoming increasingly popular.” I’ve got news for those who support this idea – it’s not “abortion” – its *murder* (homicide).

## Abortion — the Worldwide Picture

In this country, since the landmark ruling of Roe vs. Wade in 1973, there have been 57,311,972 abortions in the U.S. Since 1980, 1,353,247,797 human lives have been abruptly terminated by abortion (Source: US Abortion Clock.org.) That’s billion — not million.

The statistics on abortion are staggering – and deeply sadening. To those who support and feed the abortion racket, life is cheap indeed. There’s a working principle here. It is derived from economics. The more abundant something is, the more its value plummets. As of 2013, there were 7.125 billion people on the earth. Some think that’s too many.

The much vaunted Jacques Costeau is reputed to have said, “In order to stabilize world population, we must eliminate 350,000 people per day.”

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, offered this gem: “If I were reincarnated, I would wish to be returned to earth as a killer virus to lower human population levels.”

President Barack Obama’s science advisor took a more high-tech approach to the alleged “problem”: “A program of sterilizing women after their second or third child, despite the relatively greater difficulty of the operation than vasectomy, might be easier to implement than trying to sterilize men.

“The development of a long-term sterilizing capsule that could be implanted under the skin and removed when pregnancy is desired opens additional possibilities for coercive fertility control. The capsule might be implanted at puberty and might be removable, with official permission, for a limited number of births.”

Ted Turner, founder of CNN, would like to get rid of 95% of the world’s population to achieve an “ideal” number of inhabitants on planet Earth.

(These and other related quotes may be found at <http://www.whale.to/c/22.html>).

How many readers think Islamic, Catholic and developing nations would play along with such authoritarian population control schemes?

## Global Killing Field

As we view it today, the world is a vast killing field — especially in the Middle East. There are numerous web sites that offer on-going body counts. Sectarian wars, wars of conquest, tribal wars, wars against so-called “infidels,” are all par for the course. The sands of the Middle East are soaked with war’s victims. Terrorism, wherever it manifests itself, is a culture of death.

Jesus came to the Middle East, and to the world, with a contrary message: “I have come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10b). Judaism and the true Christian faith are all about life — both now and in the world to come.

Though “it is appointed unto all men once to die” (Hebrews 9:27), death is characterized in the Bible as an enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26). Paul said the last Adam (Christ) was a “life giving spirit,” (1 Corinthians 15:45). The Bible is a book about life; how to live it to the full in the present, and how to extend it on into eternity.

The 116<sup>th</sup> psalm is about thanksgiving for deliverance from death. Verse 15 tells us, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” We are not disposable paper cups. Every life on Planet Earth is precious to its Creator. Even the hairs on our heads are numbered (Luke 12:7).

Those who are cavalier about life, and who don’t hesitate to rob other people of that precious gift will not have a part in the world to come: “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, **murderers**, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolater, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,” (Revelation 21:8 NKJV).

Now is the time to celebrate life, not death.

L’Haim! To life!

*Brian Knowles is a professional artist and writer and is a former magazine editor. Brian is an avid student of the Bible and a frequent contributor to the Association for Christian Development website ([www.godward.org](http://www.godward.org)).*

God wants to bless us. We just have to get out of the way so He can do His work in our life. To allow God to bless us, we must make a few changes. I know that isn't going to be easy but it can be done.

For the Christian, there is nothing more fundamental to life than happiness. God created us to be happy. The Westminster Confession of Faith states: "The chief purpose of humankind is to glorify God and to enjoy God forever."

I have never met anyone who didn't want to be happy.

Have you? Since happiness is a choice we make, why do some people, even Christians, choose unhappiness and depression over happiness and peace? Some may choose unhappiness to punish themselves for guilt feelings. Others choose unhappiness to manipulate their mates and friends by enlisting their sympathies. Happiness doesn't rest upon the activities of other people. We are not at the mercy of other people's action for happiness.

I know people who are always trying to find happiness. They are searching endlessly, everywhere, and in every place, under every rock and behind every green tree but they are not looking to the right source of happiness.

I remember over twenty years ago a beautiful, intelligent and promising young mother in her 20s visiting a congregation in Chattanooga where I was the pastor.

*I preached on "You Can Be Happy In An Unhappy World." She listened intently and held on to every word I said. Tears flowed down her cheeks all the way through that sermon. When I gave the altar call, she resisted coming for prayer. As she went out the door she looked me straight in the eyes and said: "I am not happy." She chose to be unhappy. Her words held her captive to unhappiness and, as far as I know, she never came back to that church or heard me preach another sermon I recently read a magazine ad which said: "FIFTEEN WAYS TO FIND HAPPINESS, send \$2.00 and a SASE and we will send you the secrets: The person who sponsored that ad probably became a millionaire!*

I have observed that any book that has "happiness" as a part of the title is always one of the best sellers, indicating that people want happiness. They are desperately seeking happiness—but there somewhere—but they are never quite sure just where!

Happiness is like an elusive dream, or a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Its not there when you get there. It keeps on moving. People are seeking happiness in bars and nightclubs, in drugs, in T.V., in sports, the movies, clothes, money, fame, sex, materialism. But they can't seem to find it.

King Solomon made the observation that, after he had gotten all the material possessions and lived with all the comforts and pleasures that money could buy, it was all "vanity and vexation" (Ecclesiastes 2:11,17,26; 4:4).

Where is happiness? It is not in money. Nelson Rockefeller was once asked: "How much money does it take to satisfy a person?" He said: "Just a little more, you never get enough."

