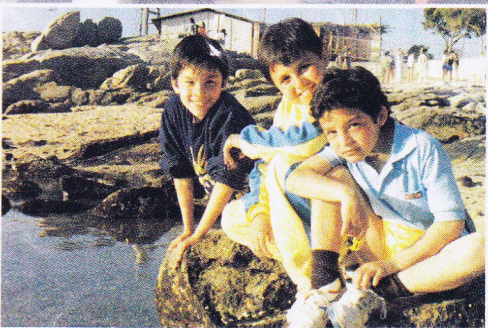


The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

FAMILY FEAST TRADITIONS

'You shall rejoice...
you and your son
and your daughter'



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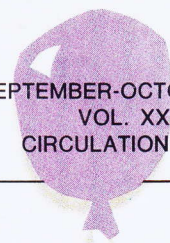
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The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

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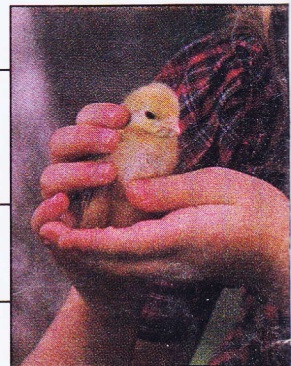
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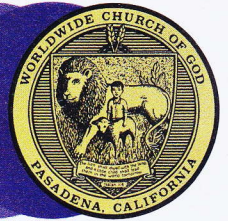
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COVER

In the United States, Australia, Chile and many other countries around the world, God's Church will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles Oct. 4 to 10. The Feast promotes strong families now and points to the world tomorrow, when God's own family will rule the earth. Photos: Don Ferguson, Bruce Lehmann, Carlos A. Torrealba.

GOOD NEWS PERSONAL



“Fitting In” With the World?

Paul’s words in II Timothy 3:1-5 speak of times very much like those in which we live today:

“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them” (New International Version throughout).

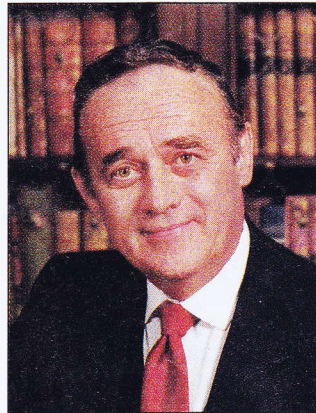
That way of life seems apparent today just about anywhere one may choose to look. It is trumpeted in entertainment, in advertising, in education and in politics. It is like a rushing torrent that sweeps along with it all who are not firmly committed to standing against it.

If one wishes to fit in, he or she must go along with the crowd, a crowd being swept toward certain destruction if it does not change.

God warns all who will listen to “come out from them and be separate” (II Corinthians 6:17). “For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?” we’re asked in verse 14. “Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

Yet in today’s progressive societies many reason that it doesn’t really make a lot of difference how you live. Morals are considered old-fashioned. Perceptions of what is right and what is wrong have become blurred. Faithful commitment to moral integrity is both rare and ridiculed.

The war on drugs has no victory in sight. Sex



outside marriage has become the norm. Honesty in dealing with fellow humans is viewed as naive, or even plain stupid. Greed seems to have thoroughly saturated the Western world.

But as we look around in our righteous indignation and decry the relentless corruption of the society we live in, have we also taken a good look at ourselves? What about it? Have *our* lives really changed all that much since we decided to follow Christ? Have we really come out of *our* former ways that were contrary to God (I Peter 1:14)?

Do *we* get high on drugs or alcohol from time to time? Do *we* want God to stay out of our sex lives? Is *our* word good? Do *we* cheat on our taxes, or steal from our work places? Do *we* abuse our mates and our children? Does Jesus Christ live in us, or do *we*, too, decide for ourselves what is right and what is wrong?

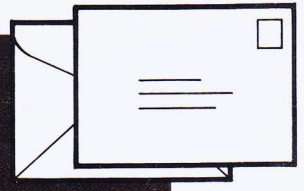
Do *we* ourselves bring reproach on the name of Christ by our own efforts to “fit in” with the world around us? Let’s never forget that Christianity is not just for the other person. It’s for *you* and *me*.

Peter admonished, “Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure” (II Peter 1:10).

Christ in us is a life-changing force. Once we truly become Christians, life can never stay the same.

Pastor General
Worldwide Church of God

LETTERS



"I Wish My Parents Would . . ."

I was raised with little or no instruction from my own parents. I can't say how I managed to handle my problems without parental instruction, but somehow I seemed to know the difference between right and wrong. It caused me to take for granted my own offspring would be automatically programmed to avoid peer influences. I was wrong.

My parents were victims of the social order of their time, and my wife and I are products of that social order. Consequently, our four children developed to adulthood with many problems that could have been less severe, had it been possible to communicate.

So, Kathy, don't be too hard on us oldsters.

Bedford Darden
Paradise, California

A pat on the back

I just want to single out the series of articles on positive child training. It has been particularly educative and elaborate. Dexter H. Faulkner really deserves a pat on the back for his dedication and for giving away his time to write these articles.

Thanks for the wonderful information in the series. If we use it, it will surely enrich our lives and make our children's lives vibrant and satisfying.

William Mankhomwa
Zomba, Malawi

Missing out

I just finished reading the January 1990 issue of *The Good News*. The article by Norman Shoaf, "Are You Like This?", motivated me to write you this letter. Two years ago when I changed jobs I met a man who is a member of your Church. It was through him

that I became interested in what the Worldwide Church of God had to tell the world.

Since then I have been watching *The World Tomorrow* and have been reading your two wonderful and enlightening magazines. I am on lesson eight of your Bible study course.

Now I see that I may be missing much more by not obeying God's laws. I understand that by keeping the weekly Sabbath and living by God's laws, I will understand and learn much more.

George S. McReynolds
Gordonsville, Virginia

Just what God wants

I truly believe God has opened my eyes to the truth and it is in your teachings. I hope I am not asking for too many of your publications at one time. I feel like I've been spiritually deprived for so long and your teaching is just what God wants me to know.

Nancy Harrington
San Juan Capistrano,
California

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for making my days much brighter when I read *The Plain Truth* or *The Good News*. All of my problems seem to not be important or aggravating. It's a feeling of knowing that God knows just what I'm going through and he's here for me.

Peggy Woodley
Decatur, Georgia

For all my 40 years, I had never been able to accept all I was taught. I felt something was missing. I've been exposed to many other religions and concepts, but none gave me what your magazines have.

I have now been reading the Bible and learning more about God and myself. I bless the day

I found the magazines. I pass them around to my friends and family. I have seen people helped in many ways that would take too long to describe here in a letter.

Delores Montgomery
Indianapolis, Indiana

"Personal" never fails

I sure want to thank you for the uplifting themes in your "Personal" column in both the *Good News* and *Plain Truth* magazines. They never fail to generate a determination to do a better job and to make the necessary changes in my attitudes and manner of thinking.

Bruce Douglass
Clatskanie, Oregon

"Facing the Outstretched Hand"

It is true, we have to be careful not to harden our hearts as an excuse not to help others. But we also need to use wisdom. Just giving something to someone is not necessarily helping that person.

If we know nothing of the person to whom we are giving, we can be causing the same evils, on a miniature scale, as the welfare system.

Robert M. Bordeaux
Pasadena, California

Meaningful prayer

Your article contained in "Biblical Workshop" (March-April), "A Workable Prayer List," was just what I needed in helping me create meaningful prayer. This gives prayer a touch of excitement and pleasure. I often found myself getting lost during prayer, and now you've given me a bit of a roadmap that I am able to draw on as I go.

Paul Prokopich
Huntsville, Texas

"Why Does God Say No?"

Thank you for the enlighten-

ing and most encouraging article, "Why Does God Say No?" (May-June). It was just what I needed today and every day. When I finished reading it, I thought, I wish I could share it with the world.

And that's just what you are doing!

Mrs. L. Wall
Lawndale, North Carolina

The Good News welcomes your comments. Letters for this column should be addressed to "Letters to the Editor." The editor reserves the right to use letters so addressed in whole or in part, and to include your name and edit the letter for clarity or space. Send all communications to our address nearest you:

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Would Jesus Christ MARRY YOU?

*Jesus Christ, in effect, has asked his Church to marry him.
Are you ready to say "I do"?*

BY DEXTER H. FAULKNER

“I don’t know if I’ll be able to keep up with you, and I don’t want to spoil your day by slowing you down,” she said.

“You’re not spoiling anything,” he answered. “I’ll help you and you’ll do just fine.”

She did. She managed to keep up with him on the ski slopes, gaining confidence on skis as well as having a wonderful time.

She was impressed with his patience and confidence in her. He taught her to parallel ski and helped her up when she fell.

She also appreciated his encouragement. He really didn’t seem to mind that he wasn’t keeping up with his friends who skied better than she.

He enjoyed her cheerful attitude and sense of adventure. She was willing to try things that she had not done before. He liked that. She was fun and he felt comfortable and at ease with her.

This was their first real date;

more would follow. A relationship that would blossom into an engagement, a wedding and a lifetime together began that day on the slopes.

Deciding you love and want to spend the rest of your life with someone is one of the most important decisions in life. Such a commitment should come only after a lot of prayer, thought and time together.

I performed this couple’s wedding. We spent a lot of time together discussing marriage—its importance, the commitment involved and the attitude and maturity necessary to make a marriage not only work but be a happy, wonderful, life-long experience.

My wife and I shared with them some of our experiences and thoughts from our more than 30 years of happily married life.

This couple found that a lot of thought and effort goes into planning a wedding. And that’s right and good. The marriage relation-

ship was created by God and should not be taken lightly.

God thought marriage was so important that he used the relationship of husbands and wives as a type of the relationship between Christ and his Church. Ephesians 5 devotes a whole section to this analogy (see verses 21-33).

The wedding ceremony of the Lamb—Jesus Christ—to his Bride, the Church (Revelation 19:7), has been planned for thousands of years.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, have you ever asked yourself why Jesus would want to be married to you? What traits would Christ look for in a mate?

Let’s take a look at a few of the characteristics Christ wants in a spouse—and how those traits can become part of your character.

Faithfulness and commitment

Commitments can be large or small. The marriage commitment is life-long. The couple are saying

to each other: "I am marrying you because I love you and want to spend the rest of my life with you. I will do my part to make this the best marriage it can be. When difficulties or misunderstandings arise, we will work together to resolve them and make the marriage even stronger. My main desire is to love you every day of my life."

The definition of commitment—permanence—is useful only if both people share that definition.

How are you with your commitments? Can your word be trusted? Do you fulfill your obligations to your mate?

Christ is absolutely committed to us. He promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

Commitment and faithfulness in marriage involves more than being sexually faithful. Are you faithful to the institution of marriage? Do you place the needs of your wife or husband above your own needs?

Christ, our husband to be, was willing to give up everything for us. The Bride of Christ must be willing to give up all for him. If we can't be committed to and faithful in our marriages now, how can we be faithful to Christ forever?

Respect

Respect is the key to success in any relationship.

"I love being married to my husband because he respects me. He values my opinions and always asks what I am thinking about any number of things," said one woman.

Her husband responded: "Respect goes both ways. I wouldn't have married her if I didn't respect her. And I wouldn't have married her if she didn't respect me."

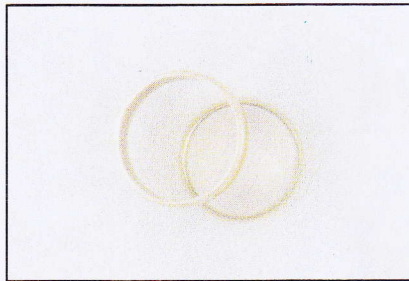
A big complaint among those having marriage problems is: "My mate doesn't respect me. Every time I bring up an idea, he/she belittles me. Sometimes I wonder if I can do anything to please him/her."

Once respect is gone, the rela-

tionship quickly deteriorates. There is nothing more frustrating than not being respected.

Conversely, there is nothing more encouraging than to be respected for your opinions, ideas and thoughts. We all need to feel our ideas and input are welcomed, that we are respected for what we are.

You wouldn't want to be married to someone who didn't re-



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spect you. Neither does Jesus Christ.

Righteousness

Revelation 19:8 describes Christ's Bride as being clothed in righteousness. Christ injects his righteousness into us through his Holy Spirit as we submit to him and learn to live the way revealed

in the Bible. Righteousness is simply doing what is right. It is keeping God's commandments (Psalm 119:172).

A bride wants to look her very best on her wedding day. She usually spends several hours getting ready. Then final touches are made just before she walks down the aisle.

Likewise, the Bride of Christ must be preparing herself to be beautiful—spiritually—through righteousness.

Christ wants a bride "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that [she] should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

Preparing for our marriage with Christ takes time. We need to replace the works of the flesh with the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). The fiancée of Christ does her best to obey.

Communication

"One thing to make marriage successful is to talk—and to listen and to be really patient," said one woman about her successful marriage.

We are going to spend eternity with Christ. He is looking for those who are able to communicate with him. He wants to hear what his Bride has to say.

Communication is vital. It requires two sides. One man said, "We talk everything over before we do it."

Listening is an important part of communication. Christ is a great listener. We can pray day or night and know our prayers are heard.

