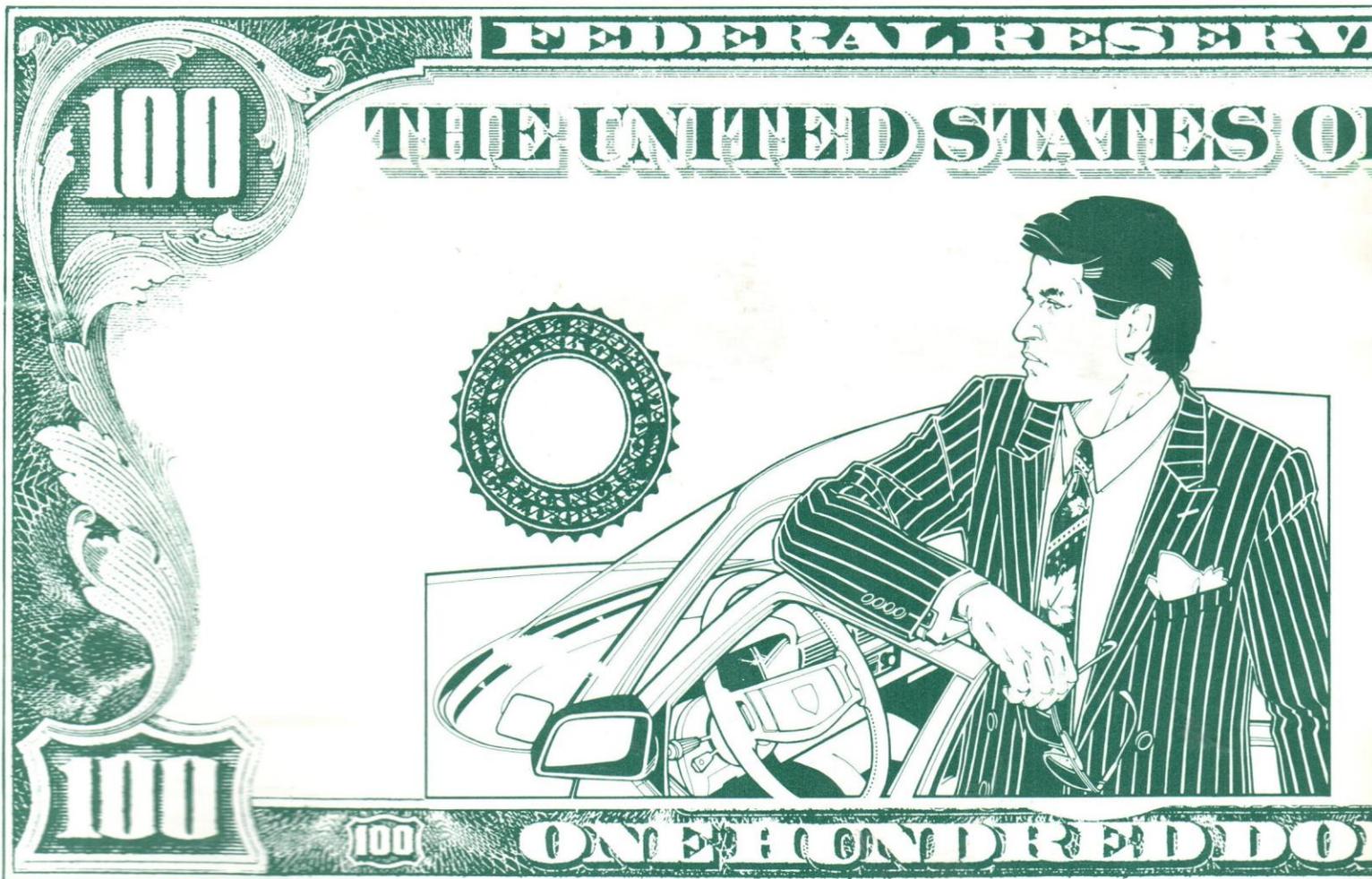


THE *Sabbath Sentinel*

AUGUST 1994

GOD has spoken
to ~~WE~~! ? \$



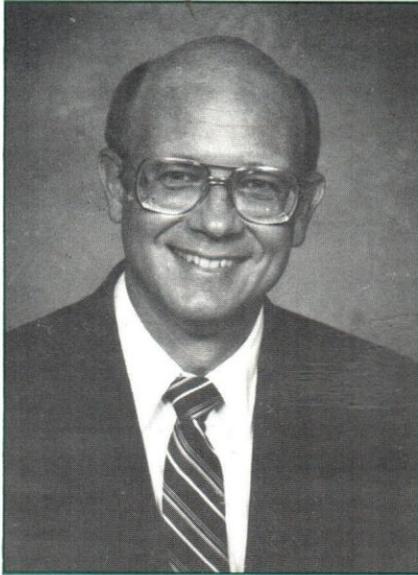
A CRISIS IN LEADERSHIP

BSA

THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION

For those who don't know Him--Jesus Christ and Him Crucified!
For those who do know Him--the liberty of His Sabbath!

