

# The Good News

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A MAGAZINE OF UNDERSTANDING



## What's the Key to Real Leadership?

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**H**ave you ever considered how much of Jesus Christ's message revolves around leadership? His gospel, the good news of the Kingdom

of God (Mark 1:14-15), centers around two major aspects of leadership. One is how this world will be transformed by right leadership—the leadership He will exercise as King of Kings at His return.

You've probably read the famous prophecy of His coming in Isaiah 9:6: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

But have you focused on the next verse? "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever" (New International Version, emphasis added throughout).

## Will you be a part of that fantastic future? You can if you begin to learn the kind of giving, serving leadership He requires of His followers.

At the heart of Christ's gospel is the message that He will return to earth establish the Kingdom of God as a literal world-ruling empire, saving the human race from the cumulative effects of several thousand years of *bad* leadership.

The prophet Daniel saw, in vision, God the Father giving this Kingdom to Jesus Christ: "Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14).

A second major aspect of Christ's good news is the awesome future in store for those who surrender their lives to Him now and learn the right kind of leadership. To them He offers this promise: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne" (Revelation 3:21). And also: "He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26; see also Daniel 7:27).

The message of good news that Jesus brought isn't well understood. He promises a future not of sitting around heaven playing harps, but of a paradise on earth, with the world transformed by right leadership—His right leadership first and foremost, but also the right leadership of those who will reign with Him in justice and righteousness.

Will you be a part of that fantastic future? *You can* if you begin to learn the kind of giving, serving leadership He requires of His followers: "Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:26-28).

This is the kind of leader God wants to see. He wants us to truly love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He wants leaders who are motivated by outgoing, outflowing love for others—the kind of love described by Christ in John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

Jesus exemplified this kind of leadership by laying down His life for others, giving of His time, energy and love to others in the wonderful works He did. As described in this issue, this is the kind of leadership He will show to the entire world in the not-too-distant future.

And best of all, He wants to share it with you! Will you take Him up on His offer?

—Scott Ashley, Managing editor

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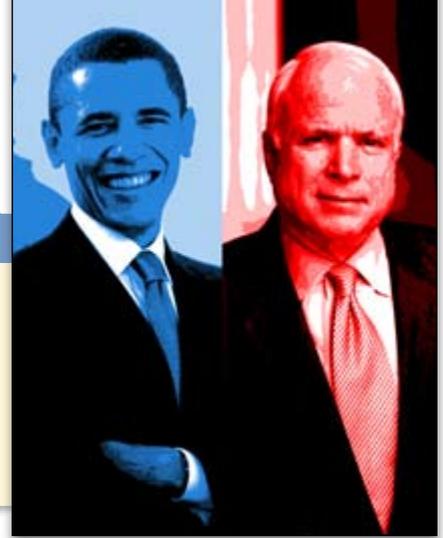
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# What's the Key to Real Leadership?

Everywhere we look we see a great need for real leadership. But what is real leadership? What is its foundation? Can someone be a good leader without displaying real leadership?

by Jerold Aust

**T**he U.S. presidential election transcends American politics, because the reality is that the U.S. president wields enormous power. The United States and its policies have a profound affect on many nations' economies and their quality of life.

American voters will soon determine who will occupy the most powerful position in the world, but only after carefully scripted campaigns designed to present the candidates in the most favorable light—as the epitome of leadership, compassion, strength and wisdom—run their course.

Both men have tried to be all things to all people, so inevitably the country will be disappointed when the winning candidate fails to live up to the high expectations.

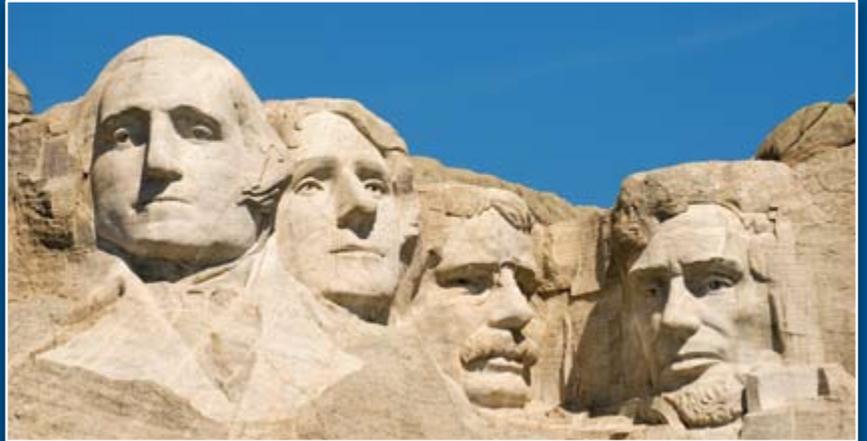
## Leaders and leadership aren't always the same

If we ever needed real leadership, now is the time. This campaign should cause us to consider several crucial questions: What is real leadership? Does God view leadership differently than most people do? How does He define leadership? And how can we apply it?

Some leaders assume that since they occupy positions as leaders, they automatically exhibit leadership. But this is not accurate. While a leader is generally defined as someone who is over a country, organization or group of people, the quality of leadership concerns *how a leader acts toward others*.

If a leader views himself as elevated above others and them beneath him, he is unlikely to be a good leader. His perspective erodes the respect others have of him. While he may think everything is fine, others secretly lament his approach toward them. As Proverbs 29:2 tells us, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan.”

Too many people in authority falsely equate their positions as leaders with being automatically smarter and better than those they lead. Conversely, a good leader is inclusive, honorable and fair, compassionate and merciful, and honors others. His leadership



**Mount Rushmore memorializes four U.S. presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. These men were known not for wielding great power, but for their visionary leadership and service to their countrymen.**

is clearly with humility (see Micah 6:8).

## Good leadership is serving those who are led

Ideally, the terms *leader* and *leadership* should go hand in hand. Sadly, in many cases these terms are contradictory. Yet leaders can develop good leadership over time, like that of the first U.S. president, George Washington.

The greatest leaders are characterized not by wielding great power, but by their humility and service to those they lead. George Washington was such a leader—a true public servant.

Many presidential observers cite various characteristics that made George Washington an effective leader. The quality least cited is intellect, possibly because he was surrounded by such luminaries as Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Joseph Ellis wrote admiringly of Washington's leadership even in the midst of such brilliant men: “It

seemed to me that Benjamin Franklin was wiser than Washington; Alexander Hamilton was more brilliant; John Adams was better read; Thomas Jefferson was more intellectually sophisticated; James Madison was more politically astute. Yet each and all of these prominent figures acknowledged that Washington was their unquestioned superior.

“Within the gallery of greats so often mythologized and capitalized as Founding Fathers, Washington was recognized as *primus inter pares*, the Foundingest Father of them all. Why was that? . . . I have looked for an answer, which lies buried within the folds of the most ambitious, determined, and potent personality of an age not lacking for worthy rivals” (*His Excellency: George Washington*, 2004, p. xiv).

Early in Washington's military career (1755), while serving as a colonel with the Virginia troops under the direction of the British army's Gen. Edward Braddock, he and his fellow soldiers engaged, quite accidentally, a large detachment of French and Indians. The French and Indians spread out

in a semicircle and started firing.

The Virginia troops rushed to fight the enemy at close quarters. Ironically, they were caught in the crossfire between the Indians and the British, which nearly wiped them out. The seasoned Braddock, fearless and stubborn, rode into the fracas to rally the men but was cut down with wounds to his chest and shoulder.

“With Braddock down and the other aides-de-camp casualties, it fell to Washington to rally the remnants. Riding back and forth amidst the chaos, two horses were shot out beneath him and four musket balls pierced his coat, but he escaped without a scratch, while, as he put it, ‘death was levelling my companions on every side of me’” (p. 22).

Washington became a hero by rallying the survivors to retreat in an orderly manner, saving many lives by risking his own.

“His specialty seemed to be exhibiting courage in lost causes, or, as one newspaper account put it, he had earned ‘a high Reputation for Military Skill, Integrity, and Valor; tho’ Success has not always attended his Undertakings.’ There was even talk—it was the first occasion—that his remarkable capacity to endure marked him as a man of destiny” (p. 23).

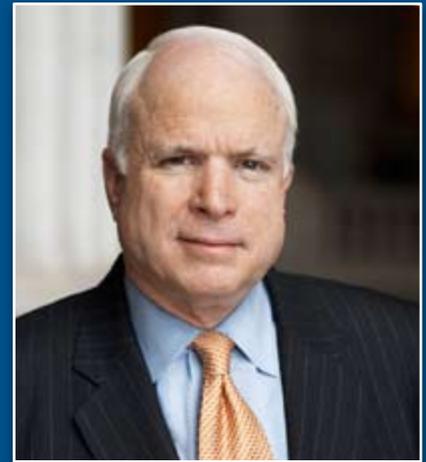
### A servant to his country

A contemporary, Samuel Davies, wrote of the future president as “that heroic youth Col. Washington, who I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a Manner for some important Service to his Country” (ibid.).

Time, opportunity, charisma and experience elevated George Washington to prominence. His exploits in the French and Indian War made him a seasoned hero.

As hostilities spread following the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress unanimously elected and designated Washington as the general and commander in chief of the Continental Army on June 15, 1775, for several reasons. They knew they could trust him. He was a man of wealth, less tempted to corruption. He was a fearless, determined and competent leader who shared a common vision with the Colonial leaders.

The impression Washington made upon those he led and many members of Congress was significant. “The feeling was that if he, George Washington, who had so much, was willing to risk ‘his all,’ however daunting the odds, then who were they to equivocate. That he was also serving without pay was widely taken as further evidence of the genuineness of his commitment” (David



**American voters will soon determine who will occupy the most powerful position in the world, but only after carefully scripted campaigns designed to present the candidates in the most favorable light.**

McCullough, 1776, 2005, p. 48).

He served in that capacity through the end of the war, but rather than pursue additional power, he resigned his commission and retired to his estate. Offered the kingship of the new country, he reportedly responded that he hadn’t fought a war against Britain’s King George the third to become America’s King George the first.

In 1789 the electoral college unanimously elected him as the first president of the federal republic of the United States, then unanimously reelected him in 1792. After reluctantly serving his second term, he again surrendered great power and refused any further terms to retire to Mount Vernon.

When Washington died two years later, he was eulogized by one of his former generals as “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.” So respected was he that his former adversaries in the British navy flew their flags at half-mast.

Washington was memorialized as the father of his country, his likeness later chiseled onto Mount Rushmore and printed on the omnipresent one-dollar bill. His timeless principles of leadership set a high and lasting standard for all aspiring political leaders.

### Another president sets a lasting standard

Less than a century passed before another historical giant led the United States through a bloody civil war and ended, in part, the stain of slavery. Abraham Lincoln, 16th U.S.

president, transformed the country and paid the ultimate price, killed by the bullet of an assassin.

Many books have been written about President Lincoln, but few about his leadership. One stands out: Donald Phillips’ *Lincoln on Leadership* (1992).

“In order to comprehend modern leadership theory and be successful in the future, leaders must look to the past—to President Abraham Lincoln, for example—who routinely practiced nearly all of the ‘revolutionary thinking’ techniques that have been preached to American industry in the last ten to fifteen years,” Phillips wrote.

“Lincoln can be looked to as the ideal model for desirable, effective leadership. He is the perfect example of . . . a ‘transforming leader’—a person who aims for the evolution of a new level of awareness and understanding among all members of an organization. Such a leader rejects the use of naked power and instead attempts to motivate and mobilize followers by persuading them to take ownership of their roles in a more grand mission that is shared by all members of the organization” (p. 172).

President Lincoln’s example instructs leaders to know the people they serve. For Lincoln during the Civil War, that meant “get out of the office and circulate among the troops” (p. 13).

Not all of his generals did this. When Lincoln relieved Gen. John C. Fremont of his command in 1861, he focused on this

leadership requirement: “His cardinal mistake is that he isolates himself, and allows nobody to see him; and by which he does not know what is going on in the very matter he is dealing with” (p. 13). “Freemont . . . was

Lincoln led by being led. To bring peace to those he served, he would bring them together to work out their differences. Such was the case of a jealous secretary of the treasury, Salmon Chase, who rallied some

handle criticism, even if unjust. Author Bruce Barton, in his book *The Man Nobody Knows*, describes a revealing incident from Lincoln’s life that took place during the dark days of the Civil War:

“An important man left the White House in Washington for the War Office, with a letter from the President to the Secretary of War [Edwin Stanton]. In a very few minutes he was back in the White House again, bursting with indignation.

“The President looked up in mild surprise. ‘Did you give the message to Stanton?’ he asked.

“The other man nodded, too angry for words.

“‘What did he do?’

“‘He tore it up,’ exclaimed the outraged citizen, ‘and what’s more, sir, he said you are a fool.’

“The President rose slowly from the desk, stretching his long frame to its full height, and regarding the wrath of the other with a quizzical glance.

“‘Did Stanton call me that?’ he asked.

“‘He did, sir, and repeated it.’

“‘Well,’ said the President with a dry laugh, ‘I reckon it must be true then, because Stanton is generally right.’

“The angry gentleman waited for the storm to break, but nothing happened. Abraham Lincoln turned quietly to his desk and went on with his work” (1987, p. 3).

Lincoln not only kept his hardheaded secretary of war in office throughout his administration, but he eventually won him over. At Lincoln’s death, the man who had once derided him as a fool lamented, “There lies the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen.”

### Another leader arises to save his country

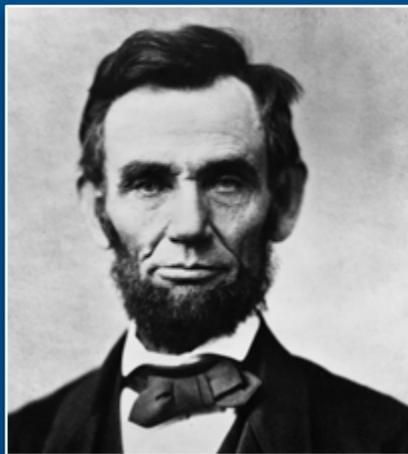
Neither Abraham Lincoln nor George Washington sought to build empires, amass great personal wealth or gain power for themselves. Their leadership qualities helped save their country in times of great crisis, as did the leadership of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

The free world owes Sir Winston Churchill a sizable debt. Had it not been for his bold stand against Hitler’s insatiable lust for power, post-World War II Europe (or much of it) might well have ended up under Nazi control.

Churchill’s remarkable leadership is highlighted in a memorable speech he gave before the House of Commons on June 4, 1940, just after the British withdrawal from France. In one of his nation’s darkest hours,



**When George Washington died, he was eulogized by one of his former generals as “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.”**



**At Abraham Lincoln’s death, the man who had once derided him as a fool lamented, “There lies the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen.”**

completely out of touch with those he commanded and the situation at hand” (p. 14).

Remarkably, Lincoln was a century ahead of his time. “Lincoln revealed the cornerstone of his own personal leadership philosophy, an approach that would become part of a revolution in modern leadership thinking 100 years later when it was dubbed MBWA (Managing by Wandering Around) by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman in their 1982 book *In Search of Excellence*” (p. 14).

### How “Honest Abe” earned his name

Presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln acquired the moniker “Honest Abe” during the campaign of 1860, but he’d earned it years earlier. During the early 1830s, Lincoln partnered with William Berry to run a general store. However, they ran up a debt he was left with after his partner died in 1835. Although it took him years, Lincoln repaid the \$1,100 they owed—a huge sum in those times.

senators to accuse Secretary of State William Seward before President Lincoln. The president got them together to talk out the situation. In the process, Chase suddenly realized that he had revealed his hidden agenda. He admitted Seward was not guilty and submitted his resignation.

“So what’s the lesson to be learned from this episode? Many corporate leaders will recognize Lincoln’s method because it is an often-used technique. They get all the members of feuding departments together, lock them in a conference room . . . and compel them to stay together until peace is made . . .

“Had he dictated [to them], they may have accepted his authority with great resentment. But the problem would not have gone away. It would have lingered and festered. By gathering the disputing parties, Lincoln let his subordinates lead themselves out of the mess” (p. 102).

Lincoln was known for never acting out of vengeance or spite and for being able to

he rallied his countrymen to stand firm in their time of peril:

“We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.”

Churchill became a symbol to the world of his country’s determination to resist the Nazi domination of the continent. Through his dogged leadership, his countrymen stood against a bullying tyrant who threatened the free world—and they survived.

