

Your New Brethren— IN FRANCE

A personal and moving article about this summer's baptizing tour in France.

by Dibar Apartian

How would you feel if one day you were to enter an old house in a small French village you had never heard of before—and suddenly, you were to discover on a table copies of *The PLAIN TRUTH*, *The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, as well as many of our booklets in French?

How would you feel to meet a stranger in a foreign country, and find yourself able to freely converse about God's Plan on earth, His Feast Days, His Sabbath, His Laws and Commandments—and hear the stranger say with shining eyes and a happy smile: "Yes, I LOVE and understand God's Word. I want to live by it. . . ."?

This is just what happened to us many times this summer during our

baptizing tour in France. In old, dilapidated rooms or houses located in villages hardly big enough to even appear on the map, we met "brethren" in the making whose eyes God had opened to see the TRUTH.

A Typical Case

Let me relate to you just one example among many to illustrate the point. Mr. Anthony Buzzard, one of the key men in the French Department at Ambassador College in Pasadena, and I visited an elderly widow in a village in Brittany. She lived in a one-room apartment. Upon our arrival, she was busily working on the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*.

"What lesson are you on?" I asked.

"The seventeenth," she answered

with a proud smile, and showed us the way she kept her notes; they were all neatly written and arranged in a binder she must have purchased at great sacrifice, as such items are luxuries in France.

"Do you understand all of these lessons well?" I asked again.

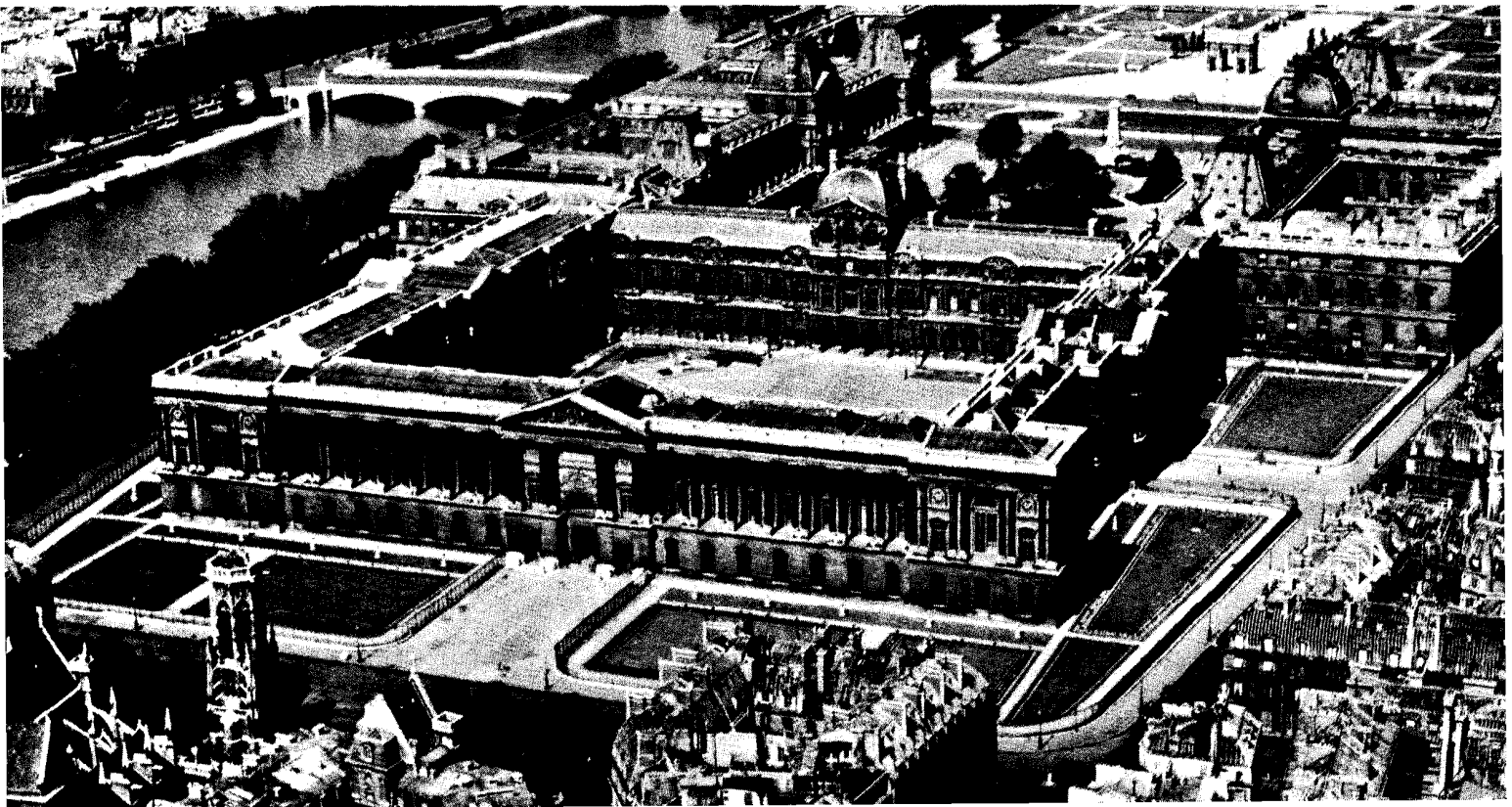
"Yes, sir," she replied without hesitation. "They are all so very clear. I had never read the Bible until I took your *Correspondence Course*. But now, God's Word has become my inseparable companion. I love to read and study it."

