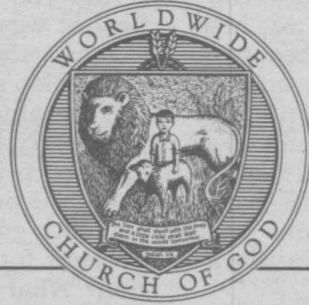


2 Who needs God in Scandinavia?

4 How do we overcome?

5 Long distance phone service to benefit local congregations

The Worldwide News



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Personal from...

JOSEPH W. TKACH

Being constantly vigilant to stay biblical

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would lead his people into all truth. This shows that we do not acquire all truth instantly, any more than our behavior becomes perfect in an instant. We'll still be learning, still following the lead of the Holy Spirit, when Jesus returns!

We do not become totally complete in this life, either in character or in doctrine. But we continually seek God's guidance. And that means, of course, that sometimes we are required to admit previous errors. We have to admit our mistakes and change, even though it may be difficult to do so. That process is part and parcel with the Christian life.

Over the years, we have been led by God to see the need for certain doctrinal changes. Recently, we had to change our perception of the nature of God and redevelop our teaching about it. Dissidents have made every effort to capitalize on that. Sad to say, many of them seem more concerned about wanting to be *different* from others than they are about conforming to the teachings of the Bible!

But God calls his people to be faithful to him and the Bible. We are *compelled* to strive to teach what the Bible teaches. Mr. Armstrong emphasized that frequently by saying, "Don't believe me—believe the Bible." The Bible takes precedence over tradition.

Christ warned us about the dangers of allowing traditions to nullify the Word of God, because humans have a tendency to idolize traditions. A particular tradition may or may not be wrong—but it is certainly wrong to put traditions on a level equal to the Scriptures. The Bible is our standard and our guide to life and faith.

When the Holy Spirit leads us to realize that we have misunderstood the Bible in some way, we can't just be silent and pretend that mistakes never happened. We have an obligation to correct the error we had taught. We have to admit that we were wrong, and we have to begin to go the way now revealed.

We certainly aren't *eager* to criticize the past. But before we can improve, we must admit where we were mistaken, and we should thank God for the correction he gives us.

Concerning the nature of God, for example, we used to teach what amounted to a polytheistic view: two God beings. We thought that calling these two beings "one family" made it monotheistic.

But two beings are two beings, and that is polytheistic, and therefore contrary to the biblical revelation. Scriptures like Isaiah 45:5 had not been thought through: "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." The Bible teaches only one God. So we had to change what we taught.

Faithful to God's Word

I wrote three articles in *The Worldwide News* about what was wrong with our old teaching and why we had to change it. God expects us to be honest and faithful to his Word. Therefore, we now teach what the Bible teaches—one God and only one God. He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

What the Father says or does, God is saying or doing. What Jesus Christ says or does, God is saying or doing. What the Holy Spirit says or does, God is saying or doing. Three distinct (but not separate) hypostases or permanent ways of being, or three divine Persons (but definitely not in the way humans are persons, as our booklet explains), but one and only one God, who is always Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

That is what the Bible teaches, as I explained in the articles. We have also produced a new, revised edition of the booklet, *God Is...*, which goes into detail explaining that this doctrine is essential to the Bible's revelation of God.

God has led us to understand what the Bible teaches, and *God holds me responsible to see that the Church's literature and official doc-*

Continued on page 3

Let's Talk workshop aims at better marriages

By Paul Monteith

Let's Talk, a marital-skills workshop program produced by the Church, uses video dramatizations and group interaction to teach people how to solve their relationship problems before they become crises.

"Some people need help learning how to be happily married," said Bill Jacobs, director of Family Ministries (formerly Youth and Parent Ministries), and *Let's Talk* coordinator. "This program shows people how to identify destructive communication patterns and how to overcome them."

Last year, more than 4,500 people in 63 U.S. and Canadian congregations participated in the program.

Overall, pastors found the program beneficial and said it created an environment in which they could naturally discuss relationship problems of which they were already aware.

Participants said the subjects about reflective listening, the spiritual principles involved in marital communication, and understanding their mate's feelings and viewpoints were most helpful.

Interaction reinforces lessons

The *Let's Talk* program consists of actors portraying marital problems and solutions on video, a study guide, a question and answer session, role-playing and lectures.

The videos, produced by the Television Department, are for use in three two-hour class sessions.

Video 1: The Dynamics of Conflict, addresses the causes of conflict and its resolution; Video 2: The ABCs of Good Communication, illustrates verbal aggression, the building blocks to better relationships, the two great principles of communication, and how to express your true feelings; Video 3: Keys to Commitment, dis-

cusses the spiritual key to committed love, his needs and her needs, and seven keys to encouragement.

The purpose of the question and answer session, workbook and role-playing is to get people involved.

"It's a hands-on communication workshop," said Terry Warren, writer of the video script and workbook and Editorial Department employee. "When people participate in the learning process they are more likely to retain the information and apply the skills."

The pastor's role is to act as facilitator. He strives to develop group harmony and directs the learning process by generating questions and ideas, evaluating group interaction and by encouraging participation.

Marital skills benefit all

While *Let's Talk* deals with communication patterns among married couples, the course is open to marriageable adults who want to improve their interpersonal communication skills.

"Turning conflict into cooperation, improving listening and communication skills, accepting ownership of a problem, living by the golden rule, and encouraging one another, are skills we all need," Mr. Warren remarked. "By the end of the program everyone involved should be aware of the skills needed to effectively discuss their everyday problems."

The benefits of teaching marital skills are many, Mr. Jacobs added.

"If couples get off to a better start they can avoid damaging their relationship. Their children would grow up with a good example to follow when they get married and, as a result, the chains of dysfunctionality might be broken."

When these things are considered, teaching people to solve their own problems makes sense, he concluded.



TOOLS—Church pastors use these materials in the *Let's Talk* video program.

Scandinavians look for light in a dark world

By John Ross Schroeder

BOREHAMWOOD, England—As I gazed out of the train window on my journey through Denmark, Norway and Sweden, I could not help but be moved by the great beauty of these countries at the top of Europe: plenty of space, stunning snow-capped mountains, valleys of wildflowers, placid ice-blue lakes, cascading waterfalls, dark-green fjords. These Nordic nations have geographical blessings in abundance.

Besides natural beauty, surveys reveal the Nordic peoples rank high in quality of life. They enjoy a high standard of living, relatively low unemployment and cradle-to-the-grave welfare. Women on average live into their early 80s, men into their 70s, usually accompanied by relatively good health.

In addition, many Scandinavians have their own boats and summer huts as well. Surely this must be, as Voltaire put it, the "best of all possible worlds."

