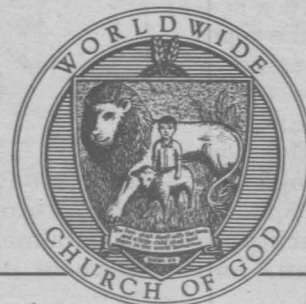


2 Unexpected opportunity to spread the gospel in Spain

4 Does *elohim* refer to a family of divine beings?

8 World Tomorrow will feature closed captioning this fall

The Worldwide News



VOL. XXI, NO. 15
AUGUST 3, 1993

Brethren help refugees in Croatia

By Frankie Weinberger

Ivo Ivin and his wife, Manda, Croatians living in Germany and members who attend the Salzburg, Austria, church, have helped transport goods to needy refugees in Preko, Croatia. Mr. Ivin received an appeal for help from Lenko Mirosevic, a hotelier friend in Preko who told of 150 refugees (women and children) living in his hotel since September 1991. Because of the continuing starvation and approaching winter, he was forced to ask for help and donations for the refugees. Mr. Mirosevic closed a letter with, "The children on whose faces this nightmare cannot be overlooked, whose eyes could tell you much more realistically than I could, await the love which you can give them."

Mr. Ivin was joined by Willi Mandel, Munich, Germany, and Salzburg and Vienna, Austria, pastor, on a trip to Preko last December to see what could be done. They gave Mr. Mirosevic food, clothing and medicine from Salzburg brethren and other groups. After the visit Mr. Mirosevic called Mr. Mandel to ask for three tons of flour as daily bread for the refugees over the winter. He explained that although he received \$1.50 a day for each refugee's needs, the actual cost was \$15 a person, including food, heating and utilities. If the bills were not paid in full on time, supplies would simply be cut off, causing Mr. Mirosevic to virtually beg for hard currency to pay bills.

Mr. Mandel turned to two of his ministerial colleagues and friends in Canada, Robert Berendt and Bill Rabey. Two of their congregations, Lethbridge and Edmonton, Alberta, donated 2,400 deutsche marks (about \$1,400). In February Mr. Ivin gave the money to

See Refugees, page 5



Widespread U.S. flood is 'in a category all its own'

After more than a month of nearly continuous rain, brethren living along the Mississippi River and its tributaries are safe from flooding, although some have had serious property damage.

Five member families were flooded out of their homes; four in the St. Louis, Missouri, area and one in the Macomb, Illinois, church. It is uncertain when or if they will be able to move back into their homes. Other brethren have had flooded basements, but did not have to vacate.

As are many area residents, brethren living near flooded areas have been assisting flood victims. Members have helped lay sandbags, while some congregations have organized food and clothing drives.

Waterloo, Iowa, brethren are planning a public service project to assemble new picnic tables for a flooded park along the Cedar River.

Dan Smith, Elgin Smith, Clayton Douglas and Mike Abshur, members who attend the Columbia, Missouri, church, organized a benefit Saturday night, July 10, to aid flood victims. Those in attendance brought cash donations and canned goods.

"Since our band wasn't playing that night, I thought it would be a

great idea to put on the benefit. I thought William Woods University Auditorium would be a great place to put a big crowd, so I called them up, and in just two phone calls I had it OK'd," Mr. Smith said.

Although floodwaters in much of the Midwest are beginning to recede, residents will be dealing with the aftereffects of flooding for quite some time.

"The cleanup here is going to take several weeks. There are fish out of the rivers and garbage dumps that have been swept over, and all this has been meshed in and floating all over the place, even inside homes," said Phil Perkins, associate pastor of the St. Louis North and Wentzville, Missouri, churches.

"It seems like things were just cleaned up after the spring flooding, and then in mid-June it started raining again, only this time the floodwaters got a whole lot higher."

He added: "Those living along rivers are used to a certain amount of flooding each spring. You have to take your belongings off the lower floor and put them upstairs, and then the water goes down in a couple days and they put everything back. But this flood is definitely in a category all its own."



Personal from...

JOSEPH W. TKACH

Why we believe in one God

In the past month, we have conducted three successful, thought-provoking and inspiring conferences on the question of the nature of God. These conferences involved all regional directors, headquarters evangelists, regional pastors, the ministerial faculty of Ambassador College, key administrators, and most researchers and writers who contribute to the publications.

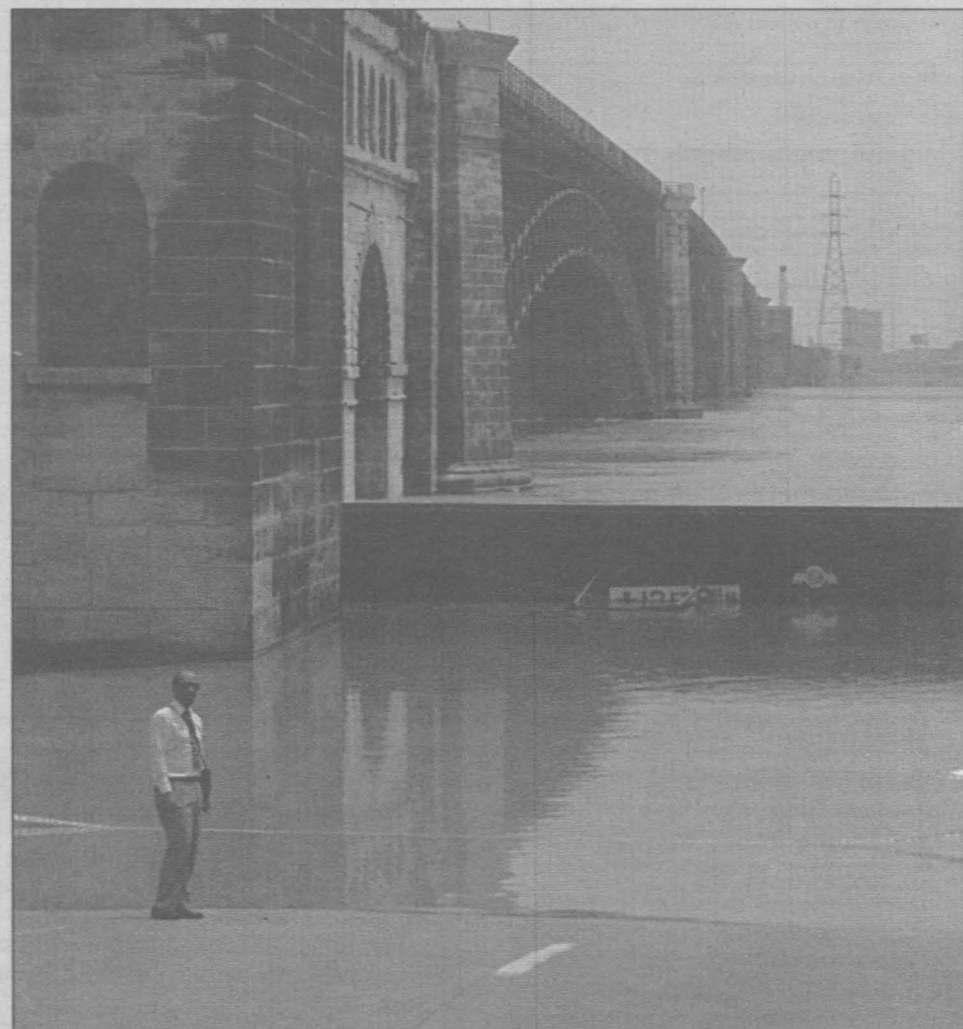
The response has been most encouraging. Some have expressed to me that the new understanding to which God has led the Church is "like recapturing the first love." In this letter, I want to touch on some of the highlights of the conference and explain the fundamental point of our booklet *God Is...*