### Tyrants left a deadly legacy

Regrettably, leaders like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill stand out because they were the exceptions, not the rule. History is filled with abusive leaders who mistreated and sacrificed others in their hunger for control. Often it was their own subjects, over whom they wielded life-or-death power.

The ancient Roman emperors often declared themselves gods. (One reportedly said on his deathbed, “I feel myself becoming a god!”) With this mind-set, other people were useful only to the extent that they could satisfy the leaders’ lust for power.

Three tyrannical leaders in the 20th century—Mao Tse-tung, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin—were responsible for more violent deaths than any before, in each case numbering tens of millions.

These dictators maintained their power by instilling fear in the masses on many levels. They eliminated rival institutions that might compete for loyalty, seized control of their educational systems for long-term influence, controlled the military structures and insisted on obedience to their personal opinions and whims.

It’s mind-boggling that such leaders could have wielded such monstrous power in the 20th century. Yet these tyrants were followed by equally evil megalomaniacs such as Cambodia’s Pol Pot, North Korea’s Kim Il Sung and Iraq’s Saddam Hussein, all of whom were responsible for the deaths of thousands to millions of their own countrymen in their quest to gain and maintain power.

### Real leadership is rare

Sadly, *real* leadership—the kind of leadership the Bible says God wants to see—is rare and precious indeed. Jesus Christ

defined for His disciples the perfect and principled leadership that really counts.

Before their conversion, the disciples naturally jockeyed for the most coveted positions. In response Jesus revealed to them the essence of true leadership:

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but *whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave*—just as the Son of Man did not come *to be served, but to serve*, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25-28, emphasis added throughout).

If aspiring leaders were required to practice these leadership qualities today, we

would go begging for candidates!

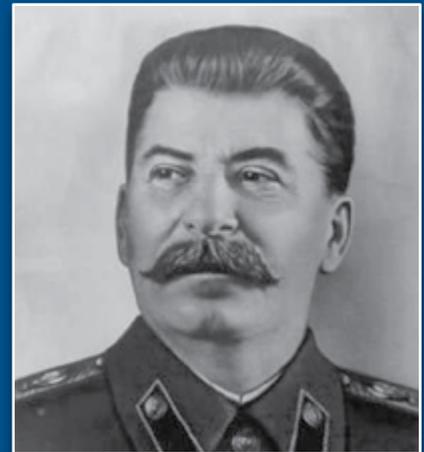
### Christ’s lesson on humility

God’s perspective on leadership is very different from ours. In fact it’s the polar opposite. “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

True leadership goes beyond shallow thinking, personal tastes and comfort zones. An effective leader understands and appreciates the need for *sacrifice and service* toward others. He is focused on *helping others* more than on helping himself.

Jesus Christ emphasized sacrificing for and

*Continued on page 21*



**Leaders like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill stand out because they were the exceptions and not the rule. History is filled with abusive leaders who mistreated and sacrificed others in their hunger for control.**

# Could Jesus Christ Be Elected President?

*As the United States enters the final weeks of a hotly contested presidential election campaign, this is a good time to ask a crucial question: Could Jesus Christ be elected president?*

by Howard Davis

Jesus Christ remains one of the most respected leaders—as well as one of the most controversial—the world has ever known. Most people acknowledge that He was good; many believe He was a great man. If He were on earth today, a fascinating question to ponder is: Would the American people ever elect Him to be president of the United States?

The question isn't that far-fetched. After all, He said He was destined to rule the Kingdom of God, bearing authority over the earth. The Bible calls Him King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

So could Jesus Christ be elected president in today's America?

The blunt answer is *no*. Most Americans would not tolerate Jesus of Nazareth in the White House if they had a choice.

## What kind of platform?

We can reach no other conclusion when we examine the electoral process and the priorities the American people use in selecting their president. Jesus Christ would not stand a chance based on the platform He would advocate. After all, the American people demand that an electable leader be in agreement with them on a range of issues.

Americans want religious freedom (or freedom *from* religion) to define God or gods in any way they want, freedom of choice to select abortion for unwanted pregnancies and freedom to enjoy whatever entertainment they desire—including films, music, books and television drenched with violence and illicit sex. Many Americans demand unrestrained sexual freedom between consenting adults. They want and fully expect unhindered and total freedom of speech.

Americans want full freedom to define culture and lifestyle issues in their image. They want unrestrained freedom to divorce.

True, Americans claim to want fairness, justice, economic and educational opportunity for all. But all freedoms and social values must be defined on *their* terms.

Above all, they want the ability to get the leader they think best suits their desires and to get rid of a leader they don't like or get bored with when he fails to bring utopia. They want that choice on a very regular basis. They view this as a sacred right.

What Christ's platform would be, and how that would impact the American voter, is easily discernible from His teachings. After all, the Bible says Jesus is "the same, yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Read the Bible and you will know His platform.

## Redefining the mission of government

First, Jesus Christ would make major changes in the governing documents that define citizens' and government's roles. He would permanently change the intent and nature of government.

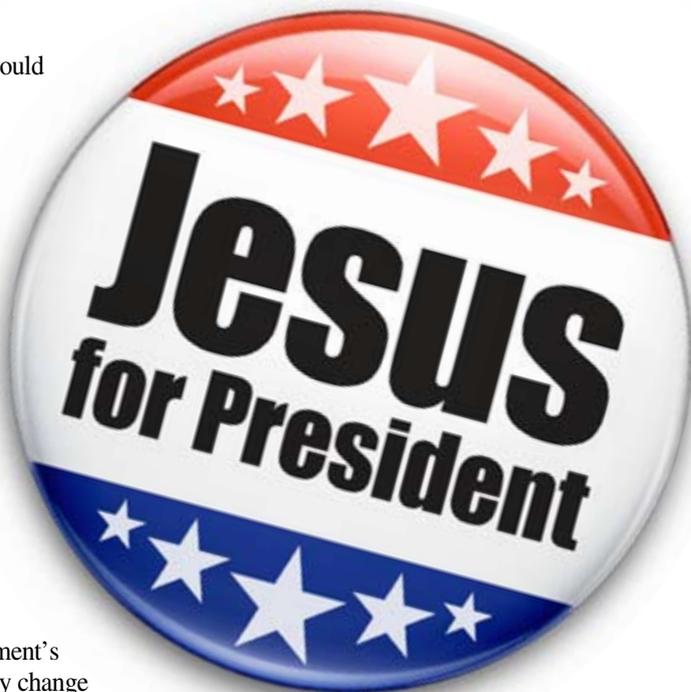
His new constitution would be designed to fulfill the ultimate purpose for the creation of every man and woman. He would explain that His new government is designed to prepare people to live forever in the Kingdom of God.

He would call for a new world order based on His Father's law and advocate creating a perfect society of peace, human development and love. His new constitution and government would guide all policies toward the spiritual transformation of physical man, created in the image of God, into the divine man with the nature and character of God. All education and social policy would be directed to this objective.

This purpose is far greater than the founding fathers' intent in creating the Constitution of the United States in 1787. While a marvel of human wisdom, the American Constitution—and the Declaration of Independence Thomas Jefferson penned in 1776—limited men to a humanly defined purpose for government and social policy.

In pursuit of ultimate good, the founders thought American government should be based on what they acknowledged as the God-given rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Jefferson, however, did not fully comprehend God's ultimate purpose for these things when he penned these words.

The purpose of life is not found in the U.S.



Constitution. And sadly, the Constitution is now subject to interpretation in such a way that people are exercising supposed rights that take away life for some and forfeit the freedom from corruption and evil influences for many. Through exercise of "rights," many are destroyed as they pursue "happiness."

The problem is that the aspirations of the Constitution, though high in human terms, are too low. Neither Thomas Jefferson nor the other founding fathers ever conceived of the Constitution as a framework for the development of human character in the divine image of God's nature.

Yet that purpose is the essence of Jesus Christ's purpose for governance. That is the platform He would use, were He to run for president.

That's a tragic omission in the American founding documents. While filling these with wonderful-sounding phrases, some of which were borrowed from the Bible, the founding fathers never fully understood the ultimate purpose of government as revealed in the Scriptures.

Most of them considered themselves Christian. Yet none fully grasped the intent and nature of Christ's pronouncements on government as He proclaimed the Kingdom of God. Sadly, today's society is much farther

removed from the Bible and the profound truths it proclaims.

## Reaction to Christ's platform

How would the idea of a new constitution from Jesus Christ go over with the American electorate today? A plan to abolish the U.S. Constitution and replace it with one authored by Jesus Himself would be the ultimate campaign killer. But just the positions Christ took on practical matters of everyday living would eliminate His chances of being elected.

For example, Jesus advocated that the Ten Commandments be universally taught and kept as the standard for human behavior. "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets," He said. "I did not come to

who choose to observe Sunday instead.

Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, so He would offend the vast majority of Jewish and Muslim voters who would consider this claim blasphemous.

## What kind of leader would He be?

Ironically, Jesus' teachings and practices are the same factors that would make Him a perfect leader. His perfect integrity, compassion, miraculous powers of healing, love for all and willingness to die for the sins of mankind—including people of every race, religion and economic status—set Him apart.

Jesus is the ultimate model of leadership—uncompromising but compassionate. With perfect ethics, He taught fairness and

## A plan to abolish the U.S. Constitution and replace it with one authored by Jesus Himself would be the ultimate campaign killer.

destroy but to fulfill . . . Whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17, 19).

There goes the atheist vote, agnostic vote and, oddly enough, much of the Christian vote—at least from those who believe the Ten Commandments are too invasive when it comes to their personal freedoms.

The First Commandment, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3) would be considered a major violation of religious freedom.

A large percentage of the electorate believes that observing the commandments and law of God would force a breakdown of the separation of church and state. "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17)—Christ's position on the Ten Commandments—would be an affront to those who believe that grace does away with a need to keep those commandments.

Another factor is that Jesus was Jewish, a member of an ethnic minority against which there is still considerable prejudice in America. Jesus' customs and teachings would appear far too Jewish for most voters, including most Christian voters. For example, He kept the Passover (and told His followers to do the same) and never observed Christmas, Easter or any other nonbiblical religious celebration or practice.

Jesus in fact kept God's Sabbaths as times of rest and worship (see Luke 4:16), including the weekly Sabbath from Friday sunset until Saturday sunset. He even said He is "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). His Sabbath observance would offend many of those

concern for the well-being of all, demonstrating virtue and truthfulness in every action. He taught the value of the family, said marriage was inviolable and directed that we should honor and care for our elderly and the disadvantaged.

Yet Jesus—though perfect in His leadership—will never be elected president.

Christ, you see, would never run for the office to start with. He would never play political games. He would not compromise the truth or His ethics and values. He would not curry the favor of special interests in exchange for campaign donations.

We must remember that Jesus was not interested in political maneuvers or in exercising worldly political power in this age. "My kingdom is not of this world," He told the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, . . . but now My kingdom is not from here" (John 18:36).

## Destined for a higher office

We should have no regrets over the fact that Jesus of Nazareth will never be elected president of the United States or of any other nation of this world.

He has, after all, already been selected for an infinitely higher office.

He currently serves at God's throne in heaven as the High Priest for truly converted Christians. And He promises to return as the earth's ruler—under the auspices of His Father—and to take the reins of all authority when mankind needs God's intervention to save us from the corruption and

collapse of human leadership.

As Jesus further told Pilate: "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37).

The message of the Bible is that *we cannot rightly rule ourselves*. We need a perfect ruler who has demonstrated ultimate love and concern for others to show us the way. Jesus Christ has perfectly qualified. And He will be that ruler!

The Bible says Jesus will one day rule all nations directly from Jerusalem in what the Bible calls the Kingdom of God. Not only will that Kingdom bring peace and prosperity undreamed of even among the prosperous Western nations of today, but it will accomplish nothing less than the transformation of human beings into the divine nature and enable them to be like Christ Himself.

A totally new form of government under the administration of Jesus Christ will bring all of the earth's citizens directly under the governance of the Kingdom of God. Only then will all Americans, and the citizens of the entire world, truly experience "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

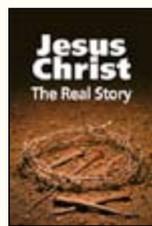
It was Christ Himself who said nearly 2,000 years ago, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). He will establish the first truly great society, one that surpasses the most optimistic visions dreamed about and proclaimed by politicians.

When Christ comes, there will be no need for a democratic process to elect the nations' top leadership. He is a king. In fact, He has already been chosen King of Kings. And He has already issued a series of executive orders.

He does not endorse human political leaders today. But He does tell you to believe the good news and accept Him as your leader both now and for all eternity. Are you willing to make that choice? **GN**

## Recommended Reading

What kind of leader was Jesus of Nazareth when He walked the earth 2,000 years ago? What kind of leader will He be when He returns as He promised? What kind of difference will His rule make for every man, woman and child on the planet? Discover the answers in our free booklets *Jesus Christ: The Real Story* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. Both are yours free for the asking.



Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download them from our Web site at

[www.gnmagazine.org/booklets](http://www.gnmagazine.org/booklets)

# Coming: God's Solutions to the World's Problems

*Nearly everywhere we look, the world seems to be spinning out of control. Why do we see so many problems? Can we find a solution? Does the Bible offer hope for answers?*

by Roger Foster

**E**verywhere we look, we see the storm clouds of global peril. Disasters of all shapes and sizes are increasingly transforming how we live.

Skyrocketing oil prices and a housing/debt crisis shake the economy. A worldwide economic slowdown seems imminent.

Floods and drought contribute to food shortages, riots, hunger and starvation. Even diseases once considered conquered are making a comeback.

Devastating earthquakes and coastal flooding take tens of thousands of lives, leaving hundreds of thousands more homeless. Populated areas are devastated by cyclones and hurricanes.

Terrorism is global. Gang violence plagues our cities. Militant nations support terrorist activity; some, like Iran and North Korea, pursue nuclear arms. Islamic extremists openly declare their intent to overthrow Western civilization. And the Middle East threatens to explode at any moment. It's not a pretty picture!

## Has our world gone haywire?

Writing for the Associated Press, Alan Fram and Eileen Putman summarize the fears they've recently encountered across America: "Is everything spinning out of control? Mid-western levees are bursting. Polar bears are adrift. Gas prices are skyrocketing. Home values are abysmal. Air fares, college tuition and health care border on unaffordable. Wars without end rage in Iraq, Afghanistan and against terrorism . . . Americans need do no more than check the weather, look in their wallets or turn on the news for their daily reality check on a world gone haywire" (June 21, 2008).

The current disasters are just the tip of the iceberg. That is to say, present problems clearly in view sit atop a vast body of accumulated evidence beyond immediate observation.

More than a decade ago *The Good News* magazine began noting the expanding intensity of weather-related and other types of natural disasters. The trend is truly disturbing.



As an example, the January-February 2000 issue of *The Good News* reported: "A representative of the reinsurance company Munich Re, which has monitored the frequency and scope of natural disasters for a quarter century and advises the insurance industry, stated: 'Comparing the figures for the 1960s and the past ten years, we have established that the number of natural disasters was three times larger [in 1998]. The cost to the world's economies, after adjusting for inflation, is nine times higher and for the insurance industry three times as much'" (page 14).

Since then the severity of natural disasters has steadily intensified. All indications are that this trend will continue. As time goes on, we will see even more unbelievable calamities and eventually a global storm of catastrophic troubles such as the world has never before experienced!

## Distinguishing symptoms from causes

Strange as it may seem, all these trends are merely symptoms of a much greater problem—the way average people the world over think and behave!

This, of course, would make no sense whatsoever if there were no God, no one to hold us accountable. But there is a God who has a sincere concern for His creation. Therefore, it is vital that we know His response to our attitudes and actions!

And that's exactly what the Bible explains. It tells us how God responds to our actions,

thoughts and behavior. It even explains when, why and how He will do it. No other book is like it!

The author of no other book declares, "Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'" (Isaiah 46:9-10, New American Standard Bible). It is only by the Author behind these words that the real cause for the grief in our world is correctly explained.

And He intends not only to get the attention of the whole world, but also to change it dramatically!

Long ago God announced the methods He will use to end human misconduct. But before we go to that aspect of His purpose, let's first consider His sincere concern for us.

His interest in our ultimate welfare is expressed clearly in John 3:17: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, *but that the world through Him might be saved*" (emphasis added throughout).

But what is meant by the stated purpose here? *From what* do we need to be saved?

We need salvation from death and destruction and the wrong way of life that leads to this end. Speaking bluntly, that means we need to be saved *from the way* we

*treat each other!* We need to be saved from our lack of self-control and from the sheer selfishness that plagues our relationships.