Joy Gould, American millionaire, had an enormous fortune but, when he was dying, said: "I suppose that am the most miserable man on earth."

Elvis Presley had all the material possess that he wanted, but died an unhappy man.

***It is not in beauty. Marilyn Monroe was considered by some to be the most beautiful woman in the world but she was unhappy and died a miserable death.***

It is not in pleasure. Lord Bryan of England lived a life of pleasure and ease, but he wrote in the end of his life:

"The worm, the canker and the grief are mine alone."

It is not in military glory. Alexander the Great conquered the entire world and then wept in sorrow because he said: "There are no more worlds to conquer." He had come to the end and couldn't find satisfaction and fulfillment.

It is not in political power. William Tweed became the brilliant political boss in New York. He controlled 9 million people. He said: "My life has been a failure in everything that I have ever touched."

It is not in unbelief. Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type, and he said: "I wish that I had never been born."

It is not in position or fame. Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both, but he wrote: "Youth is a mistake, manhood is a struggle, old age is a sorrowful regret."

***These are all people who were supposed to have been able to have found happiness, but they all confessed honestly and openly that they could not find it ... How do we find happiness? The answer is that there is no way to find happiness! Happiness must find you. Happiness comes from a formula in life, and becomes ours in the pathway of duty.***

### **Happiness Is The Lord**

Do you remember singing the little children's song, "happiness is to know the Savior... Happiness is the Lord?" As a child, happiness seemed to just happen. It was simple.

Time has passed (although more than I want to admit), and the "happiness concept" doesn't seem quite so simple. Happiness seems elusive to so many people. Every day the news media airs an endless litany of the tragedies of humanity. Ironically, the evening newscasts also report that many of last year's big lottery winners are today experiencing depression, broken families, and suicidal tendencies. The winners' "happiness" was fleeting, temporary, transient, or just may be what came with their wealth wasn't TRUE HAPPINESS.

Victor Hugo once said, "The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved for ourselves, or rather loved in spite of ourselves." I wonder whether he knew how really profound his words were. In this world we cannot always trust the love of human beings, but we can find peace in the knowledge of a Savior who always loves us—even when we are most unlovable.

Add to Mr. Hugo's quote the wisdom of Helen Keller: "Many persons have a wrong idea about what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose."

As we put these two concepts together, God's love for the unlovable plus having a worthy purpose,—we can truly get a closer glimpse of what happiness truly is and how we can attain it.

Some people are trying to find happiness; from people who haven't experienced God's special love for them; from people who are not involved in a worthy purpose; from people who are no longer singing "Happiness is the Lord."

True happiness is loving and being loved back by the Lord. After all, it's not what is around us, but what is in us; not what we have, but what we are that makes us happy.

J. T Bolding has written:

"If you're not happy as you think you would like to be, then maybe you're not living right, So take a tip from me.

***Try giving more of yourself, and soon you'll understand; happiness comes easy in lending a helping hand.***

***Just see how warm and good you'll feel At the end of a busy day,  
If you help someone less fortunate You meet along the way.***

And when your work on earth is done, you'll find it's been worthwhile, for then you'll really be happy ***In the warmth of His heavenly smile.***

It isn't how much money you possess, nor the number of people you employ; It isn't how great the folk you impress, ***But the things you have learned to enjoy.***

***It isn't that you may have earned wide acclaim, Nor that you are well known far and near; But happy you are, if you wear a good name, As you face the whole world without fear So thus, you'll be one who will sleep well at night, And you'll truly enjoy every day, For life is sublime when you know you've done right, And you've lived for the Lord while you may."***

Albert Schweitzer once wrote, "The only ones ... who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve." He should know. As a doctor, he spent half a lifetime among the poor of Lambarene in Africa, treating their illnesses. He sought and found a need and took courageous steps to help.

Today in our world millions of people are suffering from the lack of basic necessities of life, especially the victims of natural disasters. These people stand in such great need of food, clothing, medicine and the means of sanitation. Schweitzer has told us we must seek how we can serve others even at a great distance. If our compassion is to be more meaningful and more lasting than the morning dew, then it will move us to take definite steps to help.

What about the millions around the world who are not experiencing the joy and peace that comes with a close walk with the Lord? As Christians, our business is "soul winning." This means that our ultimate goal is to share the light of true happiness in Christ with a world that is shadowed by sin and depression. If your heart is overflowing with God's love, let it spill over to those around you.

Share the good news that happiness can be found in knowing our Savior Jesus Christ!

***True happiness is in the Lord.***

### ***Claim Your Happiness***

There is an old English allegory which illustrates a point about happiness. It says that humankind is chasing an untamed horse named happiness. The wild horse ran all over the mountain side and humankind chased after the horse but could not catch up with him. Humankind found a fellow by the side of the road named "Unselfishness." Humankind asked him, "Sir, do you know of any way that I could catch that horse named 'Happiness,' " and Unselfishness replied yes, he knew of a way. He had a formula that worked every time. "There is a certain house close by called Others." If you will go over there and give yourself to that house and help others, you will discover that, in the back of that house, is a stable and that horse will come and eat out of your hand. So humankind did just that and was able to slip a bridle on the neck of that horse and to ride Happiness all the rest of his life. What a simple truth. Give unselfish love to others and happiness will come automatically.