Before the *God Is...* booklet was published, I wrote to the Church explaining that the teaching we once held—that the destiny of human beings is to become Gods—was not one we could support theologically (or biblically, for that matter). At that time, I encouraged all the members to read the new booklet carefully.

Since then, I have received a great number of letters and comments expressing appreciation and excitement for the general approach of the booklet, especially the honesty that pervades the whole presentation. At the same time, there have been letters in which readers admitted that the material is difficult to understand.

The difficulty for some readers was greater because of the fact that the

See Personal, page 3



END OF THE LINE—Associate pastor Phil Perkins on a St. Louis, Missouri, roadway ending in floodwaters. Members in the Midwest have helped lay sandbags, while others have organized food and clothing drives. [Photo by Robert Perkins]

Not taking the plain truth for granted in Spain

COSTA DEL SOL, Spain—On a working holiday an unexpected opportunity presented itself for personally spreading the gospel.

As I hopped off the train in Arroyo de la Miel, I spotted a secondhand bookstore across the road. Bookstores are places I often enjoy browsing around.

The proprietor was an English-speaking man from Barbados who had resided in Spain a long time. His grasp of English and Spanish was remarkable. We struck up a substantial conversation and exchanged business cards.

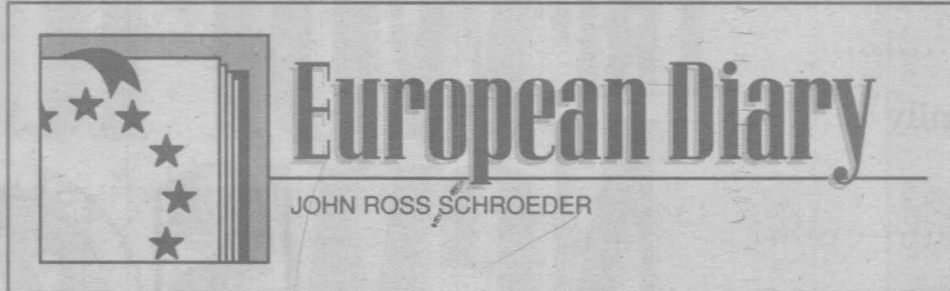
He asked to see a copy of *The Plain Truth*. I told him it was a religious magazine and he replied that he knew as much by the title.

"I want to see this magazine for myself," he said.

The next day I returned to his shop with copies of the July and August editions. Based on our conversation, I felt the August edition featuring the article on "Our Endangered Children" would be to his liking.

However, the sign on his shop door read: "Back in 30 minutes." Not wanting to wait in the heat, I left the two magazines securely inside the iron railings on the shop's front door.

The following morning I returned to the secondhand book-



store just as the owner was leaving.

He profusely praised *The Plain Truth*, almost to the point of embarrassment.

Crossing the language barrier

Later, I made the acquaintance of a 31-year-old Chinese woman from Shanghai. She was fluent in Spanish. We conversed in a combination of my broken Spanish (perhaps "fractured" is an apter term) and her limited English.

I gave her a copy of the English-language *Plain Truth*, which I hoped her English-speaking Indonesian boyfriend would help her

to understand. Later I arranged to send her three copies of the Spanish *Plain Truth* (*La Pura Verdad*) plus the Spanish language *Why Were You Born?*

Of course, my conversations with these two people may not lead to them becoming Church members. It is God who does the calling.

It is surprising what can be achieved through personal contact, however. This doesn't have to be a separate operation from *The Plain Truth*. The magazine may help people take up for themselves where our conversation leaves off.

We in the British Office witness

this every time we read one of the many letters from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. One or two copies of *The Plain Truth* can go a long way there, often doing yeoman-like duty.

Because of financial pressures we haven't been sending many magazines there for some time. Yet people comment on articles!

The message gets through

How do they know what is in the latest issues? By word of mouth, by borrowing the magazine? Somehow the message gets through. What was received is passed on to another.

Each of us has an individual commission within the body of the Church. We have to be sensitive and discern what a person's interests might be and how much truth an individual may be able to absorb.

As each of us learns to do his or her part in personally helping spread the gospel, *The Plain Truth* can help us do the job better.

Letters to the Editor

Letters for this section 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. We welcome your comments.

Hearing impaired

As one who is hearing impaired I find it increasingly difficult to communicate effectively with the brethren. Maybe a greater awareness would help.

One of the most profound ways to show love is to be truly concerned that you are communicating effectively. Are you aware that the person on the other end of your conversation may be hearing impaired? Are you sure you are really getting through?

Much if not most of the time we are not really conscious of what we are saying. We haven't had the opportunity to listen to ourselves. Lifelong speech habits are difficult to recognize and even more difficult to break.

The friend or stranger you are speaking with may indicate a problem with some sort of gesture. A tipped ear. A frown. He or she may even point to an ear.

Here are a few suggestions to show you care:

- Consider that anyone may be hearing impaired, especially older brethren.
 - Face the person directly.
 - Try to improve your elocution.
 - Be patient. Speak at a moderate rate. Old ears have trouble keeping up with fast talkers.
 - In a noisy atmosphere increase your volume somewhat.
 - If asked to repeat something, that's your signal to go into action on all of the above. Don't ignore the opportunity to improve.
- Jack Campbell
Allegan, Michigan

Wedding names

I just wish to thank you for the change in the way you caption the wedding pictures. Including the woman's name seems friend-

lier and more appropriate, giving honor to both the man and woman.

Robert S. Chicilo
Windsor, Ontario

Members in Nepal

It was pleasing and interesting to read the article in the May 25 *Worldwide News* about the keeping of the Passover by Steve and Sue Toms in Nepal. Being informed that there are no other members in Nepal is untrue.