Few countries possess such spectacular scenery, such social stability and public security. If only the rest of the world could have what Scandinavians possess.

Other nations send ambassadors here to study the Nordic role model.

In the main, Scandinavian health and social welfare are the envy of the world.

Not the promised land

And yet, in the midst of all this health, wealth and prosperous living, exists a growing rate of mental depression and suicide.

Even among young people who seemingly have everything to live for there is a deep uncertainty about the purpose of life.

What's gone wrong? How can we account for the obvious contradiction? What is lacking in their lives? Clearly some vital ingredient is missing.

Since "the curse causeless shall not come" (Proverbs 26:2, King James Version) some blame mental depression and suicide on the long, cold, dark Scandinavian winters. Few residents would deny that it can get depressing in winter. Doctors discuss the effect of daylight deprivation upon the human emotions.

But if Scandinavians don't have the resources to fly south during the dark winter months, they can always look forward to the long and bright summers. Harsh winters hardly seem an adequate reason for suicide.

No, the problem goes far deeper than that. For as Jesus Christ so wisely explained, "One's life does

not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15, New King James).

Declining religious belief

As regional editor of *The Plain Truth* in Britain, I have regular contact with Roy Oestensen, editor of the Scandinavian-language *Plain Truth*. He, his wife, Pamela, and baby son, Arne Georg, are part of the small but thriving Church of God in Scandinavia.

The Church of God there is holding its own in an increasingly irreligious society. Only about 3 percent of Scandinavians regularly attend church services of any denomination.

About half the population claim to believe in God, yet those who feel that God exists do not see him as the intervening Creator God described in the Bible.

For example, while traveling between Stockholm and Oslo, I met a young person in the restaurant car of the train. His father was a Lutheran minister and he himself had studied theology at a university for four years.

We began a conversation which, as sometimes happens on long journeys, lasted for more than an hour. He said that like many others of his country, he had lost his faith.

He found it difficult to believe

in God, almost impossible to see a spiritual purpose in life.

Surrounded by the creative masterpieces of the Creator, he was still unable to connect with the God all this beauty reflected.

He is not alone. His feeling of spiritual poverty in the face of national abundance is common. For no matter how wonderful our environmental conditions—no matter how idyllic our life-styles—we need something outside of ourselves.

In search of meaning

Our conversation made me realize just what the Church has to offer the Scandinavians and, indeed, all people.

Human beings are perpetually in search of that certain something. Without being fully conscious of it, we crave a spiritual dimension in our lives.

Even in this land, the persistent need for ultimate reality beckons.

The Nordic nations need to remember their God—to call to mind the remarkable physical and material blessings and benefits he has so generously bestowed upon Scandinavia.

It is a responsibility of the Church in Scandinavia to remind those who are materially blessed that the true and abundant life does not lie in material prosperity, but in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

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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.

Love for sincere people

I have just read your "Personal" in the May 17 *Worldwide News* regarding our approach to other Christian churches. Some time ago I had contact with a Protestant minister for a few months, and it was obvious to me that if the man was a minister of Satan, he certainly was not aware of it. He sincerely believed what he did as members of his congregation also did.

A few years ago a documentary on television by a Christian journalist taking us through Israel in the steps of Christ kept referring to the Lord in such a sincere, reverential manner it was obvious he had a great love for God, and it moved me to pray about him.

Since then I have prayed that somehow God would make it possible for the truth to reach the "other" Christian world so sincere people could have access to him.

For some years now, I have prayed that God would strengthen his gospel message so people could be strengthened by it to help them through the terrible experiences of the time in which we live and will yet live.

The direction the Church has taken over recent years has led to the good work. You have a lot more support than you may realize.

Agnes Thomson
Auckland, New Zealand

Filling in the gaps

I want to thank you for your "Personal" of May 17. I have really wondered about that over the years and felt that we didn't completely understand the subject. The Holy Spirit showed me there was a gap in the puzzle, but God surely uses you to put the piece in the gap.

Thank you for your attitude and humility toward our Creator. And thank you for having Dr. K.J. Stavrinides' Bible study tapes distributed.

It all makes such sense now. And thank you for praying for all of us to understand and grow. I know there are still universes to learn.

Andrea Marshall
Sundre, Alberta

Truth brings relief

First of all, thank you for everything you have done. You are greatly appreciated. I just finished reading your "Personal" article in the May 17 issue. What a blessing. I have had these thoughts ever since I've been in the Church, and that's been 24 years.

My husband, too, has had these same thoughts, but we kept them to ourselves because others would have thought we were going against government. What we did was what we felt was right and because of this, we never had any problems with my family or my husband's.

We still have the same friends we've always had. Distance has separated some of us, but never because of the way we worship God. My parents were quite old when we came into the Church. Coming from a big family, family gatherings were always quite a big deal, especially my parents' birthdays—not for cake and candles, but just getting together.

Being new in the Church, naturally, you ask people how to handle things like this. I was shocked at some of the advice I got. Ignore them, stay away from them, just

don't say anything, don't show up. This I couldn't do.

We went to our minister at the time, who was Selmer Hegvold. What a wonderful man. He told me never to hurt my parents' feelings by not showing up at family gatherings and to be a shining example to my family and things will work out.

They not only worked out, but my parents always managed to have some clean foods that we could eat. God blessed me with a wonderful family, and I just couldn't hurt them in any way.

So, reading your "Personal" today brought such relief to me, because I always felt a little guilty for not thinking the way others thought. Of course maybe they thought that way too, but never could say anything either.

It is like a breath of fresh air, Mr. Tkach. The articles by Ralph Orr and Dexter Faulkner too were excellent. Everything seemed to just blend together.

After reading your "Personal," we went to Church and had a tape given by Victor Kubik talking about the people from the Ukraine. It just all makes such good sense, and we thank God every day for showing you the way to these changes and ask him to continue to give you the strength and wisdom to continue.

Jan Becker
Lansing, Illinois

"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.

If things are to change...

From a political point of view, the world and country are in a dreadful mess. For a long time I have thought that it is only God who can sort things out for us. If things are to change, then individuals must change.

I would like to know more about the Worldwide Church of God, to better understand its beliefs and how those beliefs affect the lives of its members.

I would like to know the location of the church nearest to me, although I think that is most unlikely that I would be able to attend it on a regular basis.

Hull, England

Air of refreshment

The *Plain Truth* magazine is such a won-

derful breath of fresh air. Every month I anxiously wait for each issue. Your in-depth and well-thought-out articles are refreshing.

So far, you have written many articles that concerned your church's belief structure. They seem to follow the real meaning and purpose of the gospel of Jesus instead of the religious rhetoric that is so common.

I was wondering if you have a brochure explaining the different beliefs of your church. As if I am not asking enough, would you please send me the address of the nearest church to my house.