Mankind desperately needs a *change of heart*. Concerning this, the famous American military hero Gen. Douglas MacArthur spoke plainly to the U.S. Congress on April 19, 1951, saying: “If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system [than dealing with our problems through warfare], Armageddon will be at the door.

But He also gave us *freedom of choice*, which, by its very nature, requires that our *character development* also must be *by choice*. And herein lies our vulnerability to what God calls wickedness or sin.

To have not given us free choice would have required God to make all choices *for us*, leaving us preprogrammed robots without any possibility of ever developing the decision-making capability He wants us to possess. So to help us build right character

Even in this retraining phase, *free choice* is still very much in play. But now the stakes are much higher—a clear choice between the enthusiastic development of righteous character with the promise of eternal life, or oblivion. No other option will be available.

### The coming storm

This brings us to where we started, the reason for one crisis after another threatening our very existence. Before God’s retraining



## Over the past 10 years the severity of natural disasters has steadily intensified. All indications are that this trend will continue.

The problem basically is theological . . . It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh” (*Reminiscences*, 1964, p. 404).

In essence he was expressing a core aspect of the message of the Bible!

### How God plans to correct our imperfections

To fully understand God’s reasons for creating us the way we are, we must return to the beginning of human existence. God’s great purpose for mankind has always been to make us capable of supervising and managing everything else that He created in a responsible and caring manner.

That is why, as He was preparing to give life to the first two human beings, He explained that His purpose was to “let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him” (Genesis 1:26-27).

He gave us, in a limited way, some of the same intellectual and creative characteristics that *He* possesses. We are able to think, learn, imagine, plan and invent exceedingly beyond the capability of all other physical creatures.

voluntarily, God chose to give us freedom of choice—and then, after we’ve had our fill of bad choices and bad results, to put us through a *rigorous retraining* program.

Almost none of the earth’s population today knows anything about that retraining plan. But it is clearly revealed in God’s written Word, the Bible.

He instructed one of His prophets, “Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked *turn from his way and live*’” (Ezekiel 33:11).

Rescuing us from our own foolishness and its destructive effects is His objective. And He fully intends to succeed.

Regarding His determination to change human misbehavior, He says: “Listen to Me, you stubborn-minded, who are far from righteousness. I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off; and My salvation will not delay” (Isaiah 46:12-13, NASB).

Those willing to respond positively and sincerely to His corrective teachings will receive forgiveness, eternal life and responsibility beyond all they have ever imagined. All who stubbornly and persistently refuse to change will ultimately be denied any hope of life beyond their temporary physical existence.

program can get underway, mankind’s option to choose evil over good behavior—with little concern about divine retribution—will be brought to a screeching halt.

Shortly before God’s *full-scale intervention* in world affairs—in the years leading to Jesus Christ’s return—both manmade and natural disasters will start shattering the confidence of all nations. Jesus personally explained to His disciples what world conditions would be like as that time draws near:

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains [occurring with increasing frequency and intensity like the contractions of a woman in labor].

“Then you [the truly obedient and fully committed servants of God] will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved” (Matthew 24:6-13, New International Version).

International conflicts and natural disasters

will cause famines that will destabilize life on earth. As social stability fragments, resentment toward sincere believers in the Bible will increase dramatically.

The Bible refers to this period as “the time of the end.” It is not the end of all human activity, only the end of mankind’s “do as you wish” option. And when it ends, it will end with a bang!

But before the world’s present corrupt system completely falls apart, one more divinely

*there*. He will arbitrate among the nations and dictate to strong nations far away. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nations shall no longer fight each other, for all war will end. There will be universal peace, and all the military academies and training camps will be closed down.

“Everyone will live quietly in his own home in peace and prosperity, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord himself has

Devil and Satan, *who deceives the whole world*” (Revelation 12:9). And the religious world is as much his playground as the rest of human society! He popularizes many of his greatest deceptions through supposedly Christian organizations and teachers.

The apostle Paul describes them: “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, *masquerading as apostles of Christ*. And no wonder, *for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light*. It is not surprising, then, if his



## “Everyone will live quietly in his own home in peace and prosperity, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord himself has promised this . . .”

appointed activity must be completed: “And *this gospel of the kingdom* will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).

### The suppressed message of God’s Kingdom

The crux of Jesus Christ’s message, His gospel, is that He will return as the King of all nations and *will rule here on the earth!* That message has been distorted or rejected by most who claim to preach His gospel today.

Notice this prophecy of the absolute reality of His earthly rule at the time of His second coming: “But in the last days Mount Zion [in Jerusalem] will be the most renowned of all the mountains of the world, praised by all nations; people from all over the world will make pilgrimages there. ‘Come,’ they will say to one another, ‘let us visit the mountain of the Lord, and see the Temple of the God of Israel; *he will tell us what to do, and we will do it.*’

“*For in those days the whole world will be ruled by the Lord from Jerusalem!* He will issue his laws and announce his decrees from

promised this . . . In that coming day, the Lord says that he will bring back his punished people [formerly unfaithful Israelites]—sick and lame and dispossessed—and make them strong again in their own land, a mighty nation, and *the Lord himself shall be their King from Mount Zion forever*” (Micah 4:1-7, The Living Bible).

This is a major part of the message Jesus has instructed His true servants to proclaim to all nations today.

Why is this message so important? It is the foundation for God’s plan to retrain the masses of mankind, to teach them the ways of true righteousness so they can repent and be offered eternal life!

It is also a message about how all the world’s deceivers will finally be silenced. Because of this, it is a message that the devil, the greatest adversary of the coming Kingdom of God, hates with a passion.

### The devil’s fifth-column movement

The Scriptures describe the world’s arch-deceiver as “that serpent of old, called the

servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15, NIV).

Since Paul’s day, many groups and organizations considering themselves Christians have been deceived into accepting doctrines and beliefs contrary to biblical teachings. These deceptions have a common aim—to distract us from Christ’s main message about the Kingdom of God, the core of His gospel.

There is no way humanity can be brought to repentance and successfully retrained in the way of righteousness without direct contact with Jesus Christ as both their Savior and King. So this is the very thing that Satan, the great deceiver, wants to thwart from happening.

As Christ’s return draws near, Bible prophecy shows that Satan will greatly increase his efforts to destroy all hope for the success of God’s retraining program. He will use every influence possible to oppose the establishment of a real Kingdom of God on the earth!

Satan’s goal is to convince mankind that the biblical promise that Jesus will be the *literal* King of all mankind is merely a myth. He would like to poison even your mind, to convince you to reject the returning Christ as your King. The devil’s self-serving influence will affect every aspect of human activity.

## The necessity of Christ's earthly rule

"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power . . . always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth" (2 Timothy 3:1-7, NIV).

Jesus once explained: "At that time, many will lose their faith, and they will turn against each other and hate each other. Many false prophets will come and cause many people to believe lies. There will be more and more evil in the world, so most people will stop showing their love for each other. But those people who keep their faith until the end will be saved. The Good News about God's kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end [of human society under Satan's influence] will come" (Matthew 24:10-14, New Century Version).

Here is how God promises to end that terrible time: "I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it . . . Then the LORD [Jesus Christ] will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem . . . The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD" (Zechariah 14:2-4, 9, NIV).

What a remarkable change that event will bring!

## The retraining of mankind begins

Once Christ assumes full control, the time we read about in Micah 4 will be here. Nations will come to learn God's laws and ways and will no longer learn the way of war.

This will be the peace that is to follow the disasters prophesied to humble humanity to the point that Jesus Christ's teachings will be welcomed with enthusiasm by all nations.

God promises that under His administration, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

For the next 1,000 years the earth will be transformed into a paradise. Once Christ's rule is secured, biblical teachings will be the way of life that the entire world will be required to learn.

Representatives from every nation on earth will journey to Jerusalem to attend the annual festivals commanded in the Bible (compare Leviticus 23; Zechariah 14:16-19).

"Come," everyone will say, "let us go up the mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Israel; there *he will teach us his laws, and we will obey them.*" For in those days *the world will be ruled from Jerusalem.* The Lord will settle international disputes; all the nations will convert their weapons of war into implements of peace. Then at the last all wars will stop and all military training will end" (Isaiah 2:3-4, TLB).

These festivals will provide one of the primary structures for implementing God's retraining program. The people of every nation will have to participate.

By the end of that millennial period vast numbers of people will understand God's teachings. And they will be superbly trained in the ways of righteousness—right here on this earth.

## Hope for the "rest of the dead"

The apostle Paul said, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ *all shall be made alive*" (1 Corinthians 15:22). And Peter says plainly, "The Lord is . . . *not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9).

These two statements, along with other passages, indicate that the billions of people who have died with no opportunity to be taught by Jesus Christ will still be given that opportunity.

Other scriptures show that not everyone will repent. But the fact that God is unwilling to allow them to perish without receiving that opportunity is important.

In Revelation 20 the apostle John gives us the time when their opportunity for repentance will be made available: "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished" (verse 5). (For additional details concerning what will be required of "the rest of the dead" and how Christ will deal with them, please request our free booklet *What Happens After Death?*)

Once the "rest of the dead" are resurrected and given sufficient time to decide whether or not they will sincerely repent, Jesus Christ's retraining program for mankind will be complete.

## Your responsibility!

One principle stands out in regard to the understanding God gives to any human being. He holds each person accountable for what he or she knows of His ways. "Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin" (James 4:17, New Revised Standard Version).

Jesus also spoke plainly, "Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like

a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

"But he who heard and *did nothing* is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great" (Luke 6:47-49).

With knowledge comes responsibility (Luke 12:47-48). God's teachings are a way of life. When that way of life is revealed to us, God watches to see how we respond. He warns us not to ignore what we learn, not to harden our hearts through neglect or indifference.

"Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion [of the ancient Israelites], as on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors put me to the test, though they had seen my works for forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and I said, "They always go astray in their hearts, and they have not known my ways.'" . . . Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you may have an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:7-12, NRSV).

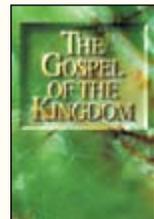
The Bible's prophecies tell us what's coming. Before the peace of the Kingdom of God arrives, a chain of disasters is destined to strike the whole world. God intends to get mankind's full attention.

Does He have your attention? Are you responding to His commands humbly and willingly? Or will those coming calamities strike when you are least prepared?

If you need personal counsel, please contact us at the office in your country listed on page 2. We have a trained ministry that can assist you. Please feel free to seek personal guidance if and when you need it. Jesus Christ is pulling for your success. And so are we! **GN**

## Recommended Reading

The word *gospel* means "good news." Jesus Christ brought a message of good news, but few understand what that message is all about. Regrettably, even most churches don't really understand it. But you can! Be sure to read our free booklet *The Gospel of the Kingdom* to discover the ultimate good news God has in store for all of mankind! Download or request your free copy today.



Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download it from our Web site at

[www.gnmagazine.org/booklets](http://www.gnmagazine.org/booklets)

## “Globosclerosis”—the failure to solve serious world problems

Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and the opening of the iron curtain, observers of the world scene have noted an increasing inability to resolve mounting global difficulties. They look back on the Truman-Marshall-Acheson era following World War II with considerable nostalgia.

Think of the Marshall Plan, which bailed Europe out of its economic difficulties. Recall Truman’s rescue of Greece from communism. Remember the creation of NATO, which spared Western Europe from a total communist takeover. The Korean War (1950-1953) ended in a stalemate, but the allied effort rescued South Korea from communism, which for decades has impoverished North Korea and isolated it from the rest of the world.

More recent times tell a very different story. Where do we begin? The global economic order is gradually weakening. India dug in its heels at the fairly recent Doha world trade talks and they collapsed in tatters. Also, Russia and China derailed UN sanctions designed to put pressure on the rogue nation of Zimbabwe. China’s desire for Sudan’s oil effectively blocked Western efforts to prevent genocide in Darfur.

In the Middle East, Iran continues to play political games with the West while proceeding with its nuclear ambitions. Some Israeli observers fear that America has changed direction and is now appeasing Iran. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process is bogged down with talks going nowhere.

**It appears that we are living in a unique period in world history—a time of transition from this age of man to the millennial period when Jesus Christ and His saints will rule over all nations.**

Pakistan is in political chaos with many believing that former President Musharraf was responsible for all that country’s problems, but with no consensus on how to solve them now. Russia appears to be taking steps to reclaim the states of the former Soviet empire. The country of Georgia, recently invaded by Russia, remains under grave threat, and the Ukraine is deeply worried about Russian intentions.

Traditionally, first Great Britain and then the United States took the lead in policing and controlling world problems. Now American and Western authority appears to be waning in the world. President George W. Bush’s domestic approval ratings are hovering at around 29 percent, with Japan’s Yasuo Fukuda at 26 percent and Britain’s Gordon Brown at only 17 percent.

Germany’s Angela Merkel, France’s Nicolas Sarkozy and Italy’s Silvio Berlusconi’s ratings in Europe are somewhat higher, but nowhere near what they should be to effectively lead their respective nations. The inescapable conclusion is that citizens don’t have much faith in their political leaders. The mantle of authority has grown ragged, and rogue regimes defiantly push their agendas.

It appears that we are living in a unique period in world history—a time of transition from this age of man to the millennial period when Jesus Christ and His saints will rule over all nations. Only the Bible can put these confusing global happenings into a proper perspective. To understand how, request or download our free booklet *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* (Source: *International Herald Tribune*.)

### Britain: repairing a broken society

Politicians of every stripe are notorious for their lack of ability to solve the deep-seated problems of our societies. However, sometimes they are able to state the problem clearly. On July 7, Conservative party leader David Cameron spoke in Glasgow on behalf of his party’s national candidate there.

What he said about morality makes a lot of good sense. He stated: “We have seen a decades-long erosion of responsibility, of social virtue, of self-discipline, respect for others . . . Instead we prefer moral neutrality, a refusal to make judgments about what is good and bad behaviour, right and wrong behaviour.”

“Bad. Good. Right. Wrong. These are words that our political system and our public sector scarcely use anymore . . . Refusing to use these words—*right* and *wrong*—means a denial of personal responsibility and the concept of moral choice . . . There is a danger of becoming quite literally a de-moralised society, where nobody will tell the truth anymore about what is good and bad, right and wrong.”

“That is why children are growing up without boundaries, thinking they can do as they please, and why no adult will intervene to stop them—including, often, their parents. The values needed to repair our broken society and build a strong society are values that should be taught in the home, in the family. *I want a mandate for restoring responsibility to our society, to call time on the twisted values that have eaten away at our social fabric*” (excerpts from text of East Glasgow speech, emphasis added).



**“Children are growing up without boundaries, thinking they can do as they please, and no adult will intervene to stop them . . .”**

During his speech Cameron said nothing directly about God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, the Christian religion or any other religion for that matter. But his words about morality were generally based on the Judeo-Christian ethic. They ring true, not applying just to the United Kingdom but to the entire Western world and especially the English-speaking peoples around the globe.

Afterwards Cameron suffered caustic verbal punishment from members of the liberal press and the intelligentsia behind it. His words did not fit with their amoral stance on basic issues governing morality. But regardless of whether his political party can or would carry out a program designed to repair British society should it ever become the ruling government again, what he said in Glasgow remains fundamentally true.

### Russia allied with Cuba again?

According to Jorge Castañeda, Mexico’s former foreign minister and now a professor at New York University, “Russian Prime



Minister Vladimir Putin’s surprising announcement in early August that his country would seek to ‘re-establish’ ties with the Soviet Union’s old allies in Havana stirred up excitement in many foreign newsrooms and raised eyebrows in a few foreign ministries around the world” (*Newsweek*, Aug. 18, 2008).

We wonder why the surprise, since such a development would be in perfect keeping with the Russian Federation’s foreign policy moves for the entire year.

The possibility of the Russian military using Cuba as a fueling station for its Bear bombers has been broached. These bombers are capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Russia is also increasing its ties to Venezuela, with President Hugo Chavez having already bought between \$4 and \$6 billion of arms from the Russians, with an apparent deal to purchase \$60 billion more in the next six years. We may well ask the question as to why Venezuela needs all those arms. (Source: *Newsweek*.)



# An Overview of Conditions Around the World

## Huge bankruptcy rise among seniors

**F**rom 1991 to 2007, the rate of personal bankruptcy among those ages 65 or older jumped by 150%, according to AARP [the American Association of Retired Persons]. The most startling rise occurred among those ages 75 to 84, whose rates soared 433% (*USA Today*, June 18, 2008). Medical bills are a huge factor. Experts believe that health care is the biggest factor in increasing bankruptcies among elderly

Americans. A major health problem in old age can wipe out a person's savings and put one deeply in debt.

