

Truths of God's Church A Summary

Truths of God's Church A Summary

By Robert G. Theophilus

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD.

The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

The truth available to God's Church has not been constant through the centuries. No comprehensive written list of all Christ taught His disciples is available. The death of the apostles and those they taught and the centuries of persecution that came upon all religious groups from a new false Christianity led to the loss of many of the truths Christ taught His disciples. In this study, a summary will be provided of some of the truths God's one true Church currently has.

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Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no

other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no biblical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses

in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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t may come as a surprise to some that how much knowledge there has been about the truths of the Bible has varied over the centuries. This was especially, true in the days before the invention of the printing press when there was no fast and easy way of recording, copying and transmitting information.

The truth Christ taught His disciples was transmitted mainly by word of mouth and doing so over many generations inevitably results in information being lost. We don't all remember things the same way and we don't express it to others in the very same way it was told us. There are unavoidable changes that occur as information is transmitted from person to person because we are all unique individuals with different listening and speaking abilities. With the passage of centuries until printing came about, it was next-to-impossible for information to be transmitted unchanged especially over long periods of time. The content of a book once written and printed, does not change over time.

In this document, you will find an enumeration of some of the currently known Biblical truths. A Biblical truth is one which can be proven using the Bible which is the only sure source of truth we have. Many men have gone out into the world claiming to have a special relationship with God where He gives them truth that they see themselves as having a commission to preach to others. They then create organizations which they call churches as their means of doing so.

Our focus in this study will be on what the Bible says, not men, especially those who are preaching for money. Of course they're not saying openly that this is why they are doing it; rather, the money they say is to be mainly used to preach the Gospel among other good deeds they claim to be doing.

A closer look at how that money is spent shows a lot of it is being spent on themselves and their pet projects which they always justify as being necessary to do what they call "The Work."

The Bible tells us that the false prophets would be the many and the true prophets, the few. That they would come in sheep's clothing but in reality be ravening wolves with great appetites for money. Lately, it has been discovered that the Bible says that the name of the true church is "church of God."

As a result many churches of God have suddenly appeared and are making themselves known to as many people as possible in the hope of drawing as many as they can to their organization and start exploiting them. It should be no great surprise that the many false prophets would of course develop organizations of men calling themselves "church of God."

The Bible says that of those who were originally truly converted Christians, it would be the many of them who would follow the false prophets that would come among them.

Why?

Once the great zeal for God's truth they had when first called and chosen faded, they lost their enthusiasm. They were reassured that they were part of God's church and that their salvation was assured as long as they remained members of this new organization. Their conversion was reduced to participating in celebrating the holy days, keeping the Sabbath and paying tithes and they placed their full trust in the men preaching to them. The dust grew on their Bible.

Being a member of an organization of men with the words "church of God" somewhere in the title of their organization is not the same thing as being part of God's one true Church which is a spiritual organization not headed up by any man and whose teachers are God the Father and God the Word.

Let's go back to the main reason for this study and that is outlining,

what are some of the Bible truths that we have today and that you can prove yourself, using your Bible. As always, you are personally responsible for making sure you are not being lied to by verifying with your Bible whether what is being taught you is true or not.

The truth of a matter does not depend on how high an opinion you may have of certain men whom you consider to be great men of God. The truth is what you can prove with your Bible no matter who says it and no matter if it contradicts or not your personal beliefs. The standard of truth is not, nor can ever be, any man, even yourself.

I have not always included all the relevant Scriptures to keep the explanations given brief. The details can be found in the studies posted on this Web Site: godspiritualnation.org

Let's begin.

Physical and Spiritual Israel

The Bible is a book about only one nation, the nation of Israel, physical and spiritual. The other nations of the world are only mentioned as they come into contact with Israel. The Bible does not speak to the world but it does at time speak about the world.

In Old Testament times (OT), God had a physical nation which occupied a specific territory, who spoke the same language, received the same religious training and, had similar customs and traditions. One became a part of Israel by being born into it. Strangers wanting to live in Israel had to abandon the religious beliefs, practices and customs of their country and fully assimilate to those of Israel. They had to become Israelites.

This physical nation was never converted nor could it be because the Old Covenant did not make the forgiveness of sin possible. Christ had yet to be sacrificed for the sins of mankind.