Practice good communication. Talk often with God, with your husband or wife, children, friends and others. And listen to what they have to say. Do they understand you? Do you understand them?

Communication is what helps us grow closer together and become of one mind. The ability to communicate is vital for the Bride of Christ.

Forgiveness

Surely the most forgiving being in existence is God. Jesus

Christ gave his life for the sins of the world. When close to death, he asked God the Father to “forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34).

We are instructed to follow Christ’s example of forgiveness: “Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against any other: even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Colossians 3:13).

Forgiveness is a sign of love and mercy. God not only forgives us, but he also forgets our sins.

Marriages based on the forgive-and-forget principle are bound to be among the best in the world.

Friendship

Many men and women with happy marriages count their mates as their best friends.

“I think the fact that we’re best friends has contributed to the success of our marriage, and that we have a lot in common. We do things together. It’s thrilling,” one woman said about her marriage of 36 years.

People become friends by spending time together, sharing thoughts and activities.

“Our love for each other has grown and increased over the 33 years. Everywhere I go she goes. We have that close relationship where we would rather be with each other than anyone else, and it makes for a very enjoyable and successful marriage.”

We’ve been given the opportunity to be friends with Jesus Christ! He calls us not servants, but friends (John 15:15).

If you make the effort, you can, as Abraham did, enjoy the awesome privilege of becoming the friend of God (James 2:23).

Love

God is love (I John 4:8). As part of the God family, it is Christ’s nature to love his wife. He gave himself for the Church, his Bride.

If we want to be that Bride, we need to learn to love as God loves. Godly love can be defined as selflessness. We know God

loves us because he gave his Son for us (John 3:16).

Others know we love them when we are willing to give to them, to put them first.

“I have no doubt that my wife loves me. She is always willing to put my needs in front of her own and seems to have set her mind to making me happy. I only hope my love for her is as obvious,” said one husband. His wife made

love Him because He first loved us” (I John 4:19).

Our marriage with Christ will only be successful if we love him as he loves us.

Show your love for others by paying careful attention to their needs and doing your best to fulfill them.

We are engaged to Christ

Couples use the engagement period to get to know each other even better than before and to prepare for being married.

We should be getting to know Jesus Christ as well as he knows us. We do this through Bible study, prayer, meditation and fasting. Study the gospels to see what Christ was like while he was on earth.

Even though Christ has been working with us ever since his Father called us, are there still things he doesn’t know about us? Probably.

Christ needs to know these things about his Bride: Will we be committed and faithful to him? Will we respect him? Are we allowing him to develop his righteousness in us? Do we communicate effectively with him? Are we merciful and forgiving? Are we becoming his true friends? And can we share and express God’s own love with him for eternity?

Preparing to be the Bride of Christ is a pretty tall order, isn’t it? God the Father and Jesus Christ know it is. That’s why they give us the Holy Spirit.

Paul tells us in Philippians 1:6: “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

The power of God is on your side. Use that power to grow in love for your husband or wife. If you’re not married, use it to equip yourself with the same fruits—love, respect, a forgiving and generous nature—in your dealings with all the people in your life.

If you take on this challenge, you’ll find yourself participating in a marriage that really will last forever. □

■ ■

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■ ■



a similar comment: “His love for me is what makes me want to make him happy. I love doing things for him because he is so kind, gentle and tries so hard to make me feel I’m the most important thing in his life.”

It’s easy to love someone who loves you. No one has more love for us than Jesus Christ. “We

FROM HERE THROUGH ETERNITY

*God plans to take mankind to the stars and beyond.
Why is this such a mystery today?*

God's plans are bigger than the universe! This shouldn't seem strange. God created all the stars and planets. So could the vast universe not fit into God's supreme purpose?

Says cosmologist Paul Davis: "If physics is the product of design, the universe must have a purpose, and the evidence of modern physics suggests strongly to me that that purpose includes us" (*Superforce*, page 243).

He is right. Isaiah 45:18 confirms that the physical creation exists as the arena for God's majestic purpose.

But consider the imperfection throughout the known universe. It needs further development, a beautifying finish.

The spectacular novas and multicolored clouds are undeveloped galaxies. Our own moon offers evidence that outer space needs much reworking. The other eight planets, like our moon, are also disordered, bleak, uninhabitable places.

To plant the heavens

Is there a reason? Does it tie in with why man was created? It does indeed. The apostle Paul understood: "The whole creation groans and labors with birth pains [the suffering on our planet, the bleakness of outer space]. . . . The creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God" (Romans 8:22, 19).

It is difficult to catch the full effect of that statement at first. Isaiah 51:16 sheds more light. Here the Creator God announces:

BY K. NEIL EARLE

"I have put My words in your mouth . . . that I may plant the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth!"

He later declares: "Behold, I make all things new. . . . He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" (Revelation 21:5, 7).

Put these scriptures together and you begin to grasp God's great purpose. His is the grandest, most majestic project ever conceived.

The human race, after being changed into immortal spirit beings (I Corinthians 15:50-53), will boldly go where no man has

gone before. The human family will join the Creator in Project Universe: to develop the cosmos to its fullest height, to transform wrecked planets into new worlds of peace and beauty—worlds so lovely that the angels will sing for joy at the final product, just as they did at the original creation of the earth (Job 38:7).

Amazing? Absolutely.

Preparations now under way

But to prepare to "plant the heavens," the human race must change. A lot. We must transcend our present limitations. For only full-fledged God beings can travel the galaxies and successfully oversee vast projects in the endless reaches of space.

This is humanity's destiny. Ancient King David caught a

glimpse of it in Psalm 8:3-6: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? . . . You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands."

But why is this such a mystery today? We live in the midst of a knowledge explosion, a time when we have begun—albeit feebly—to venture into space. Why do the great minds know nothing about the purpose of life, the stunning destiny that God has in mind for the human race?

Wise men have pondered the universe, its vastness, its

grandeur, its intimidating size and scope. Astronomer Carl Sagan has likened the surface of the earth to the shore of a cosmic ocean. The size and age of the Cosmos are beyond ordinary human understanding. Within the vast, cold vacuum of intergalactic space are dimensions so large that we measure distance in terms of the speed of light.

In one second light travels 186,000 miles. From our galaxy to the nearest spiral galaxy is 2,000,000 light years. Each star system is an island in space quarantined from its neighbors by light years.

Carl Sagan wrote: "The two Voyager spacecraft, the fastest machines ever launched from Earth, are now traveling at one ten-thousandth the speed of

light. They would need 40,000 years to go the distance to the nearest star. Do we have any hope of leaving Earth and traversing the immense distances?" (*Cosmos*, page 165).

We are approaching the greatest of mysteries. Physicist John Wheeler concluded, "There must be at the bottom of it all an utterly simple idea" (*The Creation of The Universe*, a science special written for television by Timothy Ferris).

How right he is!

But just consider our human limitations for a minute. We are 4 light years—nearly 24 trillion miles—from the nearest star other than our own sun. It is 30,000 light years from the sun to the center of our Milky Way galaxy!

These mind-numbing figures underline one thing: Humankind can never conquer space in our present form. Astronauts would need to travel at the speed of thought, something the God family can do (John 20:17-27, Psalm 33:9).

For us to join the

Creator in completing his grand design—the most stupendous technical and engineering feat imaginable—we will have to become spirit beings! That is what Bible writers pointed to.

God's plan was revealed in seven festivals that God gave to ancient Israel (Leviticus 23). These seven annual feasts outline the step-by-step sequence God is using to work out his plan.

An unfolding drama

Ancient Israel was given "copies of the things in the heavens" (Hebrews 9:23). Who today comprehends that the Holy Days recorded in Leviticus 23 symbol-

ize the unfolding of God's vast project (I Corinthians 2:9-10)?

The early New Testament Church kept these festivals (Acts 18:21). Observing them creates a bond with the God family. Keeping the feast days is part of the core curriculum God uses to educate and train his people, to help them remember his plan (Leviticus 23:21).



Just what do these festivals teach?

The Passover, a spring festival (Exodus 12:1-6), depicts the great sacrifice the God family made for the plan to proceed. This first step was crucial.

To prepare human beings for life in God's family, it was necessary that humans be given free moral agency, the ability to

choose whether to obey God (Deuteronomy 30:19, Joshua 24:15). Qualities like creativity, ingenuity, imagination, the ability to change and grow can only be developed in a being with the ability to choose, not in a robot. But allowing humans to make choices meant that mistakes would be made (Genesis 4:6-7).

So even before man's creation, the Word, the executive spokesman for the God family, agreed to be made flesh (John 1:1-3, 14) and die to pay the penalty of our wrong choices (Romans 5:8-10).

Anciently, a lamb was slain every spring at the Passover. This lamb pictured Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 5:7, I Peter 1:18-20). Jesus replaced this symbol with ceremonial bread and wine (Luke 22:15-20) pointing to his sacrificial death for sin.

Christ's sacrifice, commemorated by the Church each year (I Corinthians 11:23-26), is an inspiring reminder that God's plan is bigger than our sins.

Responding to Jesus Christ's example of sacrifice and selflessness will help God's children work together harmoniously throughout eternity.

The next festival is the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6).

Unleavened bread is bread made without yeast. This helps illustrate the essential attitude to keep God's family on track: submission, humility and respect for the Father—attitudes Jesus Christ personified (Matthew 11:28-30), attitudes free of the puffed-up pride and vanity that leaven, during this Festival, pictures (I Corinthians 5:1-8).

God will give the limitless

powers of the God family—the authority to rework this universe—only to those with the right attitude, only to those who can be trusted to obey the Father always.

From flesh to spirit

But God knew that human beings, swayed by Satan, the unseen competitor and adversary of God, would need extra help in building this attitude. So the next Holy Day, the Feast of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:15-17), pictures that extra spiritual help.

In the year Christ was crucified and resurrected, the Holy Spirit was dramatically given to those spiritual pioneers who had submitted to God's government, who wanted further training in God's ways (Acts 2:1-4; *Pentecost*, which means "50th," is the Greek name for the Feast of Firstfruits).

The Holy Spirit is available today to those God calls and who are willing to obey him (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38-39). God's Spirit gives the human mind some of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4) to gradually replace the carnal or fleshly nature.

The Holy Spirit makes change and growth possible and helps us progress toward God's character;

only by imitating God can anyone be trusted with the limitless powers of the God family.

But remember: To carry out God's projects throughout the trackless reaches of space, God's family will also need new bodies made of spirit.

These are exactly what God intends to give us (I Corinthians 15:42-44)!

Festivals point to the future

This transformation from flesh to spirit will take place for these pioneers—dead and alive—at the resurrection when Christ returns (I Thessalonians 4:13-17).

And Christ's return is the main meaning of the fourth festival, the Day of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24).

Immediately after Christ's re-

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turn, Satan, the evil architect of much human woe and blindness, will be supernaturally removed (Revelation 20:1-3). This is the meaning of the fifth festival, the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27).

But even then God's training program is not finished. Those pioneers inducted into God's family at the first resurrection will spend 1,000 years teaching

and training others (Revelation 20:4-6).

During this millennial period, earth will be beautified, becoming the prototype for the whole universe (Isaiah 35:1-7).

After that, the billions who did not have a chance to choose God's plan will come back to life in the second resurrection (Revelation 20:11-12). The vast majority of them will choose a part in God's family (Ezekiel 37:1-14).

These last two steps are pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day of the Feast (Leviticus 23:34-39). John 7 shows Jesus Christ observed these festivals. He knew they foreshadowed future events in God's plan (verses 37-38).

And Jesus Christ, who inspired these truths to be committed to

writing centuries ago, is alive today. He will bring these prophecies to pass (Isaiah 46:8-11). His Father will send him back to earth, back to rescue a humanity groaning and travailing in pain (Romans 8:22).

The result will be a new world, the world tomorrow under the 1,000-year reign of Christ and his trained assistants (Revelation 2:26, 20:6).

Why the Church celebrates

Jesus Christ has raised up his Church to teach God's plan, a plan that will take us from here through eternity. The autumn festivals—Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles and the Last Great Day—proclaim humanity's deliverance from its present darkness, and its fabulous future.

It is worth celebrating!

This is why God's people will observe this great hope at more than 100 Feast of Tabernacles locations this fall—from Chile to Canada, from South Africa to Saratoga Springs. At an eight-day convention, sermons and activities will review and accentuate God's great plan. Over 150,000 pioneers will celebrate and rejoice in token of the day when everyone will understand God's supreme purpose. "For

thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity . . . Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; and concerning the work of My hands, you command Me. . . . The Lord of Hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees . . . and He will destroy . . . the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces" (Isaiah 57:15, 45:11, 25:6-8).

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the time when God will teach all people and nations the thrilling future ahead for the human race, our incredible rendezvous with destiny.

Will you be keeping the Feast this year? □

When I was 16, my father died from leukemia. I was devastated.

Up until that time, death meant very little to me. I was young, healthy and strong.

Death, I thought, happened only to old folks. I remembered my grandfather's death at age 76. He had lived a full life.

But my father died at 56. That wasn't a ripe old age. I was shocked to realize how close death was to me and my family.

Where did Dad go? What had God done with him? I didn't know. And I didn't know anybody who did.

For three years after his death, I dreamed that Dad had only gone on a long trip, that one day he walked back into our lives and we welcomed him, grateful he had returned. But that dream never came true.

That is, not yet.

