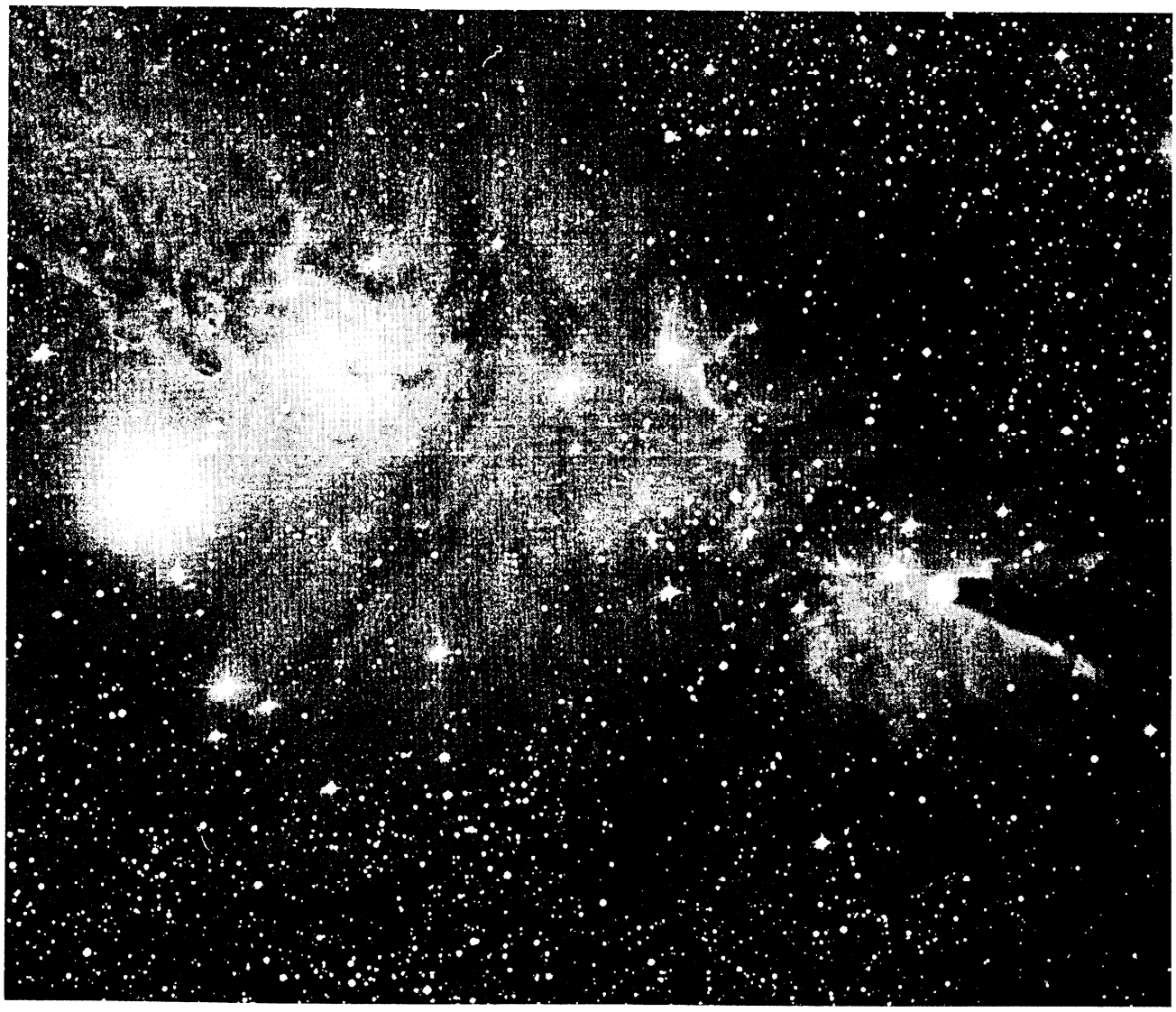
Aug 11 '66

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



Why Live Forever?

LESSON 41

What our STUDENTS SAY

Key to Better Life

"I have at last found the key that will unlock the Bible for me. For the past eight months I have been reading with keen interest, your magazine. I want to thank you for giving me the key. I would like very much to join your Bible study class so that I may turn the keys and learn how to live a better life."

—Man, Suffolk, England

Pastor Enrolls

"After listening to your sermons over WLAC, I have been inspired concerning [the truth about] Easter that we celebrated as the day Christ arose from the dead. And about December 25 and many scriptures we were wrongly taught. I am a minister and pastoring two churches. Please accept my application for the Bible Course. The prophet said we shall know if we follow on to know."

—Man, Kentucky

This Scientist No Fool

"I thought that you might like to know that the Gospel is being received by at least one scientist. Please enroll me in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, and send me a copy of each of the 27 booklets and articles I have listed below. This is only a beginning. I have copied down more than 50 titles from *The* PLAIN TRUTH, the broadcasts, and the four booklets I have. After finding out how I have been deceived, I feel the need to start over again."

—A Scientist, Louisiana

• *Numerous scientists are already enrolled. They find this Course a challenge.*

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"I take the Correspondence Course and gather my three children around me every night and ask them questions from the course and tell them where to find the answer. They, in this way, get acquainted with the scriptures and get the knowledge they need so desperately. It is bringing about a great change in them also and they look forward to these sessions."

—Father, Grand Rapids, Michigan

• *Hundreds already depend on this Course as a guide to family study.*

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 41

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About Our Cover . . .

Space! Unconquered by man — limitless, according to human knowledge — fathomless to human understanding!

Man doesn't yet have dominion over space even though he has intruded into it. Each bright spot in our cover photograph is a star — like our sun or larger.

God knows the full dimension of the universe. He reveals in the Bible the purpose for which He created it!

Wide World Photo 865

STEP INTO ETERNITY...

WHAT WILL the *saved* be doing AFTER the 1000 years? And for all eternity?

Certainly this is the most intriguing question of all! We hear the remark, "I guess we just can't know what eternity holds for the saved."

But you can know!

God specifically reveals the destiny of the saved after the Millennium—and that destiny is breath-taking!

You Can Know!

Yes, these are astonishing words! God has now, at the end of this age, chosen to ring up the curtain on the next act—to reveal to those who choose to become His, their brilliant eternity!

God once spoke through the prophet Isaiah: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what He [God] hath prepared for him [man] that waiteth for Him" (Isa. 64:4). That was in Old Testament times when the prophet uttered these words of promise.

But as the time has drawn nearer for fulfillment of them, God has spoken more explicitly! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him: *but* God hath revealed them to us by His *Spirit* [the Holy Spirit had after baptism] . . ." (I Cor. 2:9, 10). God *now* — in New Testament times—speaks more *plainly* to us of His marvelous plans and mankind's part in them.

Listen!