Since happiness is so hard to acquire, I would like to give you some basic rules on how to be happy:

**Know who you are.** You are a child of the King!

Claim your legal rights. Lay hold of your inheritance. (Child of God through Christ). God wants you to be happy. That is why he created you. To enjoy life.

**Claim happiness now.** Be content in Christ.

Happiness is always associated with contentment. Now! Not later on! Don't wait until your circumstances are different to be happy! You will never be happy.

There is a popular myth that marriage automatically opens the door to happiness. But I have counseled for many years with a lot of unhappy married people. They thought they could make their mate happy and change their mate into what they wanted them to be. You can't make anyone happy or change anyone. Only God can do that. They must choose to be happy by choosing God's way to live. Happiness doesn't depend on your circumstances. Happiness depends on your relationship to God through Christ, who says that He came to give us abundant life (John 10:7-10). The happy person is the one who trusts in God (Proverbs 16:20). St. Paul says that he was happy when he witnessed to the saving power of Jesus Christ (Acts 26:1-6). The blind hymn writer Fanny Crosby once said:

***"Oh, what a happy soul am I, although I cannot see, I am resolved that in this world contented I will be. How many blessings I enjoy that other people don't, to weep and sigh because I am blind, I cannot, and I won't ..." How could Fanny Crosby say these words? Listen to her song: "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, Oh what a foretaste of glory divine. Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of His spirit, washed in His blood." Do you have that blessed assurance? Do you know Jesus as your personal savior? Have you been born of His spirit. washed in His blood?"***

The great baseball player, Ty Cobb, once said: "I was saved in the first half of the ninth inning." A lot of people are like that. They are waiting to experience happiness and salvation in the first half of the ninth inning, instead of the first half of the first inning. Be happy now. Don't wait.

**Give away happiness to everyone you meet.**

Tell them about Jesus, that He cares and understands the problems of life, and you will be happy. Happiness is not an innate virtue. It is an acquired characteristic! All of the great psychologists have agreed that the root of all unhappiness is selfishness and egotism!

Harvard research sociologist, Dr. Petirim A. Sorokin, after interviewing hundreds of people in nearly forty countries, said that the happiest people on earth were those involved in the lives of other people.

Do you want to be happy? Then serve someone who needs to be happy, and you will be happy! If that seems like an over simplification, just study the Gospel of John and you'll find how true it is. From the first moment of our blessed Lord's public life, from a simple miracle like changing water into wine to save a young couple from embarrassment, to the sublime act of raising Lazarus from the dead, love and care for others were His main concerns.

There are many occasions in our daily lives that give us an opportunity to be of assistance to others. Don't let them pass by. Lock up your house, go across the railroad tracks, find someone in need, and do something to help that person. That's the best advice that I have for you.

God loves us and wants us to be happy not only in heaven but also in this world. He sent His Divine Son to teach us the Golden Rule of Happiness: Love One Another, and to give us the Beatitudes, the formula for a happy life.

He tells us that happiness is not found in inordinate craving for worldly pleasures, money, fame, or glory.

Someone said: "I asked God to give me happiness, and God said 'no,' I give blessings. Happiness is up to you."

Are you happy? You can be right now. So claim it in his name. Amen!

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built-in healthcare system in His Kingdom where we can pray for the sick and they are healed (Matthew 4:23). He promises to protect us from our enemy, Satan the devil (Luke 10:19, John 17:15). He also has a righteous body of laws that guide our daily lives (James 1:26-27).

Human governments want to take your children and teach them right from wrong. They want to train us to think a certain way so we can be subject to the state. The Lord promises to teach us all things through the Holy Spirit (John 14:26). Part of Jesus' gospel message is that we no longer have to put our trust in human governments when it comes to our needs. Our focus is redirected to the Heavenly Father instead of relying on humans for our provision. Being citizens of the Kingdom of God means that we are members of a different world entirely that defies the natural realm; it defies the normal way of doing things. Our provision, our behavior, our lifestyle will be opposed to the world as it is today. God is preparing us for the world tomorrow!

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20b-21a). The Kingdom of God is within us. It is also called the Kingdom of Heaven because the one who rules over this Kingdom, God the Father, now dwells in Heaven. When we receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, we enter into this Kingdom. The spiritual, Heavenly realm is put inside of us. With this comes spiritual power from God the Father!

Power is how the Kingdom of God enters into this natural world. In 1 Corinthians 4:20, Paul said, "The Kingdom of God does not depend on talk, but on power." People like to talk at church. There are committee meetings, business meetings, personnel meetings, etc. Discussion is sometimes necessary, but it does not advance the gospel. It is the power of God that advances His Kingdom purposes. It requires an intervening force from another source for us to resist the natural course of this world. When we are in a Kingdom that is not of this world, we will receive power from God to overcome normal human problems.

The word power can have different meanings based on its usage and context in the Bible. There are different manifestations of power discussed in the Bible to advance His Kingdom purposes. The first manifestation of power in our lives is the power of salvation, which is a changed life. When someone transforms from a thief to a giver, then that is evidence of God's power and Kingdom working in the world. When a person goes from drunkenness to

sober and sound-minded, then that is God's power manifesting. The natural course of humans is to be selfish and hurt others. As humans, we each experience hurt, pain and suffering. There are mindsets within us that are destructive. Only God can free us. The natural mind is contrary to God's Law (Romans 8:4-8). His Law is spiritual (Romans 7:14). Obedience to the Word comes only through power.