"How about our early-morning broadcasts? Do you listen to them regularly?"

"Yes, sir, four times a week," she answered. "I have set my alarm clock ten minutes earlier so that I won't miss

The Excellence of France is stored in the treasures of the Louvre, famous French museum in Paris. But the precious promises of God are being revealed to those who are in no way used to the Parisian society.

Air France Photo





French Tourist Office

This quiet village in Alsace, France, is typical of those visited by Mr. Apartian this summer. Note the pockmarks on the building (center) left from the gunfire of World War II—grim, daily reminders of reality!

one single word. I just don't know what I would do without those broadcasts."

And so, as we talked to her, it became obvious that this elderly widow, living on a modest old-age pension, was called by God to be part of Christ's BODY. She loved God's Word. She did hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Just What Type of People Are Your New Brethren?

Did you know that you now have TWELVE new brethren in France? These are people who are now praying for YOU and for God's WORK—twelve human beings who are hoping, like each and every one of us, to be one day born into God's Kingdom.

But just *who* are these brethren? *What* are they like? *What* do they do for a living? They are plain, ordinary people—laborers, office workers, housewives and widows—just like the rest of us, except that, for the most part, they live in *greater poverty than the poorest among us!* The European standard of living is much lower than ours in the U. S. A. Here, unfortunately, most Americans take too much for granted. The average American worker lives—comparatively speaking—like a millionaire does in Europe.

About the Tour

Our tour was divided into two parts—the northern and the southern trips, as we called them. The northern trip,

which lasted over three weeks, covered mainly the northern section of France, including all of Belgium. Mr. Anthony Buzzard, Assistant Professor at Ambassador College, accompanied me during this first portion of our baptizing tour.

Though the southern portion of the trip lasted only ten days, it covered a much larger territory as we literally had to travel from the Swiss border to the Spanish border. Mr. David Wainwright, a minister of God and Professor at Ambassador College in Saint Albans, England, accompanied me during these ten memorable days.

All in all, we traveled more than 4000 miles over the narrow and winding roads of France, where there is no speed limit—and hardly any traffic laws! We visited 77 persons of whom 43 had *specifically requested* baptism. The remaining 34 either wanted to *know us better* before making a final decision, or *thought*—as was the case with a number of them—that their former baptism was good and valid in *God's sight*. Some were truly shocked to learn that their baptism was nothing more than a simple dunking!

Adventists on the Move

We were amazed to find that at least *one-fourth* of all who had written in for a visit were *Adventists* or *EX-Adventists*.

Why was this? What made these people look for "another" religion? Why were they suddenly *dissatisfied* with Mrs. White's doctrines? In the first place, *how did they ever become Adventists?*

What we found was astonishing.

Most of these so-called Adventists were former Catholics who had discovered that their church was *not* teaching them the Truth. They didn't know, however, how to go about finding the Truth, or the *right Church*. It is precisely at this point that Adventists happened to come on the scene. Going from door to door to "save" and convert "lost souls," they acquainted these Catholics with a few passages of the Scriptures, pointing out to them *heresies* of the Roman Church.

Thus, by proving to them that the Catholic Church has *done away* with the SECOND Commandment and *changed*

the SABBATH from the *seventh day* of the week to the first, they gained the confidence and trust of these disillusioned Catholics. Consequently, the latter readily accepted the Adventists as the True Church Christ built; then allowed themselves to be baptized into Mrs. White's doctrines.

