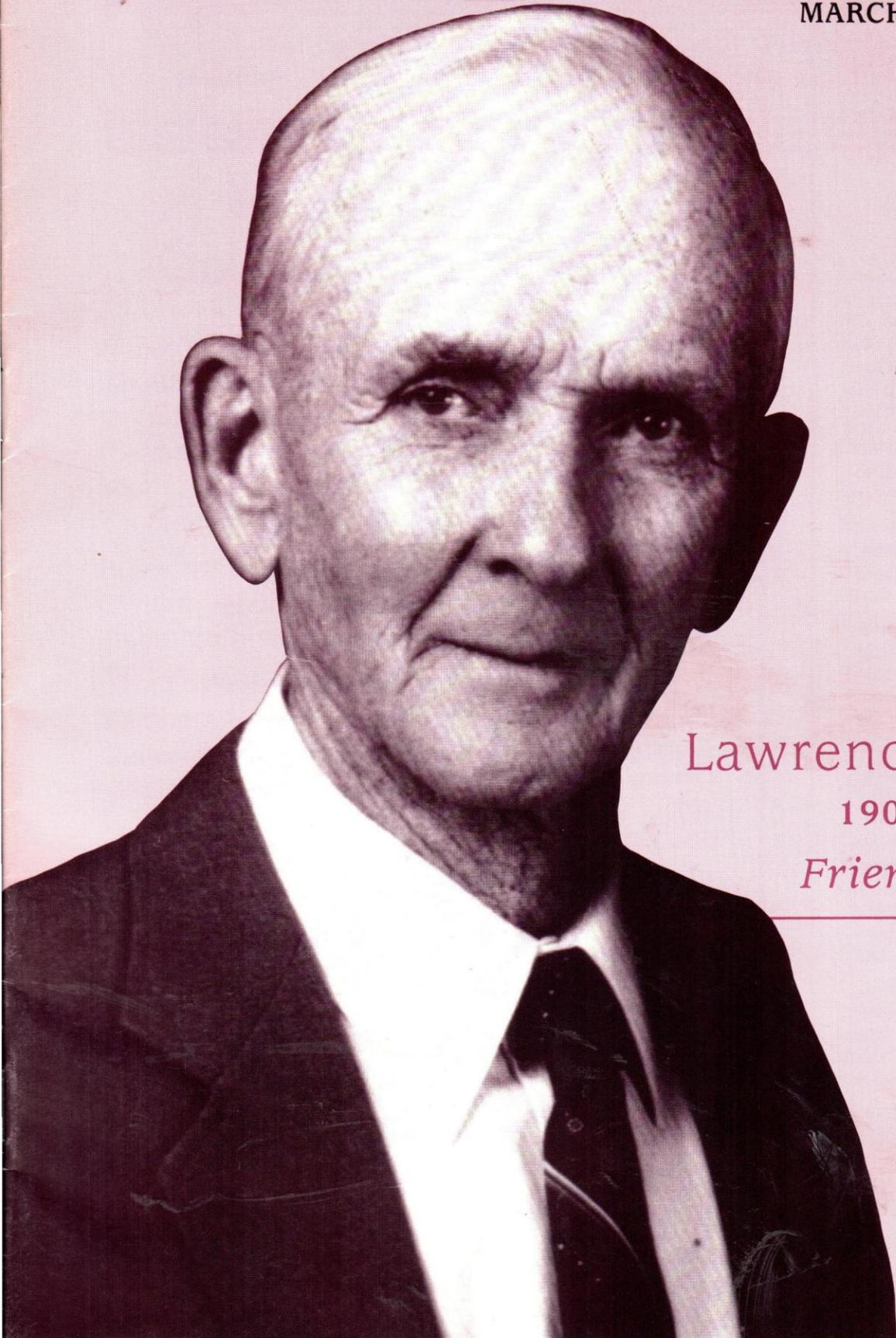


# THE *Sabbath Sentinel*

MARCH / APRIL 1995



Lawrence L. Burrell

1909 - 1995

*Friend of BSA*

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**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!

# contents

## Good-bye to an Outstanding Friend, Lawrence Burrell

One of our boys came running to our backyard, where we were working in the garden.

"We have visitors! I dunno who, but the car has Oklahoma license tags."

That was our first meeting with Lawrence and Lottie Burrell and their family, back in the late 1950's. Returning to their home from Springvale Academy, they had stopped to see us.

Since then, they have visited in our home and we in theirs many times. And always, after being with them, we felt inspired by their quiet witness. We have worked closely with them while I was editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel*, and later, as BSA president. We felt that knowing them has made us better people.

Just a few minutes ago we heard the sad news that Lawrence had died. Our sympathy goes to the family. We all have lost someone very dear to us.

Eugene and Darlene Lincoln

- 4 *A Missions Convert*  
Darlene Wiedenheft
- 5 *A Week I'll Never Forget*  
David & Wynita Hill
- Forgive as Christ Forgave You*  
Floria Sanders
- 6 *A Jewish Prayer for the Bible in School*  
Sam Segal
- 7 *What They Say About the Sabbath*  
James E. Gibbons
- Religious Commitment is Good*
- 8 *A Tribute to My Father, Lawrence Lester Burrell*  
Calvin Burrell
- 9 *For the Rushed: the Sabbath*  
Clarence "Whitey" White
- 10 *When Was the Messiah Born?*  
John Kiesz
- 11 *Christ's True Birthdate*  
John Shirn
- 12 *End-Times, Sundowners, &  
The First Church of the Frozen Chosen*  
F. Paul Haney

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The Bible Sabbath Association is dedicated to promoting the seventh-day Sabbath. As a non-sectarian association for Sabbathkeeping Christians, BSA accepts members who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Savior, believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and uphold the seventh-day Sabbath. BSA takes no official position on other theological issues, and publishes *The Sabbath Sentinel* as a forum to promote understanding and share items of interest to Sabbathkeeping groups and individuals.

## NOTICE

# Quadrennial Meeting of BSA Directors to be Held May 11-14

Notice is hereby given of the quadrennial meeting of the Bible Sabbath Association's Board of Directors to be held May 11-14, 1995, at the Church of God (Seventh Day), 2225 N. St. Charles, in Joplin, Missouri. The sessions will begin at 7:00 PM CDT on Thursday, May 11.

Business to be conducted includes nomination of officers, reports, planning for future programs, and any other business that may properly come before the board.

Members who are not directors are invited and encouraged to attend. They may speak as time allows, but may not vote.