Another manifestation of power is to pray for the natural infirmities of other people to be reversed. If you are injured, the natural course of recovery is to nurse your injury until you recover. If you pray for someone with a broken arm and it is healed, then the healing is a sign of God's Kingdom to that person. It is an invitation and a wooing from God to enter into the World of Tomorrow. This is reiterated by Christ's own words. In Luke 10:9, Jesus said, "Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'". The Creator of the Universe rules the Kingdom of God. To see a change in creation is a sign that the Kingdom of the Creator is at work! The policies of God's Kingdom are carried out by Words of Wisdom and Words of Knowledge. Just as Caesar burned the debts in Rome, our sin debts are nailed to the cross and forgotten (Colossians 2:13-15). When we proclaim the Kingdom to others, there will be manifestations that defy the natural realm. God's power is the intervening spiritual force that transforms the natural realm.

The gospel is a message concerning a Kingdom which is not of this world. At the same time, that Kingdom will one day manifest fully in this world. It will be the only government on earth, and all the nations will run to seek the spiritual ways of our God (Isaiah 2:1-5). People will live without fear because true security and peace will reign (Micah 4:4). The whole world will not seek to do things by human effort, but trust in God's divine Laws and rich provision. Jesus Christ will be the Head of this government, and His children will rule under him. This is the good news Jesus came to preach. We can participate in and share that Kingdom now.

This is an excerpt from a free booklet entitled "The gospel of the Kingdom of God". You can download it for **free** on [www.hungryheartsmistry.com](http://www.hungryheartsmistry.com). Go to the Resources section.

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Westby: "Jesus in 3-D" cont. from page 4.

The true facts of reality were not accepted by the science of his day. Pasteur encountered Galileo's problems with disbelieving colleagues. "How could anything as small as microorganisms, reasoned some of his colleagues, have the power to strike down mature living creatures? Thus, he had to deal with the skepticism of the medical community. Only begrudgingly, during the Franco-Prussian War, did doctors begin the practice of sterilizing instruments before surgery."<sup>3</sup>

The life of Jesus deserves viewing in the dimension of the microscope, actually picking up the fine details of his life, sayings, actions, and relationships. Sadly, many of us read right over these details because, I think, we have not trained our eyes to see them. This lack is correctable.

Details matter especially concerning origins. Just the other day I read that if you would begin typing the coded information contained in just one of your cells—and it truly can be coded by letters and placement—using standard 12 point type, the written out DNA from your one cell would stretch from Minnesota to Hawaii—nearly 4,000 miles. Traveling in a jet at 500 miles per hour it would take you eight hours to span that line of your DNA code from one cell.<sup>4</sup> When we delve into how DNA is duplicated and the speed with which it occurs makes one's mind melt. How precise and marvelously has God made us! And how marvelous is his Word—its details matter.

Popular narratives of people and events are often false constructions fabricated for political or other reasons unrelated to the truth of the person or event. We see this in our popular press that is agenda driven with its selection of axes to grind. Caricatures are developed and propagandists know that if told loudly and often enough people will tend to accept and believe them to be factually true. Even big lies. Adolph Hitler said, "The broad mass of a nation...will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one." The great preacher Spurgeon observed, "A lie will go around the world while truth is pulling its boots on." Lies abound. Truth must be searched out.

Jesus warned of "false Christs" and "false prophets" and we must take his warnings seriously. We must examine religious claims with an eye for the details of truth—examine under the microscope, as it were. Yet, how can one detect a counterfeit hundred dollar bill if you don't know in detail what an authentic one looks like? Unfortunately, this is the vulnerable situation where many Christians—especially those with only a superficial knowledge of the Bible and specifically of Jesus—find themselves.

Many are the details of Jesus' life, interactions, and teachings that are missed when we just accept the traditional caricatures of Jesus developed by ancient churchmen or modern preachers. For instance, what was Jesus favorite self-description? This should be important, right? Jesus should know who he was better than Hellenistic theologians of the fourth century who were more influenced by Plato than Peter. They formulated the creeds that have influenced modern perceptions of who Jesus was and is.

If you said Jesus almost exclusively referred to himself as "the Son of Man" you would be correct. He calls himself the Son of Man (*ben Adam*) 28 times just in the book of Matthew! All but one or two usages of the term in the gospels is from the lips of Jesus himself. He employs this title into the future when he is enthroned telling the high priest Caiaphas: "But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God."<sup>5</sup> After Jesus resurrection and exaltation the martyr Steven, facing death by stoning, had a vision and declared: "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."<sup>6</sup>

Is it important to know who Jesus said he was? Isn't that how you want to know him? What does being *the* Son of Man imply? He wasn't just *a* son of man but *the* Son of Man. Paul called him the second or true Adam. Why? What world of information needs to be unpacked in our study of the true Jesus? Why does the scene from Daniel's vision play such a key role in Jesus' self-identity? What was Adam's (the original son of man) God-given commission toward the human race? Why did he fail and why is Jesus succeeding? These are important details. Daniel wrote:

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man coming with clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus was also called the Son of God, though mainly by others, but he acknowledged he was the chosen Son of God. Of course, Israel is also called God's son<sup>8</sup> as was Adam and as are you. But Jesus is the unique Son of God, the firstborn from the dead to inherit eternal life, and has been appointed as Savior/Messiah to the entire human family.

While we are asking a lot of questions, here is one: While Jesus is clearly called the Son of God throughout the New Testament, (NT) and Jesus personally and virtually exclusively called himself the Son of Man, how many times in the entire NT is Jesus called "God the Son"? Answer: Zero. I know mainstream religion has for centuries called him that, but the Bible does not. Is that fact important? Like sergeant Joe Friday in the old *Dragnet* TV series was fond of saying when solving a case, "Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts."