"And I . . . saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven . . . Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them . . . Behold, I [God] make all things new . . . He that overcometh shall inherit all things . . . and he shall be My son"! (Rev. 21:2, 3, 5, 7.)

And again:

"Thou madest him [man] a little lower than the angels . . . and didst set him over the works of Thy hands" (Heb. 2:7).

These revelations from God are not the idle dreams of some visionary but the realities of God's sure word! "These sayings are *true*"—they *are* going to happen as surely as day follows night! God plans for man to be *coheirs*—*joint heirs*—with Him—God the Father and God the Son—of the whole universe! "God is love" (I John 4:8)—God loves to *share!* God never does anything except in *love!*

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9).

Near the center of this spiral nebula the stars — many larger than our sun — blend together into an indistinguishable bright nucleus.

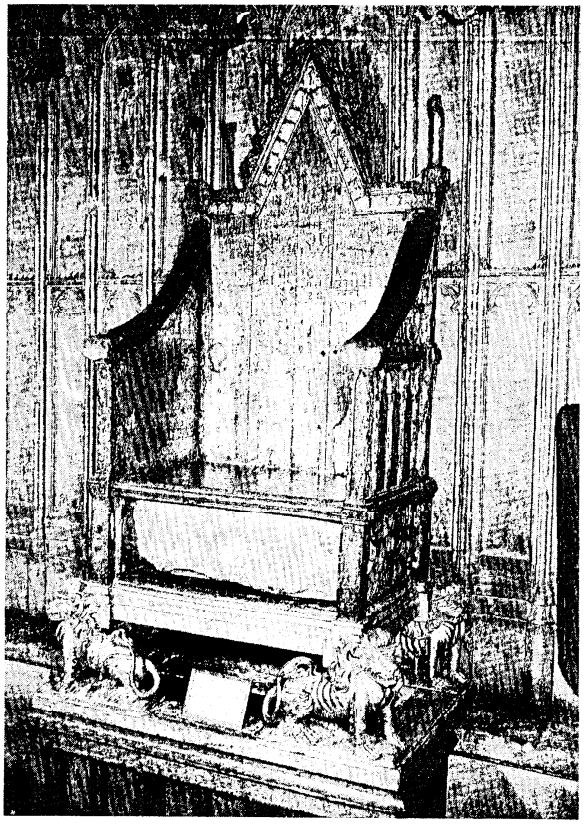
200-inch Hale Telescope Mt. Wilson and Palomar Observatories

Wide World Photo

Keystone Photo

Above: This world's monarchs sit in dignity and temporal splendor surrounded by human counselors and servants. God Almighty sits in heaven in eternal magnificence and his counselors and servants are ever living creatures and brilliant archangels!

Right: The throne of Great Britain, Scotland and Ireland is actually the ancient throne of David to which Jesus Christ is returning. From it, restored to Jerusalem, He will administer the government of the universe!



LESSON 41

God Introduces Himself

Who is this wonderful God who plans to do marvelous things for man? What kind of Mind does God have? God reveals Himself to us in Isaiah 40:26. Here is what He says of Himself:

"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things [the heavenly bodies—stars, suns, etc.]: that bringeth out their [the heavens] host by *number:* He calleth them all by *names:* [God is so phenomenal and mighty that He knows *exactly* how many heavenly bodies—stars, planets—there are in the heavens]" (Isa. 40:26). God knows the exact number of all the heavenly bodies, and He has each one of them named. How truly marvelous!

1. Does God reveal that His throne lies in the heavens to the north of us? Isa. 14:13, 14. Job 26:7.

COMMENT: Recall this is the northerly direction Satan traveled from this earth in his foredoomed attempt to seize God's throne, an empty space where there are no stars planets resulting.

2. What is the name of the heavenly city where God's throne now is? Heb. 12:22. On what mount in that heavenly city is God's heavenly throne now? Same verse.

COMMENT: The earthly Jerusalem in the apostles' day was a type of the heavenly.

3. What innumerable company is associated with the heavenly throne? Heb. 12:22. What is God's throne called? Ps. 47:8.

4. Why is God *worthy* of receiving glory, honor and power? Rev. 4:11.

5. Is God's throne to abide forever? Ps. 45:6. Then it is most certainly something that all mankind should take special recognition of, is it not? Same verse. Doesn't I Chronicles 29:10, 11 also bear this out?

6. Is God's throne, on which He sits, in a temple? Isa. 6:1.

7. What gorgeous picture does God's *throne* present? Is it like clear fire against an emerald background? Rev. 4:2, 3.

COMMENT: A jasper stone is *not transparent.* Also, the dictionary tells us that a sardine stone is of a *reddish hue.* Fire and brass (Rev. 1:14, 15) are both of a reddish hue.

8. Is God's throne high? Isa. 6:1. Are there seraphim above His throne? Verse 2.

9. Between what does *God* sit? Ps. 99:1, 2. Does God wear a robe? Isa. 6:1. Does it fill the temple? Same verse.

10. Does God have advisers about Him? Rev. 4:1-11. Note the word "elders." Note also the

richness of God's throne. Note that God is reverenced by all those who are about Him—read also Revelation 7:11.

11. *How* do the 24 elders recognize that the rule of God is *superior* to theirs? How do they symbolically recognize this? Rev. 7:11.

COMMENT: The word "beasts" incidentally mentioned here is properly translated from the Greek as "living creatures." Even they, because of God's mightiness, fall down and worship Him. Rev. 19:4.

12. Does God have a voice like thunder? Job 40:9. What proceeds out of the throne of God? Rev. 4:5.

COMMENT: The throne of God is a place of great activity. God is not asleep, nor has He gone far off and forgotten us.

13. Do a vast number of angelic beings surround God's throne? Rev. 5:11. Does God give the number of angels about His throne? Rev. 5:11; Heb. 12:22.

14. How many are the "chariots of God"? Ps. 68:17. What are they—angels serving a special function?

15. How long will God's throne exist? Ps. 45:6.

16. What do God the Father and God the Son look like, in their *glorified form*, on the throne of the universe? Rev. 1:13-16.

COMMENT: This, then, is the present scintillating capital city of the universe!!! — with which *our* eternal destiny *will be so brilliantly tied!!*

17. But for all the fascinating brilliance of God's throne of the universe—transcending far above all God's other characteristics—just what *is* God? I John 4:8.

COMMENT: God is the very personification of *Love*. Never has He done anything except in the deepest and highest sense of a loving *father*—whose very own children He has promised we may be—to share with Him to the fullest!

God's Throne to Descend to Earth

1. Is the surface of this earth to be purified by fire? Mal. 4:1, 3.

COMMENT: This is to occur after all mankind has had an opportunity to choose eternal life.

2. Is the *true* Christian instructed, according to God's promise, to look in confidence "for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth [complete] righteousness"? II Pet. 3:13. Read also Rev. 21:1.