Eugene Lincoln

*President, Bible Sabbath Association*

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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**

# A Missions Convert

DARLENE WIEDENHEFT

*DURING the summer of 1993, Darlene Wiedenheft and six others went on a short-term missions trip with Youth Missions Int'l, an interdenominational Sabbathkeeping Missions organization. On behalf of brethren in Kenya, East Africa, this group helped the people with two construction projects: completion of a health clinic and construction of a technical/vocational school. Here is Darlene's story.*

The afternoon was hot and there we were stuffed in the back of a matatoo (minibus) packed mostly with men. One man with breath betraying his recent alcoholic indulgence was badgering Shelley and me with questions, opinion and requests. We had gone several kilometers with this fellow monopolizing our trip. He seemed to be a know-it-all concerning the gospel message.

"Oh God, what do we do with this man?" I prayed.

An idea came to me. I'd share with him for several minutes and then let Shelley take over until she needed rest. This is how we got to the town of Kisii that day.

Having been a Christian for 28 years, I can reflect on past periods of personal complacency. Always, in God's mercy and grace He has awakened me to point me in a direction He wanted me to go, to a challenge He wanted me to meet. Prior to the summer of 1993 He began preparing me for a spiritual venture I had not even dared consider.

My husband, Dick, and I had been friends with Curt Blank (YMI director) for several years. We were familiar with Youth Missions International since its inception. When the first YMI team had its boot camp at Spring Vale Academy (where we reside) we were involved to some extent. Still, I never suspected that I would be part of the YMI team two years later.



Nevertheless, on Monday, June 28, 1993, after YMI's second boot camp, there I was along with Curt Blank and Shelley Gunther, the RN God provided for the project, flying toward our mission in Kenya, East Africa.

Simply expressed, what we experienced in Kenya, working in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ, were the fruits of God's spirit. Welcomed with affection, we were served in humbleness, guided by concern, helped with faithful consistency, and encouraged by brotherly love.

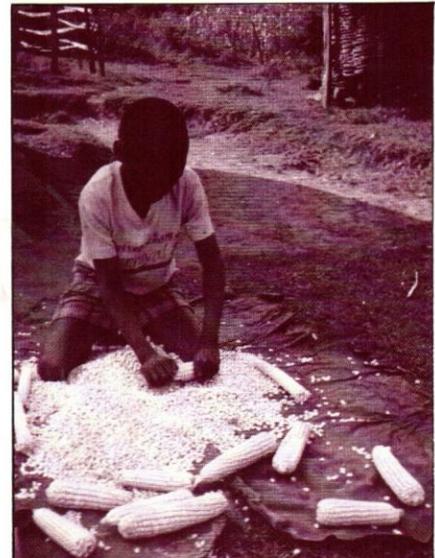
Our main concern in Kenya was the continued development and functioning of the Keore Health Clinic that YMI had built in 1991. In addition, our work involved evaluating and helping with the immediate needs of the Church of God 7th Day primary school; speaking to and visiting with pastors and brethren in various areas; investigating the Chesoen Polytech project (a technical vocational school and another major YMI project in cooperation with the Kenya brethren); and noting the needs of our Kenya brethren to present to the churches at home.

One touching experience involving an infant named Peter, the fifth child of

James and Sarah Onynkwa (James is a district pastor). The night of our arrival at Keore, Sarah placed the baby in my arms. The child lay still the entire hour I held him. He was wet through to his blanket. A day later Shelley told me he was diagnosed at the clinic as having malaria, pneumonia, and scabies. Whenever I saw Peter he was listless. About two weeks after arriving in Keore I helped carry him to the clinic. Walking more than two miles, we climbed fences and skirted brambles. Still he lay sleeping, listless and quiet. Shortly before we left Keore I saw Peter for the last time. This time his eyes were wide open and he was responsive and alert. Praise the Eternal!

What I learned and continue to learn from this short-term missions experience is perspective. I've gained perspective in my awareness of the need for honesty when working intimately with people as teammates, in the value of courage and self-control in the midst of frustrating circumstances, in the area of sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and in the spiritual dimension of responsiveness to the needs of others. All in all I see God having moved me in the direction of missions. I dare say, God has made me a missions convert!

*Note: Youth Missions Int'l sponsors a Caribbean work project this summer, July 16-August 11, 1995. Contact Director, Curt Blank, for more information. Address: 10645 E. Jensen Avenue, Sanger, CA 93657*



MARCH / APRIL 1995

# A Week I'll Never Forget

DAVID & WYNITA HILL

**2**0 November 1994: Last week was a week I don't think I'll ever forget. It started on Sunday with a bush-fire driven by a strong westerly wind. Early in the afternoon we were warned that we might have to evacuate our homes. As the darkness fell we could see the red glow of the fire approaching closer and closer. Suddenly the flames were visible on the mountains around the town (Beerburum, Qld.). Cinders flew through the air over the town starting fires to the east of the town. We were surrounded by fire. Police officers hurried through the streets, knocking on the doors of the houses, ordering people to leave their homes. Just before we left our house I phoned Pastor Andrew Boulding in Beenleigh. Although by then it was almost midnight I felt that we really needed prayer support. The smoke grew thicker as we drove away from our town leaving our home and belongings in the hands of the Lord.

That night we did not get much sleep. The next day my wife Wynita, with our daughters Larissa and Jade, were not allowed to return home as the fires had flared again and cut off the town. The bridge into town burned to ashes and the roads were cut by fire and smoke. The town's water reservoir was completely empty so there was nothing more that the firefighters could do. Finally, at eight o'clock that night we drove into Beerburum. The power was out, it was hot, and the air was thick with smoke, so the windows had to be kept shut. But, thank the Lord, we were home and not a thing in the town Beerburum was lost, although several homes and farms around the area were destroyed. Over ten thousand acres of forest were burned. Throughout the shire 50 appliances and 200 firefighters were involved. Equipment and manpower came from as far away as Maryborough. One hundred thirty three people were treated for minor injuries, yet several firefighters were seriously injured, receiving 33% burns when a fireball engulfed them.

## His Promise to Keep Us

Today, as I drive around the town and

see the devastation on all sides, I am thankful for the Palm that the Lord has given me at this time, Psalm 91. Please take time to read it. It is a blessing to know that the obedient have this promise from God: "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." Revelation 3:10.

## There's More

But that was just one of the events of the week... On the following day, Tuesday, November 8th, I was called out to attend an incident where one of our Ambulance Officers had been confronted by a man with a shotgun. As I drove to the scene, having been told that someone had shot at an Ambulance officer, I had grave concerns about the safety of the situation. The man, armed with a sawed-off shotgun, had just robbed two banks which were located on opposite sides of the street. Making his getaway, he had rammed into the rear of an Ambulance while it was transporting a patient to the hospital. The Ambulance Officer went to the assistance of the driver of the car and on his approach heard a pump action shot gun being loaded. As the man stepped from the car, the Ambulance Officer wrestled the man and at-

tempted to restrain him. The gun went off, shooting the armed robber in the leg above the ankle and grazing the officer. The officers removed the gun and dressed his wound. I drove the officers and the man to the hospital under police guard.