Many senior citizens, instead of entering retirement in good financial shape, are loaded with debt. Social security payments often are simply not high enough to meet rising costs of food, medicine and housing.

It's never too late to begin to get your personal finances back on track. If you do your part, according to the financial principles laid down in the Bible, God will help! He has resources at His fingertips that we cannot even imagine. (To see how, request our free booklet *Making Life Work*.) (Source: *USA Today*.)

## Ethiopians again facing starvation

**T**ime magazine reports that "despite years of aid from the West, millions of Africans are on the brink of starvation again" (Aug. 18, 2008). *The Guardian* added: "Despite appearances, a cycle of drought and escalating food prices is taking its toll" (Aug. 1, 2008).

Ethiopia is the main cause of concern. The *Guardian* article stated: "As hunger across the country grows, a shortfall in food aid resources and a grain shortage in the country's strategic reserves have forced the government to reduce the monthly rations it provides to more than 4 million Ethiopians."

The United States has sought to help Ethiopia. American aid is around \$800 million, including \$460 million in food aid and \$350 million in help for the treatment of HIV/AIDS. The *Time* cover feature concluded: "The sobering lesson: Even the best efforts to eliminate hunger are expensive, slow and uncertain of success." (Sources: *The Guardian* [London], *Time*.)



## Eating your way to good health

**W**e live in a fast-food, throwaway society bent on immediate gratification. Now reports say that many Americans have become obese.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, under the heading of "U.S. Obesity Trends 1985–2007," sounded these warning notes on its Web site: "During the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States . . . In 2007, only one state (Colorado) had a prevalence of obesity less than 20%. Thirty states had a prevalence equal to or greater than 25%; three of these states (Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee) had a prevalence of obesity equal to or greater than 30%."

What's so remarkable about this is that most Americans believe that many fast food chains are *healthy* eating establishments. Affluent America remains ignorant, lazy and apathetic about what it eats. Heart disease and cancer have become more prevalent while the medical field still treats the symptoms, not the disease.

There are alternatives. We can eat smarter and better, if we choose. We can also exercise more and get the right amount of rest. Interested readers may also want to request or download our free booklet *Making Life Work*. (Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).)

## Teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases

**I**n Britain the age of consent for sexual relations is supposedly 16. However, according to a *Daily Telegraph* report in June 2008, more than 1,000 girls younger than 14 had abortions in the previous year.

Concern is also growing about the spiraling rise in teen pregnancies in Britain, including those that are not ended by an abortion. According to the government Web site "Every Child Matters," the Independent Advisory Group on Teenage Pregnancy (TPIAG) published its fifth annual report suggesting strategies for halving conception rates for both the 16 to 18 age range and establishing "a firm downward trend" in the rate for those under 16.

Not surprisingly, there is a corresponding upward rise in the rates of sexually transmitted diseases. The British government plans to combat this by offering around 300,000 girls between the ages of 17 and 18 vaccinations against the human papilloma virus (HPV), which causes genital warts and, if not treated, can lead to cervical cancer. (*The Sunday Times*, July 20, 2008). The government also plans to vaccinate younger girls.

Merely treating the effects of early sexual promiscuity and making information on sex and its hazards more readily available appears to government departments to be the only solution. Few consider obeying the law, and more importantly *God's law*, as an answer to the problem. (Sources: *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Times* [both London], [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk).)

## An encouraging American trend

**A**ccording to Lionel Beechner, formerly a senior writer at the Council on Foreign Relations, "Americans today are embracing world affairs, and international news coverage is picking up and feeding on the trend—looking to broaden a growing audience" (*USA Today*, July 10, 2008).

From 2000 to 2006 there was a 200 percent increase in applications for foreign service in the United States. And from 1993 to the present, Americans have doubled their readership of *The Economist*, a British weekly newsmagazine covering international affairs. Beechner concludes: "It took a few wars and wobbly oil markets for us to learn that, as the song goes, it's a small world after all."

If you'd like to better understand what is happening around the world and why, request a free subscription to our sister magazine *World News and Prophecy*. (Source: *USA Today*.)

## How Can You Make Sense of the News?

So much is happening in the world, and so quickly. Where are today's dramatic and dangerous trends taking us? What does Bible prophecy reveal about our future? You're probably very concerned with the direction the world is heading. So are we. That's why we've created the *World News and Prophecy* Web site—to help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy. This eye-opening site offers you a perspective you won't find anywhere else—the perspective of God's Word, the Bible. Visit us at [www.wnponline.org](http://www.wnponline.org) today!



# The Russian Bear Has Awakened

*While the world was distracted by the Olympic games in Beijing, Russia suddenly invaded Georgia, a staunch Western ally and possible future NATO member. What's behind Russia's muscle-flexing?*

by Scott Ashley and John Ross Schroeder

**S**eventy years ago Adolf Hitler's armies marched into Czechoslovakia, claiming they were responding to the desire of the German population of the Sudetenland to reunify with Germany. While other countries protested, no one lifted a finger to stop him. A few months later his troops swallowed up the whole of Czechoslovakia, followed not long after by most of Europe.

On Aug. 7, 2008, Russian armies marched into the Georgian province of South Ossetia, claiming they were responding to the desire of the ethnic Russian people there to reunify with the motherland. Other European countries and the United States have protested, but the reality is that none are in a position to do much of anything.

Russian policy since Joseph Stalin's time was to encourage Russians to resettle in its satellite states. This created the situation in Georgia where two provinces, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, have large ethnic Russian populations (North Ossetia is part of the Russian Federation).

Russia used these populations to foment unrest—including regular artillery exchanges between South Ossetians and the Georgian military—to essentially lure the Georgian government into a trap. When Georgian troops moved into South Ossetia on Aug. 7 in response to recent provocations, Russian armored columns and aircraft quickly poured in to counterattack. Within two days they fully controlled the province.

But that wasn't enough. On Aug. 11 Russian forces drove forward from Abkhazia, Georgia's other province with a large Russian population, while others drove south from South Ossetia, cutting Georgia in half by capturing its main east-west highway and rail route. And while a cease-fire agreement was signed on Aug. 14 calling for both sides to pull back to prewar positions, at the time of this writing the Russians were digging in and appeared to have no intention of leaving soon.

## Russian saber rattling

These events clearly show that the Russian bear has awakened from its 17-year hibernation (since the 1991 disintegration of the Soviet Union) and is determinedly flexing its muscles.

Georgia is not the only target of Russian hostility. When Poland agreed on Aug. 14 to allow the United States to set up an antimissile base there, Gen. Anatoli Nogovitsyn,

*"This is not a game and participation is not voluntary . . . The decision on whether to confront Russia is an enormously tough one."*

deputy chief of the general staff in Moscow, threatened Russia's former ally with nuclear attack. Russian President Dmitri Medvedev dismissed American arguments that the missile shield is intended to protect against launches from rogue states such as Iran. "The deployment of new antimissile forces has as its aim the Russian Federation," he stated.

Russia has also threatened Ukraine. As *The Sunday Times* [London] stated on Aug. 17: "Vladimir Putin, the Russian prime minister, warned [Victor] Yushchenko [Ukraine's reformist president] last February that Russia could point nuclear missiles at Ukraine if it co-operated with US missile plans. Ukraine is insisting that the Russian military must leave Sebastopol when the lease on the base expires in 2017. The Russian navy has made it clear that it may refuse to do so" (Askold Krushelnycky, "Ukraine Torments Kremlin With Show of Solidarity").

The stakes, as the London *Times* points out, could be much higher there: "If the West was surprised by the ferocity of Russia's action in Georgia, the struggle over Ukraine will be far more intense. Many Russians regard their western neighbour as part of their homeland, a view shared by many Russian-speaking Ukrainians . . . Any outbreak of violence could have huge repercussions" (Richard Beeston, "A Catastrophe in the Making," Aug. 16).

Russia seems determined to show its former Eastern Bloc allies who's boss in the region. Josef Joffe, publisher-editor of *Die Zeit* and a fellow of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford, wrote in his Aug. 12 piece in *The Wall Street Journal* titled "Welcome Back to the 19th Century":

"Moscow has unleashed a cyberwar against tiny Estonia, formerly a Soviet republic. It has threatened the Czech Repub-

lic and Poland with nuclear targeting if they host U.S. antimissile hardware on their soil that could not possibly threaten Russia's retaliatory potential. It has exploited small

price disputes (normally resolved by lawyers screaming at each other) to stop gas deliveries and thus show Ukraine, Belarus and former Warsaw Pact members who runs [things]."

## A strong message to Europe

In Russia, this invasion demonstrates that Prime Minister Putin still calls the shots, though he has given up the presidency to his protégé Medvedev.

With his invasion of Georgia, Putin is sending a message not only to countries formerly in the Soviet sphere, but to Europe. As Joffe stated in his Aug. 12 piece: "Georgia is the 'last of the independents,' so to speak, a critical conduit of oil and gas that goes around Russia into the Black Sea and (with a planned gas pipeline) via Turkey into the Mediterranean. It is no accident that Russian planes are bombing throughout the country, and narrowly 'missed' pipelines. The message to the West is: 'You don't really want to invest in energy here.'"

Many European nations, Germany in particular, are dependent on imported Russian natural gas to power their economies and keep them from freezing in winter. Outside of Europe and Russia itself, few people realize that the country is the world's single greatest energy producer. It also controls crucial pipelines to Europe and has already threatened to shut off essential supplies.

With Russia controlling the oil and gas spigots, Europeans are highly vulnerable. As Joffe put it: "If Moscow gains control over Georgia, it is 'good night, and good luck' to Europe. All of its gas and oil bought in Eurasia (minus the Middle East) will pass through Russian hands in one way or the other."

In its Aug. 17 lead editorial "A Divided West Plays Into Russia's Hands," *The Sunday*



**Georgian tanks burn in the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali after a massive Russian attack into Georgian territory. Russian military forces quickly took control of two Georgian provinces with large ethnic Russian populations.**

*Times* pointed out how powerless Europe is to respond to Russia's aggression toward its neighbors. In response to Russian aggression, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice "have made a poor show of it but Britain's response has been even more feeble . . .

"If nothing else, this . . . has confirmed that Europe cannot allow itself to be reliant on Russia for vital energy supplies . . . Fast forward a few years and Britain and other EU countries could find the lights going out, courtesy of Russia, and there would be little anybody could do about it."

Putin also knows that the United States is in no position to come to Georgia's aid militarily in any meaningful way. With its armed forces stretched thin in the global war on terror and with ground troops already committed to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, America's hands are tied.

Russia is also apparently becoming somewhat contemptuous of the West and its program of expanding democracy in Eastern Europe. James Sherr, head of the Russia and Eurasia Programme at Chatham House and a recognized authority in international affairs, wrote: "Central to Vladimir Putin's nationalistic policy is a conviction that *the power of the West—seemingly unassailable at the end of the Cold War—is on the wane*" (*The Telegraph* [London], Aug. 10, 2008, emphasis added).

### Pressing in many directions

In recent years Russia has followed a pattern of pressing outward in many directions to gauge the level of resistance. Though many have protested, the Russians have met little

real resistance anywhere from other nations.

Last year a Russian submarine planted a titanium flag on the sea floor 14,000 feet below the polar ice cap, staking their claim to as much as half of the Arctic Ocean's seabed and vast oil and gas deposits that could comprise much of the planet's remaining energy supplies.

"The Russians know what they want the Arctic for, and under Putin and Medvedev they have been very aggressive," observed Rob Huebert, associate director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary in Canada. "They are way ahead of everyone else" (Christopher Mason, "Russia's Arctic Ambitions Challenged," *Financial Times*, Aug. 17, 2008).

The Russian military has been a major beneficiary of Russia's skyrocketing oil and natural gas revenues. Russia has spent much of its newfound wealth on modernizing its military.

According to *The Guardian's* columnist Simon Tisdall: "Russia's bullish plans, unveiled this week, to build up to six aircraft carrier battle groups and upgrade its nuclear submarine fleet are part of a worrying trend. They provide further evidence that Moscow's military revival, initiated by Vladimir Putin and continued by his presidential successor, Dmitri Medvedev, may in time pose some unwelcome challenges for Europeans determined to believe the days of east-west confrontation are over" ("The Bear Is Back," July 31, 2008).

Sadly, those days are far from over. The Russians have also developed a new generation of nuclear-tipped ICBMs that they claim are able to penetrate U.S. antimissile defense systems. In Iran, Russia has not only built a

nuclear reactor that jump-started the Iranian nuclear program, but it has provided diplomatic cover for Iran to continue its nuclear ambitions without fear of serious sanctions.

Moscow has also sold Iran sophisticated anti-aircraft missile systems that will make it very difficult for any other country to attack Iranian nuclear facilities, as well as several advanced diesel submarines and hundreds of antiship missiles and mines that could wreak havoc in the Persian Gulf.

Russia has also not been afraid to directly challenge the United States. In August 2007 Putin announced that Russia would resume the Cold War practice of flying long-range Tu-95 Bear bombers near American airspace, and the following February one Bear bomber twice buzzed the U.S. nuclear aircraft carrier *Nimitz* in the western Pacific at an altitude of about 2,000 feet.

In July 2008 Moscow upped the ante even more when it announced that it planned to land and refuel Tu-160 supersonic bombers in Cuba, and possibly station them there, if the United States persists in plans for a missile defense shield in Europe.

### What's on the horizon?

Without question Russia's recent moves have made the world a considerably more dangerous place. Does the West have the means or the will to counter these?

*The Sunday Telegraph's* Edward Luttwak pointed out an uncomfortable truth in his Aug. 17, 2008, article "Moscow Has Blown Away Soft Power": "This is not a game and participation is not voluntary . . . The decision on whether to confront Russia is an enormously tough one. But *that decision will have to be made*. It means that *Europe's holiday from serious geopolitics is over*" (emphasis added).

This question must be asked: Given America's deep involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, a president with only a few months left in office, uncertainty as to the identity of the next U.S. president and vice president, and severe EU energy vulnerability—will the European Union begin to redouble its efforts to construct a political and military union that can meet the Russian threat more effectively?

As we have long taught, the Bible foretells that the Roman Empire will be revived in the end time and will be centered in Europe like the original empire (Daniel 2, 7 and 11 and Revelation 13 and 17; see *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* for more explanation). The current crisis shows one way that development might be speeded along.

Stay tuned. The world appears to be changing before our eyes. **GN**

# The Resurrection of the Dead: What Does the Bible Really Teach?

Many people have at least a vague notion that the Bible teaches about a resurrection. But what is the resurrection all about? And how does it fit into God's overall plan for salvation?

by John Ross Schroeder

**W**hile defending his teaching as a prisoner bound for Rome, the apostle Paul asked King Herod Agrippa II, “Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?” (Acts 26:8).

We could well ask the same question of the intelligentsia in our modern, secular age. Disbelief in the Bible is rife among our intellectual and media establishment. Few either know or understand what God's plan is for humanity and how the resurrection fits into His overall purpose.

When talking to Agrippa, it's clear from the context that Paul had the resurrection of Jesus Christ foremost in mind. Especially during the Church's early period, preaching Christ's resurrection was a crucial part of the apostles' message. One of the reasons another apostle had to be chosen to replace Judas Iscariot was that “one of these *must become a witness with us of His resurrection*” (Acts 1:22, emphasis added throughout). Notice that “with great power the apostles *gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*” (Acts 4:33).

Having personally seen and talked with the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8; Acts 22:6-10), Paul carried on, enthusiastically confirming the fact of Jesus' resurrection. He further told Agrippa, “To this day I stand, *witnessing* both to small and great . . . that the Christ [the Messiah] would suffer, that He would be *the first to rise from the dead*” (Acts 26:22-23).

Note that the unmistakable implication from this passage is that *others would follow*.

## The resurrection of God's firstfruits

God uses the analogy of Israel's agricultural harvests to illustrate important aspects of His plan of salvation—the “harvesting” of mankind, in a sense, in which the resurrection of the dead plays a major role. Aspects of this plan are pictured by specific annual festivals and Holy Days, which in turn represent harvest times in ancient Israel. (To understand more fully the links



**When the last trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ will be resurrected and God will harvest His firstfruits.**

between the harvests, Holy Days and the plan of God, download or request our free booklet *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.)