In 1984, my only brother, Jake, died from Hodgkin's disease. He was only 46. He left behind his wife and two teenage sons.

By then I knew whether we would see both Jake and our father Jacob again. We will. Although I miss being around them, I know they will live again. God has given me that guarantee through his faithful Word! That is a great comfort.

I'm sure you also have loved ones who have died. It hurts to lose them. God knows that. And God reveals death as an enemy—the last enemy that shall be destroyed (I Corinthians 15:26).

Trumpets and first resurrection

At Christ's second coming, at the last trump, the saints will rise from the dead to meet Christ in the air, caught up together with him in the clouds (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

The Feast of Trumpets, the fourth annual festival God gave his people (Leviticus 23:23-25), pictures these events. Christ and his saints will descend to the

Mount of Olives near Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4). From there Christ and the saints will institute the government of God around the world.

But what about the rest of the dead? What about my father and brother? What about your loved ones? God's plan includes hope for them, too.

Overview of resurrections

The resurrection of the dead takes place at three different times. Let's note them here:

The first resurrection is for the

You Will Live AGAIN!

The Feast of Trumpets points to an amazing—and comforting—truth.

BY JEROLD W. AUST

dead in Christ, the firstfruits, who will become immortal beings (Revelation 20:6).

These were called and chosen. They obeyed God and his commandments. They suffered privation and persecution. They remained faithful to Christ's gospel to their deaths (Matthew 24:13, Revelation 6:9-11).

They will live again! When they are resurrected at Christ Jesus' return, they will be raised with a body of spirit, not flesh (I Corinthians 15:42-44, 49-54). They, with the saints who are alive when Christ returns, will be given eternal life.

The second resurrection is for those who died without under-

standing the gospel. They will live again after the 1,000 years are finished (Revelation 20:5, first part). They will be resurrected to physical bodies. This will give them their first and only chance to understand and obey Christ's gospel (Ezekiel 37:1-14, Revelation 20:11-12).

The third resurrection is for those who knew the truth of the gospel but deliberately turned their backs on it. They became incorrigible, unwilling to repent, committing the unpardonable sin. They will be raised to a physical existence to be burned up (Revelation 20:13-15, Hebrews 6:4-8).

Jacob, my father, and Jake, my brother, will live again. I will again be able to see them, serve them and love them. But to see them, I must be changed at the first resurrection. God's judgment is now on me and on all who are in the Church (I Peter 4:17).

Will you hear the trumpet?

“Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 58:1).

God's Church, through magazines, broadcasts and church services, is warning God's people to prepare for the spiritual battles ahead (II Corinthians 10:3-6).

If you respond to this trumpet, you are likely to hear the last trump of God and be changed to a spirit being at the first resurrection!

The Feast of Trumpets heralds the return of Jesus Christ and the first resurrection. This day begins his plan of resurrection from the dead.

You can be among the firstfruits who will be changed into eternal, spirit essence. You can be a younger brother or sister of Christ Jesus (I John 3:1-3, Romans 8:29).

God's guarantee is: You will live again! □

“Proclaim Liberty Throughout All The Land”

*Few know who first said these famous words.
Fewer understand their true meaning.*

BY DAVID FRASER

Many connect the words “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land” with the freedom of the United States.

These historic words are inscribed on the Liberty Bell, rung on July 8, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to celebrate the public reading of the Declaration of Independence.

But few realize God spoke these words first—more than 3,000 years ago at Mount Sinai!

“Proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants,” God commanded Moses. “You shall cause the trumpet of

who for financial reasons had become servants of their brethren, be freed each 50th year (Leviticus 25:39-41). The Israelites were to be freed from the obligation of working for someone else! This is a concept virtually unknown to the Western world today.

The Israelites were to return to their ancestral property and once more live off their own land.

Notice the key element of this 50th year, the Jubilee year: “The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine,” God told Moses. “Each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family” (verses 23, 10).

of the property would fall into the hands of a few, and where the landless majority would become dependent for their economic survival on this privileged few.

That’s why God decreed that Israel redistribute the land every 50 years.

One commentator writes: “[The Jubilee year] did not teach either the socialistic economic theory . . . or the free-enterprise system that allows an unlimited expansion of private property. On the contrary, it established a fixed

the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year” (Leviticus 25:9-10).

Freedom from economic bondage

God intended Israel to hear this trumpet blast of freedom every 50 years. He required that Israelites,

God intended a fair distribution of land ownership in the nation: “Distribute the land by lot, according to your clans. To a larger group give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group a smaller one,” he explained to Moses (Numbers 33:54, New International Version).

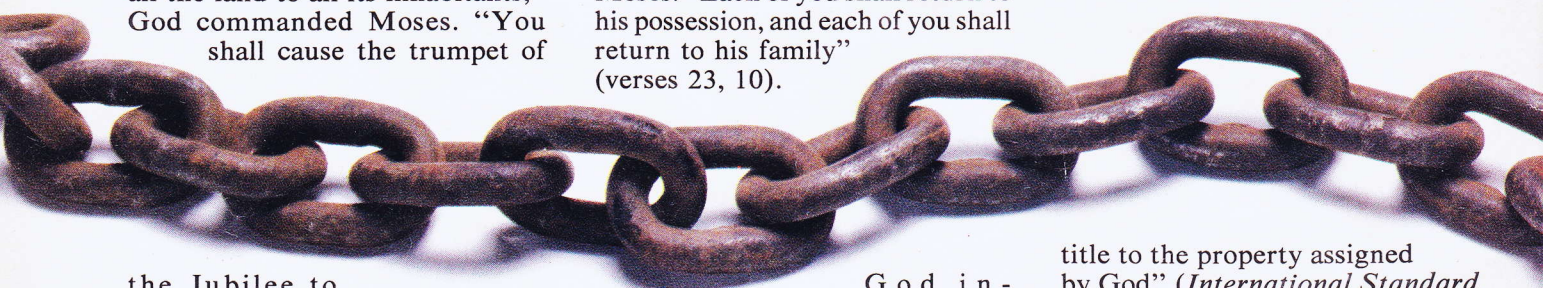
God knew that carelessness and calamity would cause some families to lose their land. He didn’t want a society where most

title to the property assigned by God” (*International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, volume II, page 1142).

“Proclaiming liberty throughout the land” specifically referred to the right of families to claim their ancestral property every 50 years—and, as a consequence, to provide for their economic well-being without having to sell their labor to others.

How far this world has departed from what God intended!

But the liberty God intended



for Israel—and for us—far transcends mere economic freedom!

“The truth shall make you free”

The Jubilee year was to be proclaimed, not at the beginning of the civil calendar on the Feast of Trumpets, but on the Day of Atonement, 10 days later.

Why begin it on the Day of Atonement?

Every year on this day God ceremonially cleansed Israel from all its national sins (Leviticus 16:30).

The high priest took two goats, one “for the Lord” and one “for the scapegoat” (verse 8). He first sacrificed the goat “for the Lord,” picturing Christ’s sacrifice for our sins (Hebrews 9:28).

Then he took the “scapegoat”—symbolizing Satan, the author of all sin—and confessed over the goat “all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites” (Leviticus 16:21, NIV). An Israelite then led this goat away into the wilderness, symbolically carrying away all the nation’s sins.

God wanted the nation of Israel freed from human oppression. But he desired much more. He wanted Israel to enjoy the same liberty Jesus Christ came to bring—freedom from sin.

On beginning his



ministry in Galilee, Christ declared: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. . . . To set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19).

Christ told the Jews on another

occasion, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

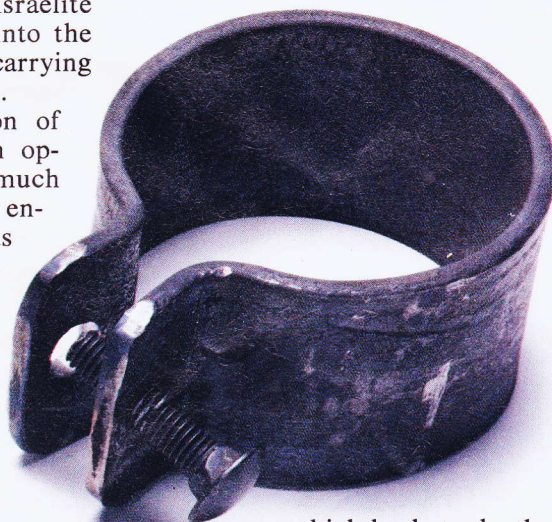
What is this liberating truth?

Christ explains: “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. . . . If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed” (verses 34, 36).

True liberty is freedom from the bondage of sin. God desired it for the nation of Israel; he wants you and me to experience it today! “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Corinthians 3:17).

The price of liberty: bondage

Christian liberty has its price. The apostle Paul explains: “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin,



which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? . . . You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness” (Romans 6:16-18, NIV).

True freedom comes only through a voluntary, total surrender of our personal independence. We must be willing to submit ourselves completely to God and his “perfect law of liberty” (James 1:25).

Paul tells us that a Christian becomes “Christ’s slave” (I Corinthians 7:22). Several times

in his epistles he refers to being in bonds or chains for Christ.

To be freed from the shackles of sin, we, too, must become Christ’s slaves. There is no other way!

Not yet fully free

Although Christ makes true freedom possible, Satan is always ready to enslave us again. Peter warns us, “Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8).

In this life there is the ever present potential to slip back under Satan’s influence, into the chains of sin.

But the time is coming when Satan will no longer influence us—and we will no longer be capable of succumbing to his influence. After Christ returns to the earth, Satan, instead of binding mankind in sin, will himself be chained.

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having . . . a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years . . . so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished” (Revelation 20:1-3).

Not only will Satan be chained, we will be freed from the bondage of death and the potential for sin. In the resurrection, John explains, “Whoever has been born of God does not sin . . . he cannot sin, because he has been born of God” (I John 3:9).

Paul writes, “[We] who have the firstfruits of the Spirit . . . [eagerly wait] for the adoption, the redemption of our body. . . . The creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Romans 8:23, 21).

After Christ’s return “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord” (Isaiah 11:9). Freedom will ring forth and true liberty will be proclaimed throughout all the world.

That time is coming! □

LET YOUR TABERNACLE TEACH YOU!

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the millennial reign of Christ on earth. But what is a tabernacle, and what can staying in one teach us?

We will soon be on our way! Spirits will be high as we leave for the Feast of Tabernacles.

We will gather at one of many Feast sites around the world to hear inspiring and motivating messages from God's ministers about the world tomorrow and our part in it.

We will enjoy the fellowship of many like-minded Christians. The Feast will be a foretaste of the joy that the return of Christ will inaugurate.

Excitement will pulsate as we arrive at the Feast. There will be so much to learn and see and do. We will hurry to check into our lodging, whether it be a motel room, condominium, camper or tent, anxious to begin experiencing the Feast.

But stop! This simple act of staying in a motel or a tent is too important to overlook. It is so important that God named this Feast after our lodging.

You see, a *tabernacle* is a temporary dwelling. God commanded the Israelites to build temporary huts or "booths" out of tree branches and live in them during the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:40-42).

These booths made this Festival distinctive. It was to be the

BY DOUGLAS G. PEITZ

Feast of Tabernacles, or a festival of temporary dwellings.

Today, even though it is more appropriate to use contemporary booths, we still follow God's command. We still stay in temporary dwellings during this Festival.

Why do we do this? And why would God name a feast after our lodging? What are we to learn?

Let's search the Scriptures and discover the remarkable spiritual significance of tabernacles.

The first lesson

God told the Israelites one purpose for dwelling in booths in Leviticus 23:42-43: "You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in the booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

God led the Israelites, under Moses' leadership, out of Egypt with the promise of giving them the land of Canaan as an inheritance and a rest from their enemies (Deuteronomy 12:10).

But God first tested them. He had them sojourn in the wilder-

ness for 40 years to face various tests of faith and obedience. Unfortunately, most failed those tests and were unable to enter the Promised Land, God's rest (Hebrews 3:16-19).

As we keep the Feast of Tabernacles, God wants us to realize that Israel's testing in the wilderness was a type and example for us (I Corinthians 10:6).

We are also sojourners, albeit in a spiritual sense. Peter says that we should "as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11).

We have been called out of spiritual Egypt, or this evil world, into God's Church. We consider our citizenship to be in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

And we must be tested before we can enter God's spiritual rest. We must strive to enter the kingdom of God. "Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience" (Hebrews 4:11).

Throughout the year, most of us live not in temporary dwellings, but in homes. However, as we leave for our sojourn at the Feast, the car sagging with children and luggage, it is an ideal

time to reflect on our spiritual sojourn on this earth.

Our bodies are tabernacles

After we get to the Feast and are settled in our temporary dwellings, it is time to consider another vital lesson: Our bodies are tabernacles, that is, our physical lives are temporary.

Peter realized this when he said, "Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you" (II Peter 1:13).

This simple truth is lost to many people. They do not base their lives on this realization. They act as if they are immortal.

James warned against this approach: "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (James 4:13-14).

Our temporary dwellings remind us that we are mortal. Just as our sojourn at the Feast will end, so will our physical lives. We have a limited time to prepare for God's coming kingdom.

This thought, coupled with the hope stirred up by the sermons and fellowship at the Feast, builds urgency in us. We must make the best possible use of time (Ephesians 5:16).

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 9:10: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going."