## The Week's Not Over Yet

Then on Friday... I attended the funeral of two beautiful girls, aged 2 and 4 years. Their mother had worked in our Ambulance Station. The family had been involved in a tragic motor accident on the previous Sunday, and to me the news on Monday, together with the trauma of the fires, was heartbreaking to say the least.

## Treasure in Heaven

The events of this week led me to consider how much importance we place on the material things of life: homes, cars and personal belongings. Yet in comparison to the loss of life and of loved ones they are not important. Jesus said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Matthew 6:19-21.

## More Important Than Life

And more important even than life itself is the human soul. "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"

Continued on page 10

# Forgive as Christ Forgave You

FLORIA SANDERS

A few years ago a theft took place in a nursing home. An unlocked closet had been provided so the nursing staff would have a place to keep their coats and purses. One day a co-worker named Evelyn went to get her purse and discovered that someone had taken money out of her billfold. She was very upset at the loss for the money had been set aside to buy groceries. The news of the theft spread quickly among the staff.

Several days later Evelyn happily informed her fellow workers that she had received a letter of apology and all the money had been returned. Everyone wanted to know who the thief was, but Evelyn would not disclose the name. Her reply was simply, "I have forgiven the person and will not tell who it was."

Evelyn would not tell because, as a Christian, she had forgiven the way Christ forgives us: "I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

# A Jewish Prayer for the Bible in School

SAM SEGAL

AS a Jewish survivor of six years of enforced school prayer, I am here to testify that it works. Reformers shouldn't merely tolerate it; nor should they stop at endorsing a timid, amoral moment of silence. They should bring the Bible back into the classroom and read it — out loud.

When I attended Teaneck, New Jersey's Longfellow Elementary School from 1945 to 1951, the day began with a student volunteer, or the teacher, reading five verses from the Old Testament, after which we all said the Lord's Prayer. The selection suited Christians and the small Jewish contingent; I guess no one worried about atheists or Muslims. I never volunteered, but I loved to listen. Passages from the Psalms, especially, still roll around in my mind.

It's not that I was devout. I went to Jewish Sunday school and after-school Hebrew classes, but neither was a devotion. So it wasn't that school prayer let me practice my religion; it was better than that. The words and cadences of the King James Bible were soothing and inspiring and, though their meaning was a little elusive, they were my favorite part of the school day. It was like walking into a splendid but empty cathedral in a foreign city.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: Come before his presence with singing. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise." I couldn't grasp what the "noise" was, nor picture the Lord's "courts." But I sat back in anticipation whenever that psalm was announced as the day's subject.

Or the 23rd Psalm. Is it decent to deny children the chance to hear: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me"? Or:

"How goodly are Thy tents, oh Jacob, and Thy tabernacles, oh Israel"?

Ah, but we were innocent then. Educators assumed that we shared a common heritage and gladly promoted it. During Brotherhood Week (if it exists, the name has surely been revised), we sang the lyrics: "George Washington like good roast beef; Chaim Solomon like fish; but when Uncle Sam served liberty, they both enjoyed the dish." And we were moved by the short film in which Frank Sinatra threw his arms around kids of different flavors and sang "The House I Live In."

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*"They should bring the Bible back into the classroom and read it — out loud."*

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*"Any atheist is free to stare or mumble."*

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Our town fathers weren't sociologically advanced enough to worry whether every ethnic group got equal time. Similarly, with our common moral heritage, they were insensitive to the crippling effect that an infidel might suffer if he had to hear the words: "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

But we had no ACLU to protect us. So, once given their opening — let us be frank — the proto-Religious Right thrust beyond the first minutes of the school day. On special holidays, religious songs were sung. At Christmas assemblies, everyone — regardless of race, religion, sexual proclivity or bell-curve location — was forced to hear "Silent Night." At Thanksgiving, after performing plays

in which English settlers were allowed to appear morally equal to Indians, we sang songs that actually averred: "God, our maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied."

School prayer and such songs are not only good; they are necessary. They may not lower the cholesterol, but they will elevate young minds and spirits. In an age when even grown-ups seem awestruck by the genie in the ever-shrinking microchip, it is crucial that children have a brush with real grandeur and mystery. A peanut-sized computer won't fundamentally change human life any more than television did. Nothing better puts man in his place than the words and posture of devotion — and no one needs to know that more than the children of an age so proud of its reason, and its freedom.

My own children were deprived: At Thanksgiving they sang of "a turkey tom and a turkey mom;" at Christmas, they sang jingles, sprinkling merriment in precisely equal measure for Christmas and Chanukah.

Of course, there are other avenues to the spirit. Parents, above all, must show the way. But if schools can help children get there, they ought to jump at the chance. They are often, and rightly, criticized for poor teaching of history, writing and science. Here's something they can't go wrong on: Just read the Psalms and sing the song, and kids will get it.

Of course, we are more sensitive than the rubes of almost 50 years ago. We feel bound by the Supreme Court's misconstruction of the First Amendment. We do worry about the atheists and Muslims.

We shouldn't even pause. The chasm to fear is not between religions but between piety and arrogance. Any religion must welcome a turn toward piety. Any atheist is free to stare or mumble.

*Note — This story is reprinted from the American Family Association Journal.*

# What They Say About the Sabbath

JAMES E. GIBBONS

*This month we depart from our practice of including positive statements about the Sabbath made by non-Sabbathkeeping authors. We felt the distinction made in this article between the fourth commandment and the other nine was worth the attention of our readers. This article is quoted from The Sword and Staff, by James E. Gibbons, 1535 Fairfield Drive, Mt. Airy, NC 27030.*

WE are no longer under the law of Moses as such. The law of Moses has not been destroyed *per se*, but fulfilled (Matthew 5:17). As Paul wrote in Galatians 3:24, 25, 'Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.' The law as law served its purpose, and still does (1 Timothy 1:8-10), but as Christians we have graduated from it. We did not destroy our school years when we finished highschool, but graduated to something higher and better. Man could never be justified by the deeds of the law (Romans 3:19-31). One disobedience undoes all righteousness (it did in the Garden of Eden), and all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10, 23). As Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, breaking God's laws takes place in the heart as well as outwardly. Whether we have or have not broken all of the Ten Commandments outwardly, we have broken them in our hearts one way or another. But now we are justified by grace through an active faith (Galatians 2:16-20; 5:4). We are 'under the law to Christ' (1 Corinthians 9:21), the law of love.