In New Testament (NT) times, God has a spiritual nation. Its members are all those who have been called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Father, who are being taught all things by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman and who are remaining faithful. They are from the four corners of the world, live in different countries, speak different languages, and in most instances, are not aware of each others existence.

Conversion is something that occurs in the mind. A change of attitude from one of being hostile to God to one of trying to obey Him in all

things to the best of our abilities. This change of attitude is not something that is outwardly visible. It is not possible in a crowd to identify who if any of them, is a truly converted Christian.

Truly converted Christians are a royal priesthood, the living stones of God's temple, they are God's temple. They offer themselves as living sacrifices every day dying to their old life of sin (their old man) and striving to live in newness of life. They are growing in knowledge and understanding by their regular study of God's Bible with the holy spirit God the Word dwelling in their mind making it possible for them to understand the God-level spiritual truth it contains. They are by themselves or in little groups and are not under the government of any organizations of men who decide for them what it is they are to believe. No man can say that God speaks to him and gives him truth which he has a commission to teach to others. That's what most of them say but there is absolutely no Bible basis for them to say so.

Peter and the other apostles didn't form a central headquarters group which set doctrine for congregations of God's Church nor did they demand any money from anyone. The importance of money for God's Church is very greatly de-emphasized in God's Church and the clear Bible example is that money is not only not necessary to do God's work but it is a source of evil. God's command is that those who would do God's work are to do it because they think it is important not because it is a means of making money. You can be assured of the dedication and credibility of those who voluntarily work for free. The same cannot be said of those who work for money and are always asking for more of it.

God's spiritual nation of Israel is not a large organizations of men with leaders that decide for them what is the truth. God's church is a little flock invisible to the world. It is invisible because it is scattered all over the world, members don't know each other most of the time and even if they do, they do not assemble themselves into large groups visible to the world as there is no need for them to do so. God's NT Church is a spiritual organization not a physical one and its teachers are not men but the holy spirit God the Father while being called and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman if they follow their calling.

Who, What and Why God's Church?

What is God's Church?

Is it one or more organizations of men visible to the world that anyone

can join if he wants to?

Who are its members?

How does one become part of it?

Is there more than one church of God?

Why does God have a church?

Let's begin answering these questions.

One true Church

According to the holy Bible there is only one true Church of God.

Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Christ did not say He would build His *churches* but that is a plain and self-evident truth that no one seems to want to know as they build their own "churches of God" for the purpose of making money.

Is God's Church being built by Men?

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but **by my spirit**, saith the LORD of hosts.

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are **God's husbandry**, ye are God's building.

Husbandry has to do with farming, raising crops and breeding animals. As used in this verse, it means that God is the one raising the crop which represents the members of God's Church. The apostles and those they trained and appointed are the labourers on God's farm (church) where some plant and some water but where the increase in knowledge and understanding is God's doing, not any man's. It is God who is doing the building of individual Christians by giving them more knowledge and understanding as they study their Bibles. He is the one, and the only one, who can add members to it. No man can call men to salvation as no man has the ability to make men understand God's spiritual truth.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the

Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, [because they are spiritually discerned](#).

The natural mind is the one with which all men are born. It gives man the ability to deal with the physical world but it is unable to know God's spiritual truth without another spirit being added to it, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. This happens when men are called or drawn by the holy spirit God the Father.

Joh 6:44 [No man can come to me, \[Christ\] except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I \[Christ\] will raise him up at the last day.](#)

Basically, this verse is saying that no man can understand the spiritual truth that He, Christ, teaches unless the holy spirit God the Father calls him. This is why the crowds that followed him could not understand the spiritual meaning of the things He spoke. Christ told the crowd He had fed with fish and bread that He was the bread of life which they have to eat to have eternal life. They understood this literally as meaning they had to eat Christ's body which of course is not what Christ meant and they remained totally confused.

God's Church Under Judgment

1Pe 4:17 [For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?](#)

God's called and chosen ones are the only ones that can understand God level spiritual truth and once they do, they come under judgment which is to say, God assesses their true attitude. Do they really want to try to obey Him as best they can or are they just pretending to do so. They can fool men but God who can know what they're really thinking cannot be fooled.

Those who are part of God's one, true Church are those who have been called, chosen and faithful, and who are growing in knowledge and understanding as they study their only sure source of truth, God's holy Bible. They can be by themselves or in little groups and they are all over the world.

Why Does God Have a Church?