EDITORIAL



Sydney Cleveland

THE GOOD NEWS!

"Their sins and lawless acts
I will remember
no more.
And where these
have been forgiven,
there is no longer
any sacrifice for sin."
— Hebrews 10:17, 18 NIV

THE SEARCH FOR HONESTY

Some 300 years before Christ, a Greek cynic named Diogenes carried a lantern as he walked through the city of Athens. When asked what he was looking for, Diogenes replied, "I am looking for an honest man." If the story is true, then the search for honesty is at least 2,300 years old. But how would Diogenes find today's world?

The News Media. Certainly not more than a handful of our readers missed the news coverage of "O. J." Simpson and his televised "flight" from the law. With straight faces and fervent words respected news anchors reported that "O. J." was fleeing in order to go to his mother's house. But that was not true, he was headed for his own home. We were told evidence linking O. J. to the murder of his wife included a "blunt digging tool." But it was not true, the "tool" does not exist. We were told O. J.'s ski mask had been recovered at the crime scene, but again the report was false. Now as I watch the evening news I can't help wondering, "Would Diogenes find an honest man here?"

The Scientific Community. Most of us are aware that the United States government is currently investigating the tobacco industry. Since the 1960's our nation's Surgeon Generals have repeatedly warned of the dangers of smoking. But for every scientist producing evidence condemning smoking there is a scientist bought with tobacco money to refute the testimony. This dichotomy among scientists is true in the Creation vs. Evolution debate, in the great Ozone Depletion scare, and even in the investigation of the flammability of gasoline tanks on American pickup trucks. Would Diogenes find an "honest man" in today's scientific community?

The Religious Community. Never before in my lifetime have there been so many claiming to be the "True Church," or to have the "True Religion," or the "True Interpretation," or the "True Miracles," or the "True Bible," or the "Truth." Reason dictates that they can't all be telling the truth! One sincere individual wrote claiming to have discovered a special truth. But his claim to credibility lay largely in the fact that he had helped track ballistic missiles during US government tests. Should I accept his theology because he "never lost a missile?" Would I believe what that Galilean fisherman, Peter, wrote because "he never lost a fish?" It seems many today discover "new truth" by omitting evidence which runs contrary to their cherished beliefs. This is not surprising, for Jesus said there would be many false Christs, false teachings, and false spirits. Would Diogenes find an "honest man" in today's religious community?

I could point to the Educational, Legal, Political, and Medical Communities ad nauseam, but the result is always the same — *all of us are desperately wicked!* As the Bible says: "(Our) whole head is injured, (our) whole heart afflicted. From the sole of (our) foot to the top of (our) head there is no soundness — only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil" (Isaiah 1:5, 6). The fact of the matter is that Diogenes lived 300 years too soon. Had he lived in the time of Christ his search would have been fruitful, he would have found one totally honest man: Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Jesus said. By laying aside personal prejudices and cherished opinions, and coming like innocent children to learn of Him, we all can be full of truth!

— SC

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Bulk Subscriptions are available if 10 or more copies are sent in the same package: \$7 each subscription, \$10 outside US.

Address all correspondence regarding BSA membership, subscriptions to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, change of address, or classified advertisements to: The Bible Sabbath Association, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737; telephone (405) 227-3200. Make all checks, drafts, and money orders payable to The Bible Sabbath Association.

Correspondence and Manuscript submissions to *The Sabbath Sentinel* should be addressed to Sydney or Sherry Cleveland, *The Sabbath Sentinel*, 172 Suncrest Drive, Greenwood, IN 46143; telephone (317) 885-8122.

Opinions expressed in *The Sabbath Sentinel* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Staff or of The Bible Sabbath Association.

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**BIBLE
SABBATH**

Mailbox

Enjoys TSS Very Much

Enclosed is my renewal subscription. I enjoy TSS very much and it is my joy to look forward to getting the magazine every month. I am a Sabbathkeeper, so your magazine holds a wealth of interest for me.

R. McClafflin

TSS is Nondenominational

I'd like to suggest that right above the TSS masthead the word "Nondenominational" be included. The reason is that as soon as some see the words *The Sabbath Sentinel* they may associate the magazine with a church. I believe the word "Nondenominational" would make it easier for some to subscribe to the magazine.