What is more valuable than the salvation God is offering us? What is more important than preparing to rule with Christ?

Christ said, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for

the food which endures to everlasting life" (John 6:27).

God is training, testing and judging us now. Our reward will be based on our fruits in this life.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10).

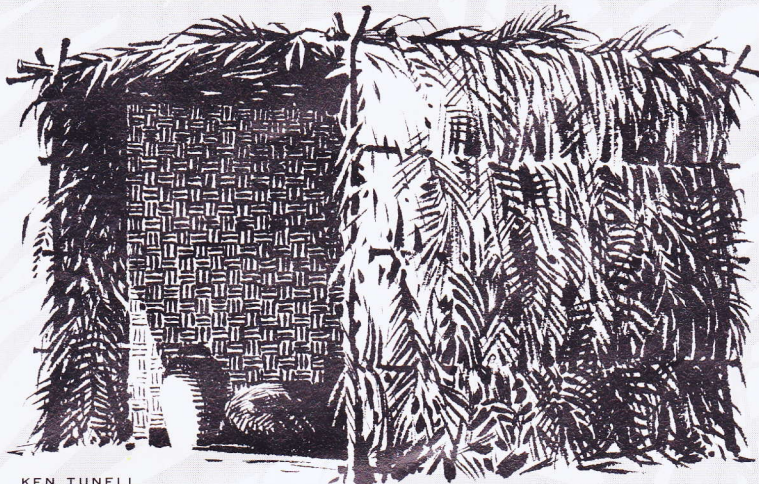
Our tabernacles remind us that we are mortal.

I want to go home

The Feast soon nears its conclusion. It has been refreshing and inspiring. We wish we could stay with God's people forever, instead of having to go back to our routines at home.

But our motel room or tent is another matter. After a few days, our temporary dwellings are less desirable.

The chairs in the room aren't as comfortable as those at home. We miss our privacy. We are sorry we took our refrigerators for granted. The dirty laundry is piling up. For a second it appeared to move! Then the thought hits—"I want to go



KEN TUNELL

home." And God wants us to feel this way! But why? Because there is yet another lesson he wants us to learn.

Our spiritual home

God doesn't want us to be satisfied with this life. Rather, he wants us to deeply desire the kingdom of God. He designed the

Feast to foster this desire in us. It heightens the contrast between God's way and Satan's.

The longer we stay in our temporary dwellings, the more we tend to desire our homes. Similarly, the longer we sojourn in Satan's world, the more we desire our home in the kingdom.

Paul expressed it this way: "For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven" (II Corinthians 5:1-2).

Yes, this life makes us groan. We groan because our frail bodies often become old, crippled or diseased. We groan because of our struggles with our "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11).

This then causes us to groan for the kingdom of God (Romans 8:23).

Abraham dwelt in tabernacles, yet longed for the permanency of his home in God's kingdom: "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:9-10).

Paul says we should do the same: "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

So, as we near the end of the Feast, and we begin to long for our homes, we should be reminded that God wants us to leave each Feast longing even more for our permanent home in the kingdom of God.

How wonderful it will be to finally inherit eternal life—to have a permanent home in the family of God! □

FAMILY FEAST TRADITIONS:

FEASTS YOUR CHILDREN WILL REMEMBER

BY MARIA STAHL

Riding roller coasters really wasn't my parents' favorite thing to do.

But from my very first Feast of Tabernacles at age 7, my parents always tried to make the Feast special for my brother and sister and me. And riding roller coasters, among other things, was what we liked to do!

My parents took us through museums, trying to expose us to something educational. But they also spent a lot of time doing the things we liked so we'd have happy memories of the Feast.

The results of their efforts

have been that all three of us, now grown, look forward to the Feast with all the anticipation we had as small children.

The Feast is for fun, too

For adults, the Feast is an eight-day reminder of the coming Millennium and the glorious fulfillment of God's plan. But for children, until the meaning of these special days becomes clearer as they mature, the Feast is a wonderful vacation!

Children get to spend all day with their parents. They get to make new friends, do fun things they don't normally do and stay

in an interesting place different from home.

And this is great! Because those fun memories build into children the habit of looking forward to and enjoying the Feast.

One way many families have helped their children build happy Feast memories is to develop family Feast of Tabernacles traditions—family habits that their children look forward to with great excitement.

The *Good News* asked a number of Worldwide Church of God members to relate their own family Feast traditions. Here are their replies:

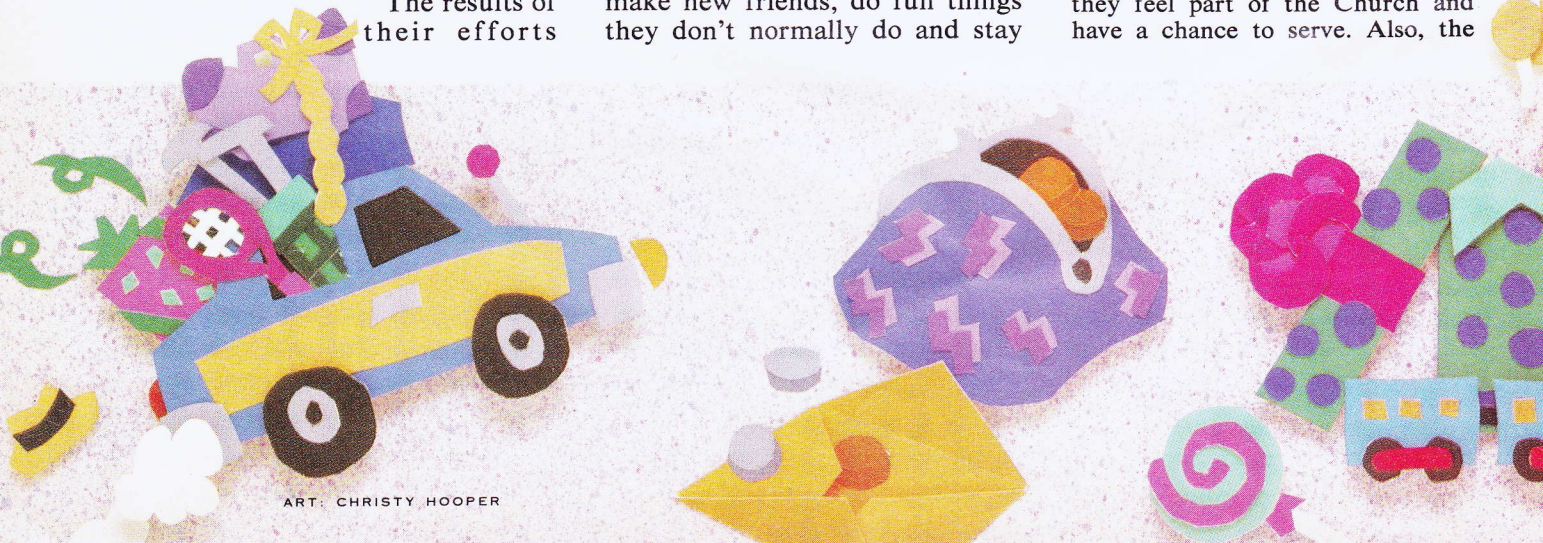
To help our little girls keep track of how far away the Feast is, a week or two before the Feast we make a paper chain with one link for each day until the Feast. Every day the girls get to remove one link, and they can see how quickly the Feast is approaching.

Ron and Linda Toth
Ijamsville, Maryland

Practicing the songs for the children's choir with our 6-year-old daughter for the 1989 Feast of Tabernacles in Bonndorf was a wonderful experience. We had a lot of fun going through the songs at home with a cassette tape. Those songs were constantly going through our heads.

For my wife, elder daughter and I it was a tremendous experience to see our youngest daughter making an active contribution to the success of the children's choir, to the glory and joy of God as well as to the pleasure of our brethren.

The good thing about it as far as the children are concerned is that they feel part of the Church and have a chance to serve. Also, the



Church's practice of providing separate offering envelopes for the children, with their own names printed on them, gives them a sense of giving with the rest of the congregation. We help them prepare ahead of time for the offering, explaining the purpose of the offerings and letting them place their own offerings in the baskets themselves.

Alois J. Betschart
Wattwil, Switzerland

I was a teenager when I attended my first Feast. My family is not in the Church, so another Church family took me with them. I didn't have any second tithe. I didn't even know what second tithe was!

This family didn't have much either, but it was my best Feast. It was wonderful.

Although I am now older and able to take care of myself at the Feast, I always remember how other families would "adopt" me and help me to be part of their family.

The family that invited me to join them in 1986 had five girls. We all shared a bedroom and helped each other select dresses to wear each day for services. We'd iron one another's dress if one person wanted to sleep a little later. I just felt like a part of that family.

The memories I've had have been a major factor in helping me understand that this is truly God's Church.

Christiana Mbome
Limbe, Cameroon

Our children are now grown, so my wife and I have developed a little tradition that includes other people's children at the Feast. Each year we buy a bunch of small stuffed animals, and every day of the Feast we take a couple of them in a paper bag to church.

Then we keep our eyes open for little children who don't look like they're enjoying the Feast. Some are lonely, some are handi-

capped, some are from broken homes.

Then we ask their names, where they're from and if they're having a good Feast. Usually they figure out before too long that they're about to receive a gift, and they get excited and start jumping up and down.

We tell them that we'd like to give them a friend, but that this friend will need a hug and a kiss every day, and that they'll have to say to this friend: "Are you having a good Feast? I hope so, because I'm having a *great* Feast!" Then we present them with the stuffed bear or gorilla or dog or whatever it is.

It's made the Feast more fun for some little kids, and also we enjoy it and look forward to it each year.

Camilo Reyes
Bakersfield, California

My parents helped teach me the principle of sharing the Feast with others by including some of the elderly or singles in our activities.

I was 7 years old when we attended the Feast in Tasmania, Australia. I still remember the afternoon we spent driving around the countryside enjoying the company of an older single man.

He entertained my brother and me with a finger trick. We truly believed that he was pulling his finger off!

Maria Kennedy
Auckland, New Zealand

My parents used to buy one bottle of some special wine or liqueur that they'd never tried before. We all got to try a little sip of it to see if we liked it, and if we liked it, we could have a few more sips at different times during the Feast.

Something I saw some parents do with their little girls—too young to take real notes at services—was to have them draw pictures of what they thought the Millennium would be like. Each day the parents assigned them a theme, like what pets

they'd like to have in the Millennium, what houses would be like or planning their own cities, and the girls would spend the time at Church drawing colorful pictures of what they imagined these things would be like.

Teresa Michel
Pasadena, California

I had a little bag in which I placed my notebooks, my Bible and my colored pens. Every day of the Feast I would pick out a different color of pen to write down the scriptures with. I'd sit by my mother and sometimes I copied her notes.

I remember enjoying singing with some 800 people around me. I stood on the chair so I could be at the same level as my parents, singing with all my heart.

Katia Yourassoff
Meyrin, Switzerland

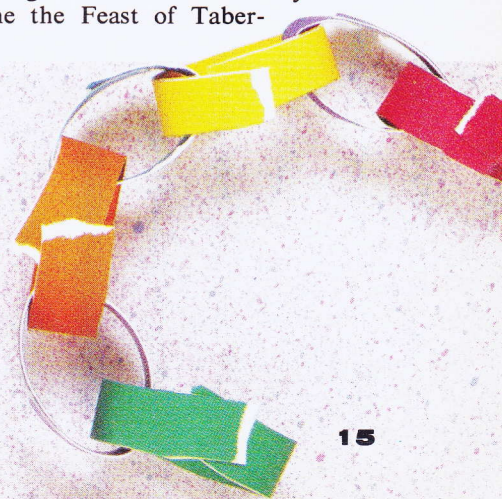
The night before we left for the Feast, my dad would always pack the trunk (boot) of the car. We kids would help carry the lighter suitcases out to the car. At some point in the evening, Mom would always bring our Feast gifts out of their hiding place. They were already gift-wrapped, but we would bounce them around a little on our way out to the car, trying to guess what they were.

We usually got plenty of chances to assess the contents, because Dad always had to pack the trunk at least three times to make everything fit.

Barry Stahl
Palmdale, California

My parents taught me the Feast's lesson about the big harvest of God's children by having us reap a harvest in our garden. They told my brother and me that if we did not sow the seed, there would be no harvest. Preparation was needed, and so were workers. We cultivated the land together and sowed the tiny seeds.

We maintained the garden through the summer and by the time the Feast of Taber-



nacles drew near, we began to understand a little more about “the big harvest.” Our garden yielded so much that we had to work with all our strength to gather the vegetables and fruits. We shared the harvest with other people.

It was rewarding to learn the meaning of the Feast in this way. It made us think of how incredibly rewarding the real harvest will be.

Tanja Peeters
Stramproy, Netherlands

What is most memorable about Feasts growing up and what made them special is returning to the motel room with my parents after each service.

Quickly we’d change from our church clothes into something more comfortable, take up positions on the beds and chairs, and wait for Mom to get out the goodies—nuts, fruits, crackers, a cheese ball and other little individual yummys we didn’t have during the year.

Then Dad, reclining, would leisurely query us about the messages—about what we had learned and where we could apply points from the sermon. This had a lot of benefits besides helping us to assimilate the messages. It also provided ideal family time together, and the food made it very enjoyable—and now memorable!

