

According to one publication I've recently read about the human body, I've learned something very interesting. "The particles of each substance which make up the organs and tissues of the body are in a constant state of flux or change. This is true of every bit of our bodies. The total exchange of particles in our tissues each day amounts to about 5% of our body weight. In other words a person 'turns over' a mass of material amounting to his own body weight every 20 days. In this way, every tissue of the body — from the nails on our toes to the hair on our heads — undergoes a complete exchange of particles periodically. This continues throughout our lives."

The interesting thing to me is, we're still the same person, with the same desires and goals in life.

When comparing this with the body of Christ, (the Church), we all need to realize the Church will always undergo certain necessary changes, but it is still the same Church, the same body of Christ. Incidentally, these changes are always for the better, for the improvement of the body.

A close examination of the creation reveals that change is necessary for growth. Every change that takes place in plants and animals as they grow is always for the good. A flower is more beautiful than the seed that produced it. A butterfly is more beautiful than the caterpillar it once was. Growth, whether physical or spiritual, necessitates change.

We need to realize as well that it's the *Work* of God that changes, not the *Word* of God (Mal. 3:6 and Heb. 13:8). The Church of God changes as it is directed by the Word of God, or Christ, to change, and that change is always for the better. When the husband, (Christ), directs a change, His wife, (the Church), should not drag her feet, but work to make His decisions work. If not, we could be playing with fire, and believe me fire can bring about a very real change in us — it's called *ashes*.

— Harold J. Rhodes
Houston, Texas

WERE WE RIGHT EVEN THOUGH WE WERE WRONG?

I am of the definite opinion that there are still a few points which need clearing up regarding Pentecost. I came to this conclusion after Mr. Adair's (Aug. 14th) and Mr. Briggs (Sept. 11th) comments in the Bulletin.

First, it should be noted that the Church of God did in fact commonly hold services on Pentecost Sunday during many of the years when the

Church officially believed Pentecost should be kept on Monday.

In those dynamic growth years of the Church of God (I would estimate from the early '50s till the mid '60s) the congregations customarily observed a three-day period of services; and if I recall correctly, we usually, if not always, held *morning and afternoon* services on the *Sunday* preceeding what we then believed to be Pentecost Monday. We, then, did have services on "Pentecost."

And I am convinced that God did bless us at those Sunday services — even though we were *ignorant* that we were having "holy convocations" on what was actually the true Pentecost Sunday.

Thus, like those who obey the laws of success (without knowing them) or who just "naturally" keep the laws of happy marriage (not knowing that they exist) so we were actually having Pentecost services on Pentecost Sunday during most of those dynamic growth years. Was it by mere coincidence, or was God guiding us in this matter?

Making the Unholy Holy?

Mr. Adair is a good friend of mine (and has been for many years) and I know I can, without offence, freely question the logic of part of his comments in the August 14th Bulletin.

Mr. Adair reasoned: "If His [God's] people make a mistake in their counting, due to bad mathematics or, [as was the case] unclear translations, will God condemn them or not sanctify the day? or will He *sanctify the day we come up with* and leave it to us to eventually discover our mistake? I personally feel God has over the years *made holy the day the Church chose*, that is *Monday*. So that in effect we have *not* been keeping the *wrong* day at all... Also, if it was really the wrong day, would God have let us continue missing His annual sabbath and keeping an *unholy day holy?*"

As a young teenager, I began zealously keeping Sunday (the 'Lord's Day') to the very best of my ability — thinking God had hallowed that day. Later, I discovered that I had been wrong in that God had *never made Sunday holy!* Rather, I only *thought* He had, but my sincere observance of Sunday did not make it into a *holy* day — didn't make it into the *Sabbath*.

Likewise, our sincere observance of Pentecost on Monday (thinking this was the correct day) did *not* make that day *holy* — didn't make it into Pentecost!

God Looks on the Heart

Some ask: "If we observed the wrong day all those years, how then could God have blessed us so much?"

The simple answer is — God looks on the *heart!*

Once a man (or group of men — His Church) has repented of sin, been baptized and has received the Holy Spirit, they automatically become members in the body of Jesus Christ — His true Church. Now, God's true Church has never possessed *all truth* (either as individual members, or collectively). Rather, the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth (John 16:13).

God does not demand that a Christian possess *all truth* before being given the Spirit, thereby adding him to His Church. But God does require or demand that a true believer REPENT of all error or sin which He has brought to his knowledge at the time of his conversion.

Therefore, it is possible for an individual member or for the collective body of God's Church to be sincerely in error — and yet have God's Spirit, His blessing and His guidance.

What, then, are the facts? We — the Worldwide (Radio) Church of God — were in error on Pentecost for many years. But this was not an error of intent or of attitude. After, all, was not it this very Church which was the only Christian Church to even teach the necessity of observing Pentecost and all of God's annual holy days?

And was not it this church which taught the world the true meaning of those days? Do you know of any other church which taught: 1) the necessity of observing all God's annual sabbaths and 2) the true meaning of these days?

We were, after all, right basically in most of what we taught regarding Pentecost, including the profound meaning of that day in the Plan of God — that Pentecost pictures the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest! And that is glorious news. How few really understand this wonderful truth?

It Takes Courage to Admit Error

But, after having said that, let us freely admit that we were wrong, technically, in observing Pentecost on Monday instead of on Sunday. And I do not believe that God made a wrong day (in this case Monday) holy any more than I believe He makes holy the Moslem sabbath (Friday) or the Christian Sabbath (Sunday), or that He hallows Christmas, Easter or the other holidays.

This reminds me of a story regarding a rabbi and a priest who were dining on Friday. Rabbi Finkelstein exclaimed: "Why Father, I didn't know you ate beef on Friday." Father O'Mally's reply (as he sprinkled holy water on his meat): "Once beef — now fish."

A few days later as they were having lunch, Father O'Mally expressed surprise that Rabbi Finkelstein had ordered pork. The rabbi's reply (as he

sprinkled water on his pork chop): "Once a pork chop, now beef."

The important thing to remember is that God looks at the heart, the attitude of mind. Remember, He is more pleased to see one with a right attitude observe a wrong day, than to see one with a wrong attitude observe the right day. Better still, God prefers to see those with right attitudes observe the right day!

It took courage for the Church to admit we were wrong.

So, let us all freely admit we were wrong! God knows it, and we also now know it! God freely overlooks and forgives our technical errors of the past, but let us faithfully observe the true Pentecost with a perfect heart henceforth.

Blessings in Error?

God did richly bless us all those years when we were technically in error, because He saw that we meant well, that we had a right attitude and were trying to obey Him to the best of our ability. And He knew we had His Spirit and were doing His Work.

I conclude, therefore, that God blessed us in spite of our technical error, not because of it!

What lesson can we learn from this long-held Pentecost error? Let us realize that only God has complete, total truth! Let us ministers all humbly realize that God wants us all to have a burning zeal for the truth — to be willing to seek for, and search longingly for His truth.

Then when God reveals "new truth" to any of us, let us as speedily as possible communicate this to those in God's Church who are charged with the responsibility of checking, verifying and communicating this new-found truth to the entire Church.

In this way, God's Church will be better able to grow in the real grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18). Perhaps my good friend Colin Adair and I are saying, basically, the same thing after all.

— Raymond F. McNair
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BOOK REVIEW

Hide or Seek by James Dobson, Fleming H. Revell Co., \$4.95 hardback.

Human worth in our society is reserved for that select group of gifted mortals who possess either or both of two qualities: 1. Beauty and, 2. Brains. So says Dr. Dobson, assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Southern California School of