C. White
Shannon, IL

Likes EGW Article

I have really enjoyed reading TSS; especially the July and August, 1993 issues dealing with SDAs rewriting Ellen G. White. I have been an SDA for 36 years and it is refreshing to see the truth on how EGW received her "inspiration." God bless, and keep up the good work. Also, besides my subscription to TSS, could you also send me a directory of Sabbathkeeping churches?

Robert Sanders
West Lafayette, IN

"Sealed" but Disappointed

I was extremely interested in the two articles on pages five and six of the May (1994) issue of TSS. But after reading them I was very disappointed. Anyone doing an extensive study into this subject could not have accidentally overlooked the obvious. It would have had to intentionally be overlooked to try to get a specific doctrinal view across.

What was done in these two articles was not scripturally explaining what the Bible says the seal is — instead, they went into defining the word seal, replacing the word sign with seal, giving examples of seals, and quoted scriptures that seem to indicate what the seal was. Nowhere in either article did they put the scriptures together to prove what the seal really is. It's really quite simple when you allow the scripture to define itself. Let's try it and see what happens. You may

want to print a third view on this subject.

In Revelation 7:3, 4 it says: "Hurt not the earth neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of Yahweh in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."

We have three important things to look at here. First, these servants were going to be sealed. Second, the seal would be put in their foreheads. And third, the number to be sealed would be one hundred forty four thousand.

Now if we look at Revelation 14:1, we read: "And I looked and lo a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." The text reads, "His name and His Father's name." Can we find those same major factors in this scripture? We see the number is the same: one hundred forty four thousand. The place is the same: their foreheads. And what is it that is there? The Name.

Now, to put a little more credibility to this scenario, look at Revelation chapter twenty-two beginning in verse one through verse four. Once again we see the servants of Yahweh mentioned, we see their foreheads mentioned, and what is it they have in their foreheads? His Name.

Stop and think about it. If you were going to mark something you owned for the sake of identification some time in the future, how would you do it? I'd write my name on it. That way I would be able to prove it belonged to me. "Yes that is mine, see there, my name is written on it."

There are different ways of Bible study for different subjects, the best way is always, let the scriptures interpret the scriptures. Some times its a bit more difficult than others, and some times its as simple as this one was. Just read the scriptures and they will define themselves.

It is not my intent to ridicule or offend anyone, I just want to point out how important it is to read what the scriptures say, instead of trying to make the scriptures say what we want them to mean.

Before anyone writes back and tells me how unimportant the Name of Yahweh is, remember this: it was important enough to Him that He dedicated one of the Ten Commandments to it.

Keep up the good work. We will continue to pray for your ministry as we hope you all will do for ours. May Yahweh bless you and yours as you continue to walk in His path daily.

Pete Vacca
Rocheport, MO

Thanks very much for your letter. Your logic is impeccable, and we agree that the scriptures you quoted certainly state that God places His name on the foreheads of the saved. But many believe this is symbolic and not literal (see "Mailbox," TSS, July, 1994). We also agree that one of God's Ten Commandments addresses the sanctity of His name. And we agree that scripture should be allowed to interpret itself. But none of the texts quoted above specifically states that the Seal of God is His name. Therefore, we have two options: (1) use logic to deduce that the Seal of God is either God's name or the Sabbath; or (2) accept that the Bible specifically states the Seal of God is the Holy Spirit: "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13).

LAST OPPORTUNITY TO BE INCLUDED IN NEW DIRECTORY!

This is the last opportunity for your church or group to be included in the 1994 *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*. By including your church or group, readers searching for fellowship will be able to contact you. Please send correct name, address, and brief sketch of your beliefs to:

The Bible Sabbath Association

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The Sign of Jonah

MIKE CLEVELAND

He answered, 'A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth' (Matthew 12:39, 40).

Jesus plainly declared that the story of Jonah, specifically the three days and three nights he spent in a big fish, was a "sign." Then Jesus showed how that sign pointed to Himself. In our study of types, this story of Jonah is rich with detail and imagery pointing us to Jesus. Let's look at the "sign" of Jonah, and see how it points to our wonderful Savior.

Chapter one of Jonah begins with God instructing Jonah to go to the great city of Nineveh and "preach against it" because of it's wickedness (verse 1). But Jonah thought a cruise sounded better than preaching against a city so he hopped on a ship and "ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish" (verse 3). God then sent a "great wind" which caused a "violent storm" so that the ship nearly "broke up" (verse 4).

Isn't it interesting that it was when Jonah ran from the Lord that his life got stormy? Is it coincidental when the prodigal left the Father he ended up eating with pigs? Storms of life come to those who run from God and pig food is the nourishment of all prodigals. "Lord keep me near you. I'm too frail for storms and the world won't satisfy me."