Jeff Zhorne
Pasadena, California

Last year we had one big he-goat which we reared ourselves purposely for the Feast. Then at the Feast we slaughtered it to share with friends and guests.

Having that much meat to share made it possible for us to invite a family who had lost a child just before the Feast to join us. So we were even able to share the sorrows of others.

It will be a Feast that my children will remember because of that goat which they themselves reared.

W.M. Deku
Accra, Ghana

In African society, a father is never supposed to go into the kitchen, let alone cook. But one Feast my dad decided to prepare breakfast for all of us. He got up early and cooked our favorite food, which was oats cooked with milk and sugar, and set everything on the table.

After prayers, my small brother, who was very hungry, started on his oats. He took a spoonful into his mouth. Then all at once he crossed his eyes as though in pain and swallowed hard. We asked him what was wrong. He said the oats were very salty. The rest of us tasted the oats and discovered he was right. We all closed our eyes and tried hard to finish our salty oats. We appreciated what Dad had done and didn’t want to hurt his feelings.

What really impressed me about this is the way my Dad brought himself to the level of a servant and prepared a meal for us. Since then he has served us in many other ways that I would not have expected from him.

It has taught me that there is nothing too low for me to do in serving others. If Dad could do it, why can’t I?

Cathrine Njeri
Nairobi, Kenya

My family has helped the senior citizens at the Feast by bringing them water. All the water must be drawn by hand at the Feast site, and it is very hard for the elderly to fetch their own water. So my children bring them water, and hot water when it is available.

Enoch K. Sogbo
Accra, Ghana

My mom used to help me put

together a Feast scrapbook every year.

All the photos we took at the Feast, plus postcards, tickets from museums and other tourist attractions visited, plane and train tickets, etc., all went in the scrapbook. We took good notes of what we visited on our trip so we could include captions in the scrapbook later.

We always had something to look forward to when we got home: Put the scrapbook together! And every year before the Feast we would look at past years’ scrapbooks and get excited all over again. I would play “travel agent,” showing last year’s scrapbook to someone who would be going to that Feast site the following year. I still make these scrapbooks as an adult.

Becky Sweat
Pasadena, California

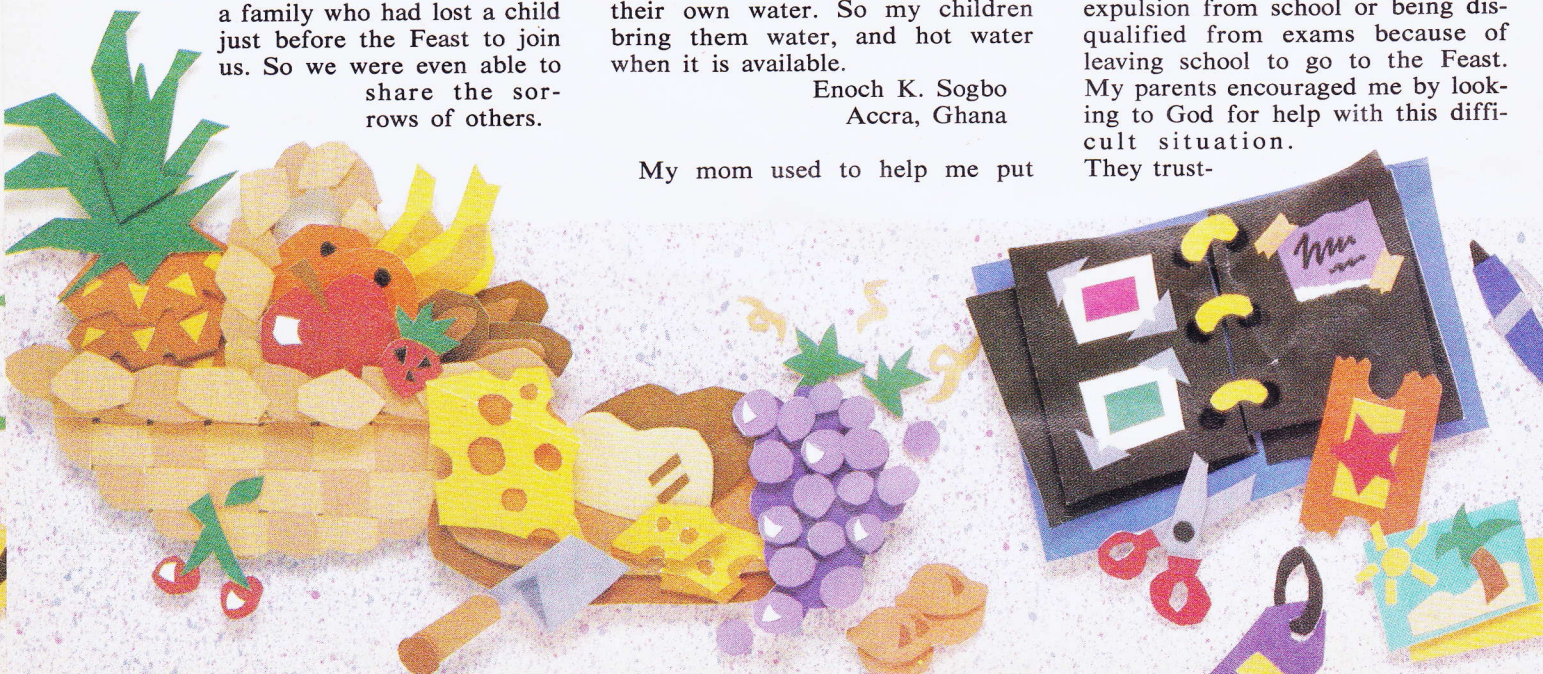
Feast presents! Every year we would get presents before the Feast and each year one of us would get a “big present”—starting with my oldest sister and going on down the line of the seven children in my family. My parents couldn’t afford to buy each of us a “big present” every year, so we took it in turns.

I remember certain food that we only had at the Feast—quails’ eggs, olives, avocados, pomegranates. Even now when I think of those things I think of them as “Feast food.”

We always stayed in self-catering places with kitchens. Mum would let each of us pick our favorite dinner and she’d fix each person’s favorite one day of the Feast.

Louise Hunnisett
Basildon, England

Several years I faced threats of expulsion from school or being disqualified from exams because of leaving school to go to the Feast. My parents encouraged me by looking to God for help with this difficult situation. They trust-



ed in God that he would bless us for not fearing the school authorities.

My parents established the tradition of assuring me that I could enjoy the Feast and still face my headmaster afterward. Sometimes no mention of my absence would be made when I got back from the Feast.

As an adult, in 1987, I faced the same choice, this time on my own. I had to decide between God and a job. The times when my parents stood fast flashed back and I made the choice—God first. I was fired. About three months later I got a job three times better!

Because of poor health, my parents can no longer attend the Feast with me. But what they taught me continues with me.

Angeline Chichaya
Harare, Zimbabwe

A friend of mine decided to spend a good part of his second tithe on children he met at the Feast. He stayed at a less expensive hotel than he could have afforded, and used the extra money to buy gifts, including books, toys and clothing.

He spent his Feast giving these gifts to children, taking young families out to dinner and sharing time with brethren at a game reserve or walking in the mornings and evenings.

His reward was seeing a special sparkle in the children's eyes as they ate in some of the best hotels in the country, and seeing a 4-year-old girl wearing a pretty new dress that he had given her on the high Holy Day of the Feast. In our part of the world, that can make a child's Feast very special.

Kalengule Kaoma
Lusaka, Zambia

Mom was a very good seamstress. Each year before the Feast she'd make dresses from the same fabric for

herself, my little sister Sarah and me. The styles were similar. We felt pretty special in our dresses that matched.

Mary Heine
Pasadena, California

I loved taking notes during services at the Feast, because my daddy took a lot of notes, and I could be like him. My parents had given me my own Bible, so I could join in and look up the scriptures.

We had family Bible study time during the Feast. My dad would wake us all up early and we'd troop into the living room for study before we started the day. I was sleepy and wished I could sleep later, but looking back I'm sure it helped me. I think family Bible studies are wonderful. I might pick another time of day, though.

Darlene Ukpebor
Lagos, Nigeria

Although the Feast is meant to be a time of both physical and spiritual enjoyment, because of the financial hardships we face in this area of the world, our children do not have as much physical enjoyment. To remedy this, I try to save some extra money to buy a roll of film for my children.

They borrow a camera and then spend the eight days of the Feast shooting pictures, mostly of their friends.

These become future reminders of the Feast for them.

Adolphus Quarcoo
Accra, Ghana

When we still had young children in our family of seven, we stayed in self-catering accommodations at the Feast. This put quite a load on Mom to prepare all the meals.

It was decided that every member of the family would take care of one lunch during the Feast, all the way from planning to purchasing groceries to cooking and serving

the meal. Dad helped the children to start planning and trying recipes several weeks before the Feast.

Our 7-year-old youngest son wanted fried eggs to appear on his menu, but he did not dare to break an egg over a hot frying pan. So I taught him to break the egg in a cup and to pour it gently into the frying pan.

At noontime on his day he waited for the family to be seated. Everything was prepared and ready, including seven cups in a row with seven broken eggs in them.

Mrs. Miek Wilms
Voorthuizen, Netherlands

My daughters always enjoy having some new clothes for the Feast, but since we do not have very much money to buy them, we all pitch in and make new clothes by hand just in time for the Feast.

Two of my daughters are 11 and 16 and need to spend time with other teens in the Church their own age because at school there aren't other teens in the Church.

I have found that my daughters discuss the things that are spoken of in services more at Feast time than during the rest of the year, probably because the Feast is a very exciting time being away from home in a new and wonderful setting.

Another exciting thing for us is when we find after talking to the brethren that many of the trials they may have had the previous year have been overcome.

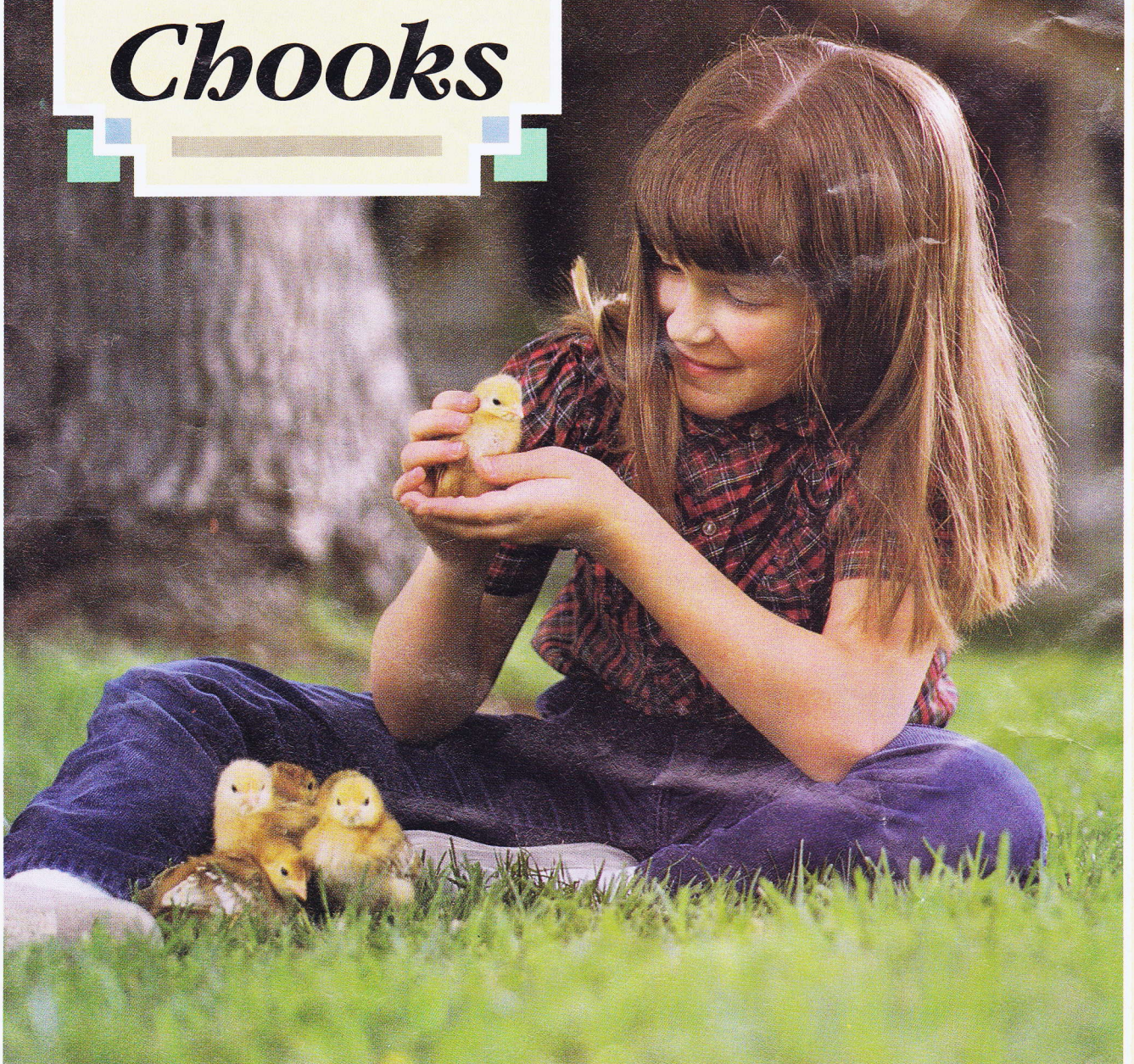
This is very encouraging to us as a single-parent family with many obstacles to overcome ourselves!