#### Jesus Symbol of God

A few years ago Roger Haight, S.J., the past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, a theology professor and one of the world's highly regarded scholars, wrote a masterpiece titled "Jesus Symbol of God."<sup>9</sup> It was widely acclaimed, receiving book-of-the-year honors and general applause. Then the Catholic hierarchy actually got around to reading it. All "hell broke loose." Sure, it is a heavy book to read, 505 dense pages of scholarly arguments and evidence, and I read every page before I did several reviews of it years ago.

In a very respectful and scholarly spirit the Jesuit professor basically said that his church got the Trinity doctrine all wrong. He said it was incoherent, unbiblical, and influenced more by pagan Greek religion than Scripture. He was making the case that the church should revise its doctrine. His basic point was that Jesus truly is the great Symbol of God, but is not God. Jesus had a God which was the Father, Creator of all. The Vatican hit back hard removing Jesuit Father Roger Haight from his teaching responsibilities, banning his book from use in Catholic institutions, and labeling him as one who has brought "grave doctrinal errors against the divine and Catholic doctrine of the church."

Challenge the mystery of the Trinity and you will experience the Galileo problem. By the way, Galileo's discovery that everything didn't revolve around the earth, which caused the Catholic Church to oppose him, was not anything contrary to the Bible which doesn't exposit on such things. The Catholic Church had embraced not a biblical view of the earth and universe but that of Aristotle. The Aristotelian cosmology was the geocentric model that didn't match reality. Eventually, the Catholic Church came around and acknowledged the obvious truth. Maybe that might happen with other doctrines—but don't hold your breath.

Christians should be honest and brave enough to abandon pagan myths and boldly embrace truth even if it is unpopular with the religious establishment.

## Gnosiophobia

Fear of knowledge is “gnosiophobia.” Donald DeMarco said, “New knowledge can challenge previously held prejudices, disturb complacency, come in conflict with comfortable ideologies and tax mental capacities.”<sup>10</sup>

Jesus battled these elements as he preached the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. He went about doing good, healing the sick, preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins, with God-given signs attesting to his status as a prophet. His message of salvation was rejected and he was killed. How could that be? Yet the most powerful sign from God attesting to Jesus and his message was God’s resurrecting him from the dead to life in a transformed eternal body. This evidence too was rejected by the majority.

Nevertheless, some saw the reality, the true picture of who Jesus was and is: He is the Christ, the Son of Man, the Son of God, the one who fully embodied the Image of God and is the appointed savior of mankind. For us it should be high time to abandon the man-made caricatures of Jesus and confusing mysteries and see the real Jesus.

We saw how hard it was for the scientific world of Galileo and Pasteur to accept what was clearly factual truth. We see denominations and churches heels dug in on their creeds and traditions unwilling to change even when they are shown to be in error. What is it about our human nature that is so hostile to truth that might require us to change?

Max Plank, the famous mathematician, observed, “An important scientific innovation rarely makes its way by gradually winning over and converting its opponents. What does happen is that its opponents gradually die out, and that the growing generation is familiarized with the ideas from the beginning.” Perhaps the big turn around to truth awaits the New Millennium of Jesus’ and the Father’s rule and teaching. I love this passage in Zechariah which reads:

“This is what Yahweh says, ‘I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth.’” (8:3)

### 3-D Ultrasonography

The knowledge gained through the telescope and microscope have revolutionized science and our knowledge of life and the cosmos. Yet there is a 3-D instrument that is in many ways just as revolutionary.

We must see the cosmic Christ in the mind of God from before creation, revealed in the fourth millennium from Adam, raised to glory and power at the Creator’s right hand, and soon coming to complete his commission to bring the human family into God’s image and into his eternal presence. We must also see the Jesus, the Son of Man, born of Mary and like us, subject to death, and leading us to become one with his Father as he was one with him. And perhaps most importantly, we must see Jesus and the message of hope he brought—the good news of his Father’s kingdom.

We can now see the historical Jesus of the gospels and the cosmic Jesus of the grand plan of God from Genesis to Revelation—the micro and the macro, the microscope and the telescope views of Jesus. But is there another dimension to consider?

There is currently underway a third revolutionary invention destined to feature the miracle of life. It is three-dimensional ultrasound, also known as volumic sonography. Soon it will enter the mainstream. I can assure you it will be resisted because it will convince anyone that sees it that the unborn child is truly an unborn human child. No longer will the abortion industry’s lies prevail that what resides in the womb is just “uterine contents,” “a product of misconception,” or “undifferentiated tissue.” As plain as plain can be a baby in utero will be seen as moving, sometimes even smiling,

a precious and unique little human waiting for the opportunity to be born, breathe air, and be loved.

Who could resist such a wonderful advancement? The usual suspects, of course: Planned Parenthood and the rest of the for-profit abortion industry and their leftist cheerleaders. They have steadfastly resisted showing abortion candidates 2-D ultrasound images of the growing child within; the impact of the 3-D ultrasound will produce a higher resolution, a more accurate image and is now a larger threat to their business. Volumic sonography creates a sense of depth—much like a moving hologram—of a recognizable and developing fellow human being.

Abortionists and their supporters fear that if pregnant mothers actually see the truth of what is inside them they will want to bond with their baby and eschew abortion. Truth therefore must be hidden from these poor women lest the modern eugenics—the killers of the unborn—lose their incomes. Just since *Roe v Wade* some sixty million babies have been killed in America.