Why does God have a church or group of people that He has called and who became chosen because they followed their calling? Because, it is

the means for Him of determining who are those men who can be given immortal, spirit life and of whom He can be sure they will never turn against Him as Lucifer and the angels that sinned did.

God's church needs not be an organization with a headquarters group with at its head a supreme leader who dictates what it is people are to believe. It has no purpose or mission requiring the concerted efforts and support of an organized group.

Those called by God have no commission *individually or as a group* to preach the Gospel to the unconverted world or any of God's spiritual truth because to them it is foolishness (1Co 2:14).

The reason God calls men is to determine whether they will accept His authority in their lives when He reveals Himself to them. Their struggle is to resist as best they can the lusts of their flesh and of their minds until the end of their lives. This does not require them to be part of any organizations; it is a process that is wholly between God and them.

Christians individually or as a group are not found worthy of salvation because they are part of organizations of men who have given themselves the commission to preach the Gospel to the world which is something men can't do. Christians stand or fall based on their maintaining their attitude of repentance and belief throughout their lives, not because they belong to organizations of men calling themselves "church of God."

God's Church is all those who have been called and chosen and who are maintaining their attitude of obedience to Him in all things wherever they may be in the world by themselves or are in little groups having spiritual fellowship with God the Father and God the Word. They are studying God's holy Bible and are being taught by the holy spirit God the Word.

God knows we cannot as human beings perfectly obey Him but we must be perfect in our attitude of wanting to do so. Perfect obedience we cannot have but we can be unwavering in our attitude of wanting to obey God in all things to the best of our abilities despite having to live with sin in our lives which serve to keep us humble before God.

This true and sincere attitude of obedience maintained until the time of our death will become an unchangeable part of our spirit character at the time of our resurrection to immortal spirit existence. God will never have to be concerned about any members of His Kingdom rebelling against Him. It will ensure perfect cooperation and harmony between

all members of God's Kingdom and perfect obedience to God.

In God's Kingdom, there will be unity or oneness because of the unbreakable authority structure made possible by the permanent attitude of obedience of God's glorified saints. Though, God's Kingdom will be composed of many separate and distinct individuals having independent mind power, the functioning of the Kingdom will be similar to that of the human body.

What do I mean?

The human body is made up of millions of cells with different functions in the body but they all work together to constitute not many bodies but one body. They are constrained in what they do by the unbreakable laws God placed in the human body. Individual cells cannot depart from their assigned function in the body.

A major difference in God's Kingdom will be that God's saints while always being obedient to God will continue to retain the individuality, personality and freedom to think made possible by their God given mind power. God created mankind for the purpose of reproducing Himself, that is, creating more God beings like Himself with whom He can fully relate as He does to God the Word. Without mind power and freedom to think, this would be impossible.

God's Church NOT an Organization of Men

Is God's Church an organization of men with a governmental structure patterned on those found in the unconverted world? Is it a centralized, top down, hierarchical organization with a supreme leader who holds all powers and sets doctrine for the group? Is it an organization where its leader has a special relationship with God where God reveals knowledge only to him and which he then passes on to subordinates to teach to the members of the organization?

When men put forth that argument, the following Scripture is presented as proof.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

A first question would be to ask if there is any indication at all in this verse that evangelists were under apostles, that prophets were under evangelists and that pastors and teachers were under prophets?

A second question would be to ask if in God's Church we would always find all of the offices of responsibility mentioned in that verse: apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors and teachers?

Is there any information provided in the Bible regarding how an organization of men can proceed to appoint an apostle? If it were possible to do so and God wanted this to be done, wouldn't there be at least one example in the Bible where a man appointed another man an apostle? There aren't any.

How about evangelists, did they appoint themselves? No, they were appointed by the men God had made apostles to assist them in their work. Can men who are not apostles appoint evangelists? There is no example of this being done in the Bible.

Is God still sending prophets? Usually, prophets in the Bible are men who were made by God to carry out a mission or to give a message on His behalf to Israel.

In New Testament times, God clearly says He is not talking to His spiritual nation of Israel by prophets anymore.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us [\[truly converted Christians\]](#) by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

The only remaining positions in NT times are that of pastors and teachers but God tells us the following about pastors.

Eze 34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and [cause them to cease from feeding the flock](#); neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

Eze 34:11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

Eze 34:14 [I will feed them](#) in a good pasture, and upon the

high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

Eze 34:15 **I will feed my flock**, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.