What really compelled me to write to you is that not once have you asked me to give a donation to the church's cause. I was never pestered by your organization asking for money for this or that.

If your local churches conduct themselves like your magazine does, I think I have found my permanent church.

Spring, Texas

Personal: Patience with self and others

Continued from page 1

trine is stated accurately. This teaching does raise certain questions, and we can work toward even better understanding, but the Bible gives us the framework or the parameters within which we must stay. Our answers must not contradict the Bible.

The Bible demands that there is one God, and the Bible demands that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct and relate to each other. There are not three Gods. There are not three separate God beings.

There is one God. Yet, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not each other. They are distinct, but together they are one and only one God, not three Gods. Jesus did not pray to himself, and the Comforter did not send himself. Yet, the Son, the Father, and the Comforter are not three separate beings—together they are the one and only God, who is one divine Being.

Those are the biblical parameters. Whatever contradicts those basic Bible facts is error. Those biblical facts may appear to us as a paradox, to be sure, but that is only because we are finite and limited.

God, on the other hand, is infinite and unlimited. He is the Source and Creator of all there is. He exists, therefore, differently from us and from his creation, though he can and does enter it and act within it as he pleases. In all the created realm, there are no perfect analogies about God.

There are many comparisons to created things that tell us about God—lion, lamb, rock, fire, king, judge, father, etc.—but there is no created thing exactly like God.

From God's perspective, there is no paradox, no confusion. But to us, with our finite point of reference, the way God exists is beyond our ability to perfectly and totally comprehend.

We certainly can understand enough to know what God expects us to do—love him, worship him and obey him. But we cannot understand the absolute fullness of what it is to be God. We can grasp certain aspects of it, but we can only see "but a poor reflection as in a mirror" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

If we teach only what we're used to, or only what we are familiar with, then we are not learning anything—we are not allowing God to teach us! The Bible often challenges us on whether we will walk according to the Word of God, or according to our own traditions.

God ahead of tradition

On this point, as on certain others, God has shown us our error, so we must be big enough and humble enough to admit it and change. It's not that hard, if we put God ahead of tradition, if we are true Christians who love our Lord and Master above all else. Our faith and trust is in Christ. He is leading his Church.

It is not a shameful thing to have been wrong. To have been wrong is normal. It is, though, a shameful thing to refuse to admit our mistakes and turn from them. Again, repentance is part and parcel with being a Christian.

As I said, the infinite God is not easy for us limited beings to comprehend. The nature of God is a difficult subject, and emotions play a significant role in our process of learning.

In fact, it's good to be emotional about God and emotional about

truth. But we should also be biblical and consistent. Our emotions need to be used rightly—to lead us to put God's Word above all else, regardless of where God leads us and regardless of what we're comfortable with.

We have not only explained and answered questions about this biblical doctrine in *The Worldwide News* and in our booklet, but also in deacon-elder lectures and in Bible study tapes. Even so, not everyone understands it equally well, and that is to be expected.

We need to be patient with each other. We should not condemn one another over whether we perfectly

Understanding the nature of God perfectly is not the key to salvation. People with different levels of understanding on this doctrine can still worship together, pray together and fellowship together in love.

understand this subject. We need to be in the unity of God's love whether we understand this subject or not.

The doctrine of the nature of God is not the gospel. Understanding it perfectly is not the key to salvation. People with different levels of understanding on this doctrine can still worship together, pray together and fellowship together in love—if we are living up to our calling as the Spirit-led people of God, as Christlike people who love each other.

In our practice and in our experience of worshiping God, very little has changed from previous decades. We pray as we always prayed. We worship as we always worshiped.

Even though our explanations of the nature of God were not put together in the right way, the Holy Spirit was still in us, leading us to worship the Father through his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. It's still the same. Again, we should pray just as we always have, knowing that our Father has the power and the wisdom and the love to answer our prayers in the best possible way.

Not a requirement for salvation

As I just stated, the doctrine of the nature of God is not the gospel, nor is understanding it perfectly a prerequisite to salvation. So why did we have to go through the turmoil of changing what we taught? Because God has revealed it to us, and we must follow his lead. Our literature must not have statements that contradict the Bible.

God wants us to lead people to Christ with the truth, not with mistakes or speculations or predictions or theories. The Church's literature and the Church's ministers must preach the Word, speaking the truth in love, speaking in unity as Christ has led us to understand and teach.

Understanding this doctrine is not a requirement for salvation. However, that does not mean it isn't important. It is very important.

Unless the official Church doctrine on the nature of God is biblically correct, the door is left open to all kinds of damaging heresies. The correct, biblical doctrine on the nature of God helps prevent false ideas about

Jesus and salvation from taking root.

For example, the error that humans will become "very God, supreme in power" or "God as God is God," which makes the creation equal to the Creator, springs from the nonbiblical idea that there is more than one God being. The belief was that since there is already more than one, then even more can be added.

From there, some went to the idea that resurrected and glorified humans would be worshiped by other humans (misreading Revelation 3:9 as though it contradicted the rest of the Bible). From there, some went on to another heretical, antibiblical idea that glorified humans could someday become "creators" and "saviors" of human races on other planets, just as God sent Jesus to save humanity on this planet!

Such a view demeans and devalues the truth of who Jesus Christ is, and what his life, death and resurrection mean for human redemption. It also minimizes what it really means to be a sinner and the depth of our need for salvation through the Son of God.

Further, it does away with the biblical truth that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. In short, it takes the focus off God, off Jesus, off the Holy Spirit, and puts it on us.

This is only one example of how an incorrect doctrine on the nature of God can begin to lead to all kinds of nonbiblical ideas and concepts. This example is one that directly affected us. We thank God that he led us to change our official position before any such thing had a chance to take deep root.

The Church must constantly be vigilant to stay biblical, a goal and a pattern that was set by Mr. Armstrong and is incumbent upon anyone who strives to serve God. In keeping with that, sometimes God must bring us back to center, and that is what he has done on the doctrine of the nature of God.

Patience through change

On the practical side, let me also mention another important aspect of this. We all might understand the nature of God on different levels or in different ways, but God definitely expects us to avoid causing division.

If you understand this doctrine, be patient with those who don't. If you can help your brother or sister understand something, that's good. But do it the way Christ would have you do it. Don't try to cram it down their throats. Don't let it be a source of pride or arrogance.

Just because you understand this doctrine doesn't make you Christlike. True Christians are "devoted to

one another in brotherly love" (Romans 12:10). Let's love one another—even when God leads the Church through some difficult changes. We need to exercise the Christian fruit of patience.

"As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (Colossians 3:12-14).