Mariella Giuffrida
Milano, Italy

This feature was compiled with the much-appreciated assistance of Michael A. Guidolin, Yvonne Kors-Hermans, John Karlson, James Newby, Tanja Peeters and Melvin Rhodes.



*A
Child
& Her
Chooks*



On a trip to Australia, I made a new friend named Ruth. Ruth lives on Australia's Gold Coast, and she is in the fifth grade.

One night over dinner, Ruth told me all about her chooks.

Now, I've lived in the city all my life, and I don't speak Australian very well anyway. At first I didn't have the faintest idea what a chook was, so Ruth had to explain.

Animal nature in this world

Ruth was in charge of a whole flock of chooks at her home. It was her job to feed the chooks and collect their eggs each day.

Ruth naturally took a liking to her chooks and had even named four of her favorites Eeny, Meeny, Miny and Moe.

One day Ruth got a shock. A big carpet snake swallowed one of her chooks, and when Ruth's parents went outside, they found the snake sunning itself there in the yard, with a giant bulge in his midsection!

(I didn't know what a carpet snake was, either. I imagined a flat, rectangular creature decorated with colored designs and a fringed border like my Chinese rug at home.)

But that wasn't all. Then Ruth's grandfather went out and killed the carpet snake by chopping its head off.

"They didn't want me to go outside, but I wanted to see!" Ruth told me excitedly. "The snake's tail was wiggling around, and I thought it was trying to find its head."

Years ago, in the Worldwide Church of God's speaking clubs for men, there was an award called the "King of Gore." If a man used some ugly, violent or frightening material to try to grab attention during a speech, he would be in danger of being named the "King of Gore" for that meeting.

Maybe I deserve a "King of

Gore" award for writing about this conversation. But if so, I think Ruth deserves a "Queen of Gore" award for telling me this story.

Of course, the funniest time to tell a story like this is over the dinner table, the way Ruth told me. She is obviously on her way to developing that wonderful Australian sense of humor.

What a world Satan the devil is running, I thought, where a poor little girl's poor little chook can be swallowed whole by a big, mean carpet snake!

The coming change

You no doubt already know the Bible predicts that violence among the human kind will cease in the world tomorrow. But did you know that even animal nature will be changed, too?

Events like the one Ruth told me about in such graphic detail will never occur again.

Right now there is enmity between the creatures on this planet.

After the Flood, God told Noah that the beasts and birds and fish of the earth would fear and dread humans (Genesis 9:2). And anyone who studies the animal kingdom itself—or, indeed, any of the natural environment around us—knows that, at every level, this world is a violent place.

But God prophesied, through Isaiah, how different the world will be after Jesus Christ returns and sets up the kingdom of God on earth.

Read it in Isaiah 11:6-8:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

"The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den."

What a different world under God's government! A child and her chooks and all other living creatures will be able to dwell

together in peace and safety, once Satan and his violent, hateful influence are removed from the world.

Notice what will be the ultimate end of this peaceful, harmonious system:

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain [under God's government], for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (verse 9).

The coming of that world, in which not only men dwell in peace among themselves but even the animals live in calmness, is what this Work exists to announce.

The Worldwide Church of God's symbolic seal (see page 1) captures the spirit of this wonderful prophecy of Isaiah.

The point is, if you are willing to submit to God now and learn to live his way of outgoing concern for others, you can help to bring that world about under Jesus Christ, as one of the spirit-born children of God!

As this year's Fall Festival season approaches, why not take the time to review our booklet *The Millennium and Beyond?* It tells all about the coming world tomorrow. (If you don't have a copy, you may have one free for the asking.) And really rejoice in these festivals, which were all designed to point to that wonderful coming society! □



GOD PROTECTS HIS PEOPLE!

In this dangerous age, see God's encouraging message!

BY BILL BUTLER

This fall more than 150,000 members of God's Church will be traveling to the Feast of Tabernacles at more than 100 locations around the world.

They will be dwelling in unfamiliar surroundings. They will be involved in activities that are not part of their normal routines.

Collectively, Church members will spend 1.5 million days away from their homes and travel more than 90 million miles on automobiles, buses, trains and ships.

The safety of brethren is potentially more at risk then than at any other time of year.

It's a dangerous world

We face dangers from all sides. Crime, accidents and natural disasters concern everyone.

Terrible automobile accidents, planes crashing, bridges collapsing, ships sinking and other tragedies occur in this world. We as Christians face the possibility that we could personally be involved in such a tragedy.

Crime rates are increasing in practically every nation.

Statistics in the United States during the decade of the 1980s were frightening. In a typical year there were 8.1 million serious crimes such as murder and burglary.

When traveling we find ourselves in hotels, airports and

other public places where crime tends to occur.

We are living in increasingly dangerous times. II Timothy 3:1-2 says, "In the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money."

Verse 3 goes on to list "unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good." This describes the kind of mind that causes the crime we see today.

Symbol of protection

In contrast, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures a coming time of peace and protection for all mankind on this earth (Isaiah 11:6, Micah 4:1-5).

Traditional Jewish communities practice an interesting custom during this Feast. Families build small booths on their porches or in their yards. These booths symbolize the temporary abodes that their forefathers built during the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

This temporary dwelling is called a *sukkah*, which means "booth" or "tabernacle." It represents God's protection, since similar temporary dwellings protected the ancient Israelites from the sun, wind and rain in the wilderness.

Psalm 27:5 speaks of the protection God provides: "In the

time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock."

God does protect

Many scriptures show God's desire to protect us.

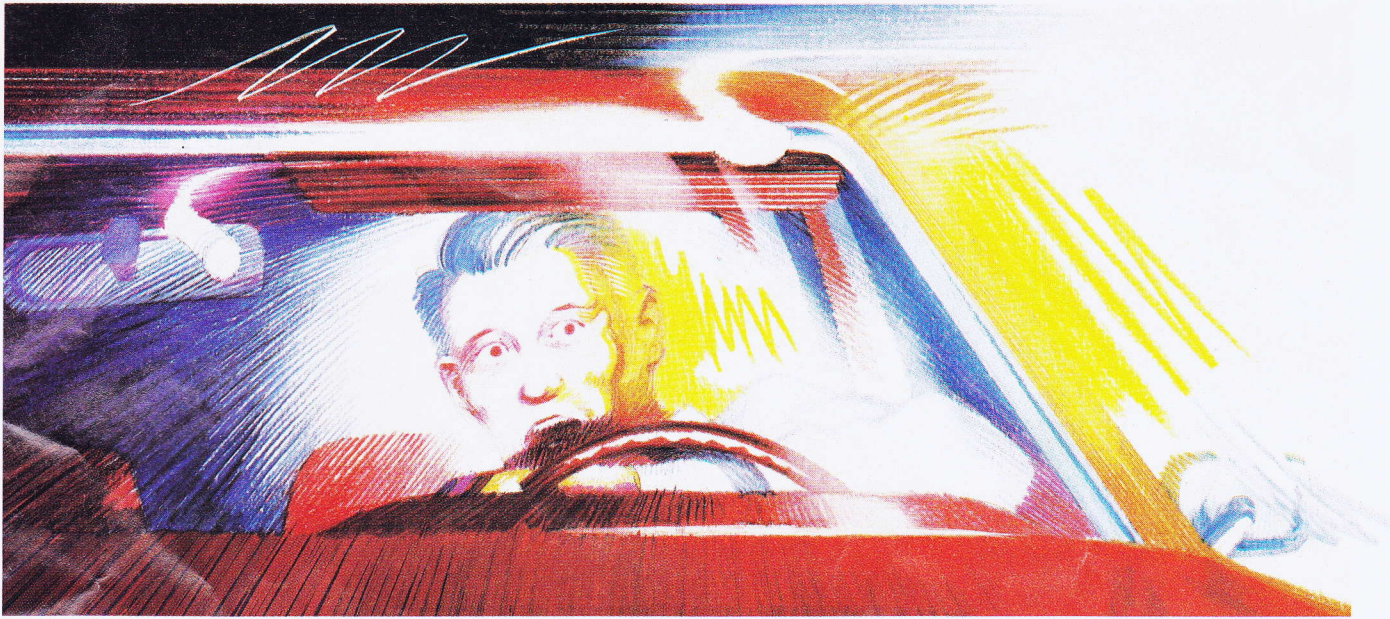
In Psalm 17:6-8, David wrote: "I have called upon You, for You will hear me . . . O You who save those who trust in You from those who rise up against them [this could include the criminal in the street]. Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings."

It's comforting to read Psalm 91:5, 11: "You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day. . . . For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways."

Angels no doubt intervene thousands of times each day on behalf of our brethren around the world. You may find out one day that God protected you a thousand times in ways you did not realize during your life.

In one case a Church member was driving home on a two-lane highway late at night. Just as he neared the top of a hill the headlights of two cars appeared in front of him. One car was heading toward him in his lane!

He had only a few seconds to



KEN TUNELL

Just as he neared
the top of a hill the
headlights of two cars
appeared. One car was
in his lane!

react. Instinctively, he swerved to the right onto the shoulder of the road just an instant before the two cars roared past. Then, just as quickly, he jerked his car back onto the highway.

After driving stunned for about a minute, it struck him that something about the whole incident was very strange. He turned his car around and went back to the spot where the two cars had passed him.

He stopped, got out and walked over to the spot where he had swerved off moments earlier. He saw his tire prints on a narrow strip of gravel beside the pavement, so he knew he had the right place.

However, at that particular point, there was no shoulder of the road—only a drop-off! His car had gone off into thin air before coming back onto the road.

Doing our part

What is our part in physical protection? First, we need to

pray daily for one another. Second, we need to pray for our own protection. We should ask God to show us how to avoid dangerous situations. We can also pray that God will protect our personal belongings from theft, damage or loss, especially while traveling.

In Exodus 34:24 we see that God told the Israelites he would protect their property while they attended his Feasts.

Could we sometimes not be protected from accidents and mistakes because we are not praying enough for God's help?

Read what Philippians 4:6 says: "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

And, in James 4:2, we read, "You do not have because you do not ask."

Be prepared

Remember, time and chance happen to all (Ecclesiastes 9:11). We need to exercise common sense, doing everything within our ability to avoid potential dangers around us.

When you travel for extended periods of time, it is wise to take precautions such as these:

- Ask your neighbors to watch your house, or have someone stay there while you're gone. If this is not practical, make your home look and sound occupied or have

someone check on it occasionally in your absence.

- Let friends and relatives know where you are in case they need to contact you.

- Carry your wallet and purses, passports and other travel papers in safe places. You may want to use hotel safe-deposit boxes.

Here are other safety tips:

- Walk only in safe areas, especially at night.

- Adhere to traffic regulations and safe driving practices.

- Keep your car doors locked and seat belts fastened when driving. Make sure your locks work.

- Park only in well-lighted areas and don't leave personal belongings in plain sight. Never leave your keys in your car.

- Whenever possible, select travel routes that avoid high-crime areas.

- Always know where your children are and see to it that they are properly supervised.

Have a safe Feast!

As one of the 150,000 attending God's Feast of Tabernacles this year, ask God for his protection on your property while you are gone. Pray that God will send his angels to protect you and all brethren as you travel to and from the Feast site. Do what you can to increase your safety.

Remember that God does protect his people! □

**THE
HISTORY
OF THE
CHURCH
OF
GOD**

**STRUGGLE
FOR
THE TRUTH**

BY RONALD D. KELLY

As the first century drew to a close, only the aging John remained alive of the original 12 apostles trained by Jesus.

Life was difficult. Even though the Christian Church had spread throughout the Roman Empire, efforts to stamp it out continued.

Domitian ruled as Roman emperor from A.D. 81 to 96. He instituted the second great persecution against the Church.

But out of that persecution came a powerful witness of the early Church. Many traditions grew out of John's confrontation with Domitian.

John and Domitian

Without a doubt, Domitian had heard of John. Perhaps his greatest concern was the Christian doctrine that Jesus would become king. The Roman emperor could not tolerate another king, so Domitian brought John to

Rome. When asked to confirm the rumors of Jesus becoming the Roman king, John's reply is recorded as this: "You also shall reign for many years given you by God, and after you very many others; and when the times of the things upon earth have been fulfilled, out of heaven shall come a King, eternal, true, Judge of the living and the dead, to whom every nation and tribe shall con-

banished him to the prison isle of Patmos.

A prisoner on Patmos

John was on Patmos, as is clear from his own writing: "I, John, both your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9).

While John was imprisoned on Patmos, Christ revealed to him the final book of the sacred writings that would complete the Bible—the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelation.

There, through dreams and symbols, Jesus Christ laid out the flow of events that would culminate in his return to establish the millennial reign of God's government on the earth.

The struggle against heresy

After John was released from prison, he not only had to battle the persecution of the Roman government, he had to struggle against false teachers.

One of the most influential heretics of the late first century was Cerinthus. Another tradition from that time was a chance meeting of Cerinthus with John and his young companion Polycarp at the public baths.

Upon seeing the heretic, John is alleged to have said something like this to Polycarp: "Let us flee the baths, lest the wrath of God consume us all with this son of Satan."