"Consequently, those laws of the Ten Commandments *which are distinctly universal (the Sabbath was not)* are fulfilled in us because of our love (Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:13, 14; 6:2). Grace moves us to an even

higher level of obedience (Romans 6:1-6; Titus 2:11-14), and it all comes through Christ who is our righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:30)."

*Were nine of the Ten Commandments really "universal" while the fourth commandment was only meant for the Jews? Think about this: two thousand and five hundred years before the Ten Commandments were given to Moses on Mt. Sinai God made the seventh day holy (Genesis 2:1-3). Not until Genesis 10, a thousand and five hundred years after the creation of the Sabbath, does the concept of "nations" appear in the Bible. There-*

*fore, with all mankind interrelated and not divided into nationalities, how could the Sabbath be less than a universal gift from God to every human being who ever lived? We agree with author Gibbons that anyone who was taught "thou shalt not murder" in highschool cannot then murder in graduate school without breaking God's Ten Commandments. We also agree we have "all broken them in our hearts one way or another," and that Christ's righteousness is the only answer to our dilemma. But this does not permit us knowingly break God's Law at anytime under the facade of "love." God's universal Ten Commandments define sin and condemn sinners regardless of our relationship to Him and His grace (Romans 7:7, 12, 13). Thus an active, saving faith in Christ's righteousness empowers us not to selfishly break God's Ten Commandments, but to lovingly obey all of them (1 John 5:1-5)!*

## Religious Commitment is Good for Marriage, Health, and Teenagers!

Reviewing a large number of studies, the Family Research Council, a Washington, D.C.-based family research and advocacy group, has concluded that religious commitment is good for your marriage, your health and your teenager.

The FRC found that:

- Couples married 50 years or more ranked religion as one of the most important "prescriptions" for a happy marriage.
- Those who attended church frequently were less willing to accept divorce as an alternative.
- Church attendance is strongly related to a couple's agreement over marital roles.
- Religious commitment contributes to the sexual satisfaction of couples.
- There is a positive link between religious commitment and good health, less stress, lower blood pressure, less depression, longevity and coping with life-threatening events and complications.
- Persons with strong religious commitment are less likely to commit suicide, abuse drugs or alcohol.
- Church attendance is a deterrent to juvenile delinquency.

Another study from Harvard and Ohio State University found that compared to unmarried peers, married men and women enjoy better physical and mental health.

For more complete information write the FRC, 700 Thirteenth St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005; or call 203-393-2100. Request their "In Focus" publication numbers IF94K2RG, IF94K3RG and IF94K4RG.

— Family Research Council

# A Tribute to My Father Lawrence Lester Burrell

CALVIN BURRELL

President of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

**L**AURENCE LESTER BURRELL was born on January 5, 1909 near Fairview, Oklahoma, and died on January 10, 1995, in the same house in which he was born. Although he traveled many places during his 86 years and 5 days of life, he never moved away from the farms west of Fairview in Major County. He was a son of the soil.

Lawrence was the first of five brothers born to Clarence and Blanche Sheffield Burrell. His brothers and their wives are Harold and Elveta Burrell of Broken Arrow, OK; Chester Burrell, who died in 1962; Glen and Shirley Burrell of Marion, IA; Wayne and Vera Burrell, of Fairview.

Dad learned the meaning of responsibility and hard work early in life. When, at the age of 21 his father died, Dad assumed the management of the family farm. He graduated from Fairview high School in 1926.

In 1935, Dad married Lottie Edna Davison, a schoolteacher who was also raised in the Fairview area. For the two years prior to their marriage, Mother had lived near Ouray, Colorado, but Dad's powers of persuasion convinced her to return to Major County and set up farming operations with him. This marriage made in Colorado lasted until death separated them over 59 and a-half years later — just as they had pledged.

Mother and Dad's first farm was six miles west of Fairview, where their first child Bryan was born. Soon after, they bought and settled on another place three miles west of town — which became the family farm until this day, and where son David, son Calvin, and daughter Mary Helen were all born.

Dad's interests and activities throughout life were firmly devoted to his farm, his family, and his faith. He



was a man of strong moral and natural conviction, which influenced the way he cared for his corner of God's good earth. His farming methods were mostly organic, with a strong effort to conserve the soil for future generations. Even after he turned eighty years old, Dad was seldom happier than when he was working the fields and the crops — unless it was planting his garden, and reaping the organic produce. Before it was the popular thing to do in this society, Dad decided to quit eating most junk food, and to restrict his diet to mostly fruits and vegetables and cereal grains — growing most of it himself. Why eat white bread, when you can grow your own whole wheat, grind it yourself, and you have a wife who loves to make bread? It was in this way that L and L Health Foods Company began around 1960. More than a few Major County residents have benefited from Lawrence and Lottie's bread, flour, cereal, etc. The primary benefactors, however, were those of us who regularly ate at their table and filled our car trunks upon every visit home.

Music was another love of Dad's, that went hand in hand with his family and his faith. Considerably self taught, he could do a good job playing several instruments, including the piano, organ, guitar, and violin. When his children came to the right age, he provided each of us an instrument, and saw to it that we learned to play. One of our clearest childhood memories is weekly music sessions of our family string band. Sometimes we would join other families in the neighborhood, like the Penner's, for multi-family musical jam sessions. Not all of the songs we played were hymns and gospel songs, but enough of them were to keep everyone reminded of the foundation on which Dad was building.

His foundation was his faith. As a young adult he made a public confession of His faith in Christ through baptism, and associated with the Church of God (Seventh Day). He lived, to the best of his ability, the lifestyle that he saw taught in the commandments of God, and the character he saw illustrated in the life of Jesus Christ. For Dad, it was always "the Lord Jesus" — God in the flesh. Just over a year ago during a difficult time trying to resist the advances of his cancer, Dad spoke emotionally and earnestly about the closeness he felt with Jesus. He knew the Lord.

For Dad, another significant aspect of knowing the Lord was that of enjoying the blessings and benefits of resting one day in seven, according to the fourth commandment: "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord." For forty years, he and Mother have volunteered their service as secretary and treasurer of the Bible Sabbath Association — a non-denominational group whose purpose is to encourage the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. In this, they have developed friendships through correspondence and personal visits with Sabbath-observing Christians all over North America. It is probably fair to say that no other individual invested himself so fully in the work of the B.S.A., as did Lawrence Burrell; and Mother ranks a close second.

Dad loved to read. He had books on many subjects, with health and nutrition being the most common topic. He was also knowledgeable in other areas, including world history, geography, and Biblical topics. He had a deep love for his country, the United States of America. Even though he loved his home and farm more than any other place on earth and was increasingly reluctant to leave it, he did enjoy, along with Mother, a trip to Israel in 1969, and a year of flying to many U.S. and Canadian destinations for their fiftieth anniversary in 1985.