COMMENT: Notice that the fiery earth's surface is to consume the recalcitrant. This will produce a condition of no more sea. All mankind, born again as spirit Sons of God, will be at such *peace* with each other. A truly "ultra"-utopian paradise in every sense!

3. But even yet more amazing, is not the Holy City new Jerusalem—the present *heavenly* Jerusalem, where is located the supreme God's throne from which He even now rules the entire universe—going to come down to remain upon this earth? Rev. 21:2. What a stupendous event!

4. And what is a great voice from heaven to say at that moment? Rev. 21:3.

COMMENT: The word *tabernacle* means *temple*. God the Father and Christ, the two supreme members of the God Kingdom ruling the entire universe, will come down to dwell *personally* with the saved of mankind—who are then spirit Sons of God!

What a *stupendous* future for man to choose!!

5. Does Hebrews 12:22, 23 elaborate on our wonderful *status*—our *estate*—at that time?

COMMENT: Notice that this is speaking of the church [the crowd] of the *first*born, the crowd into which we may be born at Christ's soon return, if *we* yield to Him today.

6. What will the heavenly Jerusalem, the capital of the universe, look like on the new earth? Rev. 21:11. Read also verses 18-21. It will be a fantastically gorgeous place.

7. What will He — God — at that time say He intends to do? Rev. 21:5.

God's Family to Run Universe!

Yes, we have now seen that God has created millions upon millions of subjects, but none of them are as yet wholly on His plane, the God-plane. Yet that is the plane God wants to *share* with us!

He has planned a large *family* with which to share His joys of accomplishment and sumptuous, luxurious living. He wants a family of His very own upon whom He can lavish His love, and who will joyously reciprocate.

1. What does Hebrews 2:6-8 say of this wonderful arrangement?

COMMENT: The joyous influence of the Family of God—the *Kingdom of God*—known now, while in heaven, as the Kingdom of Heaven—is presently composed of only *two* Spirit Beings, the Father and the Son. But this Family will expand by the addition of other begotten and born Sons of God, and its influence will not only engulf this earth but *expand* jubilantly throughout the universe!

Why Abraham An Example

How may we enter the Kingdom of God? Let Abraham lead the way! What he did, we must do!

Abraham, by *believing* in God—having the *faith* to step out and *act* on the word of God—has *already qualified* to be in God's "crowd," to be in God's supreme, universe-ruling Kingdom. What Abraham, Isaac, Jacob did is the pattern we must follow. Understand why.

1. Did Abraham have faith in God—did he believe God *means* what He says? James 2:23.

COMMENT: For anyone to be allowed to govern others, God must first see the demonstrated evidence that one has the *faith* to allow himself to be governed by God. God is forming for Himself a Kingdom — an obedient Kingdom — a wonderful Kingdom of God Beings! A God Family. *One* Divine Family, but many members.

2. What did Abraham do? Did Abraham show God by *action* that he was willing to *yield* to Him, to submit to Him?—willing to give up his old former ways, customs, surroundings—whatever God might require, so that he might follow God the more readily? Gen. 12:1, and verse 4, its first ten words. Note the word *departed.*

COMMENT: Departure!—*that* was the pattern of Abraham's entire life. Abraham "*departed*" from *his own* way of life while here in the flesh, on this earth. He *yielded* himself to his Maker, gave up his *own* way, and ordered his life according to the various commandments he received from *God.* Abraham was, while here in the human flesh, *transformed in character*, and under the rule of the *God* Kingdom though Abraham himself was not, as yet, born again into it. Abraham was readying himself for his sudden future change—the new birth into the Kingdom of God, in which he will be ruled, and will himself rule, as a very God!

3. How do we *know* that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—while alive—at that time *qualified* for the Kingdom of God? Luke 13:28. They "have it made"!

COMMENT: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be born into the Kingdom of God at Christ's coming. Their attitude is the kind God demands must be shown for that new birth. That is the reason that God reveals to *us now* that *they positively will be* in the Kingdom. So we, *being assured*, may pattern our lives to yield as they did and thereby achieve this same wonderful goal also!

4. Because of Abraham's surrendered attitude, did God give Abraham an insight into the amazing things ahead for all the yielded of this earth? Did God reveal to Abraham there is to be a wonderful city associated with his life in the future? Heb. 11:10. What city will this be? Rev. 21:10. Is it to have a foundation? Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:14. Who is to be its maker—God? Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:2—note the words "from God."

COMMENT: "By faith [righteous] Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place [Canaan—a type of the new earth purified by fire—II Pet. 3:10] which he should after [after the resurrection, and after the millennium is finished] receive for an [eternal] inheritance, [in faith] obeyed" (Heb. 11:8). ". . . For he looked for a city [Heb. 11:10—the holy city, new Jerusalem which will come down upon this earth after its surface is purified by fire] which hath foundations [see Rev. 21:14] whose builder and maker is God [note also the words "coming down from God"]" (Rev. 21:2). It is to be God's present heavenly city, the heavenly Jerusalem, capital of the universe which is to come down upon this earth, by then purified!

Yes, yielded Abraham was looking forward with the *greatest* of anticipation and confidence to being associated with the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, capital of the universe, which is to descend and remain forever upon this earth! An eager expectation that all of us who are *yielded* may share!

What an enthralling, fascinating, thrilling prospect! Of being very God, coheirs with the patriarchs and with Christ, our eldest brother, with the supreme God as our very own Father! "Our Father . . ."—that is the way the truly begotten are already addressing their prayers to their divine Creator today! Think of it! We are addressing our prayers to Him with whom we shall share infinity and eternity in splendor and in ruling and in joyous living, guided by His loving Son. No more sorrow! All to be *one* in God's very own God *Family*—the God Kingdom—the *Kingdom of God!*

No wonder the message Christ proclaimed to the world—the message of the imminent expansion of the Kingdom of God to include the yielded born-again of all mankind—created such a tremendous stir! It is a *tremendous* thing! "The *Kingdom of God* is preached," Jesus cried, as He heralded to the world the opening of the doors of the Kingdom, "and every man presseth into it"! *Every* man should yield and press into it! That is Christ's—the very Son of God's—wish! That is His exhortation. God wants to *share!*

Fabulous God Kingdom Offered Man!

God tells us all about the scintillating, marvellous future estate we may share with Him and His Son. He tells us in the Scripture by a priceless line here, and a priceless line there. Throughout the Bible—the New Testament—

this information is everywhere scattered.

1. Does God command man to set the goal of entrance into the divine Kingdom of God far above *all* his other endeavors in this world? Mat. 6:33—Note the word "*first*." Is the Kingdom of God like a treasure in a field, so that one goes and sells all he has to buy that supremely valuable field? Mat. 13:44.