“Firstfruits” is a term used to denote the first part of the harvest. This part was considered holy. As God's people, truly converted Christians are considered firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest (James 1:18).

Jesus is the *first* of the firstfruits—the most holy part. “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become *the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep* [in death]” (1 Corinthians 15:20). The apostle Paul explained that Jesus is “the firstborn over all creation,” “the firstborn from the dead” and “the firstborn among many brethren” (Colossians 1:15, 18; Romans 8:29). Clearly others would follow in due time.

The Bible is speaking here of a resurrection to everlasting life as a spirit being—not simply a temporary restoration to life in a physical body. In several places in the Bible individuals were restored to physical life *prior* to the resurrection of Jesus. But they all died again.

Paul, however, makes the important

distinction between these and the resurrection of God's firstfruits: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will *transform* our lowly [physical, material] body that it may be conformed *to His glorious body*” (Philippians 3:20-21; compare 2 Corinthians 5:1-5).

An entire chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 15, discusses the resurrection. It begins by affirming Jesus' own raising to life, followed by a description of the restoration to similar life of His disciples and true followers—God's firstfruits.

Paul describes the nature of this resurrection of the firstfruits: “It is sown a natural [physical] body, *it is raised a spiritual body* . . . as we have borne the image of the man of dust [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man [Jesus Christ]. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:44, 49-50).

Even true Christians cannot enter the Kingdom until the return of Jesus Christ to earth, pictured in God's plan by the Feast of Trumpets—one of His annual Holy

Days. On the fulfillment of this day, when the last trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ will be resurrected and God will harvest His firstfruits in the fullest sense.

Notice 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, *and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*” (compare 1 Thessalonians 4:16). At that epochal time, Christ’s disciples and true followers will experience what the Bible calls the “*better resurrection*” (Hebrews 11:35).

### More than one resurrection

Christ plainly stated: “For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will” (John 5:21). Both the Father and the Son have the authority and the power to raise the dead. Then Jesus goes on to say: “I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live . . . for the hour is coming in which all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come forth” (verses 25, 29-30).

While several passages in the Bible make it clear that there will be a future resurrection of both just and unjust human beings (John 5:29; Daniel 12:2; Acts 24:15), the long time differential between these two distinct groups is not clarified by the apostle John until Revelation 20: “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them . . . And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (verse 4).

Notice that the first sentence of the next verse is *parenthetical*, informing us of a much later *second* resurrection: “*But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished*” (verse 5).

Then the last sentence of verse 5 refers back to and naturally joins with the previous description of the resurrection of the righteous saints in verse 4: “*This is the first resurrection.*” This first resurrection is composed of those who will join Christ in His millennial (i.e., 1,000-year) rule.

Verse 6 continues to define the conditions of the first resurrection: “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

Revelation 5:9-10 anticipates true Christians’ part in assisting Jesus Christ in His millennial rule over the earth: “You [Christ]

were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth*” (New International Version).

### The second resurrection

Doctrinally speaking, Revelation 20 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible. For one thing it is the only chapter that shows the time difference between these resurrections and who will be in which. Both resurrections play crucial roles in God’s overall plan and purpose for humanity.

Verses 11 and 12 reveal a significant part of the story: “Then I [the apostle John] saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, *and books were opened.* And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, *by the things which were written in the books.*”

What are these books by which these people are judged? Clearly they are the books (plural) of the Bible. God judges all people by the same biblical standard He has always used. This will not change.

In properly understanding this vital passage, we should remember the important principle that the Bible interprets the Bible. Other passages penned by the apostles John and Paul are highly significant in properly comprehending these two verses.

Notice what some theologians call the golden text of Scripture, John 3:16-17: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him *should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*”

Christ later said: “‘And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw *all peoples to Myself.*’ This He said, signifying by what death He would die” (John 12:32-33).

Later the apostle Paul summed up God’s intentions for humanity: “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, *who gave Himself a ransom for all*” (1 Timothy 2:3-6).

Many of the people standing before God in this second resurrection *will have never*

## Who Resurrected Jesus Christ?

No dead person can resurrect Himself. Death is the complete absence of life and consciousness. Only someone alive and gifted with supernatural powers could have performed such a wondrous deed. The New Testament plainly reveals in many passages that it was God the Father who raised Jesus from the dead.

For example, the apostle Peter stated in his first sermon on the Day of Pentecost: “*This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses*” (Acts 2:32). Not long after, Peter repeated this vital testimony. He told the audience that they had “killed the Prince of life, *whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses*” (Acts 3:15).

After his miraculous conversion, Paul continued to proclaim this same basic testimony: “God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus” (Acts 13:33; compare verse 37). He continued to declare this crucial truth as he traveled from city to city.

He later told skeptical Athenian intellectuals: “Because He [God] has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man [Jesus] whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

Paul’s and Peter’s letters also testify to the Father’s active role in this great event (Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:20; 1 Peter 1:3).

Yet Jesus did say, “Destroy this temple [referring to His body being slain], and in three days *I will raise it up* [implying His resurrection]” (John 2:19; see verse 21). Jesus did not mean by this that He would come back to life on His own, contradicting the other verses in this regard. Rather, He was referring to the fact that once God the Father made Him alive again in His tomb, He would stand up from where He lay dead—raising Himself from His lying position to then ascend from the grave.

What we should see here is Christ’s unshakeable confidence in the Father to resurrect Him to everlasting spirit life. Just moments before His death, Christ cried out: “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit” (Luke 23:46)—showing His total trust in God the Father.

In the same way, those who have repented and received the gift of God’s Spirit can have confidence that they, too, will be resurrected to immortality just as Jesus was. As Paul tells us, “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you” (Romans 8:11, New Revised Standard Version).

even heard the name of Jesus Christ, much less believed in Him. Do we think God is going to consign them in their ignorance to some sort of never-ending punishment in an ever-burning hellfire?

Is salvation only for God's firstfruits in the first resurrection, or doesn't that very term *firstfruits* imply salvation for others who will follow after?

Will God not give all who have ever lived a full opportunity for salvation? For those who come up in the second resurrection, this is not a *second* chance, but their real *first* chance. For billions of people, this will be their *first* opportunity to ever learn of God's truth and plan, to ever hear of Jesus Christ, the only name by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12).

### The valley of dry bones

The second resurrection to *temporary physical life* is pictured by Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-9). This Hebrew prophet saw in vision that "breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army" (verse 10). They are shown standing just like the resurrected peoples of Revelation 20:11-12.

Then in Ezekiel 37:11 God identifies these dry bones as "*the whole house of Israel.*" It is at this future time that "all Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26). By no stretch of the imagination is all Israel being saved during this age of man—only a relatively small group the Bible calls "the firstfruits" are being saved now (Romans 8:23; James 1:18; compare Luke 12:32).

But when this extensive resurrection occurs 1,000 years *after* the first resurrection, "*Then you [Israel] shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves*" (Ezekiel 37:13). They never really knew God during their previous lifetimes. Now they will have that opportunity for the first time.

What will God then do? "I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live" (verse 14). Many, if not most, will truly repent, be baptized, receive God's Spirit and be converted—following the pattern revealed by the apostle Peter (see Acts 2:37-39; 3:19-21).

When we put together all the scriptures on this subject and understand them properly, we see that this future period is one of *judgment*, in this case meaning evaluation over time and not an instant *sentencing* of sinners to an ever-burning hellfire. The apostle Paul wrote, "It is appointed

for men to die once, *but after this the judgment*" (Hebrews 9:27). A similar judgment is now taking place in the lives of all truly converted Christians—"the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17). For others this judgment comes after this second resurrection back to physical life.

### Jesus and the judgment

Jesus Christ Himself shows that the peoples of Israel will not be the only ones to rise in the second resurrection to be judged at that time. Jesus makes this point very clear, though few have understood it, not recognizing how God will make salvation available to all in His great plan:

"Then He [Jesus] began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, *they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.* But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon *in the day of judgment* than for you.

"And you Capernaum, . . . if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you" (Matthew 11:20-24).

The peoples of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom were not Hebrews or Israelites. Yet they will also be part of the great resurrection to physical life mentioned in Revelation 20:11-12.

And they won't be the only ones. Christ plainly stated: "The men of Nineveh *will rise up in the judgment* with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South [Sheba] will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:41-42).

Here Jesus plainly describes the people of Jonah's day and of Solomon's time, who had lived more than 700 and 900 years earlier, being resurrected alongside those who lived in Christ's day! Together all these "will rise in the judgment," He said.

It should be clear that a number of biblical passages support and round out the enormous significance of this period of judgment pictured in Revelation 20:11-12. During this time God will shower His

abundant mercy on all those who have lived in the past without either really knowing Him or truly understanding His way of life. They will have the marvellous opportunity to obtain salvation and be a part of God's eternal family.

Our Creator is a God of great mercy. Indeed He is so merciful that after immense patience in hopes of genuine repentance (2 Peter 3:9), He simply will not allow the incurably wicked, those who stubbornly persist in thinking and doing evil to be a part of His Kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:9; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8).

Their penalty, however, is *not* a cruel eternal existence in an ever-burning hellfire, but the second death in a lake of fire. (For the true meaning of *hell* in Scripture, request or download our free booklet *Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?*)

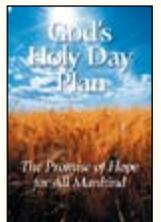
### God's magnificent purpose for humanity

The awesome result of our Creator's activities on this earth lies "in bringing many sons [and daughters] to glory" (Hebrews 2:10). As the apostle Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15:22-23, God accomplishes His plan in stages: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. *But each one in his own order.*"

God is enlarging His family in His own way and according to His own timetable. Many assume that today is the only day of salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. The first resurrection represents the firstfruits of God's salvation. But a much larger group, representing the greater part of all who have ever lived, will be privileged to be offered salvation some 1,000 years later. They constitute the great later harvest of men and women who will then receive the opportunity for everlasting life in the Kingdom of God! **GN**

### Recommended Reading

Does God have a plan He is working out here on earth, a timetable He is following? What is He doing and why? What part does Jesus Christ play in that plan? If you'd like to learn more about how the Holy Days of the Bible reveal God's great purpose and plan for mankind, request or download our free booklets *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind* and *What Happens After Death?* Both are yours free for the asking!



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# Leadership

Continued from page 7

servicing others. When His disciples asked Him, “Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He directed their attention to a little child and said that unless they became like children, humble and receptive, they could not enter His Kingdom (Matthew 18:1-4).

The book of Proverbs confirms the relationship between leader and leadership: “Before honor is humility” (Proverbs 15:33).

## To a good leader, everyone is valuable

Another great leadership principle Jesus taught is that every individual is important to a good leader, just as that individual is important to God.

“If a man has a hundred sheep,” said Jesus, “and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish” (Matthew 18:12-14).

A leader displays good leadership when he is willing to go back and restore a person who went astray rather than write him off.

Perhaps the greatest example of real leadership took place even as Jesus was dying. Experiencing great pain and aware of His imminent death, Jesus mercifully looked down on those responsible for His crucifixion and prayed for them, “Father, *forgive them*, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). Vengeance and getting even simply weren’t part of His thinking.

A good leader will reach beyond his physical needs to help others even if they hate him (Matthew 5:44). This is why God the Father extols Jesus Christ’s supreme example of leadership:

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the

glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11, New International Version).

This is the attitude of a true servant leader, one who is willing to surrender all so that others might reach their ultimate God-given potential. One day, the entire world will experience this kind of humble, serving leadership when Christ establishes His Kingdom here on earth!

## Christ’s leadership in His coming Kingdom

You may have recited the Lord’s Prayer and the part that requests and acknowledges “Your kingdom come” and “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). But do you know that this verse also foretells the thousand-year rest that Christ will bring to the earth mentioned in Revelation 20:4?

God the Father has promised that Jesus will return to set up His Kingdom of peace and prosperity. That is God’s will to be done on this earth.

Another prophecy that talks about this coming Kingdom and God’s will being carried out on earth is found in Isaiah 9:6-7:

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and *the government will be on his shoulders*. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. *Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end*. He will reign on David’s throne and *over his kingdom*, establishing and upholding it *with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever*. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this” (NIV).

Jesus Christ will establish His peace on earth in justice and righteousness. Godly justice comes only from God’s commandments (Psalm 119:172). Christ’s leadership will be based on God’s commandments, which bring about permanent peace (Matthew 5:17-19; 19:17; John 14:27; 1 John 5:3; James 3:17-18). Without God’s law, there can be no real or true leadership and certainly no peace.

When Christ returns, He will first dispatch all human tyrants who will gather to fight against Him at Jerusalem (Revelation 16:14, 16; 19:11-21; Zechariah 14:1-12). He will then remove Satan and the demons by binding them for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3).

The prophet Isaiah describes Jesus Christ’s leadership for us at that time: “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—and

he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

“He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash round his waist.

“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them . . . They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:2-9, NIV).

This is God’s wonderful promise of a world finally at peace under right leadership!

## God’s exciting plan for you as a leader

So how does Jesus’ leadership apply to you today?

There is no better time to compare current political campaigns and presidential promises to real leadership principles. Although we cannot change modern political leadership and its guaranteed disappointment, we can change *ourselves* to become better leaders.

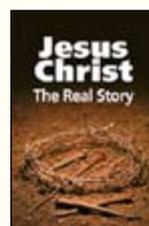
God invites us to surrender our lives now (Luke 14:26-27), along with our way of doing things (Matthew 20:25-28), so we can be part of a very different kind of leadership promised to the world (Revelation 3:21; 1:6).

At Christ’s return, those who have truly surrendered their lives to Him and remained faithful will teach all nations a new way of thinking that begins with a service-oriented change of heart, based on God’s spiritual laws (Hebrews 8:10-11).

Will you accept His invitation to become a true leader? The reward for doing so is beyond your wildest imagination! **GN**

## Recommended Reading

What made Jesus Christ such an outstanding leader? How did the teachings of a man condemned to death as a criminal transform the world? What was His mission, His purpose, His teaching? Most important of all, what does it all mean for you? You need to read *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*. Download or request your free copy today!



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# The New Mediterranean Union: Seeds of a New Roman Empire?

A media circus was in full swing as U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama was greeted in the Middle East and Europe as a political superstar in late July 2008. But a potentially far more important development in that part of the world the week before garnered little attention.

by Tom Robinson

**O**n July 13, leaders of 43 countries surrounding the Mediterranean (from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East) joined together in Paris, France, to launch a new regional union—the Mediterranean Union or, as it's now officially called, the Union for the Mediterranean. “It brought together around one table for the first time dignitaries of such rival nations as Israel and Syria, Algeria and Morocco, Turkey and Greece” (Associated Press, July 13, 2008).

This was a dream come true for French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who championed the creation of the bloc upon assuming office just a little over a year before. Sarkozy chaired the meeting jointly with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak—the two serving as interim copresidents, as the union is to operate under a copresidency of north and south.

This is a stunning development, not only for the speed of the union's formation—coming just over a year after it was proposed—but for its plausible ties to end-time events foretold in the Bible.

## Revitalizing an earlier process

The union goes beyond the stalled 1995 Barcelona Process (named after Barcelona, Spain, where the initiating conference was held), in which the European Union (EU) and many of its neighbors to the south and southeast formed the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to promote regional stability and prosperity.

That partnership failed to achieve much of anything due to political apathy and lack of agreement on major issues.

Sarkozy proposed his union with grander aims—as “a means to end all hatreds, to make way for a great dream of peace and a great dream of civilization” (quoted in *International Herald Tribune*, July 6, 2008).

Sarkozy initially limited it to nations bordering the Mediterranean. This, in his opinion, would have given it a greater chance of success than the Barcelona Process—there being fewer parties who would have to

and in the world. It would revive France's old colonial ties to North Africa and the Middle East. And the absence of Germany and other EU states not bordering the Mediterranean would have put France in the driver's seat.

## Pressured to compromise

Germany and other northern EU states, however, were outraged at being cut out of this bloc that would take on a European character and use European funds. After a meeting with German Chancellor Angela

*“We shall have another Roman Empire and imperialist design. These are imperialist maps and designs that we have already rolled up. We should not have them again.”*

agree on issues and more in common regionally among the partners.

The union was also meant as a way to shore up relations with Turkey, an important bridge state between Europe and the Muslim states of North Africa and the Middle East. Sarkozy had fiercely opposed Turkish membership in the EU, so this was offered as a consolation. Turkey, however, was late in coming to the party—not agreeing to the Mediterranean Union until it had assurances that this would not hamper its efforts to join the EU.