Mr. Bhuwan Ghale is an extremely coura-

geous and faithful member of God's Church in Nepal who gave up a brilliant career with the British army.

He is a shining example as an ambassador for God's kingdom in one of this earth's most spiritually dark places and an inspiration to all the members who come into contact with him.

In his isolation he would be so pleased to meet with any member of God's Church who visits Nepal. Last year I was privileged to spend the Passover and Holy Days with him and his family in Kathmandu and to learn of some of the joys and sorrows of Nepal. This was only possible with the financial support of brethren and friends here in England.

Barbara Penycate
Hindhead, England

"Into All the World..."

Your involvement in the Work produces fruit. In this column subscribers to the Work's publications and viewers of the *World Tomorrow* telecast express their views and opinions.

Magazine shows what life is about

Thank you for sending this informative magazine. It has helped me to understand who is God and it shows me what life is about.

I believe in God, in fact, I always pray to him. But when my mother left me, I got angry with him and I asked him why? Why did he take my mother? She's too young to die. I need her love and care. I want her to come back to me.

Please keep sending every issue. It helps me to have a better understanding of life.

R.P.
Batangas, Philippines

Convincing approach

I am agnostic, but find your (the Christian) perspective of life very—almost too—convincing. I particularly enjoy your litera-

ture because, unlike many other Christian sources, you are not forceful or dictatorial. I do not feel guilty or condemned for not really knowing whether I believe in a God.

I am fairly young (17) and find the image of Christianity unattractive. However, you really do make Christianity interesting. Even though I do not wholly believe in some of the things printed, your perspective on social, economic, emotional and humanitarian issues does provide much food for thought.

I actually do take a lot if not all of your advice when you describe a dilemma that I am in. The thought of even attempting to read the massive Bible is tiring, but your little doses (and with it being related to reality) are excellent and persuasive.

K.H.
Greenford, England

Not so bad parents

Every issue of the *Youth* magazine has so much valuable information. My 16-year-old daughter and 14½-year-old son realize that we are not such bad parents. Your articles validate our rules and make life beautiful.

E.Y.
Honolulu, Hawaii

I found your magazine in my dentist's office many years ago. My two children were preschool and elementary ages. I, myself, was a preschool director. Even though your articles were based on older youths, I filled out the subscription form and began three years of wonderfully educational articles.

A divorce and moves and remarriage have occurred, and I missed your magazines not coming any more.

My children are now 9 and 12, plus my stepchildren are 14 and 16, and my husband and I are church youth leaders. Please start me back up! I need you more now than ever.

S.A.
St. Peters, Missouri

The Worldwide News

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FOUNDER:
Herbert W. Armstrong (1892-1986)

PUBLISHER & EDITOR IN CHIEF:
Joseph W. Tkach
ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER:
J. Michael Feazell

MEDIA OPERATIONS DIRECTOR:
Bernard W. Schnippert
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR:
Ronald Kelly
PUBLISHING SERVICES DIRECTOR:
Barry Gridley

Editor: Thomas C. Hanson; senior editor: Sheila Graham; managing editor: Jeff Zhorne; associate editor: Becky Sweat; news editor: Paul Monteith; assistant editor: Peter Moore; editorial assistant: Maya Wehbe; Ambassador College correspondent: Reginald Killingley.

Columns: Gene Hogberg, "Worldwatch," John Ross Schroeder, "European Diary," Dexter H. Faulkner, "Just One More Thing."

Regional correspondents: Cheryl Catalo, Vancouver, B.C.; Eleazar Flores, Manila, Philippines; Aub Warren, Australia and Asia; Frankie Weinberger, Bonn, Germany; Rex Morgan, Auckland, New Zealand; Gerrie Belo, Nieuwegein, Netherlands; David Walker, Spanish Department; Charles Fleming, Caribbean; Marsha Sabin, French and Italian; Bryan Mathie and Peter Hawkins, Southern Africa; Irene Wilson, United Kingdom.

Art director: Ronald Grove; Illustrator: Ken Tunell.

Photography: Barry Stahl; G.A. Belluche Jr., Charles Feldbush; Hal Finch; Margie Dunn; photo librarian: Susan Sanchez.

Print production manager: Skip Dunn; printing coordinators: Stephen Gent and Catherine Snyder.

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U.S. Holy Day Offering Envelopes

Holy Day offering envelopes for the Fall Festival season have been mailed to U.S. members. If you have not received your envelopes by Aug. 31, please call the toll-free number (1-800-423-4444) no later than Sept. 7.

This is the last date the Mail Processing Center (MPC) can mail personalized envelopes with assurance that they will reach you by the Feast of Trumpets, Sept. 16.

These envelopes are for Holy Day offerings only to help speed the processing of those donations. Please handle changes of address and literature requests through other correspondence.



Pastor General visits...

Boston, Massachusetts



Trip Overview

Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach spoke to 1,851 brethren July 10 from the Boston, Worcester and Springfield, Massachusetts; Hartford, New Haven and Norwich, Connecticut; Bangor and Portland, Maine; Concord, New Hampshire; Montpelier, Vermont; Providence, Rhode Island; and Albany and Plattsburgh, New York, churches.

Hosts for the visit were David and Gwen Register, Boston and Worcester; Dennis and Karen Johnson, Hartford and Springfield; John and Anne-Marie Kennedy, Portland and Bangor; Tom and Diana Fitzpatrick, Providence; Walter and Audrey Neufeld, Albany; Ken and Susan Peterson, New Haven and Norwich; David and Ronnie Gray, Montpelier and Plattsburgh; Robert and Shelby Bragg, Concord; Bill and Harriet Ford, Boston and Worcester; and Joel and Karen Rissinger, Springfield. [Photos by Ron Hubbard and Bill Trochimink]



Personal: Why one God

Continued from page 1

new booklet was correcting old teaching.

As our study on the nature of God has continued over the past year, the need to make certain edits in the booklet has become clear. These edits will be reflected in the next edition of the booklet.

In the meantime, it is helpful to realize that the fundamental point of the booklet was to address the very thing that was wrong in the older position. Simply put, the Bible proclaims plainly and clearly that there is *one and only one God*.

Inaccurate explanations

When the Bible says that God is one, the word *one* does not refer to a "God Family," but to one God. Given a preconceived idea of a "God Family," one has to read other passages in a wrong way in order to draw a consistent picture. In this light, the expression "children of God" was taken to suggest that one day there would be billions of God beings—all in the one God Family!

As Mr. Armstrong often said, when the premise is wrong, conclusions that follow will also be wrong. The Bible is clear on the fact that there is

one and only one God. Let's look at a few passages in the Old Testament.