Dad displayed an unusual loyalty to the marriage companions chosen by his four children: Mary Sue, Cathy, Barbara, Doug, and Lee — and each of them returned the compliment to him. He loved his ten grandchildren:

Mark, Paul, Dietra, Debra, Brenda, Darla, Kevin, Perry, Donna and Richard — and their spouses: Craig, Nelson, and Sean. He thought he would live to a hundred and see his great grandchildren, but the ugly scourge of cancer interrupted his plans.

If the saints can know or feel anything between death and resurrection, I'm sure Dad must feel right at home where he is now — safe in the arms of his Lord Jesus. Two of his last words to us while we said farewell less than a week ago were the twin blessing of "Joy ... Peace." These are two of the many good things that this family experiences today because we've known the influence of fathers and grandfathers like Lawrence Burrell in time, and we have the hope of Christ for eternity.

## For the Rushed: the Sabbath

CLARENCE "WHITEY" WHITE

**W**E live in a rush rush world and it seems that there are not enough hours in a day or even days in a week. Many are "busy bodies" seven days a week with work and recreation. We want our mail in the "next day express" so decisions can be made fast. We have fax machines and car phones so we can communicate in a hurry. We rush to our jobs, have a quick bite to eat at noon, and then hurry home for a quick meal from the microwave before we rush out to bowl or see a movie. As we drive rapidly down the road we hastily notice that even advertising signs quickly flash and use nick names to save time and space.

### Rushing God

This generation seems to be in such a hurry that the ones who do go to church want only a few short songs, a short prayer and a short sermon. Then its off on the run again because they need the day for themselves. Can we really rush *God*?

A while back a person came out with a song on the radio with the words: "Stop the world and let me off, I'm tired of going round and round." When I heard this I thought of all the

people who want to get away from all the worldly rush.

### Take a Rest

Don't we remember that God looks down and sees these times that we live in? Don't we remember that He does have a special rest for His Christian believers? Hebrews 3:3 says "For we which have believed do enter into rest." What rest is that? When we accept Jesus into our life as our Savior and Guide, He has a remedy for His rushing people in this fast, restless age: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:8-11). Thank the Lord for providing the perfect rest for our rushed world.

# When Was the Messiah Born?

JOHN KIESZ

IT is only natural for a person to adhere to conducts and beliefs which are Biblically defendable: "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

## Christmas and Christ's Birth

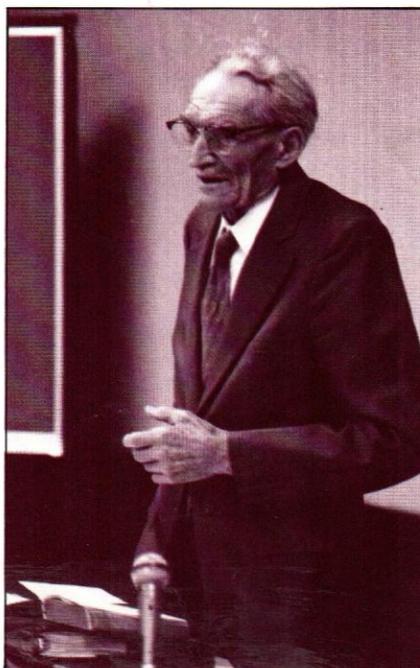
Christmas celebrations are generally observed to honor the supposed date of the birth of the Messiah. The facts are that Christ was not born on December 25. "Christmas ... was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons, rather than the birth. How then, did the Romish Church fix on December 25th as Christmas-day? Why thus: 'Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen, at that precise time of the year, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may fairly be presumed that, in order to conciliate the heathen, and to swell the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity, the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ'" (*The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, page 93).

## The Date of Christ's Baptism

There is, however, a way of establishing the approximate time of the Messiah's birth. We have proof that He was not born in December, but in October. When Jesus was baptized in the fall of A.D. 27 He was 30 years of age (Luke 3:21, 23). He chose Twelve Apostles (Mark 3:13-19), and they labored together for three and a half years until He was crucified at

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*Note: we include these two articles as alternate views to The Day Christ Was Born, by Kyle D. Pratt, in the January-February issue of TSS.*



the time of the Passover in April A.D. 31, at the age of thirty-three and a half years. Counting back six months to His thirty-third birthday, you will find Jesus' birth occurred in October.

## The Birth of John Linked to Christ

Another proof for establishing the time of the Master's birth in October is found in Luke 1:5-36. The priest Zacharias was serving in the temple during the course of Abia (Abijah), which was the eighth lot or course, out of the twenty-four that occurred during the entire year (1 Chronicles 24:10). Zacharias ministered during the second half of the eighth course which lasted for two weeks, and corresponded to the month of July. The middle of July would be the time of Elisabeth's conception.

"And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus has the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men" (Luke 1:24, 25).

"And in the sixth month (after Elisabeth's conception) the angel Gabriel

was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26, 27).

According to these developments, John the Baptist was born in January; and nine months later would be October when Jesus was born. He was not born during the Passover in April. That's when He was crucified. But He was born during the Feast of Tabernacles in October. "And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed" (Luke 2:1). That was during the days of Herod (Luke 1:5) when the proclamation to tax all the world went forth. He wisely chose Jerusalem to tax the Jews while many thousands were gathered there and its vicinity for the great Feast of Tabernacles in October.

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*"Jesus was born October 4, 4 B.C."*

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Dr. J. O. Kinnaman, editor of *The Bible Archaeological Digest*, stated that Sir William Flinders Petrie discovered a diary of the Rabbi of the Synagogue in Bethlehem, which recorded that Jesus was born October 4, 4 B.C., as our calendar now stands (April/May/June issue, 1953).

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## DAVID & WYNITA HILL

Continued

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:26. To lose one's soul is the greatest loss that a person can experience.

*Note — This story was published in LINK, the Seventh Day Baptist Newsletter in Australasia, January 1995. David Hill is leader of the Northside Seventh Day Baptist Church in Beerburum, Queensland.*

# Christ's True Birthdate

JOHN SHIRN

SCRIPTURES prove that Christ was actually born in the Fall, of the year and not on December 25. To prove this timing, simply turn to Luke 3:21-23, and note that Jesus was about 30 years of age when He received His baptism and the Holy Ghost, or Spirit. This was also the time He began His ministry. The word "about" according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* means "as soon as." We could then have the verse say: "As soon as He became 30 years of age." In Israel, men were chosen for temple duty at age 30 (Numbers 4:3 and 1 Chronicles 23:3).