In one particular instance, we talked to a group of five ex-Catholics who had thus embraced Adventism. One of the men in the group, an elder in the Adventist Church, informed us that neither he nor his companions had been able to attend church for the past six months. "After listening to your broadcasts four times a week," he told us, "it is impossible to attend the Adventist Church—or, for that matter, any church."

During our conversation we learned that the Adventists in France allow their converts to *eat meat and drink wine*; after all, how would you ever convert a Frenchman if you forbade him to drink his wine! We further discovered that these newly converted Adventists were expected to go from house to house—on *Sabbath days*—before or after their assembly, to collect funds for their church!

"If we didn't get the amount we were told to collect, we had to make up the difference from our own pocket-book," one of the women in the group told us.

This was hard to believe.

"Didn't you know that you were *breaking God's law* by doing business on the Sabbath?" I asked.

Apparently, none of them had ever considered the matter from that point of view. Because their leaders had told them to do so, they had done it unquestioningly.

"It wasn't until we heard your broadcasts that we began checking up on what we were taught," the Adventist elder said. "But ever since, we have neither collected any more funds nor attended church."

We remained with them for seven hours, answering all their questions from the Bible. Incidentally, by the time I returned to my hotel room, that night, I had practically lost my voice. But it was worth it!

Here is an excerpt from the letter

they wrote me a few days later: "We know now where God's Church is and where His true ministers are. For the first time in our lives, we feel happy and relieved of a big burden. We all turned in our resignations to the Adventist Church; I also returned my credentials to them. No doubt, we will suffer persecution, but we hope and pray that by next year, when you return, you will find us ready to receive the true baptism"—(The letter was signed by the EX-Adventist minister).

The Fourth Commandment

Here, in the United States, we still enjoy *religious freedom* and do not always realize what it really means to live in a country where such freedom is NOT granted—at least *not in practice*.

Over 97 per cent of the French are Catholics. Consequently, the country's laws, customs and traditions, as well as its legal holidays, are based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church—NOT upon the Bible.

Sunday is THEIR lord's day—and the French keep it holy *their own way*. Shops, offices and nearly all the factories are closed on that day. However, restaurants and places of entertainment do remain open, because they "add" to the people's enjoyment; one is supposed to "keep" Sunday holy by enjoying oneself in the *WORLDLY* way.

Thus God's true Sabbath is profaned *week after week* by nearly everyone and every business in France. Humanly speaking, it is next to impossible to find a job which does not *require* working on God's Sabbath.

The *Mark of the Beast* is already doing its damage in Europe, and the keeping of the *FOURTH* Commandment is confronting people with many problems and difficulties. We could have baptized three times as many people if their faith had been strong enough to quit working on the Sabbath and to rely on God to protect their jobs.

"God will not forsake anyone who observes His laws," I kept assuring them, but doubts are as *poisonous* as drugs. "I have had my job for nearly twenty years, but I would be fired on the spot if I asked my employer for the Sabbath off," said a truck driver

who had written in for baptism. Yet, he seemed to have a *good understanding* of the Bible! He *KNEW* quite well that he had to *obey God* rather than men.

But he would NOT *trust* God!

"What can I do?" he added. "Where can I find another job that will not require working on the Sabbath. Our community is 100 per cent Catholic—and, as it is, we are already hated because we have quit attending church. *What will become* of my family if I am out of work?"

This is the type of argument and human reasoning we heard nearly everywhere. No, people don't seem to realize that—although it is *impossible* for them to keep the Sabbath by their own power—CHRIST in them *can and will* do so. Is it so hard to understand that *all things* are possible with God, and that He has promised to always bless us if we *OBEY* His laws?

The Case of a Father With Nine Children

A factory worker, living in a suburb of Paris, had written in requesting baptism. As we entered his small flat which was almost bare except for a few pieces of old and dilapidated furniture, we found with him two of his friends who also listen to the broadcast.

This man had nine children. He had

Even tho France has nuclear weapons, and considers herself a "Great Power"—she still does not have adequate plumbing! Eight million Frenchmen still draw their water from wells, as they did in 1000 A.D.

French Tourist Office



come out of the Catholic Church after hearing *Le MONDE A VENIR* for the past two years. He told us that he was *willing to do what was right in God's sight*. "My wife is against my conversion," he stated. "She is still a professing Catholic and won't hear of any other religion."