And if you do not yet understand this doctrine, please do not gather a following of people who "disagree with headquarters" around yourself, and do not support any group whose work consists, even in part, of trying to divide the Body of Christ. They are deceitful workers, as Paul referred to such people, and I urge you not to participate in their ungodly works.

If you don't understand our teaching about the nature of God, be patient with yourself. Give yourself time. But don't cause division over it. Don't disturb others with your lack of understanding.

And if you are in a position of spiritual leadership, remember James 3:1. It is not enough to just "be silent." You need to show support for Christ's leadership of the Church. Don't let the devil use you as his tool to divide the Church.

Above all, don't let doctrinal growth divide you from the Church, and don't become a source of division yourself! Dissidents want supporters and followers, so they like to exaggerate every doctrinal change, every change of emphasis, every procedural difference, so that they can accuse, insinuate, divide and get followers for themselves. Don't let yourself be a victim—and don't let them get you to do their dirty work for them!

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:15-17).

Pray for unity, for peace. And pray that you may be useful to God in promoting unity and peace. Let's all pray for one another as we devote ourselves to the work of Christ's gospel.

Update to U.S. Ministerial Transfers for 1994

James and Nancy Capo to Fresno, California (pastor).

Marc and Lisa Courtenay on medical leave.

Ted and Opal Herlofson to San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, California.

Paul and Jan Linehan to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Gaylord, Michigan.*

Bill and Wendy Pack (career change), local church elder in the Bluefield, West

Virginia, church.

Dale and Mona Schurter, to Tipp City and Dayton, Ohio.**

Ken and Pam Sparks to Beckley and Bluefield, West Virginia.

Warren and Lorraine Wilson to Clarksburg and Summersville, West Virginia (pastor).

* Moving from Ontario to Michigan, but pastoring the same circuit.

** Change in church circuit; not a transfer.

How do we overcome? By blood of Christ, faith

The following letter and response are reprinted at the request of Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach.

Dear Mr. Orr,

I am writing to comment on your article titled "Can You Overcome Enough for God?" that appeared in the May 17 edition of *The Worldwide News*. I have seen a lot of articles and statements in recent years that I didn't fully agree with but I have never seen anything that quite misses the mark as badly as your article.

I am filled with righteous indignation that anyone who claims to be a minister of Jesus Christ would write such statements that mislead and actually discourage people from developing Christian character.

In this article, you came across to me almost as if you were taunting and making fun of anyone who has a serious concern about his/her spiritual life and wants to fast and pray more to draw closer to God.

You did this through the constant barrage of questions in the article, which you apparently thought no one could answer. "How much must we overcome to have eternal life? Can we ever be confident? Is overcoming achieved by fasting? By prayers? How many fasts, how many prayers? Is it by years in the Church?" and on and on.

Through a painful twist of scripture, you seem to be saying to the brethren: "Relax, you don't have to overcome. Jesus Christ did it all for you." You state that we don't have to conquer our "carnal pulls and desires" and we don't have to worry about building "holy, righteous character."

Well, isn't that just jake? What a tremendous revelation! We can just sit back and indulge our lusts and wallow in our vices and not worry about a thing! It's all been done for us and we don't have anything to do but enjoy ourselves, indulge ourselves and we will just zip right into the kingdom of God!

There's only one problem, Mr. Orr. That's not what the Bible says. I've never found any such statements in the New Testament. Throughout the New Testament I find continual warnings about my behavior and about my way of life that I take very seriously. And so should everyone else who wants to inherit eternal life!

It is absolutely incredible to me that someone as yourself could overlook the plain scriptures that state in no uncertain terms that individuals with certain persistent sins will not inherit the kingdom of God! Do you think God was just kidding when he inspired Paul to write in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

Or in Galatians 5:21 that "those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God"? Or in Ephesians 5:5 that no unclean or covetous person will inherit the kingdom of God? Or when he inspired John to describe in Revelation precisely those types of individuals who will die in the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8)?

You state that the scriptures in Revelation exhorting us to overcome are looked upon by some as being there "to taunt us, to frustrate us, because there is no hope that we will ever attain to the goal."

Well, I, for one, view those scriptures as being beautiful, encouraging words that challenge us and motivate us to become more like Jesus Christ and to inherit the marvelous rewards that God promises us in these scriptures. How could anyone view them differently?

You state that "Christ's sacrifice

and our faith in Christ ... makes us overcomers." Certainly, we would not be overcomers without the sacrifice of him who died for us and who paid the penalty in our stead. However, that's not where it ends. What you overlooked in Revelation is one of the very scriptures you quote.

"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne" (Revelation 3:21). This scripture makes it clear that we are to overcome in the same manner that Jesus Christ overcame.

How did he overcome? He fasted 40 days and 40 nights before meeting Satan in the temptation so that he might have the spiritual strength to overcome (Matthew 4:1-2). He rose up very early in the morning to have time to be close to God in prayer (Mark 1:35). Sometimes he continued all night in prayer (Luke 6:12).

He thoroughly disciplined himself so that even the mention of yielding to temptation was immediately rebuked (Matthew 16:23). He struggled so intensely against sin that he sweated great drops of blood (Luke 22:44).

Furthermore, Jesus Christ taught us that we must be willing to take drastic steps to overcome sin (Matthew 5:29-30). He taught us that we must be willing to shed [our] blood, if necessary, in our resistance to sin (Hebrews 12:4). I could go on and on but I think you get the point.

How much must we overcome to have eternal life? The very question is misleading. The Christian life is a life of continual repentance where we struggle with the world, the flesh and the devil, and sometimes we yield to temptation. Then we have to repent and come to God and ask for his forgiveness and go on with even greater determination to overcome the next time.

Overcoming is a continual process of, yes, building holy, righteous character. Paul didn't talk about "fighting the good fight of faith" for nothing!

In the parable of the talents, Jesus Christ made it very clear that he expects us to produce fruit in our lives. The principle of "to whomsoever much is given, much shall be required" is applied. This fruit in the form of holy, righteous character can be developed only through the process of overcoming, which Jesus Christ talked about in those "tough" scriptures you don't seem to like.

Furthermore, Jesus Christ made it clear in the parable of the talents that those who take Ralph Orr's advice and don't concern themselves about overcoming and say that Jesus Christ did it all for them will not make it (Matthew 25:27-30).

Your use of the scriptures in 1 John to try to prove that we have already overcome and don't have to worry about that anymore is misuse and abuse of the scriptures. When viewed in the context of the entire letter, John's statement regarding the young men who had overcome (1 John 2:13) obviously refers to something that had been occurring in the Church at that time.

We know that John had been battling Gnosticism and who knows what other heresies that were extant at that time. He was most likely referring to the fact that those young men had not been deceived by various false teachings circulating at that time.