Now this storm became one strong hurricane. The boat pitched up and down, water poured in, sailors tossed things overboard and prayed to Buddha. The sailors figured out by casting lots (and by Jonah's guilty look) that Jonah was the one causing all of their problems.

When people run from the Lord, not only does their life get stormy, but they cause problems in other people's lives as well.

Back to the story, the sailors figured out that Jonah would make better fish bait than water bailer, so with one

The Sabbath Sentinel

quick prayer begging forgiveness, they heaved the backslider into his watery grave.

But wait! Back up a minute. Listen to that prayer again. "Then they cried to the Lord, 'O Lord, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O Lord, have done as you pleased.'"

They were asking not to be held accountable for killing an *innocent* man! Was Jonah innocent? Why, he himself admitted that "it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you" (verse 12). Why did the Holy Spirit record that it was an *innocent* man who would suffer for the lives of these men? Because Jonah was a "sign" pointing us forward to Jesus, the "Lamb without spot or blemish" who would suffer for us on the cross that we might live!

"But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:17). "But the Lord provided" Sweet words for those of us who have backslid. Even when people run from God and it seems like life is just about over, He will provide.

Notice here how God gave the big fish a chance to obey the divine command: Jonah was a stranger and the fish took him in. Of course the main thing the fish learned is that you can't keep a good man down.

But listen to the wording of Jonah's prayer from inside the fish: "You hurled me into the deep ... all your waves and breakers swept over me."

Do you see the symbolism? Jesus was *baptized* with our sins.

"... Seaweed was wrapped around my head." A crown of thorns was wrapped around Jesus' head.

"... The earth barred me in forever." Jesus was buried in a tomb as he died our eternal death.

"... But you brought my life up from the pit." Jesus was resurrected on the third day.

Consider that Jonah was taken from the wood and thrown into the deep where he remained for three days and nights before resurrection. Could it be any clearer? What a "sign" the book of Jonah gives us.

One last thought. In Matthew 12, after Jesus compares himself with Jonah, he compares himself with King Solomon. Ever wonder why he picked those two? It is because those two individuals combined personify the gospel. Jonah represents the depths of Jesus' despair, His agony, and His suffering for others. King Solomon represents the height of Jesus exaltation, his glory and his kingdom. In Jesus, both kingly Divinity and lowly humanity are combined to give us salvation. Praise his name!



The Mike Cleveland Family

God Has Spoken A Crisis in

MICHAEL GALIMORE

"This is only the beginning of sorrows."

Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. ... For the dream comes through much effort, and the voice of a fool through many words" — Ecclesiastes 5:1, 3. The writer of Ecclesiastes continues in chapter 7, verse 29, "God made mankind straight, but they have pursued many woven fabrications."¹

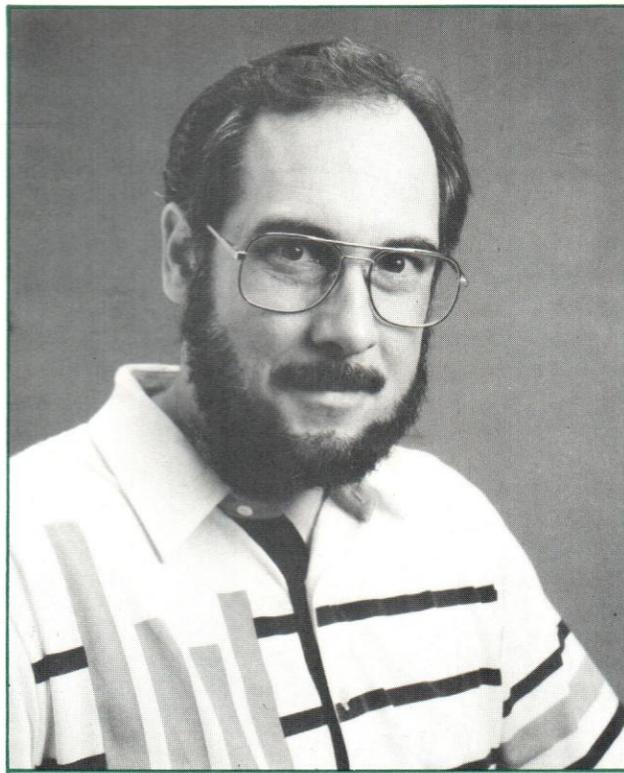
If this be the wisdom of Solomon, these words do not constitute sense common within the microcosm of televangelism.

The World of Televangelism

We no longer need journey down to the house of God. We can turn on the TV and experience multimedia reenactments of self-centered visions which have reduced the stature and fullness of God to a few hundred feet in height and have Him speaking from the midst of the cotton patch. The viewer is told that God has spoken to the televangelist and the message is on this wise: No other man, but the televangelist, can accomplish God's end-time work. The tremendous weight of this responsibility falls on his shoulders and the shoulders of his financial contributors.