And, God tells us the following about who in NT times will be the teachers.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth **with you, and shall be **in** you.**

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,[spirit] whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you [the apostles and all truly converted Christians] all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**

Based on the Scriptures we have just reviewed, the positions mentioned in Eph 4: 11 are not to be found in the last days of God's NT church. We have been in the last days of God's plan of salvation since the day of Pentecost and the foundation of God's NT Church. Presently, we are at the end of the 6th day. The 7 days of God's plan of salvation are prophetic and in accomplishment each day is a 1,000 years.

2Pe 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

We are about to enter into the 7th day. From Adam to Christ there were 4,000 years and from Christ to us, almost 2,000 years have gone by.

In the early church, in the days of the apostles and those they trained and appointed, the positions listed in Eph 4: 11 existed. But since the original apostles and those they trained died coupled with the persecutions and scattering of God's saints, there is no man today who can say he knows what Christ taught His disciples and what they taught those who came to conversion in their days. Consequently, today, no man's

teachings can be regarded as the absolute truth of God which all have to believe. If it cannot be proven with your Bible you are not to believe it.

All those called and chosen have dwelling in them the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who teaches them all things as they study the sure word of God, the holy Bible.

God's NT Church therefore cannot be and is not an organization of men who have given themselves the authority to appoint apostles, evangelists, etc. And, God's Church is not and cannot be a hierarchical, centralized and top down organization where men are in positions of authority over the church's members.

There are no teachers in God's Church who have the absolute truth to teach to others.

God's Church is all those who have been called, chosen and who are remaining faithful no matter where they may be in the world, whether alone or in little groups such as the one mentioned in the book of Malachi.

Mal 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

Mal 3:17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Mal 3:18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

These little groups are often criticized by organizations of men saying they are the one, true church of God and that they should assemble with them. However, God says at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment when "...he makes up his jewels...." or separates the goat (the wicked) from the sheep (the saved), then they will know who were the ones really serving God and those who were only pretending.

Is God working out His plan of salvation through men? Would the eternal, all-powerful creator of heaven and earth's plan of salvation not be possible without men acting as His representatives?

Mat 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Mat 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Mat 3:9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

This is what John the Baptist said to the Pharisees and the Sadducees who thought that they did not need to repent because they had Abraham as their father. God through John tells them that their being sons of Abraham does not exempt them from having to repent. Being sons of Abraham when it comes to salvation is not in the least bit of any importance. God says he could raise up children unto Abraham from stones if He had to.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees were the religious elite of the day. They saw themselves as the great master teachers of the Scriptures that everyone should honor and respect but God tells them they are no more important to Him than the rocks of the field unless they repent and if they were to repent, they would not be doing what they were doing.

Are False Churches of God Possible?

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong (HWA), the former head of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), made it clear that the true church is referred to in the Bible as the “Church of God.” Since then it is no accident or coincidence that many organizations of men have started calling themselves “Church of God” as they have discovered it makes it easier to attract people to their groups.

Mat 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which [come to you](#) in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

They pretend to be part of God's flock but their real goal is to financially exploit those they can get to follow them. God tells true Christians to beware, they will come to **you**, God's called and chosen ones. And, they will say they are the continuation of God's Church on the Earth. They will present themselves as prophets sent by God to teach them new revelations they have received from Him.

2Co 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

2Co 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

2Co 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

The false prophets are not going to make it evident who they really are to those they seek to deceive so it should not be all that surprising to anyone that they will present themselves as apostles, prophets, preachers and teachers of God's truth.

Since the destruction of the WCG after the death of HWA, there has been no lack of men claiming they were continuing in his footsteps and teaching what he taught. However, upon closer examination, we can see that they all have strayed from what the WCG taught and have new beliefs never taught in the WCG. They say they have the greatest of respect for HWA but have many new teachings that simply cannot be proven with God's Bible with some of them contradicting or undoing what HWA taught.

Pretending to honor HWA and the use of the name "Church of God" seem to be all that is needed to keep people believing that their organization is God's Church doing God's work to whom tithes are to be paid.

How can Christians tell the false sheep from the true ones?