"You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides him there is no other" (Deuteronomy 4:35). "There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God" (1 Samuel 2:2).

"How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears" (2 Samuel 7:22). "So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and that there is no other" (1 Kings 8:60). "I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me" (Isaiah 45:5).

"For this is what the Lord says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: 'I am the Lord, and there is no other'" (Isaiah 45:18).

"Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the

earth; for I am God, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:21-22).

"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah 46:9).

As you can see, there is no question about the biblical fact that there is one and only one God, not two or more "Gods." God says: "I am God, and there is no other." That is the plain truth. That's why God commands us, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

Not two Gods

The idea of more than one being in a family or hierarchy of gods is condemned throughout the Scriptures. That was precisely the concept that the polytheistic nations surrounding Israel taught.

Polytheistic is a word that refers to a belief in more than one god (*poly* = many; *theos* = god). The Bible teaches that there is only one God, a belief called *monotheism*, from *mono* (one) and *theos* (God). A family is made up of more than one being. The pagan hierarchies of gods were mostly made up of more than one "god being," and at the top of the hierarchy were usually a father god, a mother god and one or more son and daughter gods.

The Bible does not allow for the exist-

tence of two God Beings. In fact, the Bible categorically denies it. Let's take a look at some New Testament passages.

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4 when he affirmed that there is one God. Answering the question about what is the greatest commandment, he said: "The most important one ... is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one'" (Mark 12:29).

Jesus also made clear that there is only one God in Mark 10:18: "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone." "Jesus said that there is only *one* who can be worshiped, and that is God: 'Jesus said to [Satan], 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only"' (Matthew 4:10).

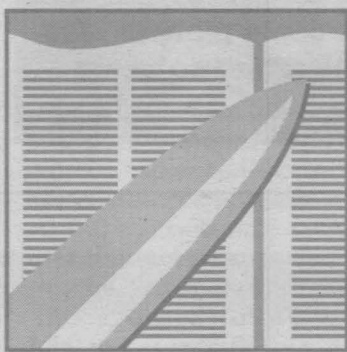
Likewise, Paul taught that there is one God. He wrote: "Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith" (Romans 3:29-30).

In 1 Corinthians 8:4 he wrote: "So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one." In 1 Timothy 2:5 he wrote: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

See Personal, page 6

IRON SHARPENS IRON

Proverbs 26:17—As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.



Does *elohim* refer to a family of divine beings?

Is *elohim* a singular, or a plural, word? What does it show about the nature of God?

By K.J. Stavrinides

The word *elohim* can refer to the true God, to a false god, to angels, and to human beings. In its rather wide application, this name is unusual and difficult to translate into English. The ability of this word to refer correctly to God, angels, man, and man-made gods can be understood only if the root of the word is kept in mind; it is somewhat like referring to the "powers that be," whether they are human or divine, singular or plural. In this light, it becomes clear that the Hebrews applied the name *elohim* to the true God because it conveyed one of his attributes—that of power.

When *elohim* refers to a singular being (the true God or a false god), it takes a singular verb. When it refers to more than one being, as in the heavenly powers (the angels or God and the angels) or in the human powers (the judges), it takes a plural verb. In neither case does the word *elohim* refer to a family of beings, whether they are human or divine. The following passages are sufficient to make the use of this word clear.

God (*elohim*) created

In Genesis 1:1, *elohim* takes the singular verb *bara*, which means "he created." The verb, then, tells us what was done by the one God. Even with this point in mind, the objection can be raised that collective nouns in English (church, nation, etc.) take singular verbs. That answer will not do, in this case, because one needs to ascertain first that *elohim* is such a word. It cannot simply be assumed to be so. It is not obvious in Hebrew, and no authority on the Hebrew language has ever said such a thing. In fact, the voice of scholarship has been united on this point, that *elo-*

him, when speaking of the Creator, refers to a single deity. The use of the word in the Old Testament is ample testimony of this truth, as the following examples show.

Greater than all the gods (*elohim*)

Exodus 18:11 compares the true God with *all* the false gods (*elohim*) and says that none of them is like him. This is clearly a plural reference, yet not about a family of beings. It is historically accurate to say that the false gods to which Exodus refers were not members of one family.

Ashtoreth the goddess (*elohim*)

1 Kings 11:5 is perhaps one of the clearest examples of the singular use of *elohim* in which it cannot possibly be construed to refer to a family of divine beings. After all, it is plainly obvious that "Ashtoreth the goddess (*elohim*) of the Sidonians" was but one deity, not a family of such beings.

Lower than the angels (*elohim*)

Psalm 8:5 says that God made man a little lower than the angels (*elohim*). Since all the angels were created beings, there are no father angels, mother angels, or offspring angels. Christ made it clear that angels do not marry. This use of *elohim* is not in the context of a family.

Bring him to the judges (*elohim*)

Exodus 21:6 constitutes the law regarding Hebrew slaves. If the freed slave expressed a desire to continue to serve his master, he was to be brought before "the judges (*elohim*)" where his desire would be made official. The judges were an institution of Israel and did not constitute a family.

The above passages may suffice to indicate that the word *elohim*—in its reference to God, angels, judges, and false gods—is not a collective noun; it is not like "church," "nation," etc. The concept of a divine family of beings is not applicable to the true God, and certainly did not arise out of the Holy Scriptures. Some reasons for the inappropriateness of the concept may also be helpful.

The names "Father" and "Son" do

indicate a family relationship. (We can omit reference to the Holy Spirit, in this light, because the name "Holy Spirit" does not immediately suggest a family relationship.) This is perfectly acceptable and biblically sound. The error creeps into the concept when the relationship is understood in terms of separate beings. The following will make the explanation easier to understand.

In a human family, a father and a son are two beings. One is the father because he existed while the son was not yet born. The father provides for the son, because the son *needs* his help. Human beings are limited. They have a beginning, they have needs, and the father-son relationship is meaningful only in light of these limitations.

It is a gross misunderstanding to think of God in such terms. God is spirit. He has no limitations in space or time. In other words, it is not true that the Son had a beginning or that the Father existed while the Son did not. Neither is it true that the Father looked after a young Son during some childhood, or provided for the Son's "needs." Rather, the names "Father" and "Son" reveal important truths about God.

The book of Hebrews speaks of the Son in various ways. He is referred to as a Son, as the "brightness of His glory," and as the "express image of His person." These are three ways of expressing the same idea. As the Son is God, he has no needs, and he is not in the same relationship to the Father that a human son is to his parent.

The names "Father" and "Son" are applied to God, without the limitations that hold true in a human family. This is another way of saying that God is not a family (a word that has meaning only in the context of limited human beings). God is infinite, eternal, and in all ways unlimited. The attempt to make *elohim* reflect a family of divine beings is not only impossible historically, linguistically, and culturally; it is theologically wrong, and inappropriate in the discussion of the true God.