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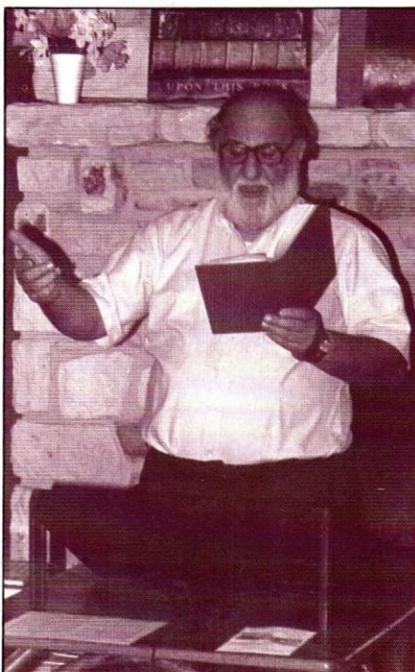
*"We can easily find the time of His birth by counting back the six months from His death."*

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Christians agree Jesus ministered for three and one-half years (as prophesied in Daniel 9:26, 27), and was "cut off," or killed at age thirty-three and a half. Therefore we can easily find the time of year He was born by counting back six months from His death to the anniversary of His birthdate. Positive thinkers can count forward six months if they choose but it comes out the same either way: the end of September or beginning of October. Passover is a floating date and is different every year. In 1990 it was on April 9th, and six months prior was October 9th. Note that this is approximately harvest time — the time after the crops have been reaped and sold. And, remember, Jesus came to harvest souls.

## Shepherds and the IRS

Another proof of Jesus being born in the Fall is found in the fact that all shepherds in the Holy Land bring their flocks down out of the hills and



fields in the Fall of the year. It gets much too cold for man or beast to stay outdoors after October, and especially through December. This is one of the reasons there was no room at the Inn when Jesus was born.

Another proof is that Joseph and Mary were compelled by law to go to Bethlehem to be taxed (Luke 2:1-5). An appropriate time to tax people is at harvest when the crops are sold, and not in the dead of winter when the profit would have been all spent. Since everyone had to go to their town to be taxed, this crowd also added to the reason there was no room at the Inn. Yet another Scriptural reason for the large crowds is that Fall is the season for the Feast of Tabernacles. All the Jews were there in Jerusalem to attend this Feast. All these facts should prove the birth of Christ to be in the Fall and not during springtime or winter.

## News

**Pastor Remains in Chechnya As Fighting Affects Sabbathkeepers**  
With heavy fighting going on in the Russian region of Chechnya, daily life for Seventh-day Adventists and all residents has been greatly disrupted. According to Euro-Asia Division president Ted Wilson, many Adventists have fled the city of Grozny, but fifty-seven Adventists were still there as of January 1. Wilson says that local Adventist pastor Nikolai has refused to leave Grozny as long as any of his members remain there. Wilson asks that everyone "pray for their safety and for peace, since this is a very difficult time for all those involved and for the country as a whole."

—Adventist Review

## Seventh Day Christian Churches Growing in Poland

In the second half of 1994 Seventh Day Christian Churches in Poland recorded a high level of Gospel outreach activities, culminating in two major baptismal services in Olsztyn and Skoczow, with over 35 candidates baptized into Christ. It's encouraging to note that most of those baptized were young people, many of whom had some remarkable testimonies to share. One girl told how she had been kicked out of her home because of her decision to follow Christ. Others recounted the abuse they had to suffer from their relatives. In another instance some in the village conspired to burn down the church. But none of these sufferings and threats were able to discourage the people from following Christ. The highlight of the Young People's activities for 1994 was their yearly 4-day Camp in Pulawy, with attendance of over 100 boys and girls from Poland, Czech Republic, Germany and a large contingent from the Ukraine.

—Link

# End-Times, Sundowners, & The First Church of the Frozen Chosen

F. PAUL HANEY

PICK up a handful of theological history from any source you care to examine, and there, nestled among all the scattered debris and wreckage, you will find Shards of a Prophetic Kind. Those splinters of half-baked, broken prophecies display ample evidence of self-appointed Failed Prophets who thinking themselves wise, were found to be fools. As a result, they became their own worst enemy. They were victims of self-deception. They misrepresented God, bore false witness to Jesus Christ and erected stumbling blocks in front of those who might otherwise have been saved. Such is the ugly fruit of false prophets.

Historically, religious prophets (and profiteers) could always be found bubbling to the surface of society, especially in times of national calamity or world trauma. And true to form, there is no shortage of Christian zealots in this present day, offering their personalized warmed-over versions of reworked formulas for ultimate global destruction. Yet, in spite of the degrading legacy of a long line of failures in passionate End-Times circles, they just don't get it. Sand castles and houses of cards never stand very long. "The end is near... AGAIN!!"

Misguided Naysayers and Sundowners have been unwisely predicting the end of this world since time immemorial. They're part of the landscape. Now radios, television sets and public address systems vibrate with pronouncements of Doomsday Utopian Prophets claiming that our deserved ignoble end is surely upon us, soon. These present evil days are numbered, and they have the numbers.

Interestingly, the present concept of the imminent bodily return of Jesus Christ to earth to set up some sort of Utopian earthly kingdom hit its stride, arguably, in the early 1800's. It appears that about half of Christian America has bought into this End-Time scenario.



According to Evangelist John L. Bray of Lakeland, Florida, a Jesuit Catholic priest by the name of Emmanuel Lacunza, writing under the assumed name of Rabbi Juan Josafat Ben Ezra (supposedly a converted Jew), wrote a book entitled, *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*. It was finished in 1790 and then circulated for a time in manuscript form. Thereafter the book was published in Spanish at Cadiz, Spain in 1812. In 1826/1827, Rev. Edward Irving (England) translated the Spanish edition into English and published it in London, England.

In his book, Lacunza taught that when Christ comes, and much more before He actually descends to the earth, He will receive Christians up to Himself. Then for a period of 45 days the judgments of God would be poured out on the earth and eventually Antichrist would be destroyed. Finally, Christ would descend to the earth with His saints to institute His millennial kingdom. This was apparently the first instance anyone had ever given a stated period of time between the supposed two stages of the return of Christ. The tribulation time period was later ex-

tended by others from 45 days to 3 1/2 years and then to 7 years. Recently, another person used 75 days. (*Robert Baxter and the Mid-Tribulation Rapture*, (c)1994, by John L. Bray.)

The awful end has been upon us time and again whether we know it or not. Most recently, Harold Camping got egg on his face for predicting the return of Jesus Christ between September 15 and 27, 1994. It didn't happen.

Not long ago, say some folks, the Earth had a "near-death" experience. In mid-July 1994 the Shoemaker-Levy 9 comet began slamming into the planet Jupiter. A number of sources classified the event prophetically as "signs and wonders" of Matthew 24 and even as "a sobering cataclysm." Then during December 1994 a meteor about the size of a house missed earth by approximately 75,000 miles (that's closer than the moon), passing over China. Apparently, it went unnoticed and no trumpet sounded.