Mat 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Mat 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Mat 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Mat 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

The false sheep will be exposed not by what they say but by what they do, their fruit. What they say sounds so much just like the truth of God but what they do to the flock, those that follow them, is mistreat them and extract money from them to provide a luxurious lifestyles for themselves. They don't care how much financial and personal hardship they

cause to the sheep. They are harsh and dictatorial towards them and do not hesitate to rid themselves of anyone they see as not being fully supportive of them.

But the Scriptures say that those in offices of responsibility in God's Church are to treat those they teach as they would treat their own family members.

1Ti 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, [an elderly person] but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

1Ti 5:2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

1Ti 5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

Is this how things are done in your "church of God?"

What will God tell to all these organizations of men calling themselves "church of God" who claim to have the commission to preach the Gospel to the world, to warn it that unless they repent God will severely punish them and who say they are entitled to received tithes and offerings from those who follow them?

Mat 7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

There would be many more ravening wolves dressed in sheep's clothing than there would be true prophets of God in the world. This is why God says that Christians are to prove all things and to try the spirits. And, when they find them to be not of God, not to keep on associating with them. Their salvation depends on their willingness to be alone with God's truth, if necessary.

Salvation is not a group process, it is solely between you and God. It's not, and has never been, about following the right man, belonging to the right group or believing what everybody else around you believes.

Prove all Things — Why?

Are Christians required to prove all things?

1Th 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Why ?

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try [test] the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets [men who claim to have been sent by God but are not] are gone out into the world.

Act 20:30 Also of your own selves [Church elders] shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, [God's people] who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2Pe 2:2 And many [of God's called and chosen ones] shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

2Pe 2:3 And through covetousness [having a great desire for money, fame and power but especially money] shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

They are the ones preaching for money and the money they earn by doing so is called by God "filthy lucre." False religions are big money making businesses today as they were anciently. There is no lack of men who see religion as an easy way of making money; religion is big business.

As we will see in the following verses, those being given the responsibility to watch over God's saints are not to do so for money.

1Ti 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

A bishop is an elder (Tit 1:5,7) whose responsibility is to exhort and reprove/rebuke the gainsayers, those teaching falsities to try to get a following for themselves from which they can make money.

Anyone wanting to be a bishop (elder) must not be greedy of filthy lucre.

1Ti 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, **not greedy of filthy lucre**; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

And, he must not be a novice or newcomer to the faith.

1Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

When someone wants to become a deacon, he also has to not be greedy for money.

1Ti 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, **not greedy of filthy lucre**;

Paul asked Titus to ordain elders in every city where there were men who had been called and chosen by God in order to stop the mouths of the gainsayers.

Tit 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders** in every city, as I had appointed thee:

Tit 1:7 For a bishop **[an elder]** must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, **not given to filthy lucre**;

Tit 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort **[strongly urge]** and to convince **[reprove, rebuke]** the **gainsayers**.

The gainsayers are those preaching for money, filthy lucre. Elders were to be those who were faithfully holding on to the truth as it has been taught them to be able to both exhort, rebuke and reprove the gainsayers.

The Greek word translated “convince” in Tit 1:9 has the following possible other meanings: admonish, convict, tell a fault, reprove, rebuke.

To reprove is to scold or correct usually gently or with kindly intent and to rebuke is to criticize sharply, strongly disapprove.

In the context of Tit 1:9, the words “rebuke” and “reprove” in my opinion better describe what elders were to do when coming into contact with gainsayers. This is borne out by what we read in Tit 1:11.

Tit 1:10 For there are **many** unruly and vain talkers and de-

ceivers, specially they of the circumcision: [the Jews were in opposition to Christianity; to them Jesus was a false prophet]

Tit 1:11 **Whose mouths must be stopped**, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, **for filthy lucre's sake.**

Elders were also to feed the flock with the truth they had personally received from the apostles.

1Pe 5:1 The **elders** which are **among you** I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

1Pe 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; **not for filthy lucre**, but of a ready mind;

There would be many, not a few, false prophets who would try to have God's called and chosen ones follow them rather than to remain with the truth they had received at the time of their conversion. This started at the very beginning of God's Church and is a process that would continue until the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind.

All truly converted Christians have to remain on their guards to make sure that what they believe is fully provable with their Bible. They must resist the temptation of putting their trust in men no matter how impressed they might be with their speaking skills, no matter how smooth, pleasant and reassuring are their messages, and especially, if they are in the end found to be preaching for money.