The scriptures in 1 John 5:4-5 show that it is only those who are born of God—those who have God's Holy Spirit—that have the power to overcome the world. This is accomplished through our faith in God's power and

knowledge that Jesus Christ overcame all the principalities and powers in the universe and he is at our side helping us every day of our lives.

This article is only a step away from turning the grace of God into licentiousness. It is a typical example of the distortion of biblical truth that has become common among those of you at headquarters who are leading this Church down the primrose path toward oblivion.

I suggest that you apologize to the Church for printing such an article and print a retraction. While you're at it, perhaps you might want to consider fasting and praying more so that God can open your eyes to the truth of his Word and begin to help you to teach the truth.

Name withheld

Here is how Ralph Orr, author of the *Worldwide News* article, responded to the letter:

Dear Sir:

Thank you for taking the time to express how you felt about my article. I appreciate the many years of dedicated service and sacrifice you have

Overcoming and character building are not the same. Overcoming has to do with our ultimate victory over sin. Character building has to do with our ever-necessary struggle against sin, not with our victory over sin.

given to the Church. Before responding to your letter, I prayed that we might grow in understanding and agreement with Christ. In thinking about your letter it is clear that there are many doctrines we do agree on.

For example, we agree that repentance is vital to salvation. No unrepentant sinner will be saved. We agree that Christians must continually battle against sin, the source of which is within us and the world. We agree that a failure to resist sin can result in a loss of salvation. We agree that the struggle against sin must at times require severe painful sacrifice.

A Christian must not draw back from repentance simply because repentance may be painful. We agree that Christians should strive to be perfect, just as our Father is perfect. We agree that God will reward us according to our works. We also agree that Christians should obey God by keeping his commandments, and by loving God and loving their neighbors. I suspect there are many other areas where we agree as well.

In my article I expressed those areas of agreement in the following way. I began by saying: "As Christians we want to do God's will. We wish to obey him, to keep his commandments, to love God and fellow humans." In the middle I wrote, "We know we will go to our graves having tried to keep the commandments perfectly."

I concluded by saying: "That does not mean we can ignore our need to grow in Christian character. If we love God we will strive to be more like him. But in the Scriptures growing and overcoming are two separate ideas. Only if we turn our back on Jesus Christ through disbelief or will-

ful disobedience will we be condemned. 'If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God' (Hebrews 10:26-27)."

Because we agree in so many ways, I cannot help but wonder if some of your concerns stem from either a misreading of the article or a failure on my part to clearly state the truth.

You claim that I implied that the brethren don't have to build character and that I stated, "We don't have to conquer our 'carnal pulls and desires' and we don't have to worry about building 'holy, righteous character.'"

I never said that at all. Nor did I imply it. Nor do I believe it.

You wrote, "It is absolutely incredible to me that someone as yourself could overlook the plain scriptures that state in no uncertain terms that individuals with certain persistent sins will not inherit the kingdom of God!" A careful reading of the article will show that I did not overlook them.

You wrote, "It's all been done for us and we don't have anything to do but enjoy ourselves, indulge ourselves and we will just zip right into the kingdom of God!" Then you added: "There's only one problem, Mr. Orr. That's not what the Bible says. I've never found any such statements in the New Testament." Of course, nor will you find any such statements in any of my writings.

To claim that I wrote against building character or that we shouldn't have to worry about character building is a total misreading of the article. It ignores some very plain statements made in the article itself.

The issue I addressed was the issue of overcoming, not character building. Overcoming and character building are not the same. Overcoming has to do with our ultimate victory over sin. (The Greek word translated as *overcomer* can also be translated as *victor*). Character building has to do with our ever-necessary struggle against sin, not with our victory over sin. Character building and overcoming are not the same.

If I overcome my enemy, I have gained victory over him. How will I gain victory over sin, Satan and the world? By character building or by faith in Christ? Essentially my article was addressing the age-old question, Are we overcomers by works or by faith?

Some of our members have been depressed and plagued by the mistaken notion that their salvation is uncertain—unassured because they simply have not done enough to earn it. The questions in the article illustrated that inner conflict.

On the one hand, they agree that salvation is a gift. On the other hand, they worry they just haven't grown (that is, overcome) enough to be saved. They have [erroneously] used the word *overcome* to refer to personal spiritual growth. They have thought that overcoming was something to be obtained rather than the condition they, as Christians, currently are in.

Revelation 2 and 3 remind us that it is the one who overcomes that will dwell with God forever. By themselves, the verses in Revelation 2 and 3 do not explain how a person becomes an overcomer or how that person can remain in that state.

Many have assumed that Revelation 2 and 3, in using the verb *overcome*, referred to our personal char-

See *Overcome*, page 7

Member rewarded princely for her singing talents

By David Bedford

ACCRA, Ghana—For member and soprano Margaret Ferguson, Oct. 28 was a memorable day—the day she sang for Prince Edward of England.

She was invited to perform for the prince and about 30 diplomats from various countries by Mrs. Walker, the wife of the British high commissioner. Margaret had only 10 days to prepare for the 20- to 30-minute performance.

After her performance Prince Edward presented Margaret with a three-year musical scholarship in England, awarded by the British High Commission. She plans to complete a graduate study in voice, opera and musical theater leading to an M.A., Ph.D. or Doctor of Musical Arts.

Margaret began attending Sabbath services with her father, sister and four brothers when she was 11 years old. In the past, the family has presented special Sabbath music, but now Margaret sings solo and as part of the choir, and she conducts the children's choir.



MEMBER ENTERTAINS PRINCE EDWARD—From left: Margaret Ferguson, Prince Edward, Vincent Richter (Margaret's accompanist) and Mrs. Walker, wife of the British high commissioner in Ghana.

It wasn't until age 16, after seeing the movie *The Sound of Music*, that Margaret showed an interest in singing. Inspired by the singing of Julie Andrews, a principal actress in the movie, she learned many of the movie's songs.

On finishing formal elementary

education, she took business and accounting classes. But this did not suit her and it was then she turned seriously to music and mastered music theory in seven months. Last year she graduated from the University College of Education in Winneba, Ghana, with a diploma in music.

Over the past three years she has been a featured soloist at the residences of the American and Swiss ambassadors, the British High Commission and the Ghana State House.

She has performed on many occasions as a soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra and, last December, Margaret was the orchestra's soprano soloist in a shortened presentation of the *Messiah*.

She has also performed several times on radio and television. After one television performance with another performer, the central regional minister of Cape Coast, Ghana, wrote to the principal of her college saying he was "highly impressed by their performance."

Margaret is being trained by Giles Swayne, an English musician and composer. This is being sponsored by the Asante Goldfield Co.

After the company manager heard her perform last year he told her: "I never knew we had such quality singers in Ghana. You are great, how do I get in touch?"