One of his two friends, a bachelor in his twenties, was also in an excellent attitude, but the other, an older man, was non-committal. When we finished answering all of their questions, and explaining what baptism *actually meant*, the father of the nine children was first to speak.

"Yes, I understand it very well," he said. "I don't know *why* God is calling me, but I am willing to answer His call. I do want to be baptized and live by His Word."

"But you can't be baptized," I answered. "You are still breaking God's laws by working on the Sabbath. You know that you have to come *out of your sins* before you can be baptized."

He hesitated for a few moments. "Don't you think," he asked pensively, "that God will understand *my* case? I have no profession, no education, no savings. If I quit working even for a few days, my children will starve. I once told my employer that I wanted the Sabbath off. 'You can have your Jewish Sabbath,' he told me, 'But you can also pack up and go.'"

At this moment his wife was looking at me with imploring eyes, hoping and praying perhaps that I would give him an affirmative answer. She wanted me to say: "Why, of course, *your* case is *different*. . . . You have a very good reason to break God's laws. . . . God is love—He will understand. . . ."

In all probability, this is the answer any minister of this world's churches would have given. But we, as true *ministers of God*, have to teach that there can be NO compromise with God's law, which is *holy, just and good* (Rom. 7:12). It is because God is love that He will not put up with our reasonings which *lead to death*.

"Let's turn to Exodus 20, and read it carefully to know what God commands about the Sabbath," I told the man and his wife. God says: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days

shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

They all remained silent. Of course the man had read these verses many times before; he might have even known them by heart.

"Is there any exception here made for fathers who have nine children and who might lose their jobs if they insisted on having the Sabbath off?" I asked.

He *got* the point. He had known it all along, but wanted someone to *assure* him that God would NOT forsake him. "Yes, you are quite right," he said, "I will have a talk with my employer next week, and tell him that I won't be working on the Sabbath any more."

"Why wait until next week?" I asked. "How about this coming Sabbath? Will you work?"

"Of course not," he answered, "I'll skip work without telling him anything. You see, my children are scheduled to leave next Monday for their summer camp. My employer provides for this as part of workmen's compensation. But if I talked to him before Monday, he will fire me, and my children will be deprived of their summer vacation."

Once again, his wife was looking at me imploringly. Surely, this was the *least* anyone could do. The loving God *would* understand such a thing! Besides, what was wrong with it? The man wasn't going to work on the Sabbath, was he?

"Is that *honest*?" I said. "Isn't that cheating your employer? You must trust God ALL THE WAY. If it be His will that your children go to this summer camp, nothing, *absolutely nothing*, will prevent them from going."

He understood again. He knew quite well that we can't keep one of God's

commandments by breaking another one; we can't lie to do something good. I read to him the first ten verses of Romans 3.

A broad smile covered his face. "Yes, sir, that's right; the BIBLE IS ALWAYS RIGHT," he stated with assurance. "I will be honest. I will talk to my employer the first thing in the morning. Will you please baptize me now?"

Shortly after, he and his friend (*not* the non-committal one who had yet much to learn and much to repent of) were baptized in one of the tributaries of the River Seine.

Did He Lose His Job?

"But *what happened* to him?" you may ask. "What happened to this father of nine children? Did he lose his job? Did his children get to go to summer camp?"

Here is an excerpt from the letter I received a few days later from his young friend who was baptized with him.

"The day after you baptized us, we went to talk to our employer. Imagine! For the first time, he was kind and understanding. He listened attentively to what we had to say. He promised he would look around to find two jobs in the factory which would not require work on the Sabbath. Unfortunately, he could find but one, which was given to Mr. Gaveaux (the father of the nine children).

"As for me, after eight years of steady employment, I suddenly find myself without work. But I am not afraid: God is my real Employer and He will provide for me.

"Mr. Gaveaux's children left last Monday for their summer camp; they are now enjoying their vacation. Thank you for all your help. Please pray for us that we may always follow the right path!"

You May Meet Them Some Day!

As you see, brethren, some of these people God is calling in foreign countries have much more to give up than most of us who live in the U. S. A.

(Please continue on page 17)

and sacrifices and libations" (*Ecccl. Hist.*, II, 13, 6).

What clear and revealing statements!

Eusebius is not talking about what he considers distinct heretics *outside* the Catholic Church. He is talking about the MAJOR group IN THAT CHURCH which was continually adding more and more on a large scale. He attributes these evils to the "Christians" who followed SIMON MAGUS. They were so active in his day INSIDE THE CHURCH as to give him grave concern.