2. Does God point out that the number of members in the spirit Kingdom of God is going to grow to great proportions? Mark 4:30-32.

3. Do we *inherit* the Kingdom of God? Mat. 25:34.

4. Will God be happy to see us within His own Family the God Kingdom? Luke 12:32. Any good father is very happy indeed to welcome more offspring into his very own family!

5. Is the coming enlarged God Kingdom—the Kingdom of God—going to be a permanent, stable, enduring system—a permanent enduring stable Family? Heb. 12:28. Note the words ". . . receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved." Read also Heb. 1:8, and II Pet. 1:11—note the word "*everlasting*."

6. Will even the *least* person born into the Kingdom of God as a spirit being be greater than was John the Baptist?—of whom there was none greater, said Jesus. Luke 7:28.

COMMENT: What tremendous powers we will be given!!

7. What is to happen to evil people who break God's commandments? Mat. 8:11, 12; 13:24, 25, 30.

COMMENT: The "man" in Matthew 13:24 is God. The enemy is Satan. The tares are those who turn out to be disobedient—verses 38-40.

8. Does the apostle Paul also verify what is to happen to those who, knowing the issues involved, refuse to devote their energy while living to overcoming themselves so they may enter the eternal Kingdom of God? II Pet. 3:10; Heb. 12:28.

COMMENT: "Wherefore we" those who exert themselves to enter the Kingdom—"receiving a Kingdom [the Kingdom of God] which cannot be moved, let us . . . serve God [earnestly *now*] . . . with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire"—*after* all the yielding righteous have been born again as spirit and are beyond fire's reach, God will consume the earth by fire and abolish the disobedient. II Pet. 3:10; Heb. 12:28-29.

YIELDING to God's Church—Not the Devil's

1. Are we commanded to *yield* ourselves to a Higher Authority in this life? Rom. 6:12, 13. Who is this Authority—God? Same reference.

2. Is it important "*to whom*" we yield ourselves? Rom. 6:16.

COMMENT: Remember, Satan has his churches. See Rev. 17!

3. Are we not to be as "*little children*"—teachable, plastic, yielding? Mat. 19:14.

4. When Philip preached entry into the wonderful spirit Kingdom of God, what did people *do* about it; were they *baptized?*—showing to God they were *willing* to bury their old ways, their old habits, for the tremendous prize of entry into the eternal God Kingdom? Acts 8:12.

COMMENT: This was explained in the lessons on Repentance and Baptism. Review them.

5. Does John 3:5 also verify one must be baptized to enter the Kingdom of God? Read also John 3:3.

COMMENT: After baptism—"*burial*" *of the old self*—one must be willing to receive instructions in righteousness to prevent sinning in the future! *That* is where the tangible, clear-cut instructions of God's one True Church, which has existed down through the ages, comes in!

Why the Church of God?

1. Did Christ not say He would build—establish—a *Church?* Mat. 16:18.

COMMENT: The Church is not the Kingdom of God: the Church is the *means through which* begotten sons of God may be *properly guided* and corrected—made acceptable to Christ for *entry into* the eternal *Kingdom of God!*

Christ is revealing the *agency* here on this earth through which He works.

2. Christ *did* build—found—His Church, the agency by which God guides and instructs His begotten sons now, just as He promised He would. Acts 2:1-8.

COMMENT: The pouring out of the Holy Spirit of power upon the day of Pentecost in A.D. 31 was but an opening occasion! Ever since then God has been imparting His spirit to those who surrender and yield to him. It is that spirit which baptizes them into the one true Church of God—Christ's body on earth through which He is carrying out His work!

3. Is the now-*glorified* Christ in the *midst* of His spirit-begotten Church, down through all time? Rev. 1:13.

COMMENT: No wonder Christ is "*in the midst*"! Christ is intensely interested in His one true Church: its progress — in seven stages — down through time. For it is *this* Church — this "crowd" (*ecclesia* in the inspired Greek New Testament)—that God the Father and Christ are fashioning into their very own eternal *Family*.

God is very intent on *focusing the attention*

of man now on the amazing glorious prospect of his being elevated into the very God Family, at Christ's soon return. That is the Gospel of the Kingdom. And the work of the Church is to make that good news known worldwide.

4. What did God ordain His Church to do to prepare its members for the eternal spirit Kingdom of God? John 21:15, 16, 17.

5. What was the name of God's one Church He was founding to be? I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 15:9; II Cor. 1:1; I Tim. 3:5.

COMMENT: Remember, ~~Christ, too,~~ is God. The name of God's one true Church down through time is ~~the *Church of God*~~.

6. What is the founding structure of the Church of God—the one and only Church God has ever founded upon this earth? Eph. 2:20.

COMMENT: Christ became the "chief corner," the cornerstone, of the Church by His preaching and by His sacrifice. Christ's twelve apostles followed closely with Him. They were the ones Christ used, after His death, to build His Church which would exist down through the ages in seven successive stages.

The Book of Acts—the acts of Christ's *twelve apostles*—is full from beginning to end with the mighty ACTS God performed through the apostles in building God's Church, and in carrying out its work.

Yes, the twelve apostles and the congregations they established carried on Jesus' work of *building*—of preaching to the world, of bringing those who repent into God's Church, of feeding them and preparing them for the coming glorious entrance into the Kingdom of God. What they, the very apostles of Christ, the Son of God, and the Church they founded did, God's ministers in God's one true Church—*this* Church—are doing today!

God's "crowd" — *ecclesia* — *is* His Church — potential heirs to the Kingdom of God!! The Church, when all its members have been changed to immortality, shall *become* the Kingdom of God. God the Father and God the Son are now in heaven. They presently constitute the God-plane members of the Kingdom of God, sometimes referred to as the Kingdom of Heaven—for that is where they are now.

Note the phrase, three times repeated: "Feed my sheep." Three times Christ commanded His apostolic group who later were to become the core of the Church of God, after His death, that they "feed" God's "sheep." He commanded them to *instruct* those within the Church of God. In no other way would each within God's one true Church *know* definitely what God does, and does not wish in their lives.

The command *applies to us today!*

The Stage Route

Christ is pictured in Revelation 1:13 as dwelling in the *midst* of His Church. But notice that there are seven candlesticks — each one separate. That is, they represent *seven* successive eras of the one true Church of God. From the time of Christ's founding it by sending the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of power, at Pentecost in A.D. 31 until Christ's now soon return, there will be seven — and only seven — eras of labor of the Church. Let's understand them.

God inspired Revelation 2 and 3 to be written, for *our* instruction and cautioning *today*. Here are pictured seven congregations. They were on a long mail stage route in the time of the apostles (send for free booklet, *A True History of the True Church*). The great *Godly yieldedness* and *zeal*—or *lack of Godly* yieldedness and *zeal*—*lukewarmness*—shown by each of these seven are a type of the seven consecutive eras of God's Church. These seven local churches *prophetically* point up what the rewards or punishments are to be meted out at Christ's coming at the first resurrection. How does this apply to *today?* It's extremely important you know. Your salvation and status are at stake! Let's understand.