A pattern has been established since the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) that preaching for money is what even truly converted men do but God say the truly converted do not preach for money and this is a constant in the Bible. None of the true prophets of God became rich from bringing God's message to ancient Israel. None of the apostles were to go out preaching for money. Money is effectively nullified as a requirement for preaching the Gospel by the Instructions Christ gave His disciples when He sent them out to preach (Mat 10: 5-10; Mark 6: 7-9 and Luke 9: 1-4).

Christians must prove all things with their Bible and not associate with organizations of men preaching for money. The success of God's plan of salvation for mankind doesn't depend on money or men.

Spiritual Growth

Is it possible for a Christian to remain part of God's Church without having continuing growth beyond the truth he was given when he was first called by the holy spirit God the Father? Is there any time when a Christian can say "I know it all, I don't need to learn anything else."

God tells His called out one and chosen ones that they are to study.

2Ti 2:15 [Study](#) to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Pro 4:5 [Get wisdom, get understanding](#): forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Pro 4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore [get wisdom](#): and with all thy getting [get understanding](#).

Pro 16:16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Pro 3:13 [Happy is the man that findeth wisdom](#), and the man that getteth understanding.

Pro 3:14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

Pro 3:15 She is more precious than rubies: [and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her](#).

Pro 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and [the knowledge of the holy is understanding](#).

You don't have a correct knowledge of the holy, of God and of the wisdom of God without understanding. Everyone can read the Bible and know different verses but only those in whom dwells the holy spirit God the Word can have understanding.

Is spiritual growth essential for salvation?

The answer is provided us in the parable of the talents.

A talent represents the knowledge true Christians receive at the time of their calling from the holy spirit God the Father. Different people receive different numbers of talents, some less than others and some more than others. Regardless of the number of talents received, all are to make their talent grow which is to say, they have to increase the knowledge they were given when they were called or lose their salvation as we will see as we read through the following verses of Mat 25.

Mat 25:24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

This servant says he knew when he was first given his one talent that his master expected him to have increased it by the time he would come back but rather than growing it, he hid it in a hole in the ground.

Mat 25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

Mat 25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, **Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:**

What does it mean to be slothful? A slothful person is someone who is lazy. It is someone who is indolent; someone who is disinclined (unwilling or reluctant) to exert himself or make an effort.

So his master tells him, if you didn't personally want to make an effort you should at least have placed the money I gave you with the exchangers (bankers) so you could at least have given me my money back with interest. That wouldn't have taken too much of an effort since you were too lazy to increase it by your own efforts.

Mat 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. **[Interest]**

Mat 25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

Mat 25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

What is the conclusion of the matter? Christ says that to everyone who has growth, more growth will be given and to those who have no growth, they will lose even the knowledge that they had been given. The will lose what they had been given as they will lose the holy spirits of the Godhead and become again as spiritually blind as they were before their calling.

Mat 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Those who have not grown the spiritual knowledge given them when they were called and chosen are unprofitable servants who lose their salvation. They will find themselves in the Lake of Fire after their sentencing in the Great White Throne Judgment.

Having growth in knowledge and understanding of the spiritual truths of God contained in God's holy Bible is required for salvation.

What Was the Original Sin

What was the sin committed by Adam that resulted in him and Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden and being prevented from re-entering it?

It was because they took to themselves the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Gen 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

In other words, Adam chose to decide good and evil according to his own standards rather than having God do so for him. The problem is that man wasn't created with the ability to correctly determine good and evil; he would have had to rely on God to do so for him.

This is why God says:

Pro 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Pro 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

The Immortal Soul — What is It?

Many Christian organizations of men believe in the doctrine of the immortal soul. Supposedly, at the moment of death, the soul leaves the physical body and goes up to heaven and exists eternally in a state of permanent happiness and satisfaction with God. This soul supposedly retains and continues the consciousness and personality of the now dead person.

But what does the Bible have to say about "souls"?

Gen 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The LORD God here is God the Word who is the holy spirit through which the holy spirit God created all things. He formed man of the dust of the ground and gave it life. Man is made of dead matter, the dust of the ground. God the Word breathed into his nostrils or nose the breath of life. In other words, by a great miracle of creation, He made the dead dust of the ground alive. And, the dead inorganic matter of which man was made and which was made alive by God the Word became a living "soul" or an air-breathing, mortal animal.