Margaret leaves for her studies in England in August.

Cut your telephone bills and help your congregation too

By Mardy Cobb

Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach has approved a nationwide program for the benefit of local congregations and Church members. This program offers a 12.9 cent per minute long distance rate and gives a rebate of 7 percent to local congregations. By comparison, many discount programs offer rates of 20 cents or more per minute.

Pastors of participating U.S. congregations will announce this savings plan at services from July 23 to Aug. 20. To participate, members will need to make a two or three minute phone call to an 800 number.

Joseph Tkach Jr., director of Church Administration, said: "Our chief objective is to serve. This is the kind of savings plan that does just that. We rarely approve a program that raises funds from the brethren. Our brethren are generous, and we cannot allow some corporation to abuse them.

"This savings plan should benefit those who participate. Money is tight for everyone, so we asked the vendor to give us the greatest possible savings on phone rates. Some vendors offered us a higher percentage rebate, but the long distance phone rate was more expensive. We put the brethren first. We want them to come out winners, too."

No selling is required in this plan. Your local phone company does not change. Your local service does not change. The way you use your phone does not change. The only thing that changes is that you pay less on long distance phone calls. If you don't like the service offered you're under no obligation to stay with it.

The income generated from this savings plan will benefit local congregations. Fifty percent of the income generated by a single congre-

gation will be returned to the local church account. The other 50 percent will go to the headquarters fund dedicated exclusively to building and maintaining local church buildings.

The advantage of this headquarters fund is that we will be able to help produce equity in providing adequate facilities for the local congregations. Some areas, although they rent, have adequate facilities. Others do not. Our objective is to first address those situations where the need is greatest.

The carrier we are using is WilTel, carrier of the Super Bowl, PGA and many other major sporting and news events.

Since 1985 WilTel has expanded its fiber-optic network and has been selling its product wholesale to AT&T, Sprint and MCI. Most of us have already been using WilTel's fiber-optic network, but have been paying retail prices to AT&T.

WilTel decided to enter the retail side of the phone business about two years ago when it enlisted the help of UniDial.

WilTel owns and operates a nationwide fiber-optic network, one of four in the United States, with fiber miles exceeding 20,000. Access to additional fiber miles brings WilTel's total network to more than 30,000 miles.

In building the network, WilTel has taken many steps to ensure maximum reliability. Fiber cable is located securely in thick pipes along highly secure rights-of-way. And all fiber is patrolled through regular ground and aerial surveillance.

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Founded in 1985, WilTel is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Williams See Phone, page 8



Lighten your phone bills as you light up someone's day

The Church has made an agreement with PSI Network, Inc., to offer the UniDial Residential Long Distance Service to members. The Church will receive a 7 percent rebate. This long distance service includes:

- 12.9 cents per minute interstate with no restrictions
- Monthly interstate service charge of \$2.50
- Available in the 48 contiguous states
- No change of dialing procedure
- No term or usage commitment
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Call their 800 number now and save. Have your local phone bill ready for reference

1-800-UNIDIAL

DEPT. No. 119 — (ask pastor for local church number)

To sign up call 1-800-UNIDIAL from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday Central Standard Time.

For further information contact
Telephone Fund-Raiser, 300 W. Green St.
Pasadena, California, 91129

Mardy Cobb works in Church Administration.



JOHN & HILDA RICHOUX

John and Hilda Richoux of Maple Ridge, British Columbia, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary March 26. They have one son, Didier; three daughters, Patricia, Joelle and Nadine; two sons-in-law, Phil Hopwood and Leighton Lefavre; and four grandchildren, Chantal, Benjamin, Geoffrey and Vanessa.



BILL & JOYCE SEELIG

Bill and Joyce Seelig of Marion, Texas, celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary July 21. They have six children, Gerald, Joe, Michael, Philip, Timothy and Carlton; and six grandchildren.



EUGENE & DONNA TYMCHUK

Eugene and Donna Tymchuk of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary May 10. They have three children, Cheri, Peter and Jami; and two grandchildren, Nicole and Steven.



MITCH & MARY HADDAD

Mitch and Mary Haddad of Staten

Island, New York, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary May 2. They have two children, Michelle and Louis; and seven grandchildren. Mr. Haddad is a local church elder in the Union, New Jersey, South church.

**Anniversaries
Made of Gold**



LARRY & ANGELINE GROVE

Larry and Angeline Grove of West Des Moines, Iowa, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary June 18. They have three children, Norman, Carolyn and Ronald; one daughter-in-law, Linda; one son-in-law, Barry Brown; six grandchildren, Robert, David, Daniel, Bryan, Melissa and Kristen; one granddaughter-in-law, Kim; and two great-grandchildren, Benjamin and Nathan.



TOM & ADA BATHO

Tom and Ada Batho of Roswell, New Mexico, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary June 3. The Bathos serve as deacon and deaconess in the Roswell church.



GENE & BETTY KLINEBURGER

Gene and Betty Klineburger of

Issaquah, Washington, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 7. Bellevue, Washington, brethren honored them with a buffet reception. The Klineburgers have two daughters, one son, eight grandchildren and three great-grandsons.



JOHAN & GESINA VAN ASSELT

Johan and Gesina van Asselt of Apeldoorn, Holland, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 6. They have three sons, three daughters and 24 grandchildren.



ERNEST & BERTHA HAND

Ernest and Bertha Hand of Scappoose, Oregon, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 20. They have one daughter, six sons, one son-in-law, five daughters-in-law, 21 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Portland, Oregon, West brethren honored them with a reception.

Obituaries

PISANI, Evelyn Rose Thurkill, 75, of Wichita Falls, Texas, died May 13. She is survived by one son, John; one sister, Lynette Robinson; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

STOVER, Orpha E., 85, of Beckley, West Virginia, died May 17. She is survived by three sons, Winfred, Kermit and Gary; one daughter, Agnes Tote; one brother, Denvil Williams; one sister, Cordie Williams; 26 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren. Her husband, Basil, and six children preceded her in death.

GODFREY, William W., 90, of Boise, Idaho, died May 4 following a

stroke. He is survived by his wife, Zella; two daughters; and 12 grandchildren.

MILLER, Martha H., 60, of Stony Run, Pennsylvania, died May 26 after a lengthy battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Leroy F.; her mother, Mary Beidelman; two daughters, Anna Boyer and Susan Wallace; one son, Williard; one sister; two brothers; and six grandchildren.

CONATY, Elizabeth, 84, of Dublin, Ireland, died June 3 of cancer. She is survived by one son, John Joe; one daughter, Rosemary Heavey; one son-in-law, Noel Heavey; and one grandson, Paul.