Thus we are introduced to Polycarp—the successor to John in the ministry of the Church in Asia Minor.

Born sometime after the fall of Jerusalem, Polycarp trained under John till John died shortly after the turn of the first century.

For more than the next half century, Polycarp struggled to preserve the true faith.

The struggle continues

During the reign of the Roman emperor Trajan (A.D. 98-117), Pliny the Younger, governor of



**Commanded
to renounce Christ,
Polycarp proclaimed:
"For 86 years I
have served
him, and he has
never done me
wrong. How can I
now blaspheme my
King who saved me?"**

█

Bithynia, wrote to the emperor about the growing Christian churches: "The contagion of that superstition [Christianity] has penetrated not only the cities but also the villages and country places."

Pliny the Younger wrote to Trajan for advice on how to deal with Christians. What kind of punishment ought to be inflicted on this group who seemed to be causing local peoples to desert their pagan temples?

In one of his letters to the emperor, Pliny wrote that they "assemble before daylight and recite by turns a form of words to Christ as god."

To find out more about their beliefs, he tortured two ladies who may have been deaconesses and reported, "I discovered nothing else than a perverse and extravagant superstition."

After reading Pliny's report, Trajan ordered that Christians who were caught ought to be punished, but they were not to be actively sought out.

The government's tolerance provided opportunity for cautious growth.

But the Church was fragmenting. Doctrine became subject to a variety of interpretations.

Gnostic organizations began to use Christian doctrines and terminology. Followers of Simon the Magician, Carpocrates and Cerinthus were sometimes identified with Christianity. A sect known as Ebionites were said to blend customs and ordinances of the Jews with the Christian teachings.

The complexity of knowing who really were the faithful followers of Christ is shown by this statement from historian Edward Burton: "The fugitives from Jerusalem . . . while some became true disciples of Jesus, others, as in the case in the spreading of new opinions, may have imperfectly learnt, or ignorantly perverted, the real doctrines of Christianity" (*Lectures Upon the Ecclesiastical History of the First Three Centuries*, page 264).

The principal custodians of the faith resided in the churches of

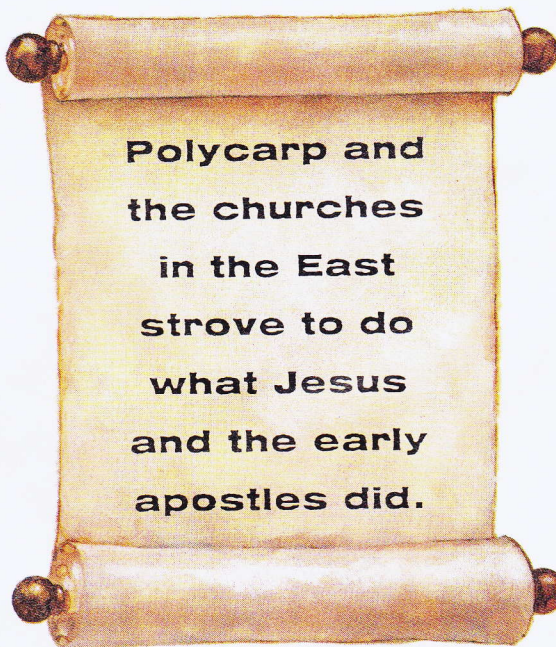
Asia Minor. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was the best-known leader.

Other important second-century figures

In the large eastern city of Antioch, Syria, traditions preserve Ignatius as the second successor to Peter in that region.

Arrested by the Romans, Ignatius may have paid a visit to Polycarp in Smyrna while on the journey to Rome.

Trajan sentenced Ignatius to die about A.D. 115. Before being thrown to the lions in the arena, Ignatius wrote, "I bid all men know that of my own free will I



die for God . . . only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ."

By this time, the western Christian churches at Rome were also gaining strength and authority. It would yet take another two centuries, but in the course of time, Rome, capital of the western empire, would also become the seat of what would be called Christianity.

Philosophers and writers associated with the development of the Christian church were also associated with a changing theology. Men like Clement of Rome (died about A.D. 97), Justin Martyr (100-167), Irenaeus (130-200), Tertullian (150-220),

Origin (185-254) and Eusebius (260-340) provide us with the bulk of information we have from these first three centuries of Church history.

Most of the prominent names are from the church in the West—the church that ultimately would take the name *Roman Catholic*.

Changing doctrines and ideologies

Through these first centuries Christianity struggled with new theological precepts: What should be the place of Mary in worship? Should Sunday be sanctified as a day of worship to honor the resurrection of Jesus?

Should the Church observe the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, or observe an Easter commemoration of Christ's resurrection? What about "Jewish" practices such as Holy Day and Sabbath worship? What was the true nature of God? Who and what was Jesus—man, God or both?

Basically Christianity divided into two areas of theology. In the West, headquartered at Rome, the Roman bishop (not yet called the Pope) was gaining influence and power. There, special consideration of Mary, Sunday as a day of worship and casting off things "Jewish" grew in popularity.

Polycarp and the churches in the East maintained the traditions of the early Church regarding the seventh-day Sabbath, the Holy Days and the laws of clean and unclean meats.

In other words, Christians in the East strove to do what Jesus and the early apostles did.

Polycarp's trip to Rome

Perhaps the most significant event in Polycarp's ministry was his struggle to preserve the faith once delivered. When the church in the West established Easter

Sunday as a memorial to the resurrection, they discontinued observance of Passover on the 14th of Nisan.

Churches in the East continued the custom of observing the Passover on the same night Jesus instituted the new symbols of bread and wine. The controversy, still with us even all these centuries later, was called the Quartodeciman controversy, its name coming from the Latin words meaning "14th."

Even though he was past 80 years of age, Polycarp undertook a journey to Rome to discuss this matter with the bishop of the Roman church, Anicetus. Neither could persuade the other. Polycarp returned to Smyrna. Even though persecuted by the government and rejected by the growing church at Rome, Polycarp would not yield to the change.

The last days of Polycarp

Only a few years after that confrontation, Polycarp, then 86, was arrested at Smyrna. The complete tradition is told by the fourth-century writer Eusebius.

On the first Holy Day of the Days of Unleavened Bread, during the night, government officials arrived to arrest him. Rather than attempt an escape, Polycarp arose to meet them. The soldiers were surprised to find an old man, now feeble with years. They had expected a dangerous troublemaker.

To the contrary, Polycarp asked that a meal be prepared for them, then requested an hour of prayer before being taken away.

After his prayer, Polycarp was permitted to ride a mule into the city. Upon arrival, officials rode with him in their carriage trying to persuade him to reject his Christian ways and give honor to Caesar as god. "What harm is there in saying 'Lord Caesar?'" they asked. "Just sacrifice to him and you will be safe."

Polycarp made no reply.

As they persisted, Polycarp finally answered, "I have no intention of taking your advice."

The magistrates angrily turned to threats. He was shoved from

the carriage and had to walk to the stadium where a large crowd was gathering for the games.

The final hours

As they neared the stadium, now filled with roaring fans, a loud clap of thunder rattled the arena. Because of the clamor most did not hear the voice: "Be strong, Polycarp."

It was announced at the arena, "Polycarp has been arrested."

The proconsul demanded: "Swear by the genius of Caesar. Say 'Away with those who deny the gods.'" Of course, the Roman official meant for Polycarp to acknowledge the Roman gods and deny the God of the Bible and his Son, Jesus.

With a twist of irony, Polycarp waved his hands toward the roaring crowd and cried, "Away with the godless!"

Upon further demands to renounce Christ, Polycarp finally proclaimed: "For 86 years I have served him, and he has never done me wrong. How can I now blaspheme my King who saved me?"

"I have wild beasts," the proconsul roared.

"Call them," the old man calmly replied.

"If you make light of the beasts," retorted the official, "I'll have you destroyed by fire."

Polycarp responded: "The fire you threaten burns for a time and is soon extinguished. In the judgment to come there is a fire of eternal punishment reserved for the wicked."

The huge crowd called for the lions. But the time allotted for that kind of sport was already past.

"Burn him alive," they shouted. Many rushed from the stadium to gather logs and sticks.

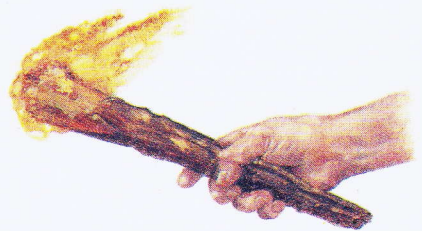
A great pyre was built and Polycarp was bound on top. He prayed, "O Father . . . I bless you for counting me worthy of this day and hour."

The men in charge lit the fire. It roared into the air. Those who were there said it took the shape of a great sail. Polycarp's body seemed protected from the

flames. The executioner rushed forward, thrusting a sword into Polycarp's body.

Polycarp's life came to a dramatic and speedy end.

But what he stood for, the preservation of the original and pure truth of the gospel, would never die.



Leadership passes to Polycrates

Leadership of the Church passed to a young man about to enter the prime of his ministry—Polycrates. He would also live a long and productive life in Christ's service.

In nearly a repeat of Polycarp's trip to Rome, Polycrates also journeyed to the capital to discuss with the bishop of Rome (then Victor I) the matter of Passover versus Easter. Victor held to Easter.

By now the authority of the Roman bishop was sufficient to demand that those in the East give up the 14th of Nisan memorial and observe Easter. Victor threatened excommunication if they did not.

Polycrates refused to give in. He wrote: "We, for our part, keep the day scrupulously, without addition or subtraction. In Asia great luminaries sleep who shall rise again on the day of the Lord's advent, when he is coming with glory from heaven and shall search out all his saints. . . . All of these kept the fourteenth day of the month . . . in accordance with the gospel, not deviating in the least but following the rule of the Faith."

He concluded, "Better people than I have said, 'We must obey God rather than men.'"

Polycrates lived through most of the second century. But great changes were to take place in the coming two centuries. □

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Q&A

An article in the March-April Good News said the Passover bread pictures God's Church. Doesn't the bread eaten at Passover services symbolize the body of Christ?

Yes, it does. The article should have differentiated between the unleavened bread eaten at Passover services and the unleavened bread eaten during the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival traditionally called *Passover* by the Jews and others.

Unfortunately, the article confused some and led to impossible conclusions neither the author nor our editors intended. For instance, if the Church is symbolized by the bread eaten at Passover services, then is not the Church eating itself? Of course this was not what the article was intended to say.

Of the "Passover bread" we partake of at Passover services, Jesus clearly stated, "Take, eat; this is My body" (Matthew 26:26). When we eat that bread at Passover, we are symbolically partaking of and accepting the wonderful meaning of the body of Christ—Jesus' own body that bore our sins on the stake (I Peter 2:24), that was pierced for our transgressions (Psalm 22:16, Isaiah 53:5), that was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many (Hebrews 9:28).

The bread and wine taken together at Passover services commemorate Jesus' death (I Corinthians 11:26).

The article's purpose was to draw an instructive analogy between the Church and unleavened bread, and to emphasize that members of the Church, as members of the Body of Christ, are in unity through Christ and should therefore be reconciled to one another before Passover. Paul told

Christians they should be a "new lump" of unleavened dough, symbolizing a spiritually unleavened way of life of sincerity and truth (I Corinthians 5:7-8). And in I Corinthians 10:17 he wrote, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread"—the unleavened bread eaten at Passover services. In this sense, in the analogy, the Church should be like unleavened bread.

But the "Passover bread" we partake of at Passover services unquestionably symbolizes Christ's body, which was sacrificed for us. We apologize for any misunderstanding.

Was Jesus a vegetarian?

Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem every year to keep the Passover. When Jesus was 12—the age a young Jew was considered a man—he went with them (Luke 2:41-42).

Each family killed and ate a lamb at the Passover, so Jesus ate meat. He continued to eat the Passover every year, as God had commanded.

If Jesus had been a vegetarian, people would have noticed and criticized. The subject would have been mentioned in the biblical accounts. Therefore it is obvious Jesus ate the same things other Jews ate, including animal flesh.

If Jesus had been a vegetarian, he would have been called an ascetic like John the Baptist (Luke 7:33). Instead, Jesus was called a glutton and a drunkard (verse 34) because he attended banquets and ate with Pharisees, tax collectors and other affluent people who certainly ate meat (verse 36).

As Lord, Christ also visited Abraham, and he ate flesh (Genesis 18:1-8). Jesus associated with fishermen and helped them catch

fish, and he ate fish (Luke 24:36-43, John 21:5-13).

Of all the Israelites who left Egypt, were Joshua and Caleb the only ones to enter the Promised Land?

After the Israelites left Mt. Sinai, they began to move toward the Promised Land (Numbers 10:11-12). Twelve men were chosen to scout out the land (Numbers 13:1-20).

Ten spies reported the Canaanites were too strong to conquer (verses 26-33). Joshua and Caleb, however, told the people to trust God to give them the land (Numbers 14:6-9).

The Israelites complained, saying it was better to die in the wilderness than to be killed in war (verses 1-3). God gave the people their request: "You who have murmured against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered . . . from twenty years old and above. Except for Caleb . . . and Joshua" (verses 29-30).

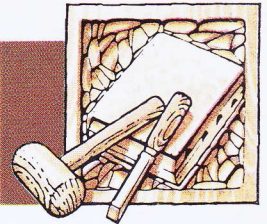
Joshua, Caleb and children who had been under age 20 entered the Promised Land. But others may have, too.