Or, how about this one: God has personally told the televangelist that He has set a deadline for "X" amount of money to be raised. The intensity of the plot coagulates. The terms of the blackmail unfold. If the televangelist does not succeed in motivating his supporters to shell out the required shekels, God is going to murder him.

I have lost count of how many wives of televangelists I have heard say, "If anyone on this earth today is doing the job of the apostle Paul, it's just gotta be my husband!" This heartfelt,



Michael Galimore



script-led testimony is always given in context of sorely needed financial support as the screen dissolves into the twin logotypical icons, Visa[®], and MasterCard[®]. This is only the beginning of sorrows.

A Private Meeting

In 1983, I attended a private meeting with believers/contributors of a media ministry in attendance. An "evangelist" proclaimed that we should think about how much more a modern-day "apostle" was accomplishing, flying around in his personal G-III (Gulfstream III executive airplane) than the apostle Paul ever dreamed of, riding around on his "Jackass-III." The "evangelist" proceeded to propagandize a message filled with exclusivist jargon and institutional mythology, sprinkled with allusions to scriptural proof texts. The "evangelist" assured the believers that the Word of God was living, that God was *personally speaking to them through the "evangelist,"* and that the "apostle" was a reincarnate "Elijah," heralding the second coming of Jesus Christ.

In light of such pretextual appropriation of the apostle Paul for mercantile purposes, would the reader permit this writer to transport one of the apostle Paul's audiences to the meeting with the "evangelist?"

Paul's Audience

In Acts 17, verses 2 and 3, we find that Paul "lectured to them on the scriptures, demonstrating and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead, and saying, 'This is the Christ, Jesus, whom I proclaim to you.'" The writer Luke highlights a group of Jews in Berea who heard Paul. "They received the Word in all eagerness, studying the scriptures day by day to see if this were really so. And many of them believed" (Acts 17:11, 12).

"No other man, but the televangelist can accomplish God's end-time work."

Address to a Modern Audience

Apparently, I am not the first correspondent to suggest juxtaposing a Berean audience and modern "spokesmen" for God. In a communication to members/contributors, written in 1979, the above-mentioned "apostle" seems to be responding to such a Berean examination. "I am writing a book, titled *A Voice Cries Out Amid Religious Confusion*. This book will say that of all the religions and all the

Spoken to Me — Leadership

BALTIMORE

"We no longer need journey down to the house of God. We can turn on the TV and experience multimedia re-enactments of self-centered visions which have reduced the stature and fullness of God to a few hundred feet in height."

more than 250 denominations and sects in 'Christianity,' *not one*, except the _____, knows *who* and *what* God is! *Not one* knows what, and why, *man is!* ... *Not one* knows what is the *true Gospel* Christ proclaimed! *Not one* knows what happens in the hereafter — the transcendent human potential, *not one* knows the real function of the Church and purpose of its being. *None* but God's one and only *true Church* has the full knowledge God has revealed to His own Church. *Not one* knows what salvation really is! ... Today, Christ has put the *true doctrines* into God's Church through the apostle *whom He chose* — not elected by men! ... I have said through the years, over the air and in print and before audiences, 'Don't believe me because I say it — look in your own Bible and believe what you find there!' But *I do not* — or at least, *should not have* ever said that to our own brethren! ... To the unconverted Thessalonians, the Bereans were complimented for checking up on Paul's preaching (Acts 17:11). But none should be accepted *in the Church* until that person either has come to *know* and accept and believe Christ's true doctrine, *or* has repented so *thoroughly, conquered by God* and with an attitude of a little child, so that the minister doing the baptizing feels sure he or she *will* accept and believe fully Christ's true doctrines in His church. In other words, Christ commands that we all speak the same thing. *That becomes a qualification for membership!*"²

Emotional Reaction

"In *other words*," indeed. My immediate gut reactions are numerous. That one organization embodies the "true" church is a myth. An organization does not save you; Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected is our hope of salvation. There is a "church" which is a *spiritual* body whose names are known to *God* — written in the "Book of Life" — whose *existence* predates the existence of corporations on the North American continent, and

against whom winds of doctrine, the wiles of Satan, and the gates of the grave shall not prevail.

Reasoned Reaction

When I attempt to penetrate my emotional reactions to the "apostle's" message, I find him making two primary statements common to many "spokesmen" for God: (1) That God has remained silent, not addressing or providing course correction for today's diverse expressions of belief; (2) that the "apostle" has resolved his resulting frustration by closely identifying God with himself, specifically by *speaking out* for God.