Putting the blessing of the children in its right perspective

The blessing is not a guarantee that children will never suffer serious illness, injury, even death.

By Joseph Tkach Jr.

Over the last year we have received several questions about our tradition of asking a blessing on infants. Unfortunately, some people have a superstitious misunderstanding of the blessing on children, while others see it as merely a human ceremony.

In 1 Corinthians 7:14, we know that Paul declares the children "holy" if only one parent is a believer in Jesus Christ. In a certain sense, we understand this to mean that our children are within the New Testament covenant of grace and promise

of salvation that is made to believers and their seed (Luke 1:55).

However, as we all know, this does not mean that we baptize our infants, for they have not reached the point of mental, emotional and spiritual understanding.

Of course, there are people who baptize infants and believe that this is the way by which saving grace is infused into the child. We believe the Scriptures teach us that faith and repentance are necessary conditions to baptism, and infants are not capable of meeting such conditions.

Following Christ's example

We practice the blessing of children because it is Christ's example that we are emulating. When we ask a blessing on the children, we are asking that God, according to his will, make evident his calling in the life of the child. We cannot sanctify the child; only God can do that.

The blessing we ask is not a guarantee that the child will never suffer a serious illness or even the tragedy of an accidental death. It is not a

guarantee against injury nor a promise of permanent protection. The blessing for which we pray is that the child will experience the environment where God chiefly works to bring his people to himself.

The enormous advantage that the blessing provides is this: to be in the environment where the example of converted people interact and where the preaching of the faithful Word of God is regularly heard. We recall Paul's statement that faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

Blessings for all who ask

When we review Christ's example of blessing the children, we see that he blessed all children who were brought to him. Our practice has somewhat fallen short of what Christ practiced.

In Mark 10:13-14, we read, "People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder

them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'"

We know that there are times when a family who is not in our fellowship requests that we ask a prayer of blessing for their child. And at times some have prayed for the blessing, and others have refused. Usually, the refusal is based on the observation that the family is not in our fellowship and even may not have any church association.

However, we must recognize that it is not wrong to pray for someone outside the fellowship of our Church. Christ instructed us to pray for our enemies. Paul instructed us to pray for all men and for kings (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Therefore, we can confidently pray for any child who is brought to us.

Christ blessed all who were brought to him. We should remember that we are not the ones who provide the blessing, but only the ones who ask for the blessing.

We should be humble to faithfully ask God in prayer to provide his blessing to anyone who asks.

Refugees supplied with daily bread

Continued from page 1

Mr. Mirosevic, who bought flour and bread.

Part of Mr. Mirosevic's letter of thanks read: "I am so happy that I could shout for joy. Thank you very much. The children will now have

daily bread for the next three months. Their joy and sparkling eyes could show you much more thankfulness than I can in words.

"We all hope that this misery will soon end and the children can return to their homes, though partially destroyed, and can make a new start with God's help and blessing."

Pasadena officials meet with Church of God (Seventh Day)

By Joseph Tkach Jr.

A few weeks ago, we were invited to attend the general conference meeting of the Church of God (Seventh Day), which they hold every two years. Victor and Beverly Kubik, Greg Albrecht, Michael Feazell and I attended their conference meetings, which lasted one week in Minneapolis.

We were treated graciously, and it was obvious that they have no intention of pulling members out of our fellowship. We assured them that it is not our intention to pull members out of their fellowship.

There are groups with which we would not desire to fellowship because of their disfellowshipped status and their divisive teachings. However, the Church of God (Seventh Day) is not one of those groups. It is important to realize that we hold a majority of doctrinal beliefs in common and share the same organizational roots.

I was delighted to learn that many of their members read our *Plain Truth* magazine. Many commented to me about how much our magazine is appreciated.

It was interesting to hear that several of them had tried to attend the Feast of Tabernacles but were turned away by a zealous usher or greeter. For those who asked me, I welcomed them to attend the Feast. I don't expect a rush of people that would affect our attendance limits at any of our Feast sites, but I would hope that we would make any visitor welcome in our Festival observance.

Joseph Tkach Jr. is director of Church Administration.

Ambassador College applications available

Application packets for admission to Ambassador College for the fall of 1994 are now available. Applicants need to be advised that there has been a new printing of the application form. All applicants should request a new application packet for fall 1994 as the old forms are now out of date and should not be used.

Applicants are encouraged to request their application packets and submit applications early. Applications for the fall 1994 semester must be received by the Admissions Office in Big Sandy by Feb. 1, 1994.

U.S. applicants may obtain application packets by writing the Admissions Office, Ambassador College, Box 111, Big Sandy, Texas, 75755 or by calling 1-903-636-2190. Applicants should not use the toll-free number.

International applicants (except from Canada and the Netherlands) may contact their regional offices with application requests. The requests will be forwarded by electronic mail to the Admissions Office.

SAT test dates—The College Board ATP has released test dates for U.S. and international administration of the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test). SAT scores are required of prospective students with less than 30 semester hours of college-level course work.

The following dates are Saturday tests. All Sunday SATs are administered the day after these dates: Oct. 9 (California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia), Nov. 6, Dec. 4, and Jan. 22. Other test dates (but considered too late for fall 1994 admission) are scheduled for March 19, May 7 and June 4, 1994. However, high school juniors and international applicants planning to apply to Ambassador College for the fall of 1995 semester may take the SAT in the spring of 1994.

Registration information and forms for the above test dates are available from high school counselor offices or by writing the College Board ATP, Box 6200, Princeton, New Jersey, 08541-6200; or by calling 1-609-771-7588. Instructions for obtaining a Sunday administration are given in the SAT registration brochure. International applicants (except from Canada) may obtain SAT registration information and forms from their regional offices.

The Ambassador College Admissions Committee strongly recommends that Ambassador applicants take the SAT at the earliest possible date. The College Board requires six weeks to process SAT registration for U.S. applicants and longer for international students.

L.E. Torrance
Director of Admissions

Jnay Marlett
Associate director of Admissions



Dateline: Ambassador

AN UPDATE OF AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

College recertified to grant degrees

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board informed the college July 15 that it had approved Ambassador's application for a certificate of authority to grant degrees in Texas.

The college's authority to grant bachelor's and associate's degrees was extended for another two years, to July 31, 1995. State certification is required for all nonaccredited institutions.

The board's decision reflects favorably on the major strides AC has made toward regional accreditation. A new accreditation committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is scheduled to visit the college in November. SACS will make a decision on AC's accreditation status in June 1994.