No doubt the proposed union was also meant to elevate France's status in the EU

Merkel, Sarkozy agreed to inscribe the new union within the EU framework of the Barcelona Process and include all EU member states.

He dismissed criticism, however, that he had planned the union as an exclusively French project. And he particularly thanked Merkel for her support of the project: “It made me happy to see how she defended the Union for the Mediterranean . . . That was really the German-French axis” (quoted at EurActiv.com, March 14, 2008).

To achieve wider acceptance, the initiative has been scaled back, so touchy issues like immigration have given way to projects

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The map of the recently announced Union for the Mediterranean, above, looks strikingly like a map of the Roman Empire in the early second century. Bible prophecy reveals that the Roman Empire will be resurrected shortly before Jesus Christ's return.



on solar energy, marine pollution and anti-terrorism coordination. But it's a start, and major issues will likely follow.

Some consider Sarkozy's plan to have faltered. But if that's so, we must wonder why so many heads of state gathered to launch the union, including Arab leaders sitting down at the same table with Israel's prime minister. This was certainly a diplomatic coup.

### Return of empire foretold

Notably absent from the meeting was Libyan leader Col. Muammar Gaddafi, although he sent a representative. Angry that original plans for only a few southern European and North African states were changed to include the whole EU and the Middle East, including Israel (making it, in his words, "very dangerous" for him to support), Gaddafi boycotted the meeting, saying, "We shall have another Roman

Empire and imperialist design. These are imperialist maps and designs that we have already rolled up. We should not have them again" (quoted by Bruno Waterfield, "Gaddafi Attacks Sarkozy Plan for Union of the Med," *The Daily Telegraph*, July 10, 2008).

Indeed, you too may find that the map of this new union looks strikingly like the one in the back of your Bible of the ancient Roman Empire. That empire likewise surrounded the Mediterranean—the Romans taking pride in referring to it as *Mare Nostrum*, "Our Sea."

Frankly, Gaddafi in this case is exactly right. Another Roman Empire is indeed where things are headed even though most of the participants are themselves blind to it.

Bible prophecy reveals that the Roman Empire—the fourth in a succession of ancient empires—will be resurrected in the last days (see Daniel 2; 7; Revelation 13;

17). We have long seen this coming together in the increasing political integration of the European Union, which began with the Treaty of Rome in 1957. But in the past few years, integration has greatly picked up speed. And now we have a larger union encompassing the breadth of the ancient Roman Empire and then some.

### Leaders of north and south also prophesied

Of further interest is the north-south copresidency of the new union. A lengthy prophecy in Daniel 11 details the historical struggle in the Middle East between powers to the north and south of the land of Israel. The "king of the South" of the end time will attack the "king of the North," the ruler of Europe who will retaliate and occupy parts of North Africa and the Middle East, including Israel (verses 40-45). While North and South here are often thought to be separate political entities entirely, they could initially be participants in some sort of union who subsequently turn against one another.

Worth considering in this regard is Gaddafi's warning that the EU blueprint for the Mediterranean will be a pretext for a new generation of terrorists. "I believe this project of the Union for the Mediterranean would increase illegal migration and terrorism and give a justification to Islamist extremists to step up jihad attacks. These extremists would explain it [the Mediterranean Union] as [a] crusade against Islam and European colonisation," he said.

"They will talk about jihad in Europe. This project is frightening. This project is dangerous. They will interpret it as a new crusade to contain Muslim forces. They will see it as a new colonialism and they will accuse the Arabs [i.e., the Arab leaders] that they are traitors, who have abandoned principles and sold out their countries" (quoted in *The Daily Telegraph*).

That could lead to further European entries into Muslim areas to deal with terrorism. Thus, a bloc meant to promote cooperation and peaceful exchange could end up causing greater division and even outright war.

In any case, those who place their hope in this union to bring peace to the Middle East and even the world will be sorely disappointed. For prophecy speaks to this as well, warning us of a time of false peace to be followed by the worst period in human history.

To learn more about what the Bible says will happen in Europe and the Middle East in the years to come, be sure to read our free booklets *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy* and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. **GN**

# Is Halloween Harmless?

Every year at Halloween, well-meaning parents dress their children in grotesque and ghoulish costumes. Is Halloween really harmless? Who and what's behind this bizarre holiday?

by Jerold Aust

It all looks like so much fun and seems so harmless: jack-o'-lanterns, grotesque grinning masks, long black witch attire with pointed black hats, costumes painted like skeletons, outfits that represent demons and goblins, and children going door to door, soliciting treats from compliant neighbors.

But when Halloween comes around, do you find yourself yearning for the hours to pass until the whole trick-or-treat farce is over? If you don't, you should!

## Halloween's not-so-fun side

Since when is it acceptable for little children to threaten to commit vandalism?

What happens if the homeowner doesn't come to the door or doesn't have the treats the kids might expect? Is it permissible for children to then soap his windows, toilet paper his trees, chalk mark his sidewalk or turn over plants as they leave? When is it okay for children to commit vandalism while on another person's property?

Isn't it about time for all well-meaning citizens to just say NO to Halloween?

The clergy, in general, hasn't stood against it. Some churches even have Halloween parties. Some citizens do speak up against it, as the letters to the editor in your newspaper occasionally show.

Is Halloween simply good, clean fun, or is it something else entirely? You need to know!

God is giving a wake-up call to professing Christians. As it was with those the prophet Elijah addressed in his day, so it is with us: "'How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' But the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21). What will it take for Christians to accept and stand for God's truth rather than harmful traditions that originated in paganism?

## Where did Halloween originate?

Just where did Halloween come from, and why is it so widely celebrated?

*The Encyclopedia of Religion* explains: "Halloween is the name for the eve of



**You cannot find any support for Halloween in your Bible, because God is adamantly opposed to it and the pagan, occult practices it revels in. He warns His people to have nothing to do with these celebrations.**

Samhain, a celebration marking the beginning of winter as well as the first day of the New Year within the ancient Celtic culture of the British Isles. The time of Samhain consisted of the eve of the feast and the day itself (31 October and 1 November).

"On this occasion, it was believed that a gathering of supernatural forces occurred as during no other period of the year. The eve and day of Samhain were characterized as a time when the barriers between

the human and supernatural worlds were broken. Otherworldly entities, such as the souls of the dead, were able to visit earthly inhabitants, and humans could take the opportunity to penetrate the domains of the gods and supernatural creatures.

"Fiery tributes and sacrifices of animals, crops, and possibly human beings were made to appease supernatural powers who controlled the fertility of the land . . . Samhain acknowledged the entire

spectrum of nonhuman forces that roamed the earth during the period” (1987, pp. 176-177, “Halloween”).

On this holiday “huge bonfires were set on hilltops to frighten away evil spirits . . . The souls of the dead were supposed to revisit their homes on this day, and the autumnal festival acquired sinister significance, with ghosts, witches, hobgoblins, black cats, fairies, and demons of all kinds said to be roaming about. It was the time to placate the supernatural powers controlling the processes of nature” (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition, Micropaedia, Vol. 4, p. 862, “Halloween”).

It was, bluntly put, a day devoted to appeasing demonic spirits and the dark side of the spirit world—something no Christian should have any part in (Ephesians 5:11).

So how did this dark celebration continue into modern times? Sadly, Halloween came down to us from the Roman Catholic Church, which assigned a day of each year to each of their saints. When it reached the point that they had more than 365, they then combined them together on Nov. 1 and called it “All Saints Day” or “All Hallows Day”—the night before being “All Hallows Eve” or “Hallow Even” (holy evening), contracted to the name Hallowe’en or Halloween.

Why did they choose this particular day? Again *The Encyclopedia of Religion* explains: “Samhain remained a popular festival among the Celtic people throughout the christianization of Great Britain. The British church attempted to divert this interest in pagan customs by adding a Christian celebration to the calendar on the same date as Samhain. The Christian festival, the Feast of All Saints, commemorates the known and unknown saints of the Christian religion just as Samhain had acknowledged and paid tribute to the Celtic deities” (p. 177).

Thus a pagan celebration was relabeled as Christian.

### The Bible versus Halloween

You cannot find any support for Halloween in your Bible, because God is adamantly opposed to it and the pagan, occult practices it revels in. He warns His people to have nothing to do with these (Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:10-12). They blind us from the truth of God.

God does not take Halloween lightly. As He says, “Learn not the way of the heathen” (Jeremiah 10:2, King James Version). And, “Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them,

after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise’” (Deuteronomy 12:30).

God will not always remain tirelessly patient with those who insist on celebrating harmful and superstitious customs such as Halloween. “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance . . . What kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God” (2 Peter 3:9-12, New International Version).

### The author of Halloween

The author of sin and death, Satan the devil, is also the behind-the-scenes author of pagan customs like Halloween. Jesus said that Satan is a liar and the father of all lies (John 8:44). God is the God of the living, not the dead (Matthew 22:31-32). He is the God of not only true Christians alive today but, because of the certainty of the coming resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15), of those who will yet live when raised from death. So certain is this resurrection that to God it is looked on as an accomplished fact (see Romans 4:17).

Conversely, Satan is the “lord of the dead.” Hebrews 2:14 says of Jesus Christ that “only by dying could he break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death” (New Living Translation).

Satan is the lord of the dead in that he leads people by his lies and influence into the way of death and, as the next verse shows, puts them in bondage to the fear of death.

He has foisted Halloween on ignorant people and even well-meaning Christians in a subtle and deceitful way, perpetuating it through the Catholic Church with a “Christian” mask that hides its demonic origins.

### Can people make Halloween harmless?

When it comes to Halloween—or any other holiday for that matter—you should ask yourself, “Did God make man in His image, or did God intend man to remake God in man’s image?” Now that’s a sobering thought.

The religious excuse for perpetuating Halloween might be that, as we’ve seen, church leaders long ago called it a “holy evening” for all the Catholic saints who

had no day assigned to them. But face it: People who celebrate this evening today couldn’t care less about such religious notions. All they think about is instant gratification, to follow the pack with everyone else and to have some fun.

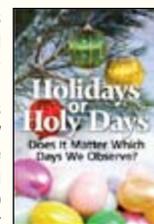
*The Encyclopedia of Religion* goes on to say: “Modern Halloween activities have centered on mischief making and masquerading in costumes, often resembling otherworldly characters. Folk customs, now treated as games [such as bobbing for apples], have continued from the various divination practices of the ancient celebrants of this occasion. Supernatural figures [such as the ghost, the witch, the vampire, the devil] play a key role in supplying an aura of the mysterious to the evening, whether or not they originally had an association with the festival.

“Children are particularly susceptible to the imagery of Halloween, as can be seen in their fascination with the demonic likeness of a carved and illuminated pumpkin, known as the jack-o’-lantern. In recent times, children have taken up the practice of dressing in Halloween costumes and visiting homes in search of edible and monetary treats, lightly threatening to play a trick on the owner if a treat is not produced” (p. 177).

Halloween is one of many human traditions that cloud biblical teachings and keep people in the dark from God’s truth that can set us free (John 8:32). It is not a harmless holiday for you or for your children. God warns us to avoid it and to follow His ways, because He hates for us to dabble in the spirit world of Satan and his demons! Instead, as God tells us in Isaiah 66:2, “On this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.” **GN**

## Recommended Reading

It’s ironic that so many of today’s popular holidays—including major religious celebrations like Christmas and Easter—originated in ancient pagan festivals and customs, while God’s Holy Days revealed in the Bible are almost universally ignored. Which should you celebrate, and why? To learn more, download or request our free booklets *Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Celebrate?* and *God’s Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*. You’ll be surprised to discover the truth about these things!



Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download them from our Web site at

[www.gnmagazine.org/booklets](http://www.gnmagazine.org/booklets)



# Peace: The Hunger of Human Hearts

The apostle Paul, locked in a depressing prison cell, wrote, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.” He reminded his readers that they also could have “God’s peace, which is far beyond human understanding.” You too can have this unique contentment and peace!

by Don Hooser

**P**ace. Ah, the word itself stirs calming and pleasant thoughts.

Hearts yearn for peace. In fact, a common greeting in many languages is to wish someone peace, like *shalom* (Hebrew) or *aloha* (Hawaiian). Even Jesus Christ used it (John 20:19, 21, 26).

How about your life? Are you stressed out with life’s pressures and wanting more peace? Most people would say *yes!*

The Bible focuses on three areas of peace: personal peace of mind, doing what we can to have peace in our relationships with others and eventual peace among all nations.

True peace of mind is an inner calm, contentment and confidence no matter what the outer circumstances. This seems impossible, but “with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27).

## A planet without peace

We live in a frightening and frenzied world. We used to hear of someone being a *nervous wreck* or suffering a *nervous breakdown*. Emotions haven’t changed as much as terminology. *Tension*, *anxiety*, *depression* and *panic attacks* are the common designations today.

One result is the overuse and abuse of alcohol and legal drugs as well as the use of illegal drugs—as people turn to temporary escapism instead of seeking long-term solutions.

Finding peace in a contentious world can seem hopeless, but Scripture tells us to “seek peace and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:11). Seek it by taking time to read the Bible, by far the greatest book on peace ever written (Colossians 3:15-16). Pursue it through prayer to the very “God of peace” (Hebrews 13:20).

Christ’s followers are protected from many trials and dangers, but not all. In fact, some trials, like persecution, happen *because of trying to “live godly in Christ Jesus”* (2 Timothy 3:12).

The key is to rely on Christ, the source of sublime peace (John 14:27; 16:33) and the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). He can “guide



## Finding peace in a contentious and difficult world seems hopeless, but Scripture tells us to “seek peace and pursue it.”

our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:79).

### Practical principles and spiritual dangers

To experience peace, you must take responsibility for your thoughts (Philippians 4:8). With God’s help you can quit *reacting* with anger or self-pity. It’s not your circumstances or other people that determine your mood; it is your *attitude* about them. “Whoever has no *rule over his own spirit* is like a city broken down, without walls” (Proverbs 25:28, emphasis added throughout).

Today, many good books and Web sites have practical advice on reducing physical and mental stress. Some keys are to learn good interpersonal skills, be positive and flexible, exercise, get good nutrition and sleep, learn to relax, and rest one day each week.

However, don’t trust everything that is written. New Age teachings, based on pagan ideas with new scientific-sounding terminology, have mushroomed in popularity. As people have pushed the Bible out of their lives, they have been filling the spiritual vacuum

with a dangerous counterfeit spirituality.

Learning and living by the Bible brings more mental and emotional benefits than any New Age teaching. Furthermore, instead of being drawn into the paganism of false gods, one is drawing close to the true Creator God who *inspired* the Bible.

### Fear and worry versus faith, courage and peace

For most people, the most common type of meditation—thinking intently on a particular subject—is *fear* or *worry!*

But guess what single command in the Bible occurs more often than any other? *Fear not.*

But how is that possible? We must replace fear with *faith*—a childlike trust in your heavenly Father. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he *trusts in You*” (Isaiah 26:3).

The Hebrew expression translated “perfect peace” here is literally “peace, peace.” It refers to the *superior* kind of peace that God makes possible for human beings. And those who have this peace are hoping for *ultimate divine* peace in the resurrection!

Trust in God to be your shelter and shade, your refuge and fortress (Psalm 61:4; 121:5; 91:2). David wrote, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are *with me*” (Psalm 23:4).

Worry is a type of fear, and Jesus repeatedly said, “Do not worry” (Matthew 6:25–34). Worry is a waste of time and energy. The Creator provides for *all* His creatures, and “you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31).

We cannot experience true faith and peace without obedience to God. His perfect commandments define the way of peace. God said, “Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea” (Isaiah 48:18).

The issue of fear is not primarily about emotion. “Fear not” means to have the *courage to do the right thing* even when it seems frightening. Knowing “the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” will give you the needed “good courage” to go forward anyway (Joshua 1:9).

### The greatest key to peace: God’s Spirit

True peace of mind depends on attaining “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

Begin by humbly turning control over to God. Trying to manage our lives on our own generally brings only frustration and confusion, yet “God is not the author of confusion but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Do as Peter instructed: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission [forgiveness]

of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

These two great gifts of God—forgiveness and the Holy Spirit—result in “righteousness and peace and joy” (Romans 14:17). Even better, they lead to the greatest gift of all—eternal life (Romans 6:23). The “hope of eternal life” takes away the “fear of death” (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 2:15). No other comfort compares!

In Galatians 5:22–23, the apostle Paul is apparently likening the Holy Spirit to a tree of life. He said, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, *peace*, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

Consider carefully the relationship of peace to all the other virtues that come through the Spirit. Each helps produce and maintain all the others.