1. Scan Revelation 2:1 for the *names* of those seven local churches of God which existed simultaneously, consecutively placed on a mail route, in the time of the apostles. Underline with red, or green crayon, or ball point pen the name *Ephesus* and number it in the margin, "1."

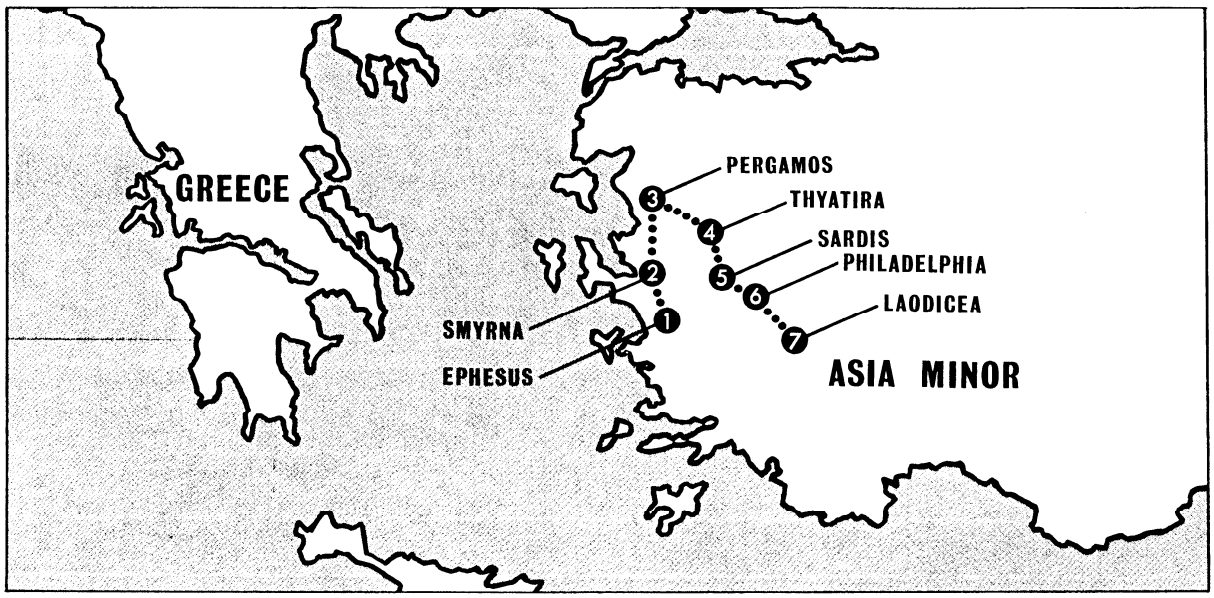
2. Do the same with the second church—*Smyrna*, numbering it "2." (Rev. 2:8.)

3. Continue in the same manner with the remainder of the five consecutive congregations which then existed simultaneously on the mail route in the time of the apostles, numbering each in order—Rev. 2:12; and verse 18. And Rev. 3:1; 3:7; 3:14.

4. But now to the practical *application* of *that* mail route to *your* salvation *today*. It is extremely important!! Study and mark carefully the sixth church, the PHILADELPHIA ERA. Rev. 3:7.

COMMENT: Those seven churches, each with its own particular characteristics, were chosen because of their location, *in successive order*, on a long mail route. One had to go for *some time* to reach the *next* point. IT WAS PROPHETICALLY TYPICAL OF SEVEN *GREAT* SUCCESSIVE TIME *STAGES* OF GOD'S ONE TRUE CHURCH IN PREPARING MAN FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD. They cover the period from the time Christ founded His Church, until His *return—now imminent!*

Where are we today? We who are *now* within



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The Stage Route—Mail Route—which connected the churches of Western Asia Minor, illustrates the successive time eras of God's True Church. Be sure to request the free booklet, "A True History of the True Church," for full explanation.

the Church of God are in the *Philadelphia Era!*

Truly the "Philadelphia Era" of God's Church—our Church—has the brightest future ever—for such as these. A *tremendous* opportunity to enter!

WE Fulfill Prophecy

Yes—today we, the *Philadelphia* Era of the *Church of God* — stand excitingly, sharply, graphically, yes—even resplendently, identified! Thundering out, at the tip-end of this age, the message from God to man to this dying world! The message that man has had *his* chance, and that the glorious Kingdom of God is on the way *in!!*

Here it is!—it's been in your Bible all the time, hidden there by God, ready to be revealed by Him at this crisis of the ages.

1. Read very carefully Revelation 3:7-13. Nowhere else in the world is there such a message of eternal import to man today. God here positively identifies the agency — the Church (verse 7)—through which He works. Before it is a "door," the *greatest* radio and publishing *power* on earth, to bring mankind into *eternal life!*

COMMENT: ". . . to . . . angel of the Church in Philadelphia [the Philadelphia *stage* of the *Church of God*] write [verses 7-10] . . . I have set before thee an open door and *no man can shut it* [*God* keeps the door to the *greatest radio power on earth* open to us. For years we have been using more kilowatts of power than any other organization on earth, commercial or otherwise, to carry the one *true* message of *God* to man, worldwide!] . . . thou hast a little strength [*not* millions of members as some] . . . hast kept My word [we follow and preach what the *Bible* says] . . . not denied My name [our name is the Church of *God*] . . . I . . . will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them [persecution by a great religious power is now almost upon the world]. . . ."

THERE STANDS OUR CHURCH *TODAY* — DESCRIBED IN EVERY PARTICULAR BY GOD ALMIGHTY HIMSELF. WE—and *no* other organization or so-called "church" on the face of the earth—are fulfilling that description!

This Church—this "crowd"—God's "crowd," is going to expand and expand, under God, until all who obey and yield themselves to their Maker will be within the one glorious, happy, eternal Family of God! That is the tremendous Good News the one true Church of God thunders forth today.

Wonderful Things Ahead

1. What did Christ, before His crucifixion, point out He would return to heaven to do? John 14:2.

COMMENT: The Father's house is the heavenly

temple in which the Father, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, resides. It is symbolic of God's universal government. (The word "mansions" is a mistranslation. The proper meaning is "offices.") Christ was going to heaven to prepare *positions* of authority for those now presently yielded. The yielded will be made kings and priests in the millennium and, as such, will instruct yet others in the ways God desires His created beings to go.