How many could be alive today if mothers had just faced the truth of what their eyes could see. Would that truth have been sufficient to have overcome the lies and emotions and pressures that brought them to the abortionist’s table? I believe millions would be alive today had that stark truth been seen and considered. Truth saves lives. Yet one must be willing to look.

### Jesus in 3-D

Jesus is like a living “logo” of the entire Divine Enterprise. In Jesus—his life, character, message, death, resurrection to eternal life, exaltation to God’s presence—the entire plan of Yahweh is presented from start to finish. From the beginning the Creator’s purpose was that man become fully in His Image. That didn’t happen in Genesis. Man had the potential to take on the Divine nature and be filled with the holy and pure character of God, but it required man to submit to God and come to love him with all his mind, soul, and strength (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5), and this did not happen.

Jesus lived as the ideal man, the archetype of a man in the image of God, the true prototype of “the man of God’s own choosing,” the Son of Man (*ben Adam*), fit to lead all men and women to the Father’s presence. He said he did all things to please his Father and the words and deeds he did were those the Father blessed him to do. Salvation is simply understood as following and becoming like Jesus.

The words of N.T. Wright (perhaps the world’s leading Protestant theologian) are inspiring as we consider the Passover symbols Jesus left us.

What happens at the Eucharist [Lord’s Super, Passover] is that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, this future dimension [the new creation on earth, Rom 8] is brought sharply into play. We break this bread to share in the body of Christ; we do it in remembrance of him; we become for a moment the disciples sitting around the table at the Last Supper. Yet if we stop there we’ve only said the half of it. To make any headway in understanding the Eucharist, we must see it as the arrival of God’s future in the present, not just the extension of God’s past (or of Jesus’ past) into our present. We do not simply remember a long-since dead Jesus; we celebrate the presence of the living Lord. And he lives, through the resurrection, precisely as one who has gone on ahead *into the new creation*, the transformed new world, as the one who is himself its prototype. The Jesus who gives himself to us as food and drink is himself the beginning of God’s new world. At communion we are like the chil-

dren of Israel in the wilderness, tasting fruit plucked from the promised land. It is the future coming to meet us in the present.”<sup>11</sup>

Now that is a 3-D image we can savor. Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for us in his Father’s kingdom. He is at work on that project as you read these words. He is minding his business of running the church he heads and preparing every last detail toward having his beloved brothers and sisters join him in his everlasting rule (Rev 5:10). He is dedicated to you taking as your own the details of the very character or Image of God—the Divine nature.<sup>12</sup> He did it and we can too.

Jesus walked the way to eternal life and he is committed to helping you and me walk the same path. Jesus is alive and active at this moment and his focus is on bringing many “to glory.” Living people are in three dimensions. Jesus is alive.

How do we perceive him? Certainly we know he existed historically and we have the flat pages of our Bible that provide us the details of his life. That is important. We also know that Jesus was more than a teacher who lived 33 years some 2000 years ago. We know that he was in the mind and plan of God from before creation and is the firstborn of God’s Grand Plan. He and those who follow him are the reason for the Creator’s cosmos. We see these important dimensions of Jesus.

But look! There is a moving 3-D-like image of a glorious being if we just had eyes to see him. It is Jesus and he is “someone like a son of man....” Read the full visionary description of the glorified Jesus, symbolism and all, in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation. It can almost take your breath away. And he speaks saying:

Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave. (vss 17–18)

How do you see Jesus?

### End notes

- <sup>1</sup> DeMarco, Donald, *A Third Revolution*, an article in *Human Life Review*, Summer 2014, p. 33.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 31.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 33.
- <sup>4</sup> Gauger, Ann, Senior Research Scientist at the Biologic Institute.
- <sup>5</sup> Luke 22:69
- <sup>6</sup> Acts 7:56
- <sup>7</sup> Daniel 7:13
- <sup>8</sup> Exodus 4:22–23; Jeremiah 31:9, 20; Hosea 11:1
- <sup>9</sup> Haight, Roger, S.J., *Jesus Symbol of God*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 2002, 505 pages.
- <sup>10</sup> DeMarco, p. 34.
- <sup>11</sup> Wright, N.T., *Surprised by Hope* (Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church), Harper One Books, 2008, p. 274.
- <sup>12</sup> 2 Peter 1:4

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## Meet Them Where They Are by Lenny Cacchio



On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38 NKJV).

In this passage, Jesus is attending the annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem, one of the annual religious festivals listed in the Book of Leviticus as a time to celebrate and worship before God. Scholars tell us that in Jesus’ day, part of the festival celebration was a water ceremony, where the priest would take water from the spring-fed pool of Siloam and would pour the water on the altar.

Clearly, Jesus was using this ceremony as a reference point for his teaching, but it is odd that this water ceremony is nowhere enjoined in the Old Testament. In spite of that, Jesus used it to teach a profound spiritual truth. Throughout the New Testament we find the great teachers and evangelists using the cultural milieu of the day to illustrate, instruct, and to pique curiosity. From Jesus’ use of the water ceremony to Paul’s teaching at Athens’s Aeropause, they were able to spread the gospel without the aid of PowerPoint or music videos, and, may I add, were quite successful at it.