The Problem

The problem enters when "spokesmen" for God look into the mirror of the Word and experience a perverse dyslexia. They visualize God as themselves magnified. Paul typifies this as follows: "They gave up the glory of God in exchange for the likeness of an image, of perishable man. ... They changed the truth of God into a lie" (Romans 1:23, 25).

Why? "They received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. For this cause God shall send them strong delusion (a working of error) that they should believe a lie. That they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but were well pleased in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

Today's television screen is capable of projecting an image of a "spokesman" who stands in the place of Jesus. This image, enhanced by stage makeup and low camera angle, is that of a super-Christian with a ministry and message of far greater impact than that of the apostles of Christ! In reality, the introductions and fade-outs have more biblical content than the ego-infused personal predictions, healings, and financial appeals we have come to expect from media ministers! The nature of the medium seems to invite **distortion**.

Seduction and Abuse

Oral Roberts' communications from a 90-foot Jesus and Jimmy Swaggart's man-of-the-hour vision of a ripened cotton patch have become faint echoes emblematic of the wiles and methodology that *caricaturize* the power and presence of the living Jesus Christ. In even less subtle seduction, Vernon Howell, alias David Koresh, told his soon-to-be-killed followers that they were no longer "Christians," but "Koreshians."

Abused Christians have often been merchandised by gospels that appeal to their carnality. "Spokesmen" for God have conditioned abused Christians to draw a circle around themselves — to redefine the simple teachings of scripture along very narrow lines, reflecting the personal experience and prejudice of the "spokesmen." Scriptural phrases alienated from context become pretextual keys to unlock secret extra-Biblical teachings known only to the "elect."

A chain of abuse is not only practiced within families of believers; they often openly despise other believers who act according to variant expressions of Christian belief. God is the ultimate recipient of the abuse. Because of the words and deeds of the "spokesmen" and their "elect," the name of God is maligned, and the way of truth is evil spoken of. Exploitation of Creator and believer in the name of "love" is very damaging, insidious and abusive; it is tantamount to anti-relationship between God and man.

A God who is judged to be silent, *speaks out* with clarity regarding these matters, "What gives you the authority to catalog my definitions, or to magnify my covenant with your speech? Examine yourself, you hate disciplined instructions and do not apply my messages to yourself. ... You judge, arranging words against your brother; you cause your own mother's son to stumble. These you have done, and I have kept silence. You thought

that I was totally as yourself. I will judge you and arrange in order your vision" (Psalm 50:16-21).

Around 66 A.D., the apostle Peter projects us backward and forward in time with a piercing indictment of would-be entrepreneurs of their own personal gospels. Peter asserts intent and motive: "There arose false prophets among the people, as among you also there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions,

"That one organization embodies the 'true' church is a myth."

denying even the Master who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow the undisciplined lustful ways of them, by reason of whom the way of Truth will be evil spoken of; and continuing in an eagerness to gain or possess, they will make merchandise of you with fabricated words" (2 Peter 2:1-3).

God Communicates Clearly

God communicates clearly and without distortion. "I, the Eternal, am your Creator ... you shall have no other gods before my face" (Exodus 20:2, 3). We are not to have another God, another Jesus, another good message other than the gospel. The names "Jeezuss!" and "Gawdduh!" have become the buzzwords of the modern merchants of theology. These multi-syllabic phonetic mutilations of the names "Jesus" and "God" are the profane attempts of charlatan hucksters to derive verbal power from those names in absence of any semblance of spiritual power of their own.

God Has Spoken to Us

The letter to the Hebrews brings the good news of salvation into focus in the Person of one simplifying denominator — Jesus Christ. "God, Who in many modes spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days **spoken unto us by His Son** ... Focus your minds on the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus" (Hebrews 1:1, 2; 3:1).

God speaks to us by his Son. Many individuals, during the course of their entire adult life expend their energies trying to dismiss the existence of the

Son of the living God. They have been conditioned, from childhood on, that to survive and prosper in this world one must preserve, adore, and serve the great god, SELF.

"Men have made god in their images, after their prejudices, serving their self-esteem."

The god of this world — the creator of distractions — would blur our perception of personal identity. Jesus says, "Why do you not understand my speech? Because you cannot hear my word. If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:43, 31, 32).

A Call to Christian Leadership

Today the body of Christ faces a crisis in leadership. Men have made god in their images, after their prejudices, serving their self-esteem. In this the true essence of Christian leadership has been repeatedly perverted: "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" (Philippians 2:5-8)! One of our greatest needs is for the people of God to step forward as leaders to preach the Word of God.

¹Personal translation of the text by M. Galimore.

²"Personal" by Herbert W. Armstrong, *The Good News* magazine, April, 1979, pp. 1, 23-24.