2. Will we, the yielded today, be ruling over nations? Rev. 20:4.

COMMENT: Jesus will return from heaven in clouds. We are going to meet Him in the air (I Thes. 4:15-17). At that time Jesus will give us positions in the Kingdom, according to how well we *now* do with what we are given. We are to be with Jesus here on earth—"that where I am there may ye be also." We shall be ruling with Christ over nations, pointing out to them the desires of God for their way of life.

In addition, at Christ's return, God's "crowd" —God's Church who lived throughout all the time since Christ—shall rise as a body from out of their graves and be with Him. Together we shall bring the nations to the truth. Billions will, in the 1000 years, be begotten into the God Family—will be part of God's one true Church, the one Church of God!

When composed of spirit—very born Sons of God with *all-powerful* spirit minds and bodies, with capacity for tremendous speed of motion, we will be used to bring all mankind, not only in the Millennium, but in the Great White Throne Judgment era of one hundred years, to the truth—to salvation!

3. Does not Revelation 1:6 show we will have been made kings and priests for this purpose? Doesn't Revelation 5:9, 10 also strongly verify this? Will we judge the people of the world during the millennial and white throne eras in order to guide them so they may attain the eternal spirit Kingdom of God, too? I Cor. 6:2.

4. Due to our guidance—acting then in the capacity of kings and priests—will not the earth become full of the knowledge of the Lord as waters cover the sea? Isa. 11:9.

COMMENT: Yes, there are tremendous things ahead for the yielding BUT there are *very rough times ahead* for those who *delay* surrendering to God and coming into God's ONE true Church —the Church of God.

There has never been more than ONE true Church of GOD! All other "religious" institutions of any sort belong, of necessity, to *someone else*—the Devil!

SURRENDER!—So You May Enter God's Kingdom!

1. What has God commanded mankind to do so he may enter the eternal universe-ruling Kingdom of God? Deut. 30:19. Read also verse 15.

COMMENT: God has created man a free moral agent. Man is commanded to choose—to choose LIFE—eternal life. Man must *become*, as God already *is*, perfect in his decisions. If man surrenders his self-will, God will supply him with the divine power to make the right choices and to carry them out. He will then make of him a divine being in the supreme Kingdom of God!—make of him God, a member of the very Family of God!

God has made man, His highest creation, a creature of choice. Any man who refuses to choose life automatically has chosen death.

2. What does God call upon man to do?—and for what purpose? Rom. 6:13.

COMMENT: Note that we are the same as dead if we do not *yield* ourselves to works of righteousness.

3. Will not those who *really* believe, surrender and yield themselves to God be *baptized* by the Holy Spirit into His one Church, the *Church of God?* I Cor. 12:28.

COMMENT: Note in verse 28 the words "Church" and "God." God is discussing *His* Church, the *Church of God*. And in verse 13, note the words "by one Spirit [the Holy Spirit of God] are we baptized into *one* body [baptized into God's *one* Church body, the *Church of God!*]." God wishes each human being would *yield and be baptized* into His one true Church —the Church of God!

4. Does not Ephesians 2:19, 21, 22 also make clear what God desires of man? That God wants man to be transformed—come out of this, *Satan's*, world—this world's "crowds," and come rather *into* the "crowd" — the *ecclesia* — the Church *of God*, where one may have the beginning token of that brilliant, *eternal* future in the Kingdom of God?

COMMENT: "Now therefore ye [who had been formerly members in the vast numbers of Satan's misled "churches" of this world, but who have come to realize the truth and who have NOW, THROUGH REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM, come within God's one and only *true* church — the Church of *God*] are no more strangers and foreigners [living like Gentiles], but [are] fellow citizens with the saints [we today who have already yielded ourselves into God's one true Church] and [are] of the household [*fed true* spiritual food from the Bible by God's one Church, and *growing* as begotten Sons, though

not yet born] of God . . . in whom all the building fitly framed together *groweth* [God's one true crowd, Church, *growing*] into a holy *temple* [becoming a *constant* dwelling place of the Holy Spirit of God] . . . builded together for an *habitation* of God through the [Holy] Spirit" [such will have become its constant abiding place and will gladly eternally do as He—God—desires they should!].

If one is to be saved today he must repent and *believe* Jesus, and believe *in* Jesus, and be baptized as God has ordained. Then God promises to give that person the Holy Spirit which puts him into the only Church God has ever had upon this earth—the only Church He has marked with His name, so there will be no mistake. From this Church only, in which God's own inspiring Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God dwells, learn the *truth* about salvation. Learn from it how and what to do to be saved. Be guided from God's only Guide Book on earth, the Bible.

Spiritual truths are *spiritually* discerned: "the [Holy] Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into *all truth*" (John 16:13). You must first be *baptized* in water, then you will receive the Holy Spirit before you can fully perceive in their true light the meanings of all the scriptures. Repent, believe the Gospel, acknowledge that Christ died for your past sins and be baptized, and you shall receive the Holy Spirit (of perception). Then you are *truly* on your way to salvation—on your way to eternal life and the abundant things God has ahead for those who have so loved Him! (John 14:15.)

5. Are we beseeched to *walk worthy* of our *high calling to be very God?* Eph. 4:1.

COMMENT: To be able to *walk worthy* requires *coaching* — growing WITHIN God's *one* true Church—the one Church He formed and has brought down through the ages for this one purpose!! Not much time is left!

Grow in God's ONE Church into the Kingdom of God!

1. What has God *commanded* us to do *now* if we are to enter the soon-opening glorious eternal Kingdom of God—if we are to enter into, and be a part of, the very Family of God? II Pet. 3:18.

COMMENT: This is important! What else could be more important in one's life?

2. *Growing* requires *feeding! To whom* has God given the authority—the commission—to feed — instruct — His own "sheep"? His ministers? John 21:15-17. This is so important to *salvation* that it is being repeated a *second* time!

COMMENT: Remember that it is *only* God's Church, the *one* true *Church of God*, which was founded by Christ, that has continued down to this day, which has this commission! Others may claim it, but their deeds prove them liars—see Revelation 17. That is vital to your very salvation to know and *act* upon.

3. Within God's Church the true intent and meaning of the Bible is taught. Are its members cleansed by God's Word? John 15:3. And thereby sanctified—set apart to God—by it? John 17:17.

4. Must one grow in grace and Godly knowledge in this life? II Pet. 3:18.

5. Are we to strive to be—become—perfect? Mat. 5:48. Isn't this a miserable existence compared to the brilliant glorious life God holds in store for His Sons? I Cor. 15:19. Should we have a Godly concern that we strive now to attain the wonderful future life God holds in store? Heb. 4:1. So what should we do *now*—seek to make ourselves worthy of entering the coming Kingdom, placing that goal above all others? Mat. 6:33.

COMMENT: The big point is: the period to act is now—"while it is today"— so as to qualify to be among the firstborn into the Kingdom. Time is almost up. Christ's return is imminent, almost at our very door! One must move swiftly.