Consider also the contrast between the fruit of the Spirit and the “works of the flesh”—human nature—in verses 19–21, including “hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like.” God’s Spirit will *replace* these vices!

### “Grace and peace”

Why do Paul’s epistles begin with variations of the salutation, “*Grace to you and peace* from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ”? (See, for example, Galatians 1:3.)

Paul may have coined a new phrase or perhaps adopted a previously little-used phrase. “Grace” (Greek *charis*) or “Grace to you” was a Greek greeting.

On the other hand, “Peace” (Hebrew *shalom*) was a Jewish greeting.

Paul ministered to Jewish and Greek

Christians, so the greeting “Grace to you and peace” was inclusive and unifying. “You are *all one* in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

More importantly, the New Testament adds great theological meaning to “grace” and “peace.”

*Grace* includes God’s wonderful gift of forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7). Grace heals the guilt! It is the great *prerequisite* to peace. First pardon, then peace.

God’s grace also makes us “sons of God” (Galatians 3:26). What peace to know we are the beloved of our gracious Father!

Therefore the distinctly Christian greeting gave honor to the One who gives us grace and, as a result, real peace.

### Enjoy peace and be peacemakers

Peace and harmony come to those who extend it to others. Paul wrote, “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (Romans 12:18). We are called to be peacemakers, following the example of the supreme Peacemaker (Matthew 5:9).

Pray that God will make it possible for His people to “lead a quiet and peaceable life” (1 Timothy 2:2). Pray for peace of mind. Pray for peaceful relationships. And pray for God’s peaceful Kingdom to come soon!

Paul’s admonition in Philippians 4:6–7 (Revised Standard Version) beautifully summarizes this wonderful subject: “Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. *And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*” **GN**

## World Peace—Will It Ever Come?

**P**ace—worldwide permanent peace among all nations and peoples—has been a perpetual hope and dream of mankind. It’s the stuff of countless stories, sermons and songs—and wishful thinking.

Endless strategies have been proposed and tried. Think of all the peace demonstrations, peace talks and peace treaties! But leaders are too often people “who speak peace to their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts” (Psalm 28:3). They’re deviously manipulating to get a *bigger piece* of the world. Sadly, even sincere negotiations are often fruitless.

God inspired Jeremiah to write a poignant portrayal of world history: “They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly [margin: *superficially*], saying ‘Peace, peace!’ when there is no peace” (Jeremiah 6:14). The Contemporary English Version paraphrases this as, “All they ever offer to my deeply wounded people are empty hopes for peace.”

Man on his own cannot discover lasting solutions. “The way of peace they have not known” (Isaiah 59:8). They are spiritually blind (verse 10).

The conduct of nations reflects the behavior of people. International relations will be peaceable only when all *people* are peaceable. And Scripture promises that this will eventually come to pass.

World peace will require people to have “a new heart and a new spirit”

(Ezekiel 18:31). Only God can give us that new heart and spirit. For the people God is calling now, He is offering that change. When Christ returns, that offer will be extended to all people.

During Christ’s first coming, He was not trying to bring about peace on earth (Matthew 10:34). But world peace will begin when the Prince of Peace returns to earth. Then “of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end” (Isaiah 9:7).

Christ’s peacemaking will *not* be by *appeasement*, which is the granting of concessions to enemies in hopes of buying them off. Rather, He will forcibly put down rebellion and establish His Kingdom on earth. Then He will set about reeducating all mankind and bringing about their spiritual conversion.

At that time, the nations will be led to “beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

That is when “everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid” (Micah 4:4).

Someday we *will* finally see true peace on earth. This is a central aspect of the message Jesus and His apostles preached—the message Paul referred to in Ephesians 6:15 as the “gospel [or good news] of peace.”

## Television Log

All channels and times listed are for cable TV unless stated otherwise. For additional information and the most current airing times, or to download or view programs online, visit [www.beyondtoday.tv](http://www.beyondtoday.tv).

### UNITED STATES

**Arizona**  
Prescott ch. 13, Sun 5 p.m.; Sat 3:30 p.m.  
Prescott Valley ch. 13, Sun 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.  
Tucson ch. 72, 120, Sun 8 a.m.  
ch. 73, 98, Sat 8 a.m.

**Arkansas**  
Fayetteville ch. 18, Sun 10 a.m.; Wed 6 p.m.; Sat 9 a.m.

**California**  
Alamo ch. 26, Thu 7:30 p.m., 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Anaheim (west) ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Berkeley ch. 26, Sun 8 a.m.  
Clayton ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Concord ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Costa Mesa ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Cypress ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Danville ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Dublin ch. 26, Fri 4 p.m.  
El Cerrito ch. 26, Sun 8 a.m.  
El Sobrante ch. 26, Sun 8 a.m.  
Emeryville ch. 12, Fri 8 p.m.  
Eureka ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Fremont ch. 29, Tue 6:30 p.m.  
Garden Grove ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Hayward ch. 28, Tue 10 p.m.  
Hemet ch. 3, Fri 2:30 p.m.  
Hercules ch. 26, Sun 8 a.m.  
Huntington Beach ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Lafayette ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Livermore ch. 26, Fri 4 p.m.  
Los Alamitos ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Marin County ch. 26, Tue 10:30 p.m.  
Martinez ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Midway City ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Modesto ch. 26, Thu 8:30 p.m.; Fri 6 p.m.  
Monrovia ch. 16, 98, Tue, Thu and Sat 4:30 p.m.  
Moraga ch. 26, Thu 7:30 p.m., 2nd & 4th Mon 8 p.m.  
Newark ch. 29, Tue 6:30 p.m.  
Novato ch. 71, Tue 9:30 p.m.  
Oakland ch. 26, Sun 8 a.m.  
Orange ch. 3A, 6, Sun 12:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Orinda ch. 26, Thu 7:30 p.m.

Palo Cedro  
Pasadena  
Petaluma  
Piedmont  
Pittsburg  
Pleasant Hill  
Pleasanton  
Redding  
Richmond  
Rossmore  
Sacramento  
San Diego (North)  
San Diego (South)  
San Francisco  
San Jose  
San Rafael  
Santa Clara  
Santa Rosa  
S. Pasadena  
Stanton  
Verdugo Hills  
Walnut Creek  
Westminster

**Colorado**  
Boulder ch. 43, Fri 1 p.m.

**Georgia**  
Cornelia ch. 4, Sun 6:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.

**Hawaii**  
Hilo ch. 53, Sun 10 a.m.; Thu 7:30 p.m.  
Lanai ch. 13, Fri 7 p.m.; Sat 7 a.m.  
Maui ch. 52, Fri 7 p.m.; Sat 7 a.m.  
Molokai ch. 13, Fri 7 p.m.; Sat 7 a.m.

**Idaho**  
Boise ch. 11, Wed 7:30 p.m.

**Illinois**  
Arlington Heights ch. 35, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
Bartlett ch. 35, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
Brookport ch. 2, Sun 2 p.m.  
Buffalo Grove ch. 19, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
Chicago ch. 36, times vary  
Des Plaines ch. 35, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
East St. Louis ch. 18, Sat 5:30 p.m.  
Elk Grove Village ch. 19, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
Glenview ch. 35, Wed 6:30 p.m.  
Golf ch. 35, Wed 6:30 p.m.

Hanover Park  
Hoffman Estates  
Lincolnwood  
Metropolis  
Morton Grove  
Mt. Prospect  
Naperville  
Niles  
Normal  
Northbrook  
Palatine  
Park Ridge  
Prospect Heights  
Rolling Meadows  
Romeoville  
Schaumburg  
Sikookie  
Springfield  
Streamwood  
Wheeling  
Wilmette

**Indiana**  
Bloomington  
Evansville  
Ft. Wayne  
Valparaiso

**Iowa**  
Des Moines ch. 15, Sun 11:30 a.m.

**Kentucky**  
Berea ch. 5, Fri 9 & 9:30 p.m.  
Owensboro ch. 52, Sun 8 a.m. & 7 p.m.  
Paducah ch. 2, Sun 2 p.m.  
Richmond ch. 5, Fri 9 & 9:30 p.m.

**Massachusetts**  
Boston ch. 22, 23, 83, Sun 7 a.m.; Wed 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.; ch. 22, 23, 83, Sun 7 a.m.; Wed 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.  
Cambridge ch. 5, Sun 11:30 a.m.  
East Longmeadow ch. 17, Tue 4 p.m.; Wed 10:30 a.m.  
Greenfield ch. 33, Wed 10 p.m.; Thu 7 a.m.  
Worcester ch. 13, Thu 10 a.m.

**Michigan**  
Ann Arbor ch. 17, Thu 4:30 p.m.  
Grand Haven ch. 22, Mon 4 p.m.  
Grand Rapids ch. 25, Tue or Wed 11 a.m.  
Kalamazoo ch. 19, Sun 8:30 a.m.  
Midland ch. 3, Tue 5:30 p.m.  
Mt. Pleasant ch. 3, times vary  
Petroskey ch. 2, Sun 11:30 a.m.; Fri 5 p.m.  
Traverse City ch. 2, Sun 11:30 a.m.; Fri 5 p.m.  
Ypsilanti ch. 17, Thu 4:30 p.m.

**Minnesota**  
Albert Lea ch. 6, Sun 9:55 a.m.  
Austin ch. 6, Sun 7 p.m.  
Blaine ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Bloomington ch. 16, Wed 10 p.m.; Thu 6 a.m. & 2 p.m.  
Brooklyn Center ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Brooklyn Park ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Burnsville ch. 14, Mon, Wed & Fri 4:30 p.m.; Sun, Tue, Thu & Sat 4:30 a.m.  
Centerville ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Circle Pines ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Eagan ch. 15, Sun 6:30 a.m.; Mon 12:30 a.m.; Tue 9:30 p.m.; Wed 6:30 p.m.; Thu 3:30 p.m.; Fri 12:30 p.m.; Sat 9:30 a.m.  
Eden Prairie ch. 15, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Edina ch. 15, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Golden Valley ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Ham Lake ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Hopkins ch. 15, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Inver Grove Hts. ch. 15, Sun 6:30 a.m.; Mon 12:30 a.m.; Tue 9:30 p.m.; Wed 6:30 p.m.; Thu 3:30 p.m.; Fri 12:30 p.m.; Sat 9:30 a.m.  
Lexington ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Lino Lakes ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.  
Litchfield ch. 10, Sun 2 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 7 p.m.; Wed 1 a.m., 3 a.m., 8:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.; ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Maple Grove ch. 75, Mon 6:30 p.m.  
Minneapolis ch. 15, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Minnetonka ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
New Hope ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
New Ulm ch. 72, Sun 5 p.m.; Thu 10 a.m.; Fri 7 p.m.  
Osseo ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Plymouth ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Richfield ch. 15, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Robbinsdale ch. 19, Sun 4 a.m., 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.; Sat 10 p.m.  
Rochester ch. 10, Sun 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Sat 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.  
St. Charles ch. 20, Sun 2 p.m.; Wed 3 p.m.  
Spring Lake Park ch. 14, Sun 1 & 9 a.m.; Sat 5 p.m.

Wabasha  
Willmar  
Winona

**Missouri**  
Cape Girardeau ch. 5, Sun 7:30 a.m.; Tue 6 p.m.; Thu 12:30 p.m.; Fri 7:30 p.m.  
Jackson ch. 5, Sun 7:30 a.m.; Tue 6 p.m.; Thu 12:30 p.m.; Fri 7:30 p.m.  
Jefferson City ch. 3, Wed 6 p.m.  
Poplar Bluff ch. 54, Tue 4 p.m.  
St. Louis ch. 18, Sat 5:30 p.m.  
Springfield ch. 26, Sun 8:30 a.m.; Wed 7 p.m.

**Montana**  
Billings ch. 7, Sun 6 p.m.; Sat 11 a.m.  
Helena ch. 11, Sun 3 p.m.  
Missoula ch. 7, Sun 11 a.m.

**Nevada**  
Carson City ch. 10, Wed 7:30 p.m.  
Reno/Sparks ch. 16, Wed 7 p.m.

**New Hampshire**  
LaConia ch. 25, 26, Sun 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.

**New Jersey**  
Newark ch. 19, Sun 7 a.m.

**New Mexico**  
Albuquerque ch. 27, Sun 10:30 a.m.  
Santa Fe ch. 16, Sun 10 a.m.; Mon 6:30 p.m.

**New York**  
Binghamton ch. 4, Thu 5:30 p.m.  
Bronx ch. 70, Mon 3 p.m.  
Brooklyn ch. 56, 69, Sun 10 a.m.  
Canandaigua ch. 12, Sun 2 p.m.  
Long Island ch. 20, Mon 10 p.m.  
Olean ch. 6, Thu 9:30 p.m.  
Oneonta ch. 23, Mon 6 p.m.; Wed 9 p.m.  
Queens ch. 35, Tue 8 p.m.; Thu 3 p.m.  
Woodbury ch. 56, Sun 10 p.m.; Thu 4:30 p.m.  
Queens ch. 20, Sun 8 a.m.

**North Carolina**  
Asheville ch. 20, Sun 1 p.m.  
Burlington ch. 5, 10, Sun 10 a.m.  
Charlotte ch. 21, Sat 1 p.m.  
Durham ch. 8, Wed 7:30 a.m.  
Greensboro ch. 8, Sun 10:30 & 12:30 a.m.  
Hickory ch. 3, Sun 7 p.m.  
Mebane ch. 5, 10, Sun 10 a.m.  
Raleigh ch. 22, Tue 6:30 p.m.

**North Dakota**  
Bismarck ch. 12, Sun 2:30 p.m.  
Fargo ch. 12, Tue 10:30 a.m.

**Ohio**  
Akron ch. 15, Sun 9:30 a.m.; Mon 11 p.m.  
Athens ch. 23, Sun 7 p.m.; Wed 7 p.m.  
Brunswick ch. 21, Tue 7 p.m.; Wed 12:30, 4:30 & 8:30 a.m.; 2:30, 6:30 & 9:30 p.m.  
Bryan ch. 4, Sun 11 a.m. & 8 p.m.; Mon 8 p.m.  
Cincinnati ch. 18, Sun 10:30 a.m.; Tue 10 p.m.; Thu 11 p.m.; Sat 6:30 a.m.  
Cincinnati (Union Twp.) ch. 8, Sun 2:30 a.m.; Tue 9:30 a.m.; Wed 11 p.m.; Sat 2:30 p.m.  
Dayton ch. 12, Mon 3:30 p.m.; Sat 11:30 p.m.  
Defiance ch. 5, Sun 12 noon; Thu 6 p.m.  
Fairborn ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m.  
Greenville ch. 3, Thu 8 p.m.  
Oberlin/Wellington ch. 12, Sun & Sat 9 a.m.  
Springfield ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m.  
Trotwood ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m.  
Urbana ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m., 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.  
Vandalia ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m.  
Wash. Court House ch. 3, Wed 2 p.m.; Sat 10 a.m.  
Xenia ch. 23, Sun 5:30 p.m.

**Oregon**  
Eugene ch. 29, Tue 2 p.m.  
McMinnville ch. 11, Sun 5:30 p.m.; Wed 8 p.m.  
Medford ch. 15, 95, Sun 5 p.m.  
Oregon City ch. 21, Mon 8 p.m.  
Portland ch. 22, Sun 7:30 p.m.  
Salem ch. 23, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Fri 2 p.m.; Sat 11:30 a.m.  
Woodburn ch. 11, Sun 9 a.m.

**Pennsylvania**  
Pittsburgh/Moon Twp. York ch. 21, 14, Sun 12 & 2 p.m.  
York ch. 16, Sun 8:30 p.m.; Mon 4:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

**Rhode Island**  
Entire state ch. 14, Fri 10:30 a.m.

**Texas**  
Austin ch. 11, Mon 8:30 p.m.  
Dallas ch. 148, 74, Sun 12:30 p.m.; Thu 9:30 p.m.  
Del Rio ch. 19, Sun 9 a.m.; Wed 5 p.m.  
El Paso ch. 15, Mon, Fri, Sat 1 p.m.  
Fort Worth ch. 28, Tue 5:30 p.m.; Thu 1 p.m.  
Longview ch. 26, Tue 2 p.m.; Wed 10 p.m.; Fri 12:30 p.m.; Sat 9 p.m.

**Virginia**  
Charlottesville/ Albemarle County ch. 13, 14, Wed 10 p.m.

Hampton Roads ch. 71, 74, Sun 10 a.m.