This living soul created by God the Word does not have dwelling in it immortality.

How can we know for sure?

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

After Adam sinned by taking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God drove him out of the Garden of Eden to prevent him from taking of the tree of life which would have given him immortality.

Gen 3:23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Gen 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east

of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, **to keep the way of the tree of life**

The Bible, in other verses, also tells us plainly that souls die.

Eze 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: **the soul that sinneth, it shall die.**

Eze 18:20 **The soul that sinneth, it shall die.** The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

The life in man who is an animal is no different from the life that is in all other animals created by God.

Ecc 3:19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: **as the one dieth, so dieth the other;** yea, **they have all one breath;** so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

The dead lie in utter unconsciousness.

Psa 146:4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in **that very day his thoughts perish.**

Psa 115:17 **The dead praise not the LORD,** neither any that go down into silence.

And, their bodies made of the dust of the ground, after death, again becomes dust.

Ecc 12:7 Then shall the dust **[man]** return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ecc 8:8 There is **no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit;** neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

The spirit in man is what keeps him alive; it is the life that God placed in the inorganic matter, the dust of the ground, from which man was made. This human spirit comes from God and is given at the time of the conception of a human being and goes back to God at the time of death.

Human life is maintained by breathing, eating, drinking, etc. but these processes are not the source of life in a human body. Once the power that makes it possible for men to breathe, eat, drink, etc. is removed, the death of the body follows.

Jas 2:26 For as **the body without the spirit is dead**, so faith without works is dead also.

This spirit in man or human spirit is not a being living in man and which continues his existence after the death of the body. The spirit of man is something that is in him but is not part of him. It is like a marble that one would swallow; it is in the person but is not part of them. It is something added to the human body by God which also gives man's animal brain mind power which no other animals created by God has.

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the **spirit of man** which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The spirit in man could be said to be powers from God given to man which include life, the ability to think, the freedom to make decisions, and the ability to acquire and use vast amounts of knowledge. The spirit in man also makes it possible for God to communicate spiritual truth to men, “.... the things of God....” and make their salvation possible if they follow the truth given them and remain faithful.

These powers are from God and come to an end when God takes them back which is expressed as the spirit going back to God.

Man is a living soul that dies; the soul is not immortal.

Are You Born Again?

What does it mean to be born again? The Bible is rather clear on the subject but it continues to be grossly misunderstood by the many Christian religious organizations of this world.

The prevailing understanding is that when someone gives his heart to Jesus, he is born again. Or, still in other words, when someone decides to try to obey God, that person is born again.

What does the Bible tells us about what it is to be born again?

Joh 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

Joh 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

Joh 3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Nicodemus could not understand what Jesus was telling him because it was not given to him to understand spiritual truth as were Christ's disciples.

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

Mat 13:11 He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

Like all the unconverted of this world, Nicodemus could only understand Christ's word in their physical sense which is why he was asking if being born again meant he had to reenter his mother's womb and be born a second time.

Christ continued giving him information but Nicodemus could not and did not understand what He was telling him.

So what does it mean to be born again?

Col 1:15 Who **[God's Son]** is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** of every creature:

The creatures mentioned in this verse is mankind that was created by God. God's created beings are creatures or the creations of God. Christ was the firstborn from the dead of all mankind created by God.

Col 1:18 And he **[God's Son]** is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead;** that in all things he might have the preeminence.

When born again by a resurrection from the dead, Christ was born as an immortal, holy spirit being which is what will occur to all those who are to also be born again by a resurrection from the dead. They will also be holy and spirit and immortal.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by **the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**,

In this life, true Christians are only begotten or conceived, they are spiritual embryos whose birth will occur in a resurrection from the dead.

Jesus was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead; but, there are to be others.

Rom 8:29 For whom he **[God the Father]** did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be **the firstborn among many brethren**.

Paul gives us more information as to how this will happen.

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

No flesh-and-blood man can be part of God's Kingdom which is wholly composed of spirit beings. Our physical bodies subject to decay cannot become part of a Kingdom in which there is no decay, corruption and death.

1Co 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, **[die]** but we shall all be changed,

All will become immortal spirit beings, all will be changed/transformed from being mortal to becoming immortal.

1Co 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and **the dead shall be raised incorruptible**, and we shall be changed.