AC approved for federal student aid

The college received approval July 9 from the U.S. Department of Education to participate in federal student aid programs. Eligible

students who are U.S. citizens or legal residents can apply for federal student aid for the 1993-94 academic year in the form of Pell grants and federal loans.

Pell grants offer up to \$2,250 a year for needy students, and federal loans offer low-interest repayment plans that give students a grace period of up to nine months after graduating or ending full-time studies before repayment must begin.

Students who receive these funds and who are enrolled in the college's work program will benefit from a reduction in the number of hours that they are required to work.

Campus recycling program

AC began a campuswide recycling program with the formation of a 12-member recycling committee comprising college employees and students, along with employees of the Big Sandy Church Office. The committee analyzes recycling opportunities on campus and in neighboring communities.

Five college and Church departments recycle their reusable waste paper, aluminum, yard waste, oil, anti-freeze, auto batteries and scrap metal.

Looking forward to new freshmen

As of July 26, the Admissions Office has accepted 321 freshmen (167 men and 149 women) for the 1993-94 academic year. The average high school grade-point-average for the incoming class is 3.31 and the average Scholastic Aptitude Test

(SAT) score is 1,025.

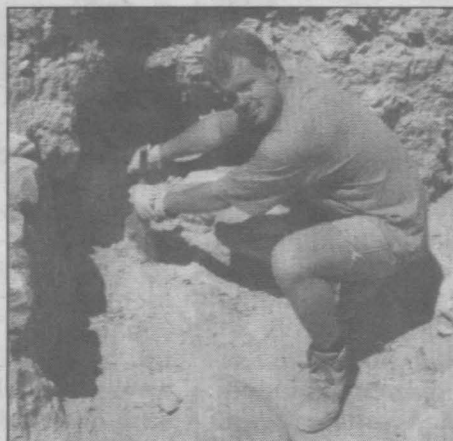
Fifty-four of the new students come from outside the United States. They represent Australia, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Germany, Guyana, India, Israel, Italy, Liberia, Mexico, Philippines, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Kingdom.

Crews plug leaky roofs

Maintenance crews have reroofed four of the older residence halls. The buildings, constructed more than 25 years ago, had several roof leaks. Work started June 21 and was completed by mid-July.

Maintenance crews also installed new utility lines to all eight older residence halls and upgraded the lighting in the library reference room.

In addition, the teakwood floor in the student dining hall was refinished. Work started on that project June 29 and was also completed mid-July.



HAZOR DIG—Junior David Morker brushes up on Israelite archaeology. [Photo by Juliana Egedus]

Students pioneer idea-generating software

Students in one of the business administration classes pioneered the use of a creativity-facilitation software package called IdeaFisher 4.0.

The software, which is a powerful associative lexicon of the English language, contains 61,000 idea words and 700,000 word associations. Packed with the knowledge of 200 editors and researchers, it simulates a group brainstorming session.

The product is used to generate ideas for advertising, writing, public speaking, problem solving and decision making.

Computer network helps career search

Students may now access information about jobs and potential employers through the college's computer network. With a software program called Jobhunt, students may obtain a list of available employers within a major field of study, job description or industry, or find out who is hiring from a list of 4,000 companies in the country.

The computer database of companies is more extensive and current than placement catalogs or library materials. The program can show students who the top employers are in various cities, or list addresses, phone numbers and job descriptions of major employers in a given state.

Personal: God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Continued from page 3

James wrote: "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder" (James 2:19).

As we saw above, Paul points out that the *man* Jesus Christ is the mediator between men and the *one* God. Even while describing the role of Jesus Christ, who was *God in the flesh*, Paul still affirmed that there is only *one* God. When the Son became flesh, he did not cease to be God—he was God in the flesh (John 1:14).

So now we begin to see that the Bible gives us two facts that are apparently contradictory. But I say *apparently*, because they only *appear* to be contradictory because our minds are finite and limited, while God, our Creator, is infinite and unlimited.

The Bible tells us there is one God. The Father is God. The Son is also God (John 20:28-29). He was eternally with God and also was God (John 1:1-2).

I hope that this helps you to see why we must teach that there is one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (I will discuss the Holy Spirit next time).

This is not a matter of confusion, as some would like to say. It is a matter of believing the Bible and realizing that God is greater than our finite imaginations can perceive. It is beautiful, and it is a matter of faith, because we believe the Bible.

Mr. Armstrong was never formally challenged on this point, and he never had to defend his teaching in the same way that I have been forced to do. I firmly believe that if the same facts had been brought to Mr. Armstrong's attention that we have had to face over the past few years, he too would have made the changes we have made.

Mr. Armstrong's integrity in putting the Bible and truth ahead of his own teachings, when he was convinced of the facts, is a matter of record. Likewise, when the Church today is challenged on a point of doctrine, we have to be able to defend our doctrine from the Bible. Now we can.

Not three Gods

I was first challenged on this point when I put a "Personal" in *The Plain Truth*, in which I set forth the traditional arguments against the Trinity. In response, I received a letter from a priest, who said he had respected *The Plain Truth*, but now realized we had no idea of what we were talking about.

I don't think any of us mind being different when we're right, but only a fool is happy to be different when he knows he is wrong. I was quite confident that we did know what we were talking about.

So I commissioned a study to more effectively prove our doctrine and give a careful and proper answer to this priest. I had no doubt that we could prove him wrong.

One of the men I assigned to this task told me: "What's the point? This man is a priest, what did you expect him to say? We are right; he is wrong; he won't believe the truth anyway."

I patiently explained to him that if our doctrine is true, it ought not to be too hard to prove it. I put several men to work on it, and what we began to find, after a short time, was that most of what we had written on the development and history of the Trinity doctrine was at best superficial and based on misunderstanding, and at worst, just plain false.

Believe me, I did not expect that. I thought our published material on the Trinity had been accurate, but I found that much, if not most, simply wasn't. Apparently, we had often relied on research that agreed with how we already felt, rather than on having studied the subject from scratch ourselves.

God had already shown me that we needed to humble ourselves by correcting certain doctrinal mistakes, but I had no idea how wrong we had been in the way we explained this point.

Mr. Armstrong, as I said, was simply never formally challenged on this point, or I'm confident he would have changed it himself. God's people are committed to the Bible, and are humble enough before God to admit error and change. God instilled that commitment in the Church through Mr. Armstrong.

It is often quite easy to see the faults and shortcomings of others, but not nearly so easy to look in the mirror ourselves. God has been making us look in the mirror.

We have been able to see that the Roman Catholic Church in various ways placed traditional teachings in the place of Scripture, but until recently, we haven't been able to see ourselves in the same light.