S

Victor Burford



Pastor Victor Burford, Director of Missions Abroad for the Church of God, Seventh Day, recently spoke at the Christian Community Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Following the worship service, he showed slides of seventh day Christians and their work in Kenya.

Youth Focus

JAMES B. PATE

Ever since the 1962 Supreme Court decision banning prayer in public schools, America's greatness has rapidly diminished. Violence has afflicted our homes and communities, and the number of single parent homes has dramatically increased. Deadly diseases such as AIDS have threatened the lives of thousands nationwide, and environmental disaster continues to plague the nation. These are but a few of the many problems which have resulted from our nation's refusal to acknowledge God, and the crisis will only continue to worsen if we do not end our descent into sin and godlessness.

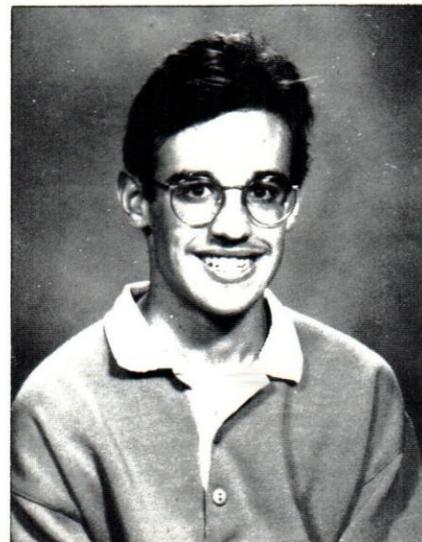
These issues profoundly affect the lives of young people, for they especially have felt the impact of our national defiance of God. Children and young adults in public schools no longer petition the Almighty to grant his "blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country," but instead live in a society where our nation's prosperity has been attributed to man rather than God. We have disregarded God's warning in Deuteronomy 8:11-14: "Beware that in your plenty you don't forget the Lord your God and begin to disobey him. For when you have become full and prosperous ... that is the time to watch out that you don't become proud, and forget the Lord your God..."

Far from being indifferent to America's current condition, God is greatly concerned about our nation's well being. History is full of nations which became great and then passed from the scene. Many of these disobeyed God and his laws and thus suffered his punishments.

What punishments will God pour out upon this nation if we continue our downgrade into sin? Deuteronomy 28:58-62 vividly describes what to expect: "If you refuse to obey all the laws written in this book, thus refusing reverence to the glorious and fearful name of Jehovah of God, then Jehovah will send perpetual plagues upon you and your children. ... And that is not all! The Lord will bring upon you every sickness and plague that there is, even those that are not

mentioned in this book, until you are destroyed. There will few of you left, though you were as numerous as stars. All this if you do not listen to the Lord your God." Although these words were spoken specifically to ancient Israel, God has not departed one inch from His intention to punish sin. The message God intended to convey was this: Turn from your wicked ways, or perish. And this message is applicable to America today.

Thus God calls all of us to repentance: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14). This should encourage Americans that our national problems are not hopeless, but require humility and righteousness in order to be solved. As Christians, let us lead the way for



James B. Pate

national repentance. Let us pray constantly that God will hear from heaven and heal our land!

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Church of God, International Holds Tri-State Feast of Pentecost



Approximately 160 members and friends of The Church of God, International came from Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost on May 15 in Dayton, Ohio. A highlight of the afternoon program was the music as pianist Sheila Woodard accompanied the Indianapolis Choir. Sermonette was presented by Tom Kauffung of Middletown, Ohio, and addressed the topic, "Counting the Days to Pentecost." Mr. Kauffung utilized Leviticus 23:6 and Deuteronomy 16:9-12 as he explained his conviction that Pentecost was properly celebrated on May 15 this year. Keynote speaker was Mr. Mike Linacre from Chicago, Illinois. His sermon, "The Seven Laws of Holiness," highlighted the importance of each believer recognizing that God has called us to be holy (Romans 1:7).



From Sunday to Saturday

SYDNEY CLEVELAND and HERB JOHNSON

Five years ago Ruben McKenzie stood at a crossroads in his life. As an Associate Pastor in a Baptist church, Ruben knew he had to make a change, perhaps even start his own church. But God was using this very experience to separate him theologically from Sunday worship and start him worshipping on Sabbath.

As Ruben evaluated his options he said, "I remembered that the Lord will bless you and the Lord will work miracles, but the Lord also gave you common sense! So I prayed, 'Lord, how can I start my own church? We don't have any people!' The Lord responded, 'You have your own family.' 'But, Lord,' I prayed, 'we don't have a church to meet in.' The Lord responded, 'You have your own living room.' 'But, Lord,' I prayed again, 'we don't even have a pulpit!' And you know what — a short time later, my wife Debra made us a pulpit!