Notice the words "all of you who were numbered." This refers to the census of the army—those who were 20 years and older (Numbers 1:2-3). The Levites were not numbered in this census (verse 49). Nor did the Levites send a spy into the land of Canaan. They were not included in the punishment.

Eleazer, Aaron's son, is one example. He had duties in the tabernacle (Numbers 4:16), which implies he was at least 30 (verse 23). He, and possibly other Levites older than 20, were also allowed to enter the Promised Land (Joshua 14:1). □

BIBLICAL WORKSHOP

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING



EVERYTHING WILL COME UP ROSES

This issue of *The Good News* emphasizes the fall Holy Days. The Feast of Tabernacles in particular pictures a future time when the world will be totally different.

The Bible reveals that Jesus Christ will return to earth to set up his way of life during a 1,000-year period. Isaiah, Micah and other prophets describe this coming age as a time of world peace and prosperity. Man, for the first time, will learn to worship the true God.

The Good News teaches how to prepare for this new world. We talk about peace, abundance and physical and spiritual healing. The



HAL FINCH

plowman will overtake the reaper. Nations will beat their swords into plowshares. We describe the world tomorrow in terms of beauty, happiness and joy.

Are we looking at life

through rose-colored glasses, as some readers think we are?

This present world isn't the world tomorrow. We know the horrors and heartaches that the problems of this society bring. We see and feel mankind's suffering.

But we also see the future. There is a difference between distorting your vision, as rose-colored glasses do, and seeing clearly both good and bad but choosing to emphasize the good.

Paul said to look at life positively: "Whatever things are true . . . noble . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

It doesn't mean ignore or deny the negative. That would be impossible—even foolish—to do. It means between the negative and the positive, *choose* to think about the good.

That's a tall order, for we live in a world where every few seconds someone is murdered, raped, robbed or abused. Not everyone is financially stable. Not everyone has a happy family.

But that's the whole point. We can mentally, emotionally and spiritually drown in a sea of woes.

The world tomorrow *is* coming. And it's the best thing you can choose to see—clearly!

—Lana Walker-Helmuth ■



FIAN ARROYO

WHAT LEADS YOU TO REPENT?

Three basic motives can change behavior:

- 1) fear of punishment,
- 2) desire for reward and
- 3) love.

If you are training a dog, for example, you might punish it for bad behavior or reward it for good behavior. Punishment works best for some behaviors, and rewards work best for others. But training is more effective if it is reinforced with love. If you befriend the dog, it will obey simply to please you. Obedience from the heart is more pleasing to the pet's trainer, too.

Children, too, can be threatened with punishment and encouraged with rewards. Strict punishment without love can make children obey, but such obedience evaporates when they become independent. Rewards without love will produce spoiled children

who demand ever increasing rewards.

Parents, to help their children mature, must base all child rearing on a firm foundation of love. Children nurtured in a loving family relationship will obey, respect and love their parents for the rest of their lives.

We are God's children, and he wants to train us in his way of life. Some people begin to obey God because they want to avoid punishment. Others begin to obey so they can get rewards, such as help in a trial, blessings in this life or authority in the world tomorrow. These motives, though selfish, can help people begin to obey God. But we must mature into an obedience based on love.

God will punish disobedience and reward obedience. But he doesn't stop there. God's plan is based on love. He wants a loving relationship with each of his children, and he wants us to obey from the heart, motivated by love and thankfulness.

"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8; see also I John 4:10).

How grateful we ought to be! As we come to understand the greatness of God's love and the greatness of Christ's sacrifice, we ought to be motivated by love and gratitude to please God in every way. "We love Him because He first loved us" (I John 4:19). "The goodness of God leads you to repentance" (Romans 2:4).

—Michael Morrison ■

ASK— RIGHTLY!— AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE

Did you know the rape and murder of a woman once touched off civil war in Israel?

The rapists were from the Benjamite town of Gibeah. Israel's other tribes asked Benjamin to surrender the guilty men, and when Benjamin refused, the Israelites prepared to do battle with their brothers.

They asked God, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?" And the Lord said, "Judah shall go up first" (Judges 20:18). But in the battle

that followed, 22,000 Israelites died!

That evening the stunned Israelites asked God if they should go against Benjamin again. God told them to go ahead (verse 23). But, again, the vastly outnumbered Benjamite soldiers won—and 18,000 attackers perished.

What was wrong? Weren't the Israelites seeking God's counsel?

The problem was that Israel asked the wrong question! The leaders had assumed their cause was right. It didn't occur to them that God might not want the problem solved this way. The Israelites had not sought correct counsel.

That's an important principle for us to remember. When we seek an answer from God, let's be sure we go before him with the right question—and the right attitude.

Had Israel asked the right question to begin with—something along the

lines of "We've heard about the atrocity that has happened in Benjamin. Is it your will that we destroy those who won't hand over the guilty ones?"—then the outcome of the whole situation would have been different.

The misguided Israelites lost 40,000 men. Not until they prayed, fasted and sacrificed before God did he give them victory. They finally asked the right question: "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" (verse 28).

God says if we ask him for help, we'll receive it. But we must ask in humility and according to his will. "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss" (James 4:3).

Let's remember this lesson in all our decision making—and receive the wonderful guidance of God.

—Philip Stevens ■

IF YOU RECEIVED A "PRAYER STATEMENT"

You walk to the mailbox and open it. Junk mail, bill, bi—hey, what's this? A *prayer statement*?

Suppose you got a statement each month for use of your prayer line. (Of course, all "calls" made to God are free of charge! Your statement would just be for your information.) What would your prayer statement look like?

The first possible statement merely says "no calls made this month." It seems the "telephone" wasn't even picked up!

A second possible statement does record some

use. There were several calls to 911—the emergency line. Oh, yes, the time a car swerved into your lane. And the time your little girl fell off the swing and was knocked unconscious.

There are also some 611 calls—that means the line needs to be repaired because of a bad connection. For instance, last month you stayed up too late one night and the next morning the connection grew fuzzy when you tried to pray.

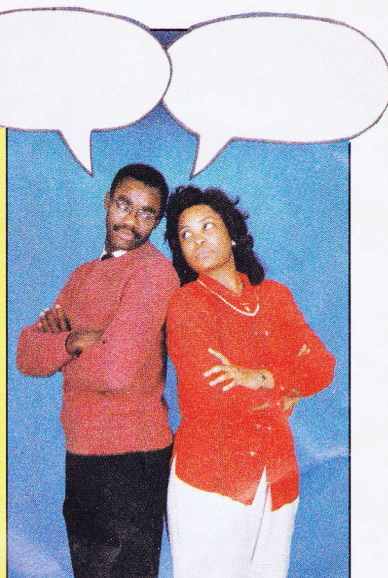
Statement No. 3 lists a number of calls to 411—information. There are requests to understand certain scriptures and also requests for more patience. There are also calls about world leaders, members of the Church, ministers, family and friends. There are also calls just to chat, share feelings and express thanks.

This statement also tells you that the prayer line was

solidly connected last month. It never faded and it was busy day and night.

Keep lethargy and lack of faith from jeopardizing your prayer line and you can receive a statement like No. 3. The more you use your "prayer line," the closer your connection with God will be. What would your prayer statement look like?

—Ed Callihan and Kathy Johnson ■



CHARLES FELDBUSH

SPEAKING OF MARRIAGE: A QUIZ

"I know you believe you understand what you think I said.

But I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant." You may have heard this humorous yet thought-provoking quote.

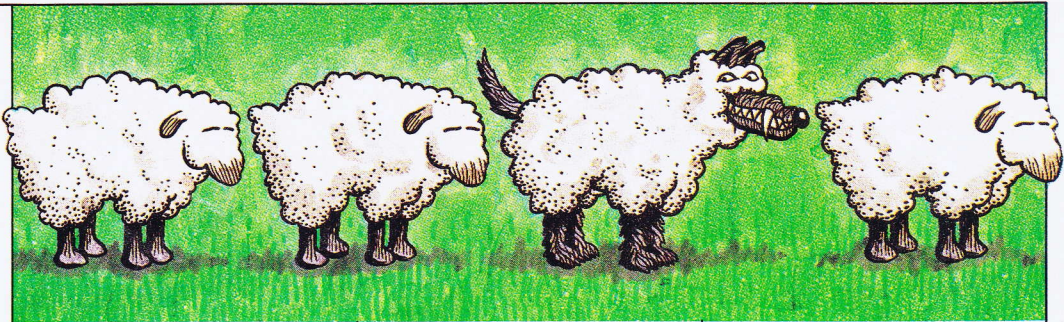
Communication is vital to the success of any marriage. And it can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of your marriage.

Think over each of the following 20 questions and then answer yes or no. Your score indicates how effectively you and your husband or wife communicate.

In relation to your spouse, do you:

- 1) Discuss issues openly?
- 2) Listen carefully?
- 3) Answer questions completely?
- 4) Avoid interrupting?
- 5) Discuss disagreements calmly?
- 6) Accept criticism gracefully?
- 7) Show affection frequently?
- 8) Display a good sense of humor?

- 9) Remember important occasions?
 - 10) Extend sympathy in trying times?
 - 11) Avoid nagging?
 - 12) Give gifts just for fun?
 - 13) Maintain good relations with relatives?
 - 14) Respect his or her need for privacy?
 - 15) Plan future events together?
 - 16) Shop together for clothes and furnishings?
 - 17) Avoid selfish temper?
 - 18) Pray together?
 - 19) Discuss the Bible together?
 - 20) Discuss the children together?
- More than 15 *yes* answers implies you and your spouse communicate well. If you have 10 to 14 *yes* answers, examine yourself and open up to your spouse. Less than 10 means you seriously need to work to improve your marital communication.
- Rick L. Shallenberger ■



MONTE WOLVERTON

TRUE OR FALSE?

Many ideas sound tempting, interesting—and believable. How can you know which ones are armed and dangerous?

Most ideas and philosophies contain at least one kernel of truth, sometimes many. Here are some questions to ask when evaluating an idea:

1) Is the basic premise of the philosophy firmly

rooted in biblical principles? Who first promoted the idea, and why?

“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

2) Is it forward looking? Many of today’s popular ideologies encourage digging up the past and analyzing why we may do the things we do.

God’s Word encourages us to keep our focus

forward after we have repented of sins, and not to look back.

Paul’s approach was to forget what is behind and reach forward to what is ahead (Philippians 3:13).

3) Are the fruits of the philosophy consistently positive? Many ideas today promise peace of mind, increased control over our lives and heightened creativity. Do these characteristics truly appear in the lives of those who have adopted the ideas?

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?” (Matthew 7:15-16).

4) Does the philosophy require you to alter your consciousness through a type of meditation, hypnosis or other influence? It is important to ask ourselves what these influences might be.

The Bible exhorts us to make God’s ways and laws the subject of our meditation. Nowhere does the Bible encourage us to relinquish the control of our minds. Instead, we are instructed to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5).

Unless you can answer *yes* to the first three questions and *no* to the last, the idea is best avoided—whether it contains a little error mixed with a lot of truth or a little truth mixed with a lot of error!

—Kerri Dowd ■

ANSWERING A FOOL

Does the Bible contradict itself? “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him.” This scripture, Proverbs 26:4, seems clear. But notice verse 5: “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.”

Which should you do, answer a fool or not answer a fool?

Suppose someone belittles you for what you believe. You jump to the defense. Before long you find yourself in a futile argument you may be unable to get out of.

What happened? You lowered yourself to the fool’s level.

Jesus Christ showed how

to handle this type of fool in Luke 20. The chief priests, scribes and elders asked him, “Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things?” (verse 2).

An innocent question? No! They weren’t there to learn. They wanted to trap Christ. But Christ responded by asking them a question they couldn’t answer (verses 3-8). This stopped all conversation.

He didn’t get into a pointless argument with them. Neither did he appear ignorant. He refused to answer a fool and therefore avoided being like them—just as Proverbs 26:4 advises.

On the other hand, at times if we don’t answer, we could be giving silent approval to what is being said. This is especially dangerous if the “fool” is influencing others against the Body of Christ.

Paul could not afford to remain silent when false teachers subverted the

church at Corinth. He thundered: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers . . . whose end will be according to their works” (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Paul exposed the false teachers and disproved their claims so they wouldn’t appear wise—just as Proverbs 26:5 says.

There is no contradiction in Proverbs 26:4-5. These verses actually complement each other. God’s Word is truth (John 17:17).

—Rick L. Shallenberger ■

BIBLE ILLITERACY

Less than 50 percent of U.S. adults can name the four gospels, according to a poll conducted by Gallup.

COMING IN THE GOOD NEWS

◇ God's Church Isn't What It Used to Be

Should God's Church always remain exactly the same, still doing things the way they were done hundreds of years ago—or even 10 years ago?

◇ The Dramatic Story of Chinese Sabbath Keepers

Thousands of Chinese learned of God's truth in the 19th century. Amazing events followed!

◇ It Can Be Done!

Terry Fox became a national hero as he hopped and skipped across Canada on an artificial leg. His exploit offers encouragement for those running the Christian race.

◇ What Did Jesus Mean, "Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen"?

Why would God call many to salvation, and then choose only a few? Are you one of the few chosen? Here's how you can know!