JONES, Clara, 72, of Fresno, California, died May 19 of congestive heart failure. She is survived by two daughters, Cora Estes and Pam Jones; one son, Larry; three sisters, Mandie Mann, Fayrene Barnes and Mary; and one brother, Junior Clifton.



ELIAS HOCHSTETLER

HOCHSTETLER, Elias M., 74, of Elkhart, Indiana, died May 5 of liver and pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife, Fannie Mae; two daughters, Jeanie Bernheisel and Dorothy Topash; three sons, Sherman, Bill and Allen; 11 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Three sisters, three brothers and one grandson preceded him in death.

CARTWRIGHT, Wilbur J.R. "Jack," 75, of Lawton, Oklahoma, died April 21. He is survived by his wife, Margie; one daughter, Jackie Johnson; two sons, Roger and Stephen; one stepson, Marcus Park; two stepdaughters, Ricci Belgarde and Carmen Park; one brother, Jerry; and five sisters, Margaret Lowry, Betty Haines, Lee Joy Smithheart, Annette Roark and Nelda Joplin; and five grandchildren.

PITMAN, Leslie Wilfred, 75, of Argyle Head, Nova Scotia, died April 3 of cancer. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Shirley; and one niece, Beth Denty.

EMORY, Robert, 51, of West Mon-

roe, Louisiana, died April 16 after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Sandy; three sons, Robert L., Jason and Daniel; one brother; and four grandchildren.

LYNCH, Tom, 67, of Madera, California, died April 2 of a heart attack. He is survived by his second wife, of 12 years, Gladys; two daughters, Linda Maddock and Sunni Cline; one son, Tom Jr.; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

FLOWERS, Anna, 83, of Clovis, California, died April 11 of heart failure. She is survived by three daughters, Earline Hayborn, Dorothy Marlow and Lila Pelow; three sons, Kenneth, Dean and Alan; 14 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.



KATHRYN RADEMACHER

RADEMACHER, Kathryn, 37, of Wedemark, Germany, died April 3 of cancer. She is survived by her husband, Wilhelm; two daughters, Daniela and Anita; one son, Michael; her father; one sister; and four brothers.

HORTON, Johnny Jr., 2 1/2 months old, of Dolton, Illinois, died April 15 of sudden infant death syndrome. He is survived by his parents, Johnny Sr. and Alysa; four grandparents; eight aunts; seven uncles; and numerous cousins.

SHIREMAN, Florence M., 79, of Richland Center, Wisconsin, died May 19 of severe pulmonary disease. She is survived by one daughter, Geraldine; one son, James; three sisters; and two brothers. Her husband died in 1978.

SOMMERFELD, Frieda, 83, of Hamilton, Texas, died May 4 of liver cancer. She is survived by three sisters, Alivine Hohertz, Erna Hohertz and Albertine Lange; and several nieces and nephews.

ROBERSON, Ruth, 88, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, died June 2 after a lengthy battle with cancer. She is survived by one son, Bobby; one daughter, Patricia Beck; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; three brothers; and one sister.

THORPE, Floyd, 73, of Big Sandy, died June 3. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Mary; one daughter, Ilean Vanwinkle; one granddaughter, Holley Meyer; and many nieces and nephews.

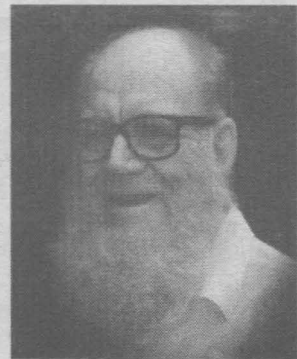
BAKER, Bessie, 86, of Hays, Kansas, died June 14. She is survived by two sisters, one brother and several nieces and nephews. Her husband, Oliver, preceded her in death.



FRANCES WRINN

WRINN, Frances, 98, of Windsor, Ontario, died May 1. She is survived by two nieces and two nephews.

JONES, Clara Mattie, 72, of Fresno, California, died May 19. She is survived by her son, Larry; two daughters, Cora Estes and Pamela; three sisters; one brother; and seven grandchildren.



ROBERT CORLISS

CORLISS, Robert, 86, of Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, died May 10. He is survived by three sons, one daughter, and several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

WILLIAMS, George, 65, of Mount Juliet, Tennessee, died May 31 of cancer. He is survived by his wife, Mildred; two sons, Mike and Jeff; one daughter Jacque; two daughters-in-law, Debbie and Abby; and five grandchildren.

MORRISH, Richard Hugh, 72, of Flushing, Michigan, died May 26.

Overcome sin, Satan, by blood of the Lamb and faith

Continued from page 4

acter building. That assumption was bolstered by how the word is sometimes used in common everyday language and therefore by us. But the verses themselves do not say this. They do not explain how one overcomes. We need to look elsewhere to discover what John understood about overcoming.

As mentioned in the article, Revelation 12:11 gives us a good understanding. There we read that Christians overcame Satan, not by prayers, fasting, commandment keeping or character building, but "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." We should have no trouble agreeing with that.

Hindus pray. Buddhists fast. Jews keep the commandments. Many try to build character. But by these things they will not overcome Satan or sin. Christians overcome Satan and sin "by the blood of the Lamb and by their word of their testimony."

In my article I quoted 1 John 5:4-5, 11-12. You commented on them, so I think it would be useful to review these passages again, starting with verses 11-12. There John tells us, "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

Eternal life is not something we hope to gain. It is something we have. Since eternal life is something we have, then we have conquered

(overcome) death. Though Christians die, they have eternal life, for God has given them his Holy Spirit and will raise them up to immortality.

In this sense, Christians are overcomers now. As John explains, this overcoming of death, this having eternal life, is for those who have Christ. It is not for those who have the law alone, for the law condemns. The law cannot save.

John adds in verse 13, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." I believe in the name of the Son of God. Therefore I have eternal life. Since I have eternal life now, there is nothing else I must overcome to obtain eternal life. I do not have to work for something I already have.

Yet, as explained in the article, that does not mean a Christian is free to be licentious or ignore spiritual growth. Christians can lose the eternal life they already have. Or to put it another way, one who has overcome through Christ would be overcome if he or she rejected Christ.

Verses 4 and 5 also illustrate this point. John not only wrote that the "young men" had overcome Satan (1 John 2:13), but that everyone who has been born again *has already* overcome the world. How is this possible? By the law? By the commandments? By character building? John tells us: "This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."

We can fast all we want, pray all we want, build all kinds of character, and we will never be perfect in this life. We will never overcome Satan, the world or our sinful nature that way, for overcoming is through the blood of the Lamb and faith.

That does not mean there are no benefits to prayer, fasting, Bible study and character building. Their benefits can be enormous. It's just that none of them give us the victory over sin and death.