Beware of Satan's "Churches"

Do you know that Satan has flooded this world with a vast horde of so-called "spiritual" aggregations called "churches"? Why? Let's understand.

1. Does not Satan deceive the whole world? Rev. 12:9. Why? II Cor. 4:4.

COMMENT: "The god [Satan] of this world hath *blinded* the minds of them which believe not [blinded them to the good news, the glorious news that God plans for man to be made very God—spirit beings—in the brilliant eternal Kingdom of God!] lest the light of the glorious gospel [that we are to be made God] . . . should *shine* [become known] unto them" (II Cor. 4:4).

As long as man is in the *dark*—blinded—as to his destiny, there is no way for him to become God. Satan and his demons want no Sons of God replacing them in their offices.

Note also the words "Christ who is the *image* of God." Christ is the *first* man begotten and born again into the God Kingdom. Now there are God the Father and God the Son: but, as yet, only the *two* spirit members.

As long as man is kept "harmlessly"—from Satan's point of view—occupied in this world, confused and divided among the "churches" of

Satan, man will *never* inherit the eternal spirit God Kingdom.

2. Does God identify Satan's monstrous, close-knit, pseudo-"religious" system which saturates this world? Rev. 17:5, 6.

COMMENT: Here we see the great "universal" ("catholic" means, in Latin, "universal") church, with her *protest*-ant daughters.

3. What is to be the sorry *end* of this "blind alley"—this system—which seeks to block man from entering the brilliant Kingdom of God? Rev. 19:2, 3. And II Pet. 3:10. Its persistent followers will share the same fate.

COMMENT: This earth's crust and the wicked will be no more after the millennium and White Throne Judgment time. *But* those within God's *one* true Church — who are going on into an eternity of breathtakingly beautiful, joyous, brilliant living in the splendor of the Kingdom of God—will be there!

4. Does God already know that His tremendous offer, extended to us—and ultimately to all men—to enter the glorious eternal spirit-being Kingdom of God is such a great *bargain* that the vast majority of fleshly mankind will ultimately yield to God and choose His happier, vastly better way of living? Will most people gladly *thank God* for the opportunity He extended them? Col. 1:12, 13.

COMMENT: After our advancement, at the resurrection, to immortality, we will then gladly be "*Giving thanks unto the Father* . . . who hath delivered us from the power of darkness [delivered us from Satan, and this, his Satan-dominated sorrowful world] and hath translated us [now as begotten members] into the Kingdom [or Family] of His dear Son [the eternal glorious Kingdom of God!!]" (Col. 1:12, 13). Why not make the situation easier and simpler by beginning to yield your stubborn will to God NOW?

To Be Associated With Magnificent Throne of the Universe

Did you know that those who, *in faith, yield* to God now, obey God, will share in the same destiny as Abraham, the "*father*"—the forerunner—of all the faithful? What a *tremendous destiny* it is! Notice:

1. By *faith* did Abraham, the obedient, look for and expect to be in the city whose Builder and Maker is God? Heb. 11:10.

COMMENT: This city is to be God's capital of the universe, which is to come down upon this earth after it is purified.

2. What does the Bible say of this tremendous coming event? Rev. 21:1-3. Does it say that only one of mankind, Abraham—will be transformed into a spirit being, a *God*, and be where the holy city, new Jerusalem, descends? Or will the other righteous be there *too?* Verse 3. Note the words "*them*," and "His *people*," and "with *them*," and "be *their* God."

COMMENT: God emphasizes and re-emphasizes here that there will be *many* resurrected or changed into righteous spirit beings. They will even be with Him within the new Jerusalem, capital of the universe! *You* may be one of *these*. God is doing His part! It's up to you!

3. What is the *size* of the holy city new Jerusalem, the capital of the universe, which is to descend upon this, by then, purified earth? Rev. 21:2, 10, 15, 16, 17.

COMMENT: One furlong is one ninth of a mile (your center reference in your National Bible gives you this). It will be 1,333 miles long, 1,333 miles wide, and 1,333 miles high!

The huge capital of the universe will occupy a space equal to most of central United States! *That* is the size it will be!

4. What does God say of the eternal brilliant

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The "Wailing Wall" of Old Jerusalem. Faithful Jews gather here to mourn the destruction of Herod's Temple. At the close of human history an eternal city will descend to this site and become Headquarters of the universe. In it will be no temple building, no mourning, no sorrow, no tears!

future of those transformed into spirit? Heb. 2:6-8.

COMMENT: We have access to this brilliant palatial capital of the universe!

5. What is the unimaginable *beauty* of this awe-inspiring, tremendous, palatial home of God? Let us understand. Is the holy city new Jerusalem to come down out of heaven? Rev. 21:2. What breathtaking beauty will it exhibit? Of what will the wall around the great city, the holy new Jerusalem, consist? Verse 18. Will the foundations of the wall be ornamented with all sorts of precious stones? Verse 19—and scan on through verse 21. Of what will each of the twelve gates of the wall consist? Verse 21.

6. Of what will the entire city and streets of the capital of the universe, the new Jerusalem, be composed? Rev. 21:18, 21. What will the light of the city be? Verse 23.

COMMENT: That—the new Jerusalem—is the *beginning* of beauty. God *loves* beauty, real *beauty*.

7. Sorrow will disappear, will it not? Rev. 21:4.

COMMENT: The rule of God is also the ending of *sorrow*. God loves *happiness!*

8. Does God say He will then create *all things* new—expand the happy estate? Rev. 21:5.

Matson Photo Service

The "Via Dolorosa"—the way of sorrows—in modern slum garb. Many sorrow here for the suffering of Christ who is *supposed* to have passed this way. Soon He will return and wipe the tears from their eyes.

9. Will all these comforting, gratifying, wonderful things be accomplished in the warmth of a loving God-Son *Family* relationship? Rev. 21:7.

COMMENT: *No wonder* Christ and His apostles went everywhere preaching the coming glorious Kingdom—the coming glorious happy Family of God!

Perfect Happiness Ahead for Those Yielded Now!

Yes, there is perfect happiness ahead—internal, external, eternal!

1. What about the "internal" benefits?—will there be the former battles within our minds when we become spirit beings—are composed of spirit, are born of the Holy Spirit of God? Gal. 5:22, 23.

COMMENT: The result will be a happy, joyous state of mind. We will not have to fight any wrong impulses of our minds then, will we? There won't be any human nature in those born again. I John 3:9.

2. We are promised no sorrow, death, or pain, are we not? Rev. 21:4.

COMMENT: Neither is the spirit body subject to sickness. All the wonderful things God here enumerates may be had for all eternity if you are willing to yield your mind and will to Him *now!* Those are the "*internal*" benefits of yielding to God.

3. But what about the "external" benefits of yielding to God?—will we not be surrounded by extremely beautiful surroundings? Rev. 21:18-21. Is *God a great lover of beauty?* Is God going to create all things *new* and fresh? Verse 5.