Why They Came

With his excuses taken away, Ruben called his friends and family together to announce that the new "Whosoever Will Come" church would be meeting the next Saturday in his living room. And people came — not because of the prestige of a large church edifice, but because they found what they needed in that church-within-a-home.

"The reason people come," Pastor McKenzie said, "is because they have had turmoil with past worship services in various churches. But here we can concentrate on worshipping the Lord!" His mother- and father-in-law came to that first worship service. They had been going to established Sunday-keeping churches, but they were not satisfied.

The second week Ruben's Aunt and her husband came — and they invited another couple. The next week the new family invited their friends, and then Debra's brother came. The church was now a reality.

Baptism in a Tub

It was there in his own bathtub that Pastor McKenzie baptized the first member. "I can tell you that bathroom was really packed," he said as he remembered the joyful event. "And we baptized her by immersion — fully under the water."

A year later, the church was overflowing the living room and the pulpit had to be moved further back to make more room. But even that was not enough, so they moved to Ruben's aunt's basement. Several months later they moved to his brother-in-law's living room. A few months afterward the church moved to an upstairs apartment. Two and a half years later they were able to rent their present location — a real church building.

As he reflected on the various moves his church has made over the past five years, Ruben commented: "All of these were blessings from God and at the invitation of the people themselves! Now its a real joy to open the door on Sabbath morning and hear the air conditioner running and feel truly comfortable! I can see it in the eyes of the congregation when they come in to our church — they're ready to worship the Lord and study the Word."

From Sunday to Sabbath

A Sunday-keeper for thirty-eight years, Pastor McKenzie first became aware of the Sabbath when he received materials from the Worldwide Church of God. "I've always been unable to separate the Old Testament from the New Testament," he said. "The basis for my Sabbath-keeping is the fourth commandment. I believe the entire Bible is inspired, but I don't believe everything in it is just for me."

Two key texts which strongly influenced Ruben toward the Sabbath are "The Israelites are to observe the Sab-

bath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant" Exodus 31:13; and "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" Hebrews 13:8.

"The Lord will bless you and the Lord will work miracles, but the Lord also gave you common sense!"

"As a life-long Sunday-keeper," Ruben said, "I thought I was taught right, but there's a difference between doing what you've been taught and doing what you're going to be held accountable for! Don't get me wrong, I didn't start keeping the Sabbath the moment I was convicted. But in starting my church I was free to implement what I knew God wanted me to do. That's what I like about my own church — I'm here to please the Lord, not the 'higher-ups' in some big church organization. There is true freedom here."

A Fish a Day

When asked what he teaches his congregation, Ruben replied: "I'm a believer in the 'Fish a Day' philosophy — if I give you a fish I have fed you for a day. But if I teach you *how* to fish I will feed you for a lifetime."

At Whosoever Will Come church the Sabbath day is celebrated from 6 P.M. Friday to 6 P.M. Saturday. The Sabbath itself is seen as a day of rest from work, assembling at church for worship and Bible study, and concluding the day with relaxing family activities.

Remaining Faithful to God

To help himself remember his calling and be faithful to the Lord, Pastor McKenzie has written out four general statements to clarify and define his ministry:

"God's Servant to the members of 'Whosoever Will (let him) Come' is Reverend Ruben C. McKenzie (Mark 10:44).

"Accountable to God to 'rightly divide the word of truth' (2 Timothy 2:15).

"Responsible to give spiritual guidance and counsel to it's members, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded so that, lo, Jesus will be with us always, even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:20).

"Members are responsible to apply 2 Timothy 2:15 so they can seek first the Kingdom of God and it's righteousness (Matthew 6:33), and then Philippians 4:19 will happen."

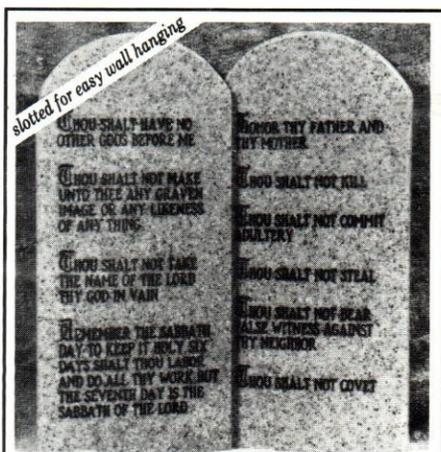
We at TSS respect Pastor McKenzie and his congregation for putting God first in their lives and following their conviction to worship on His holy Sabbath day. In this age when many

"I believe the entire Bible is inspired, but I don't believe everything in it is just for me."

small churches spring up and quickly wither away, Whosoever Will Come has the dedication to continue on to the glory of God.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Pastor McKenzie may be contacted at 2945 Browse Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46218-2710.

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