**Washington**  
Everett ch. 77, Wed 5 p.m.  
Kennyway ch. 13, Sun & Tue 8:30 p.m.  
Olympia ch. 22, 29, Sun 9 a.m.; Thu 10:30 p.m.  
Vancouver ch. 11, Sun 11 p.m.; Mon 5 p.m.; Sat 11 a.m.

**West Virginia**  
Morgantown ch. 3, Mon, Wed & Fri 3 p.m.; Sat 10 a.m.

**Wisconsin**  
Beloit ch. 12, Thu 6:30 p.m.  
Eau Claire ch. 11, Sun 2 p.m.  
Kenosha ch. 14, Sun & Mon 7:30 p.m.  
Madison ch. 4, Sun 12:30 p.m.  
Milwaukee ch. 96, Mon 2 p.m.; Tue 7 p.m.; Wed 2 p.m.  
Omro ch. 19, Sun & Sat 1 p.m.  
Stevens Point ch. 3, Mon 5 & 9:30 p.m.; Tue 10 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.  
Wausau ch. 10, Sun 8:30 a.m.; Sat 9 a.m.  
West Allis ch. 14, times vary

### CANADA

**Nationwide**  
Vision TV Sun 11 p.m. (PST)  
Star Choice Digital ch. 399, Sun 10:30 a.m. (EST)

**Alberta**  
The Christian Channel Telus ch. 158, Sun 8:30 a.m.

**British Columbia**  
The Christian Channel Telus ch. 158, Sun 7:30 a.m.

**Manitoba**  
The Christian Channel MTS ch. 21, Sun 9:30 a.m.

**New Brunswick**  
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sun 11:30 a.m.

**Newfoundland and Labrador**  
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sun 12 noon

**Northwest Territory**  
The Christian Channel Northwestel ch. 226, Sun 8:30 a.m.

**Ontario**  
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sun 10:30 a.m.  
The Christian Channel Cogeco ch. 186, Sun 10:30 a.m.

**Saskatchewan**  
The Christian Channel SaskTel ch. 282, Sun 8:30 a.m.

## Radio Log

For additional information and the most current airing times, or to download or listen to programs online, visit [www.beyondtoday.tv/radio/](http://www.beyondtoday.tv/radio/).

**Nationwide**  
Internet Radio live365.com, Sun 8:30 a.m. (PST)

**Alabama**  
Birmingham 1070 AM, Sun 7:30 a.m.

**Arizona**  
Douglas Globe 930 AM, Sat 10:30 a.m.  
Sierra Vista 1240 AM, Sat 10:30 a.m.  
Tucson 1470 AM, Sat 10:30 a.m.  
940 AM, Sat 10:30 a.m.

**California**  
San Diego 760 AM, Sun 6 a.m.

**Florida**  
Jacksonville 690 AM/106.5 FM, Sun 7 a.m.

**Indiana**  
Ft. Wayne 1190 AM, Sun 10 a.m.

**Louisiana**  
New Orleans 870 AM/105.3 FM, Sat 9:30 p.m.

**Montana**  
Helena 101.9 FM, Mon 8 p.m.; Fri 8 p.m.; Sat 8 a.m.

**Nebraska**  
Omaha 1110 AM, Sun 7:30 a.m.

**New York**  
Buffalo 930 AM, Sun 6:30 a.m.

**Ohio**  
Cincinnati 550 AM, Sun 6 a.m.

**Oklahoma**  
Tulsa 740 AM, Sun 8 a.m.

**Washington**  
Seattle 770 AM, Sun 7:30 a.m.

**West Virginia**  
Wheeling 1170 AM, Fri 8:15 p.m.



# Man's Endless Quest for Happiness

*How can you find real happiness? Many people look for it by acquiring more and more or doing more and more. But that's not where the key to real happiness lies.*

by **Beyond Today** host Gary Petty

**W**hat would make you truly happy—a new car, a new job, a different husband or wife, more money, or to be better-looking?

Or maybe you're a young person and your definition of happiness is to find a special someone, get married and have a family. Maybe your definition of happiness is to become a doctor and help others or perhaps you want to be an entrepreneur and be your own boss.

Now imagine what it would be like to have everything you think would make you happy—and then to suddenly lose it all. That's exactly what happened to Viktor Frankl.

Viktor Frankl was one of Austria's most promising and well-known neurologists and psychiatrists in the 1930s. He was highly successful, happily married and admired by his colleagues.

One day his entire life came crashing down as he and his wife found themselves forced from their home, robbed of everything they owned and crammed into a boxcar bound for a German concentration camp. There Frankl was separated from his wife—whom he would never see again—was stripped of his clothes and had all the hair of his body shaved off.

Viktor Frankl would spend the next few years living in indescribable horror. He slept with nine other men in a bed only 6½ to 8 feet wide with no mattress and only two blankets. He received so little food that his body looked like a skeleton with skin. He endured beatings from SS guards and fellow prisoners. He watched countless people suffer and die.

Yet in the midst of the most unbelievable hell on earth, Viktor Frankl claimed to find the important keys to happiness.

## What is happiness?

What is your definition of happiness? Be



**If you measure happiness by what you own or how much money you have, it's likely that you aren't very happy.**

honest with yourself and see if any of these sentences describe your approach to life.

- You constantly suffer from feelings of anger and bitterness toward others and life in general.
- You're always struggling with perfectionism and feelings of never measuring up.
- You see other people as barriers to your happiness.
- You measure happiness by what you own or how much money you have.
- You are obsessed with your appearance, clothing, jewelry, makeup and body shape.
- You suffer from excessive shyness.
- You have difficulty experiencing meaningful relationships with others.
- You feel stressed much of the time and can't relax when you're not busy.

• You are in constant conflict with others and always trying to bend everyone else to your will; you feel that you are right in almost all situations.

- You have a preoccupation with sex outside of marriage.
- You find yourself always comparing yourself with others and judging others by your personal criteria.
- You experience an inability to trust God or even believe that He exists.

If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms much of the time, you have to admit you aren't very happy.

## Happiness is an approach to life

Viktor Frankl arrived at some profound conclusions resulting from his experiences in Nazi concentration camps. He concluded



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Use our search tool so you can find material on any subject you want—marriage, family, biblical teachings, current events, prophecy, you name it. Feel free to download all these to your own computer so you can study them in depth, or request your own printed copies to be mailed to you.

While you're there, be sure to take a look at our companion publication *World News and Prophecy*. This eye-opening newsletter will help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy, giving you a perspective you won't find anywhere else—the perspective of God's Word.

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that *the more a person tried to be happy, the unhappier he or she became.*

Instead of trying to be happy, we should be thinking more in terms of becoming *spiritually, mentally, socially and physically healthy.* This moves us away from becoming increasingly self-centered, and we can begin to understand that there are principles to happiness we can learn.

At this point you may be saying, "But this isn't what I need to be happy; I need a new girlfriend"—or "a new boss" or "more money!"

It's true that other people, places or things can give us temporary happiness. It's also true that other people, or lack of health or deprivation of basic human needs can cause us to suffer and feel unhappy. But if that's all there is to life, then all of us are no more than victims of our environment—jerked back and forth between good times and bad with no control of how we think or feel. Ultimately, happiness is a product of how we think.

Happiness is more a product of *attitude* than *situations.* A positive attitude looks for the good, even in the most difficult of situations, while a negative attitude always sees the bad.

### Steps on the journey of life

Happiness isn't a destination. It's not as if one day you discover it and it never goes away. It is part of the journey of life. If happiness is a way of thinking, then maybe it's time for some mind surgery. Here are four steps to take every day to help you along the journey of happiness:

#### 1. Take responsibility for your life.

We can never be mentally, emotionally or spiritually healthy until we are willing to take responsibility for our own actions, thoughts and emotions. Happiness isn't found by concentrating on yourself—it is discovered in objective truth, not in basing right and wrong on your immediate feelings.

It is discovered in relating to other people. It is discovered in work that uses your talents. It is ultimately discovered in a relationship with your Creator.

#### 2. Learn to control your thoughts.

The more a person fills his or her mind with negative thoughts, the unhappier that person will become. Many people waste their entire lives feeling controlled by hurt, hatred, feelings of being a victim, and other negative emotions. We can't always control our environment or what happens to us. We can't even always control how we feel, but we *can* control

what we choose to think about.

**3. Learn to be thankful.** We can either concentrate on what we *don't* have or be thankful for what we *do* have. If we concentrate on what we don't have, we doom ourselves to frustration and unhappiness. Victor Frankl, for example, wrote of finding beauty in the midst of the oppressive bleakness of Auschwitz in a sunset or flower.

There's an old story of an immigrant to America who arrived at Ellis Island, the port of entry in New York, with nothing more than the shirt on his back. He worked hard and eventually had a small business and a nice house, living in relative comfort. He even managed to help his son graduate from college with an MBA.

When the son returned from college he looked at his father's books. The son complained, "How do you even know what is your profit?"

The father replied, "I first take out the cost of the shirt I had on my back when I arrived in this country. Everything else is profit."

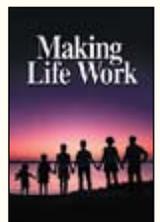
How different would your life be if the last things you thought about before going to sleep and first things you thought about when you woke up were all the good things in your life instead of the negative?

**4. Ask God to reveal His plan for you.** God has created you for a purpose. He wants you to be His child. He wants you to be happy. And He has a marvelous future planned for you if you want it and are willing to accept it.

Change is never easy, but it can be exciting. If you are going to discover and respond to the Creator's purpose for your life, you are going to have to make some radical changes in thinking. It will take effort and dedication, but the rewards are worth it on the journey of life! **GN**

### Recommended Reading

Few people realize it, but they probably already own the best self-help book ever published. What book is that? The Bible! It's packed with proven, time-tested advice on all major aspects of life—friendships, family, marriage, parenting, career, finances, health, happiness and much more. We've gathered much of that advice into an eye-opening booklet, *Making Life Work*. Request or download your free copy today!



Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download it from our Web site at

[www.gnmagazine.org/booklets](http://www.gnmagazine.org/booklets)

## “How Can You Help Restore the Disappearing Family?”

The July-August edition of *The Good News* has enriched my knowledge, especially the articles “How Can You Help Restore the Disappearing Family?” and “Career, Home and Family.” I have decided to appreciate my wife more than I previously did.

*J.A., Milton Keynes, England*

I really enjoyed the articles on family life in the July-August *Good News* magazine. They were very clear and concise to my family and me as I have returned to work full-time now that my children are at school.

*T.M., Lewes, England*

Thank you for sending the July-August issue of *The Good News*. I especially enjoyed the first article about marriage because my wife and I feel our marriage of 56 years is the focus of our lives and makes life worth living. We support and comfort one another, talk with one another, laugh together and find life a delightful adventure together. There was a time when some people would have disapproved of our marrying one another. We are of different cultural/ethnic backgrounds because I am of Swiss descent while my wife is of English and Chippewa heritage.

*J.W., Blanchard, Michigan*

## Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension

I wanted to thank you for sending me a copy of your booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. This very important publication changed my decision regarding my marriage. I've been married for five years already, but our marriage is somewhat shaky. We always fight because of many reasons and I decided that we should separate. I read the booklet and it opened my mind and heart for the preservation of our marriage. I now think that God is always with us through our difficulties.

*J.A., Philippines*

## Creation/evolution articles

As a retired science teacher in the Illinois public school system, I want to tell you that I really appreciate the articles you have recently published on evolution/creation issues. There is so much to be said about the creation side of the evolution/creation debate of which most of the public is unaware. I hope you continue to educate people correctly on this vital issue. It is important because so many wonder whether God really does exist.

Part of the reason they have these doubts is because for such a long time they have been led to believe that much of what they have been taught in their science classes was true science instead of “scientific” speculation. Thank you for your efforts to reeducate the public on this important subject. People need to understand that the biblical accounts of events such as the creation and the Flood are not in conflict with true science. Please accept my small contribution to help you in this effort to educate the public.

*H.B., Bettendorf, Iowa*

The articles on creation and evolution have been quite helpful to my family. My son, although raised as a Christian, had become confused because of the teaching of evolution at school.

*O.O., Glasgow, Scotland*

## Lives changed and readers helped

I just wanted to let the members of the United Church of God know how blessed I am to have received the booklets you have sent to help me in my spiritual growth. I thought for sure that I was a lost cause. My faith in God has been restored and my attitude readjusted. I no longer feel insecure. I know now that I can find strength in God to handle many situations and I have found words of encouragement to be a blessing to someone else too. I thank God for this organization.

*L.W., Chicago, Illinois*

Thank you for all the free literature and the *Bible Study Course* which you provide. I grew up without any religion and then converted to Catholicism when

I got married. I thought my life was perfect and never really thought about any life issues in the spiritual sense until recently. My 22-month-old son unexpectedly died and that led me to really question life's meaning and purpose. Through your literature you have given me hope for a better life in the future and helped me to cope with the loss of my precious son. I have enclosed a small contribution to help you continue in your efforts to provide the truth to people who seek to find it.

*T.L., Grand Prairie, Texas*

Thank you so much for the material that I have received. It has opened my eyes and fed my spirit and my hungry soul. It has changed my life almost overnight. I can't get it fast enough to suit me. I pray that I will have a great testimony of God's wonderful grace and the saving love of His precious Son to share with you someday soon—when God restores my wounded soul and I start bearing fruit for His kingdom. Please accept this small token of my love.

*D.S., Las Vegas, Nevada*

Thank you so much for your free magazines and booklets. I praise your ministry for offering such literature at no cost to anyone, anywhere, be he rich or poor. I and my family have been through many difficulties in life, but we are very grateful to your ministry for providing us with lots of teachings about our true Savior—receiving the true answers and solutions for our daily life. The literature is made easy to read and understand, leading to a positive way of life.

*S.J., Tanzania, East Africa*

Thank you for *The Good News*, which is really worthwhile and an eye opener. Through reading this magazine I came to know that there is a vast difference between traditional beliefs and biblical truths and principles. Through reading *The Good News* my viewpoint has changed. Please continue to send it to me.

*A.D.J., India*

I have just logged onto your online magazine and once I started on an article I couldn't stop. It has given me a hope that I never had before from any church. I have sometimes cried myself to sleep with worry for my friends and family's eternal destiny. I have been so often taught about them not repenting in this age and suffering an eternity in hell.

I have cried out to God to show me why He would allow such an awful existence to those He created and loves. Having read your articles, I have been comforted to see that my loved ones may be given a future chance to repent if they haven't done so before they die.

*L.D., Internet*

*For further knowledge and understanding about this subject, readers should request or download our free booklet What Happens After Death? Also read the article “The Resurrection of the Dead: What Does the Bible Really Teach?” beginning on page 18.*

## Who Is God?

We, the Church of Jesus Christ of Papua, New Guinea, came across your address on a booklet entitled *Who Is God?* We found whilst reading through this booklet that we share the same faith. We would appreciate greatly your kind assistance in terms of sending any doctrinal booklets or articles of faith to assist in our ministry. Should you send us these resources materials, you will be informed on the outcome of our studies and how these resources are used in our ministry. We are praying to God to lead us to work with a Church of the same faith.

*P.D., Papua, New Guinea*

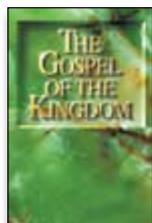
*We are glad to assist with our literature. You may find our free booklet The Church Jesus Built to be particularly relevant.*

Published letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address your letters to *The Good News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, Ohio 45254-1027, U.S.A., or e-mail [gninfo@ucg.org](mailto:gninfo@ucg.org) (please be sure to include your full name, city, state or province, and country).

## Will the World Ever See a Time of Lasting Peace?



**T**oday's headlines are filled with bad news—war, famine, natural disasters, governmental scandals and the like. With all this bad news, what kind of future can we look forward to?



Almost 2,000 years ago, a prophet came bringing a vital message for this world. That prophet was Jesus Christ, and His message was “the gospel of the kingdom of God” (Mark 1:14).

The word *gospel* means *good news*. But what was the good news Jesus Christ brought? What is the kingdom of which He spoke? And does it have anything to do with the problems that threaten us today?

Most people don't understand the truth about the Kingdom of God. Yet it is the central theme of the Bible—and truly the best news the world could ever hear!

In *The Gospel of the Kingdom* you can discover the truth of the surprising message Jesus Christ brought. This booklet shows you, from the pages of your Bible, exactly what that message is—and what it means for you. For your free copy, visit our Web site or contact any of our offices listed on page 2.

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