Paul himself said, “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings.” (1 Corinthians 9:20-23 NIV)

To make it work, Paul had to be thoroughly educated in the cultures in which he was working. Not only was he thoroughly steeped in the ways of the Jews, he was profoundly aware of the Greco-Roman world in which he lived. That enabled him, when he reasoned with the philosophers of Athens, to approach the big questions of life from a perspective they could understand, referring to the Unknown God that even their own poets and philosophers acknowledged, but did not know (Acts 17:16-34).

The point is, Christians above all people should be in touch with the culture of the day. Preachers of the gospel and believers in the way should be the most educated of all people in order to understand the world view of those whom we hope to reach. Even the highly educated philosophers in Athens longed for a knowledge of the Unknown God, and if Paul had not understood their need and how to address that need, he could not have piqued their interest and held their attention, even quoting their own literature to them to support his arguments (Acts 17:28).

For too long some have characterized believers as uneducated, gullible, out of touch ideologues, but the Christianity of the Bible is eminently rational and relevant to the modern world. Being educated and devout are not mutually exclusive. An apostle named Paul was proof of that.

—Lenny Cacchio

You can catch all of Lenny’s latest commentaries on <http://morningcompanion.blogspot.com> and on the BSA Web site at <http://www.biblesabbath.org/>. Lenny is a member of the BSA board of directors.



***This is a response to Kenneth Ryland's editorials in the September-October issue and the November-December issue of the Sabbath Sentinel. It is not a doctrinal response, but a testimonial response. That's simply because we can argue about doctrine all we want, but it's hard to deny a testimony of a personal experience.***



**by Bryant Buck**

I am an anomaly in the Sabbath movement. That's because I am both a Sabbath keeper and a Charismatic Christian. Very few Sabbath keepers are Charismatic; very few Charismatics are Sabbath keepers. So it really doesn't matter where I go; I will almost always have some doctrinal differences. That's why I am taking a testimonial approach to respond to Kenneth Ryland's editorials.

In October of 1967 I was a senior at Northern Illinois University. And I was sick and getting sicker. First, I had major sinus irritation. Then, soon after my sinuses started flaring up, I began to develop migraine headaches that just got worse and lasted longer as the semester went on. In fact, I came to the point where I could take the maximum dose of Excedrin in a twenty-four hour period and sometimes never completely get rid of a headache. Finally, I went to a regular doctor. When he couldn't find anything wrong with me, he sent me to my eye doctor to see if my eyes were the root of my problem since I had already had *kerataconus* (conical cornea) for about 5 years. When the eye doctor couldn't find anything wrong with me, he referred me to an ear, nose, and throat specialist. Of course, he couldn't find anything wrong with me either even as the migraines got worse. So he sent me for an X-ray. To this day I don't know the results of that X-ray. That's because Yahweh was about to intervene.

On a Saturday in late October (please note that I was not yet a Sabbath keeper at this time) my fiancée discovered the passage in James 5:14-15 about calling for the elders of the church and having them pray over you for healing. At that time the only church that we knew of that had elders who believed in divine healing was about 35 miles away from Northern Illinois University. Yet on Sunday evening we drove down to Plano (Illinois) and went to this group's Sunday evening fellowship meeting. At the end of the meeting the elders asked if anyone wanted prayer. I immediately responded that I did and then explained my physical problems for which I needed healing. So the elders of the group gathered around me, laid their hands on me, and started praying for me. Immediately I felt sinuses roll back upward into my head. Then the migraine headache I had at the time suddenly lifted and was gone. It has been over 47 years since that day; I have never had another migraine headache since! This experience was both a healing from the migraines and a miracle with sinuses rolling back upward into my head.

In the late 1990's I was at an inter-church prayer meeting at a friend's house near Waterman, Illinois. Suddenly the Holy Spirit had me focus on a lady at the prayer meeting whom I had never met before. I felt the Holy Spirit speaking

these words to my heart: "Go and tell her that she has been estranged from one of her best friends for some time. Tell her that all her efforts to date to restore their broken friendship have been of no avail. Then tell her that if she goes to her friend now, their friendship will be restored." Of course, when I heard the Holy Spirit speaking to my heart, I doubted what I was hearing. "Lord, I don't even know this lady; how can I be sure that this is You?" Yet the Holy Spirit kept impressing the same words on my heart over and over. Finally, near the end of the prayer meeting, I got up enough courage to share with this lady what I felt the Holy Spirit was telling me. Her response was immediate. "This is amazing! Yes, I have been estranged from one of my best friends for over a year. And I have gone to her repeatedly and tried to work things out between us, but all to no avail. But I will do what the Holy Spirit has spoken to you; I will try once again to reconcile with my friend."

Over a year later I ran into this same lady at another inter-church prayer meeting. She came up to me with eyes beaming and said: "Remember me. I did what the Holy Spirit told you last year. I went to my friend and this time we were able to immediately reconcile our differences and restore our friendship." The fact that the Holy Spirit told me that she had been estranged from one of her best friends for some time was a word of knowledge. The fact that the Holy Spirit told me that she had repeatedly tried to restore their broken relationship without success was also a word of knowledge. Think about it: How could I know these things? I had never met this woman before the day on which the Holy Spirit gave me those words of knowledge. And the instruction of the Holy Spirit that if she went to her friend immediately, their friendship would be restored, was a word of wisdom.