It is as Paul said in Romans 4:4-5, 13-16, 22: "Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.... It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath.... Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham.... This is why 'it was credited to him as righteousness.'"

"The words 'it was credited to him'

were written not for him alone but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:23-24).

And as he further wrote: "Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: 'The man who does these things will live by them.' But the righteousness that is by faith says: 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven' [that is, What great work may I do?]'.... But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,' that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'" (Romans 10:5-13).

That is the good news. That is what my article was saying. That is the truth. No wonder Revelation 12:11 proclaims, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."

Sincerely,
Ralph G. Orr

Update

NEWS OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS

Elders and wives meet for conference in East Texas

BIG SANDY—About 250 people attended a ministerial conference for local church elders and their wives in Ambassador Hall June 22 to 24.

The purpose of the conference was to update the local church elders on material presented to full-time ministers at regional conferences.

William Kelly, a local church elder in the Atlanta, Georgia, Northeast church, said: "It was an excellent conference with good fellowship. The presentations were most enlightening."

Speakers were **Michael Fezell**, executive assistant to the pastor general; **Joseph W. Tkach Jr.**, director

of Church Administration; **K.J. Stavrinides** of Church Administration; **Tom Lapacka** of Church Administration; and **Donald Ward**, president of Ambassador University.

Video presentations were given by **Greg Albrecht**, editor of *The Plain Truth*; and **Bernie Schnippert**, director of Media Operations.

In his invitation letter Mr. Tkach Jr. told the ministers and their wives: "As a local church elder, you and your wife provide invaluable service to the local congregations. We deeply appreciate the many years of service and hard work to which you have dedicated your lives."

Conference participants were housed in student dormitories and in area hotels. The next local church elders conference is scheduled to take place in Pasadena Aug. 17 to 19.

Atlanta churches to sponsor Christian music concert

ATLANTA, Georgia—The Atlanta East and Northeast churches will sponsor a Christian music concert 3 p.m. Aug. 28, at the Clayton County Performing Arts Center.

The concert will feature classical, contemporary and gospel presentations from some of the best talent in the Southeast. Professional guest choirs and soloists will also perform.

Admission is free, and donations are encouraged. For more information, please

call **Jasper Fletcher** at 1-404-289-5912.

Churches to celebrate 30th anniversaries

MIAMI, Florida—The Miami church will celebrate its 30th anniversary Aug. 13 with Sabbath services and a dinner and dance that evening. A picnic is planned for the following day.

If you would like to attend, please contact **Milt Wilson** before Aug. 1 at 1-305-944-3471.

SPOKANE, Washington—Brethren who have attended the Spokane church are invited to attend the 30th anniversary celebration Oct. 29. A semiformal dinner and dance with a live band are being planned.

For more information or to make reservations, please write to **Rod Hall** at Box 141904, Spokane, Washington, 99214, or call him at 1-509-928-0805. When writing, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Student adds a research fellowship to his account

DURHAM, New Hampshire—**David Ledger**, a mechanical engineering major at the University of New Hampshire, was awarded an undergraduate research fellowship for his project, "Pulsed Laser Deposition of Titanium Carbide Films."

David is the son of **Harry and Doris Ledger**, and they attend the Concord, New

Hampshire, church.

YOU member wins music composition

MADISON, Wisconsin—**Danielle Fields**, 12, who attends the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, church, was awarded first place June 1 in the Wisconsin Student Composition Competition in the Division I Vocal Solo category.

The title of Danielle's entry was "Fruit of the Spirit," for which she wrote the melody and the words.

Seniors chronicle recipes for living

CLARKSBURG, West Virginia—**Helen Woodcock**, 85, gives the profits from her book, *Grandma Talking—Looking Back on the Years*, to the Youth Opportunities United (YOU) chapter here.

Her book contains stories of her growing up, hints she has learned over the years, and recipes for her favorite dishes. YOU members are selling it to pay for a trip to New Orleans, Louisiana, this summer.

Copies of her book are available by sending \$11.95 to Mrs. Woodcock at 495 Kanawha Run Rd., Sutton, West Virginia, 26601-9789. Mrs. Woodcock and her husband, **Homer**, attend the Clarksburg church. *Daniel Marsh*.

SOLDOTNA, Alaska—A *Mother's Survival in an Alien Wilderness*, a biography of member **Violet Kielczewski**, 83, was published by

Carlton Press. The book was written by a daughter of Mrs. Kielczewski, **Elnora Moe**, also a member.

The book chronicles Mrs. Kielczewski's life in the Canadian wilderness and the family's eventual move to Alaska.

The book begins: "When I eloped with **Orrah Kielczewski**, I never dreamed that I would be living off of the land, and nearly starving that one winter in the little cabin up in the hills on the Pipestone River in Ontario, Canada." *Rex Sexton*.

YES group brings good things to light

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana—Before an audience of more than 500 people, the combined YES choir performed the musical production, "Good Things Come in Small Packages," March 12.

The presentation told the story of King Josiah in a musical format that featured 45 children between the ages of 5 and 12.

Many vocal soloists, as well as group singing and choreography, highlighted the performance.

Director **Kathe Myers** commented: "We had several guests attend, so it was great to see our children letting their lights shine."

25-year honoree

BIG SANDY—**Alec Surratt** of the Spanish Department here received a plaque and watch June 22 for 25 years of service to the Church.



FROM OUR

Brethren Worldwide

Members in Cyprus take one day at a time

CYPRUS—Two years ago this sun-scorched island visited by the apostle Paul (Acts 13:4) had no resident Church members.

Then, **Alvia Antoniades**, her husband, **Anthony**, and their daughters, **Suzanne**

and **Stella**, moved from South Africa to the town of Paphos.

Mr. Antoniades, not a member, who gave up his business and returned from South Africa to his native land, now has a well-established restaurant called The Palm Grove at Coral Bay.

Alvia was born in Est-

court, South Africa, as were **Suzanne** and **Stella**, the Antoniades' son, **Mark**, and

Angela, their married daughter, who also are Church members.

Mark and **Angela** remained in South Africa.

Alvia, **Suzanne** and **Stella**, who well understand the difficulties isolated brethren face in keeping the faith, rely on the British Office for taped sermons and literature, and letters and telephone calls of encourage-

ment from brethren elsewhere.

Alvia's advice to other brethren in this situation is to "take one day at a time and to never let up on prayer and Bible study." *Gordon Archer*.

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Continued from page 5

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intrastate calls (calls within one state) are established by law (Federal Communications Commission tariff) for each state. A listing of intrastate rates will be provided to each congregation. Please contact your local phone plan coordinator.

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OUR FAMILY IN CYPRUS—From left: Suzanne, Alvia and Stella Antoniades. [Photo by Gordon Archer]

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