Many others have predicted, to one degree or another, the date(s) for the physical/spiritual return of Our Savior, but all their efforts have thus far been in vain. Here's a partial list: Hippolytus for A.D. 500; worshippers at the Basilica in Rome in 999; Martin Luther for 1532; Melchoir Hofmann for 1533; Nicholas Cusa for 1734; Mother Shipton for 1881; William Miller for 1843 & 1844; Jehovah's Witnesses for 1874, 1878, 1881, 1910, 1914, 1918, 1925, 1975, and 1984; William A. Redding for 1915; Ellen G. White for 1844, 1845, 1856; Herbert W. Armstrong for 1975; Reginald Edward Duncan for 1979; Mikkel Dahl for 1980; Emil Gaverluk for 1981; Edgar Whisenant for 1988, 1989, etc. to 1993; Hal Lindsey for 1988, 1992 & 2007; William Dankenbring for 1991-2006; a Vancouver, Canada lady for 1991; Charles R. Taylor for the Fall of 1992; a Korean group for October 28, 1992; Ministers in Los Angeles and Denver for June 9, 1994; a female minister in Russia for mid 1994; Grant R. Jeffrey for 2000; and Pat Robertson for 2007.

And the list goes on. But it does not include the many thousands of sincere, well-meaning and God-fearing folks who simply accept and parrot prophetic timetables without first adopting a serious Berean attitude

(Acts 17:11). Even the Jewish rabbi, Menachem Schneerson, got into the act. He was loudly touted as actually being the long-awaited Messiah. Obviously, he was not. He died on June 12, 1994 and hasn't been heard from since.

For the most part, however, today's Sundowners simply represent one facet or another of the "Newspaper Theology" assemblage. And they are distinctly non-denominational. Even Sabbath-keepers belonging to The First church of the Frozen Chosen do not have a corner on the divination market.

Instead of tossing bones or peering into crystal balls to discern the future as diabolic mediums might do, Sundowners toss headlines, shuffle old magazine articles, and peer into news stories. Instead of gazing off into the starry night, modern prophets stare into glowing television screens, squeeze clickers, and haunt the newsstands. What's the difference? Not a whole lot.

But we've all heard it before. "Save yourselves from this evil generation! Flee from the wrath to come!" It's become a stale and boring joke, which is on us. And the sincerity of the prophet has nothing to do with it. Who would dare question God's anointed?

The musty and yellowing twin calling cards of, "What time is it?" and, "Where are we now in prophecy?" belong to The Sundowners of recent history. But spilling coffee on newspapers, canceling weekly magazines, or zapping nightly news reports would paralyze many of our venerated latter-day soothsayers. As a result, a fair number of America's religious zealots would have precious little left to preach. Heaven forbid that real hope for today's society might be preached from our pulpits. More puzzling, however, is that the piping of their dirge drags on even in the face of genuine good news. Worse, it is contrary to plain scripture. For example, Matthew 24:34, "This generation shall by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled" is contemptuously swept away by private interpretation. In like manner, Christ's unrivaled power and present kingship is denied (Hebrews 1:8).

Far too many of us are consumed with watching world news in order to beat the drum of impending disaster. The inbred drive to trumpet the latest societal upheaval and maintain our pessimistic status quo, as we skillfully mold and patch each new tragedy into Matthew 24 somehow, is unrivaled.

And typically we turn a visionless eye and an indifferent ear to other viewpoints while defending our staked-out territories with the vigor of a mother bear standing over her cubs. Consequently, much of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) gets ignored in our often intolerant, and frequently snobbish and pompous, rush to Judgment City. Tell me: Who has all power on earth, Satan or Christ? Who's in charge of earth (verse 18)?

"Watch this, Watch that, Watch the other thing, and be sure to Watch each other" has emerged as key, instead of, "Do this, Do that, Do the other thing, and be sure to Do it for one another." Yet we can't really be doing much of anything if we're absorbed with watching everything. Perhaps that's the dark secret of End-Time Theology.

Each newly found catastrophe we pounce upon elicits the usual wagging of the head, a knowing insider smile, and yet another sermon tape or article designed to strike fear into the hearts of mankind. And the rest of us who have been conditioned to hunker down into our foxholes hunch down even further, ready to pull the dirt over us at a moment's notice. Yet the messages are more often than not, historically predictable and futuristically (and scripturally) untenable.

Surprise! Nowhere in Matthew 24 or anywhere else does Christ tell us to watch for signs. Rather, He says, "Watch (Strong's #1127: "be vigilant, keep awake")... be ready... give the household of God food in due season... and be so doing" (verses 42, 44-46). In effect, we're to watch out, be careful, lest we're found not doing certain things when He does come.

But no, we're not seeking after signs. Nor are we denying the power of God to do a work on his earth when He gets good and ready to do it, whenever that might be, which, undeniably, is

completely under His control (2 Timothy 3:5).

That which we proudly declare not to be seeking or not to be doing, may have abscessed into a real stumbling block for all concerned, since the hallowed quest for negative signs to justify a pessimistic outlook denies a positive world view, the Good News of the Kingdom of God. We may have boxed ourselves in and now have too much vested interest in this bankrupt project to escape without losing face, or worse, our following.

This non-pursuit of signs to justify an existence wastes a lot of time and energy, not to mention a careless alienation of those who might have been saved but for our ingrown and well-documented hostility to "The World." The vaunted promotion of what we think we know, which we believe to be far and above all that those "false Christians" and others out there are able to grasp, does a disservice to the cause we profess to advocate. For the most part, it just comes off as the epitome of pride and pomposity, and not surprisingly, with very few souls being won to Christ. This may be an unrealized secret of Remnant Theology. Solid and lasting bridges of love to Jesus Christ cannot be built on foundations of derision, mockery, contempt, or however perceived, elitist arrogance. Does the shoe fit?

Still, a lot of us will continue to hang on to every End-Times pontification in obedient silence, and continue to sit on our hands doing absolutely nothing to really help anyone anywhere, while the greatest Christian nation this world has ever known crumbles around us. Yet the absolutely unmatched power of The Father and our King is readily available to any Christian, should he choose to accept it. But to the contrary, quite a few of us have already opted to become life members in good standing of The First Church of the Frozen Chosen.

Of course, as we move closer and closer to the end of this century, we will experience a prophesied escalation of End-Times prophecies which will ultimately have little, if anything, to do with the actual return of Christ to this earth. After all, He did say, "Of that day no one knows... but My Father only" (Matthew 24:36), and,

"It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Acts 1:7), all the while emphasizing a constant doing of His work no matter when we might think the Master would return. In quoting Matthew 24:42, "you do not know what hour your Lord is coming," we underscore "hour" and neglect to read the following passages in context that tell us to stay busy and essentially, put our minds on the doing, not the grandstanding.