The Philadelphia Trumpet recently ran an article condemning us for correcting what had been wrongly taught for decades. The writer announced that we are now teaching that the Holy Spirit is "a third, separate God." That statement points out how little they understand the subject, because that is *not* what we teach; it is *not* what the Bible teaches.

The Holy Spirit is *not* a third, separate God—not according to us and, most importantly, according to the Bible. There is one God, and that one God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are distinct, but not separate.

It's true that the "average" Protestant or Catholic cannot explain God's nature. Many may even think that there are three God Beings in one Godhead, or a three-headed Being of some sort. That merely points out how ignorant some people are of the doctrines of their church. But even if they got it straight, we are interested only in what the Bible reveals, not in how any church understands or explains it.

So, let me summarize, and I hope to make this crystal clear. Our old literature taught that there are two God Beings in one God Family, each composed of Holy Spirit. That teaching, which *implied* that there are two Gods, is not biblical. The Bible teaches that there is one God, not two.

The Bible does not teach that God is a family name, with two God Beings in that family right now, and billions to come later. The Bible teaches that the one and same God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Truth we've always known

Now let's look at another important point—and *this is vital!* Despite our former explanation of the biblical oneness of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I want to make it clear that we always *experienced* God in the biblical way! We have always known that the Father is the Creator and Source of all things, including our own existence.

We have always known that the Son is our Savior and Redeemer who reconciles us to God, and we have always known that the Holy Spirit inspires us, leads us into all truth, conforms us to the image of Christ, and is the promised Comforter and Advocate.

(In fact, the Holy Spirit is working in the Church right now as we communicate the richness of the biblical truth about the nature of God.)

Further, we have always known that in some way, God is one; but we simply didn't analyze our way of *explaining* that biblical fact to see where it might lead.

The Bible teaching is that there is one God who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is not my idea, nor is it the idea of some fourth-century theologians. It is the plain Bible teaching.

What the fourth-century theologians did was to formulate a doctrine that denies certain unbiblical teachings about God that were in vogue at the time.

One such teaching was the idea that the Son was a created being. Another heresy is the idea that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not distinct but are really all the same—in other words, the idea that the one God is sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the Holy Spirit, but not all three all the time. These and other related points are explained in the booklet.

Despite these historic attempts, mistakes on the nature of God continued to be made. What's more, mistakes will be made as long as human beings walk the face of the earth.

As a result, the term "Trinity" has picked up extra baggage, so to speak, which makes it a misleading term to use without qualification. The Church will publish a definition that is completely biblical.

After all, it is the biblical perspective that we are interested in to pass on to the members. In the next issue of the *WN* I plan to focus on why the Holy Spirit is God, and, in the subsequent issue, we will take up the question of proper terminology regarding "Trinity," "persons," etc. Such terms cannot be used loosely. In the meantime, as the human leader of the Church, God holds me responsible to teach what the Bible teaches.

A personal God without limitations

God transcends our world of time and space. He *created* time and space. Think about that. He appears in it when he desires, but he is in no way limited to time and space. He does *not need* time and space to exist. We can only think in created terms, in terms of time and space.

Therefore, God is everything we can conceive of *and more!* He uses all sorts of concepts in the Bible to reveal himself to us, and he does it *in terms we can understand*—like King, Redeemer, Shepherd, Defender, Fire, Rock, Shelter. But he is all those and more, and not really just like any of them, because they are all a part of the created world.

God does not have or need a "mighty arm," for example. God uses the human term, "mighty arm," precisely because it is one we can understand, one that helps us understand something important about the power of God. But it is not a literal description of God. It is a metaphor.

God also speaks of his "right hand." Is that because his "right hand" is stronger or more skilled than his "left hand"?

Of course not. He is conveying the fact that he is powerful, that he intends to do a particular thing, and that he is going to do it in a powerful way. Bible-believers should not take such descriptions literally and think of God as subject to time and space like ourselves.

This brings to mind Paul's statement in Romans 1:22-23: "Although

they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles." There are stone images and there are mental images.

Now, none of us would want to make God into an image of mortal man, but if we cling to a belief that God has a body (a male body, many will attest), or is subject to time and space (who can only be in one place at one time), and needs to have something in order to create (that he needs a preexisting "substance"), just like we need physical matter to fashion things, then we *have* inadvertently reduced God to an "image made to look like mortal man."

God is not created. He does not have a body. Bodies are put together or composed, and God is neither put together nor composed. He is the Creator, not the created. Until God created, there was nothing. *Only God is eternal. Only God is uncreated.*

God is spirit (John 4:24). There is no eternal matter or "spiritual substance" that co-existed with God. That would mean that God *did not* create everything, and such a God is *not* the God of the Bible. Such a God is a *limited* God, a *less-than-supreme* God, a God who *needs* something beside himself to act as God.

Now, I am well aware that the old concepts are strongly ingrained, and that questions will come to mind. We want to help you answer all your questions. Be patient with yourself as you go through things that are new to you. But I hope each person has the spiritual courage to study God's truth with a mind that is willing to be taught.

If we didn't have to deal with facts, we could believe anything we want, anything that makes sense to us. But the Bible gives us facts, and it is those facts we have to teach.

One other important point before I close for this time. God is *personal*—and he relates to us in a personal way. We should never think of God as so transcendent that we cannot relate to him in a personal way. That, again, is precisely why he reveals himself to us in the Bible in human terms, in terms we can understand.

That is why the Son of God became human to reconcile us to God. God wants a close and *personal* relationship with us. The new explanation does not affect how we relate and pray to God, but only how we explain his oneness.

The truth is inspiring and exciting! I thank God daily that he has not left us in ignorance, but has led us to examine his word and grow in understanding.

I will continue to address related topics and pertinent points in future letters, and questions and answers will also be appearing in the *Pastor General's Report* and *The Worldwide News*.

Let's continue to pray for one another, and that we may all grow together in the new understanding. In the meantime, please study the article included in this issue of the *WN*, "Does Elohim Refer to a Family of Divine Beings?"

Let us all rejoice in the truth and thank God for the spiritual growth he grants to his Church. He has promised never to leave us or forsake us.

Let us remember that spiritual growth does not take place without humility. Let's pray for willingness to grow in understanding the Bible. That is what God requires of all his people.

Update

NEWS OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS

World Tomorrow to feature closed captioning

Closed captioning for the hearing impaired will appear on the telecast by the start of the fall season in October, according to **Herb Vierra**, manager of Television Production.

Captions are subtitles of spoken words and sound effects in a television program. The captions are hidden (closed) unless the viewer has a decoder box. As of July 1 all televisions 13 inches or larger sold in the United States will have closed-

captioning decoders built in.

Kay Ford of Television Production will produce the captions. She has served for many years as a sign-language interpreter for Pasadena deaf brethren and at various Festival sites.