But what happened?

Did the few Catholic leaders of the 4th century who abhorred outright IDOLATRY manage to persuade the masses to give it up and turn away from the SIMONIANS (now called Christians) who were the cause of it all?

The answer from history is NO!

The Simonian "Christians" won out. Imagery, idolatry and paganism became the Universal Church *just as planned* in the very beginning by SIMON MAGUS—or by the Devil who possessed him.

Can we now understand why God, through Luke, devotes a whole section of Acts to warn us of this man's origin. He was NEVER a part of the Church of God—NEVER!! But he, and his followers—from clear history—have succeeded in bringing in their UNIVERSAL religion—a pagan blend, called "Christian"!

French Brethren

(Continued from page 6)

Their life is harder, and their decisions often much more difficult. They *need* our prayers—constantly. They are our *brethren in Christ!*

Human nature is the same all over the world. We all have too much of it; that's why we have to ask God daily to help us *overcome* our downward pulls, to *resist* temptations whether they be our own or Satan's. Like Paul, we must cry out daily saying: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24.)

But like Paul, we must also know the answer: JESUS CHRIST!

Perhaps, some day you will meet these

twelve new brethren somewhere in the wilderness where the Church will be taken for three and one-half years prior to Christ's second coming. Perhaps some day you will meet this factory worker, the father of nine children, who was ready and willing to *give up all he had to* OBEY GOD. Perhaps you will even shake hands with him and the other brethren, and say: "Yes, some time ago, I read about you in *The GOOD NEWS*. I have prayed for you! . . ."

Next month Mr. Apartian will tell of his and Mr. McCullough's experiences in the West Indies—EDITOR.

Readers Say . . .

(Continued from page 2)

being done. Congratulations on a job well done!"

Mr. and Mrs. Al J., California

Good Lesson in Faith

"We had never paid tithes to anyone before, but after hearing you speak we finally sent in our first tithe. It wasn't much, but it was what we had on hand at the time. We are hay haulers, which is strictly seasonal. We have always managed to get along. The very next day a brand new battery burnt up in our car. We had two flat tires. A few days later a good friend turned against us. Then our truck blew its piston connecting rod and inserts. Our helper quit. The Mrs. had to drive, leaving our four children to fend for themselves. Our new helper got hurt and had to quit. I had always heard you get paid 10-fold for what you do. We sent you \$15, and delays and repairs came to (you guessed it) \$150. We were feeling pretty sorry for ourselves when I read the book of Job. Who are we to gripe? The truck is running again, so look for our check once again. I pray that this time it will be accepted by the Almighty as a free and wonderful tithe and not an obligation."

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil W. D., California

"Through your magazine, I feel positive when I say I have found

what I could not find during my ministry in the Methodist church of South Africa. This is a personal testimony Mr. Armstrong. I am an African, 27 years of age, and served in the Methodist Church as a minister from 1958 to 1962."

J.B.D.M. from Bechuanaland

• *God is changing lives in far-away places!*

"Long before I was a baptized member of the Church of God I decided to send small offerings to Mr. Armstrong. Immediately after I started I received an increase in salary. Still continuing to send offerings about 8 months later I received another raise. Then Mr. Waterhouse came to South Africa and we started attending Sabbath services. I now started to give tithes. This was December last year, and I was very surprised to receive another increase for the month of June, the third increase since I started giving money to God's work. I may add that the firm I am working for is not famous for giving increases in salary. I now know it pays to obey the instructions of Almighty God."

J.E.S. (Member), Transvaal, Republic of South Africa

• *Tithing pays in Africa too.*

Simon Magus Recognized

"Your article, 'Where did the Twelve Apostles Go' by Herman L. Hoeh, is unearthing just those galaxies 'we' Catholics were not allowed to tamper with. This truth has been laid hidden since man began to be enslaved by masquerading so-called 'Christian Religions.' Indeed Simon Peter, the True Apostle and the other Simon Peter, 'the Magus,' chief of the pagan Babylonian Samaritan mysteries, conflict in men's minds and this alone may take centuries to be realized and accepted by those who have been duped by Catholicism. My interest having been captured by this article, which has been a tremendous blow to imported religious bigots here, I wish to prove more dexterous by having with me the booklet, 'United States and British Commonwealth in Proph-