Regardless of what many proud prophets, self-appointed Jeremiahs and home-made Ezekiels have to say about setting dates for the return of Jesus Christ and all it entails, know this: fudging a date by saying, "Although we cannot state with certainty when...", "These dates are not set in concrete...", or, "I'm not setting dates, but...", etc. is no different from nailing down the day and the hour for our Lord's return.

The seeds of our undoing have been sown. Our stubborn refusal to accept God's great mercy, compassion, and long-suffering will be our downfall. The very real possibility that God might not destroy everyone we have scheduled for Him to destroy, carries no weight, and no doubt will come back to haunt us. By the same token, a pig-headed refusal to accept or believe His offer of salvation for everyone — even today (John 3:17; 12:47) in no way negates His personal and spiritual intervention in the affairs of this world due to the intercessory prayers and godly faith of many Christians.

Call me naive, but shouldn't God's plain Word be more profitable than all the complex, overworked and worn out prophetic interpretations of arrogant man as to what The Father or Jesus Christ will, or will not, do at any time? And isn't it God's prerogative to have mercy upon whom He will, to save anyone He wishes to save when He wishes to do so, and determine for Himself what the timetables will be?

How does all this negative activity glorify our King, Jesus Christ? Is it possible we have some guilt feelings, or perhaps we are afraid that our emphasis on searching for signs of Christ's second coming is not bearing much positive fruit, and we have to

hang on to everything we have? Can it be that some of us are beginning to squirm in our chairs a little bit as time marches on and our people leave and other churches grow? We claim numerical growth doesn't actually mean that much, but Christ testifies differently: "Go... disciple all nations... baptize them... teach them..." (Matthew 28:18-20). Serve them. It remains job number one.

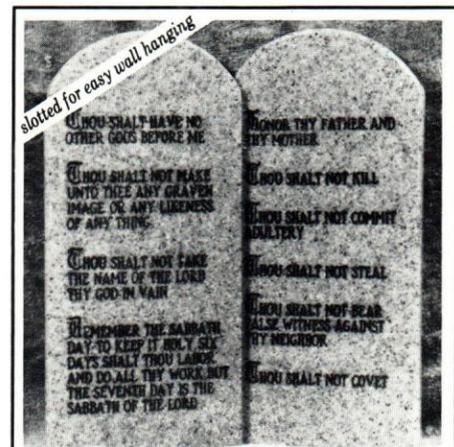
Where have we gone wrong? Perhaps we have not taken to heart the scriptural direction of Christian ministry. We are to be servants. More than one minister has described the church as a service industry. And they are right. But who are we really serving with this constant vigil for, and incessant and unprofitable bleating about, the signs of the end, ourselves or others?

After all, if we're only guessing with date-setting, then let's all play prophet, set dates, make eschatology charts, and project our enemy into the future instead of dealing with the son of perdition that lives within each and every society in the world.

Some have said that we're "in training" right now for future rulership. This would be laughable if it weren't so seriously flawed. And the notion belongs to man, it's not in the Bible. Look around. Do you see any appreciable training being done to that end in our congregations? On the contrary, we're a people looking for problems, not solutions, and we have been blind-sided.

Maybe it's time we redirected our efforts and rededicated our lives to the service of King Jesus Christ, and try to help Him to make this a better world for all concerned. Maybe it's time to forget this nonsense of non-stop seeking after signs, and get to

work. Surely He would appreciate that. Only then can we become part of the solution, instead of compounding the problem. And only then will the First Church of the Frozen Chosen begin to thaw out.



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## Spiritual Heritage or Spiritual History?

I would like to respond to a reference by Richard Nickel's article "Why Study the History of Sabbathkeepers?" printed in the January/February issue of *TSS*. He stated, "Yet some would deny my claims of spiritual kinship with early English and American Sabbathkeepers." Citing the book which I wrote, *A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists*, he then stated: "Sanford holds that other Sabbathkeepers cannot rightfully appropriate Seventh Day Baptist history as their own."

I would draw a distinction between claiming spiritual heritage, and claiming history. As a Protestant, I can claim spiritual heritage from men such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, William Brewster, John Robinson, and other reformers, but I do not claim Lutheran, Presbyterian, or Congregational history as a part of Seventh Day Baptist history. As a Baptist I claim spiritual heritage from some of the Anabaptists and their emphasis on adult baptism. I also can claim spiritual heritage from such early Baptists as John Smith and Thomas Helwys, but I would not claim them as Seventh Day Baptists.

However, I can claim denominational history for those who were a part of that body of Christians who were early identified as Seventh Day Baptists, and whose records have been continued to the present. The Mill Yard Church in England continues to this day as a Seventh Day Baptist Church, even though the congregation has changed considerably. Their records and correspondence with Seventh Day Baptist Churches in

America are a part of our history. Those who were members of the Pinners' Hall, the Bell Lane Church and others who have been identified as Seventh Day Baptists are a part of our nearly 350 years of history.

In America, the church at Newport, Rhode Island founded in 1671 was clearly identified in both secular and church records as Seventh Day Baptists even though they sometimes used the term Sabbatarian. The meeting house in Newport built in 1729 is known as the Seventh Day Baptist Meeting House even though now owned by the Newport Historical Society. The original members of that church and many of their families have continued as Seventh Day Baptists for generations. In December of this past year, my daughter gave birth to a girl whom they named Tacy after her grandmother of eleven generations, Tacy Hubbard, one of the chief founders of that church. We have been able to trace her lineage through at least 18 lines of Seventh Day Baptists. The founder of the Piscataway Church in New Jersey founded in 1705 was my grandfather of eight generations, and my mother grew up in that church.

We are glad that others have been able to profit by their faith and their spiritual heritage as Sabbathkeepers, but in all honesty, the history of a people has continuity from generation to generation. Sometimes that continuity may be by biological descent, sometimes by organizational commitments, but always by a covenant relationship which cannot be appropriated by those who have not experienced this covenant. Rev. Don A. Sanford  
Janesville, WI

## Mailbox

### Appreciates Salvation by Grace

I have just finished reading your little book *Bible Truth About Salvation by Grace Through Faith*. It was such a blessing for me to understand the difference between the commandments and the law of ordinances. You put things so plain that I can understand it. I have been a Sabbathkeeper for 29 years and study everything I can find on the Sabbath. May God bless your work.

Eve Lester  
Anderson, IN

*We are glad you were blessed by the book. Nearly every issue of TSS contains a selection of books and materials available through BSA (see "Resources Available From BSA"). We encourage our readers to utilize these resources for personal spiritual growth and witnessing.*

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