COMMENT: God loves matchless, breathtaking beauty everywhere, and we are going to have it! (The original garden of Eden was a beautiful place—Ezek. 28:13, 14—a sample of *things to come* in the way of *gorgeous beauty everywhere!*)

4. Did God also create this earth originally, *long* before Eden, a tremendously beautiful place?—so much so that the angels could not contain themselves for the sheer *beauty* of its creation? They shouted in *sheer joy!!* Job 38:4, 7.

COMMENT: The angels, the created (but not begotten or born) "sons" of God, were dazzled with its beauty. All of these glorious things God has in store—*and more*—for us His begotten, though not yet born, *real* Sons of God!

Here we have promised us by the sure word of God—the Creator of all things—that we may receive both "*internal*" and *external* tremendous

N. Ben-Haim

Old Jerusalem as it appears today. Center right, the Islamic shrine, the Dome of the Rock, sits atop the general site of God's ancient Temple. Almighty God will finally purge this whole area with fire to prepare it for the New Jerusalem which will descend from heaven.

benefits if we will *accept* them. These are to be ours for all eternity. These are the *true* values. There is nothing to be had on the other side of the scale. Why not capture them? You'll be for all eternity *tremendously happy* that you did!

Christ the ONLY Entrance

1. Does Matthew 22:2 point out we should *prepare* ourselves now for entry into the glorious eternal Kingdom of God?

COMMENT: Jesus is here teaching concerning the *Kingdom of God* (presently composed of only God the Father and God the Son, who are in heaven). The King is God the Father. The Son is Christ. His servants—the Church—as a body — are Christ's "bride." Christ and the Church are to be associated in a husband-wife relationship in the Kingdom of God. The wedding garment of verse 11 *portrays whether they will have prepared themselves in God's one only true Church, the Church of God,* for this marvelous event!

2. What if one refuses to *prepare* himself in God's one true Church, the Church of God, for entry into the Kingdom of God—what will happen? Luke 13:28. Doesn't Matthew 22:11-13 also verify this?

COMMENT: One may be thrust out, never to enter the glorious eternal Kingdom of God, if he holds to such an attitude! He will cease to exist. *Send for free booklet, "Lazarus and the Rich Man."* It explains what happens.

3. Does the Supreme God point out that He has established *one* Church only, through which man may receive the vital preparatory instructions necessary for his entrance into the spirit Kingdom of God and the resulting brilliant eternal future? Mat. 16:18.

COMMENT: ". . . I will build My Church [not churches] . . . ," Christ said. The *Church of God!* He *did not say* He would build a lot of other kinds of "churches" with different kinds of names and conflicting doctrines.

The repentant will have been *properly* led as *God* has ordained and instructed from the

Bible in God's *one* inspired Church which He is building and has brought down through the centuries for this very purpose!

4. Doesn't Ephesians 4:1-6 also verify that God works in "*ones*"? (And not through vast numbers of various organizations calling themselves "churches" and having all sorts of names and ways to be "saved"?)

COMMENT: There is only *one true* Church: "There is [only] *one body* [i.e. *one true Church*], and one spirit [one Holy Spirit] . . . one hope . . . one Lord . . . one faith . . . one baptism . . . one God [Family]."

And this: "I therefore . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [our wonderful future for which we are being transformed] wherein you are called . . . there is *one* body [*only one* true Church of God upon this earth] and one Spirit . . . one Lord [Christ] . . . one God and Father of us all [God the Father]" (Eph. 4:1, 4, 6).

So again God re-emphasizes there is only *one* entrance—Christ—into glorious eternity—and to be *His* we must be made part of God's one—and only—true Church upon this earth, the one bearing *His* name, the Church of *God!*

God today—as always—works only through His one Church. Nowhere else can one receive the proper spiritual "food" whereby he may grow unto salvation.

5. So shouldn't we now, *within the guidance of God's one true Church* — God's one true "crowd"—be learning steadily, consistently and swiftly God's commandments in their various ramifications? And be following them now in order to be accounted worthy to be born into the glorious eternal life at Christ's return—now imminent? Rev. 22:14.

COMMENT: Note the words "blessed . . . do His commandments that they may have right to . . . [*eternal*] *life*"!! Those who don't "*do*" will be "without"—verse 15. They, in clinging to their own wrong ways, cease to exist forever.

6. Should we not now be actively preparing —within God's one Church—for entry into the eternal glorious Kingdom of God? *Yes, we should!*

COMMENT: *Don't slumber the glorious chance of an eternity away!* Act! Time is short! We are now on the down-count of the very final prophesied end events of this age.

7. What does God advise us—we who are in His one true Church, *the Church of God*—to do especially now? Heb. 10:24, 25.

COMMENT: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the *assembling of ourselves* together [those in God's one true Church] . . . but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day [of Christ's soon return, now just ahead] approaching" (Heb. 10:24, 25).

God is telling us who are in His one Church to *stand ready!*—stand ready *through instruction within His one Church now*, and through study — to be transformed into His glorious spirit Kingdom at His now imminent return.

8. Doesn't Mathew 24:44 also warn us to be ready for transformation at Christ's coming?

COMMENT: It behooves one to move rapidly. There are untold blessings in being among the first into the wonderful glorious spirit Kingdom of God!!

Baptizing Teams!

Warning! There are many different groups bearing the name "Church of God." This shows there are *counterfeits!* There is only *one* true Church of God—with world headquarters here at Pasadena, California. From here the truth goes to the world. God uses His ministers to do His work.

Write Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, if you have come to the place of repentance and belief in Christ and His gospel. Then one of our baptizing teams can arrange to visit you. This service, like sending of the true gospel, is free. The Ambassador Colleges send out baptizing tours to personally visit and counsel hundreds of people who write in requesting a personal interview with God's ministers. *These people who are visited* KNOW *this is the work of God's true Church today.* And they REALIZE the IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE MINISTERS of Jesus Christ. These ministers are doing His work of preaching the Kingdom.

If you have truly repented of your sins and realize the vital necessity of this personal contact and guidance of the true servants of Jesus Christ regarding being baptized, and other matters—not just having seen the "argument" of the doctrine of baptism proven to you—**then send your name and address immediately to Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Box 111, Pasadena, California 91109. If you live overseas, then send your name to our London office, B.C.M., Ambassador, London, W.C. 1, or to Box 345, North Sydney, New South Wales, Australia—or whichever is closest, addressing it to Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.** He is pastor-general of the Churches of God with world headquarters here at Pasadena, California.

You need to fully realize the VITAL importance of coming to a real conversion now! *Don't put it off any longer!* For "the night cometh, when *no man* can work"!

Remember, God does not do His work through false ministers! Your eternal salvation is at stake.