In addition to deaf and hard-of-hearing people, children who are learning to read, low-literate adults and viewers for whom English is a second language benefit from closed captioning.

Regional pastors attend conference

Regional pastors and wives attended a conference in Pasadena July 12 to 21. The format was similar to the regional directors and headquarters conferences that took place in May and June.

Pastor General **Joseph W. Tkach** opened the conference, then introduced **Joseph Tkach Jr.**, director of Church Administration, and evangelist **K.J. Stavriniades**.

1993 SEP Pasadena

One hundred sixty-five high school juniors, seniors and graduates attended a Summer Educational Program (SEP) camp in Pasadena June 21 to July 8.

Campers attended a classical guitar concert by world-class artist **Scott Tennant** after a formal welcoming

dinner in the Church headquarters' lower gardens.

The students participated in a career exploration fair, in which more than 60 professionals from many fields, ranging from computers and air traffic control, to nursing, journalism and environmental science, displayed their wares.

Along with a vigorous athletic program, campers were treated to several motivational sessions, a trip to Disneyland and a beach party at Manhattan Beach.

Capping the session were the final banquet and dance. Awards were presented for outstanding service, speech and sports. Four speakers were selected from the speech clubs to demonstrate their communication skills before an audience of about 300 people.

Denver singles outing

DENVER, Colorado—The telephone number for **Gary Flesner**, the contact person for the Dec. 23 to 27 singles outing, was incorrectly listed in the July 6 issue. Mr. Flesner's number is 1-303-421-7707.

Kamloops YOU serves seniors home

KAMLOOPS, British Columbia—"It's wonderful to see the light in the eyes of

the young ones," commented a resident of the Pine Grove Lodge for Seniors in Kamloops during a visit by YOU members in mid-June.

Entertainment was provided by **Cara-Lee Steele**, **Michelle Jensen**, **Vicki Clowater**, **Lana Bos**, **Karen Jensen** and **Nikki Knuit**. After the two performances youths served refreshments to the seniors.

Many of the teens were skeptical going into the activity, but were pleased with the result, feeling they learned much from the interaction.

"We didn't know what to say when we first tried to talk to the elderly people, but we found out all that was needed was to be close, look attentive, smile and nod," Nikki said.

Lana added: "It was enjoyable to know that a couple minutes of our time to just hold the hand of an old person could brighten their whole day. A couple simple words or a little hug and we made a difference."

AC library needs Imperial School photos

The Ambassador College library is working on its archival files and an Imperial Schools picture index. Those who attended Imperial Schools in Big Sandy or Pasadena between 1953 and 1961 are asked to help by

sending photocopies of class pictures from those years, as well as identifying students in the pictures.

Please send pictures to: Special Collections, Ambassador College Library, Box 111, Big Sandy, Texas, 75755. For further information, call 1-903-636-2000, extension 3511.

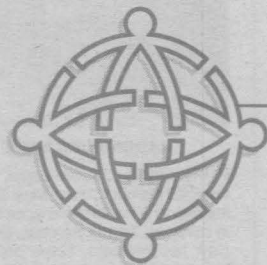
Employee honored for 25 years of service

Willie Edwards, an employee of the Custodial Department, received a plaque and watch July 17 in recognition of 25 years of service to the Church.

For the record

Gary Antion, a pastor-rank minister and director of Counseling Services at Ambassador College, will be guest speaker at the Marriage and Godly Friendship seminar (see July 20 WN) in Santa Barbara, California, Dec. 24 to 26. **Joseph Tkach Jr.**, director of Church Administration, will not attend.

Hotel rooms are still available. To reserve a space send a deposit of \$75 per person, payable to Marriage Seminar, and mail to Marriage Seminar, Box 12032, San Luis Obispo, California, 93406. If you have questions, call 1-805-541-4655.



FROM OUR

Brethren Worldwide

Her work is more than obligation

Tineke Belo, 26, attends the Doorn, Netherlands, church. As we reported in the March 17, 1992 *Worldwide News* she worked in Ghana in 1992 as a dietitian with the Horizon Holland Foundation, a Dutch aid Organization.

Following are her comments on that experience.

Horizon Holland sends medical and agricultural help to several countries. I worked in Ghana for a year as a dietitian. My job was to set up a clinic for malnourished children under the age of 5.

What did your work in Ghana involve?

Our first task was to go to villages and bring children to the clinic to treat them and give them information on nutrition. Some came for weeks at a time, and a few even stayed for months. The children were extremely malnourished. Often the adults were ashamed to let us see how bad things were.

We had to deal with strong superstitions. Some children would go back to the villages feeling more healthy, the vil-

lage priest would tell them that they would die, and they did. The power of superstition is frightening.

A main goal was to help people help themselves in such a way that they wouldn't need others anymore.

Were you able to attend church in Ghana?

Yes. I attended the church in Kumasi almost every week, which enabled me to meet people from outside the village. About 70 people attend services in Kumasi. It was a long journey though, around 150 kilometers (90 miles).

I had to leave at 5 in the morning to be at church by 10. I traveled by minibus, which left at different times each day, depending on when it filled with people.

What do you feel the people you were helping taught you?

A lot of things. They gave me so much as I learned about their approach to life. Life there is much more basic, so

that taught me to appreciate the many things we have.

We in the West take luxury for granted. For example, running water is normal to us. We just turn on the tap. In Ghana someone had to go and get water from the pump.

We put that water into a barrel and that was our shower. There is so much luxury in Holland by comparison.



Tineke Belo with a child in Ghana.

I also enjoyed Ghanaian food. Fortunately for me, the person who did most of the cooking was a Muslim so he didn't make anything with pork.

What did your experience teach you about being a light in the world?

I learned how important it is for each of us to think about how we can best help other people.

Strangely enough, the first question people asked me in Ghana was about my religion. Many Christians were in the village I lived in, but when they found out that I went to Kumasi every Sabbath they were surprised.

It was a long way to travel. They were glad I was a Christian but wasn't their local church good enough? It's so important to put your beliefs into action and not to wait for the kingdom to solve all problems. We have responsibilities now.

How do you apply what you learned now that you are back in Holland?

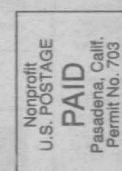
I'm a lot more appreciative. Also, I try to be a good example to friends who are not in the Church. They like to know these kinds of things, the practical aspects of our beliefs

and not all the details of the doctrines. What they are interested in is the way I live my life.

I like my work to be more than just an obligation. I have always wanted to help people, and dietetics has allowed me to do that.

I like to be in a hospital environment helping people have a better life. It's what I've always wanted to do. By *Ruth Arnold*.

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