Before I retired, I was "a life insurance salesman by occupation. In June of 2000 I went through a period where I wasn't turning up many new prospects. Finally, during the last week of June I reached the point of desperation with my insufficient prospecting. One evening I prayed a desperate prayer: "Yahweh, I need some prospects. I need referred leads. I need to run into other people who are interested in life insurance in customers' houses. And then I prayed this wild prayer: 'I don't care if people hail me down on the streets! Yahweh, I need some prospects.'" Yahweh was listening to my prayer.

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*Bryant Buck is a freelance writer and a member of the BSA board.*



## Mail from our Readers



Dear Mr. Ryland,

After reading several of evangelist Kelly McDonald's articles in *The Sabbath Sentinel*, I contacted him to come to speak to our church group in Capmanville, West Virginia. We didn't know what to anticipate, but were pleasantly surprised. His speaking talent surpasses his wiring ability, which is superb.

Seldom does one cross paths with a young man interested in God's truths. His energy, talents, enthusiasm, personality, love for others, knowledge, wisdom were so very refreshing to our group. In fact, we intended to have him visit with us annually. Thank you.

Sincerely in Jesus' name,  
Sharon L. Hill.  
P.S. Love your magazine.

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Mr. Ryland,

My father, Lawrence Miller, age 85, asked me to read your article, "Unity in Diversity." My husband and I also heard your Bible Study at the Iowa Feast on this topic of spiritual gifts. My father wanted to know your definition of "brethren" or "brother," or "believer" as mentioned in the article. Thank you, in advance, for your time in answering!

Sincerely,  
Kathy Monahan  
My answer to Kathy Monahan

John,

My article on "Unity in Diversity" was for the purpose of bringing different Sabbath-keeping groups together. We are often our own worst enemies. We divide when there is no need to divide. Even though many Sabbath-keeping groups believe the same things, we often can't get along with one another.

However, I don't have the attitude that people have to be Sabbath-keepers to be Christians. We know some very serious Sunday-keepers whom I would classify as Christian. These people believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, so I am not hung up of labels. I am hung up, however, on Jesus as our Messiah, and I accept others that believe the same thing.

I hope I have answered your question.  
Kindest regards,  
Ken Ryland

One of the most controversial aspects of what I discussed on my "Unity in Diversity" editorial last month was speaking in tongues. Thanks to Daniel Botkin, one of our regular contributors to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, he sent me an article on speaking on tongues, or glossolalia written by Sabina Wurmbrand, wife of the founder of "Voice of the Martyrs." The article is quite revealing.

She states as follows: "I was marched into the guard room and put into a carcer. It was a narrow cupboard built into the wall in which you could just stand. The door had a few holes to admit air. After a few hours my feet were burning. The blood in my temples beat with slow, painful thuds.

"...One, two, three, four," I cried, and again, "one, two, three, four..." After a time words became inarticulate. I didn't know what I said. My mind had moved into rest. It blacked out. Yes my spirit continues to say to God.

"I should explain further, for it is one of the keys to survival in prison. With all the worry and misery, you wished often to black out the mind. You sought desperately to escape, but you were hounded and obsessed by thought that could lead you into deeper mental trouble. Just as an injured leg is put into plaster to rest, so the tormented mind, a sick mind, a mind grieved by remorse needs rest if it is to be healthy.

"It is known that there existed in the early church a phenomenon known as *glossolalia* — speaking in unknown tongues. Out of the depths of the heart, in moments of ecstasy or terrible suffering, come sounds, come expressions of love towards God, and toward fellow men, made up of words that exist in no dictionary. The mind blanks out, as the Bible puts it, he that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but into God.

"In the carcer, this blacking out of the mind, so as to allow unreasoning sounds to come out of the depths of the subconscious saved my sanity.

"After an hour or two my mind came back and rested. I found, too, that the speaking in these unintelligible language [tongues] has one great advantage. You never lie, you deceive no one."

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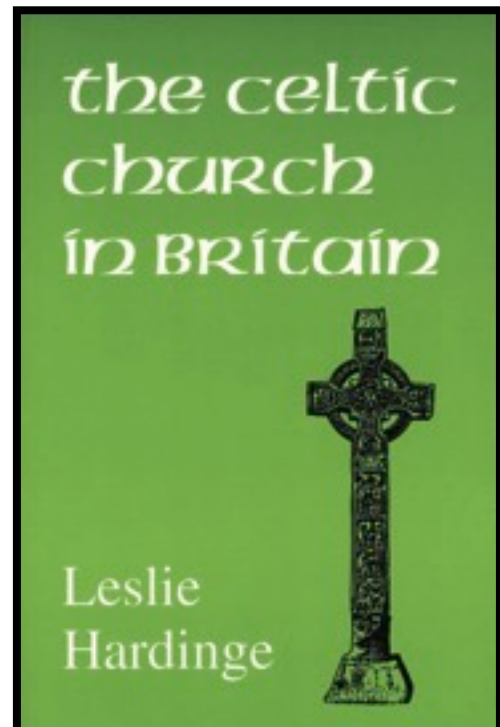
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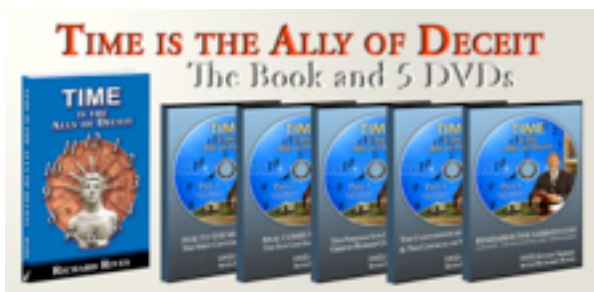
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