The last trump is the 7th trumpet of the 7th seal of the book of Revelation which when it is blown signals Christ's 2nd Coming and the resurrection of God's saints.

1Co 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and **this mortal must put on immortality**.

Why?

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Joh 3:6 **That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

We were first born of the flesh as mortal, flesh-and-blood human beings but our next birth must be as a spirit being. This is not something that can be done by fleshly reproduction, it has to be done by a spirit being who has the power to transform fleshly human beings into spirit beings.

Joh 6:40 **And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. [In the Great White Throne Judgment which occurs at the end of the Last Great Day.]**

Joh 6:44 **No man can come to me, [Christ] except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Joh 6:54 **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Being resurrected to everlasting life as a spirit being is something that Christ will do for all those who have been called, chosen and faithful until the end of their natural lives.

This is what it means to be born again. Christ was the first of many brethren that are to be resurrected to eternal life as He was and become part of God's family, nation and kingdom.

Faith

What is faith has been and continues to be a mystery to many of the Christian religions of this world. Indeed, faith can be interpreted to mean different things by different people. Let's see what the holy Bible tells us about what is faith?

Heb 11:1 Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for**, the evidence of things not seen.

This is a roundabout way of saying something which is basically simple

and that is that faith is believing what God says without having any physical/material evidence or proof that we can touch, feel, see, etc. It is not something whose existence we can confirm with our physical senses. It is believing that God will and can do what He says He will do and has done like the creation of the heavens and of the earth, the creation of mankind, the resurrection of Christ, and the list goes on and on.

Hebrews 11 gives us many examples of what is faith and I would encourage you to read through it on your own.

Faith can also be thought of as being hope.

Rom 8:24 For we **are saved by hope**: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Rom 8:25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with **patience** wait for it.

Faith requires not losing hope which is continuing to patiently believe God can and will do what He says in the Bible even though we have no way of proving it using our physical senses. Hope like faith requires believing God without ever actually receiving any of the things promised by God.

In Ephesians, Paul provides us with more and similar information to that provided in Rom 8:24 about what is faith.

Eph 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Eph 2:8 For **by grace are ye saved** through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

In Eph 2:8 the word "faith" is not referring to what is believed by a Christian. It is talking about the perfect faith of Christ who voluntarily became a man born of woman and subject to the second death to become God the Father's perfect sacrifice for sin fully trusting and believing that God the Father would resurrect Him to the glory He had with Him before becoming a flesh-and-blood man. It is this perfect faith of Christ which saves us when God the Father imputes it to us. Imputing means God the Father considers us as having Christ's perfect faith and it means that God then does not impute sin to us as Christ was sinless.

Rom 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Because Abraham believed God (faith) God considered him to be righteous i.e., without sin even though all men have sinned and will sin until they die (Rom 3:23; 1Jn 1:10).

Rom 4:4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, [what he receives is not free; it is the result of the work he did] but of debt. [As something owed him for the work he has done or is doing.]

Grace is the free, unmerited forgiveness of sin; we can never do anything to merit it or deserve it nor is there anything we can do to force God to forgive us our sins. It is a free gift from God. It is the imputation by God of Christ's perfect, holy, righteous character to us. God then considers us to be sinless as Christ was sinless even though He knows we cannot ever be sinless.

Rom 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Rom 4:7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

I think here a practical example of what imputation is can be useful.

Christians are God the Father's children who despite their abiding attitude of wanting to perfectly obey Him in all things, are unable of consistently doing so. They are somewhat like human children who have to learn many new skills and who at first are unintentionally clumsy. For example, a child learning how to use a spoon or a fork may sometimes drop it on the floor not having yet mastered how to use them. Does the parent then punish the child? No, a clean fork or spoon is given the child so he can continue learning. It is as though he never dropped the fork or spoon. It is not taken into account and this is what God does with His called and chosen ones who are doing their best to obey Him but not always successfully. In other words, He then does not impute sin to them. It is for Him as though they had not sinned.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for

he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Christians have to believe what God tells us in His holy Bible without having any physical proof that we can see; God wants us to believe and trust Him.

Another point we have to consider is that of faith and works. Since God says that having faith results in Him not imputing sin to us or in imputing Christ's righteousness to us, some say that there is no need to have works. If I have faith they say then I don't have to obey God or have works.

Jas 2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

In other words, what we believe will reveal itself by what we do. If I believe that if I eat well I will be healthy, I will do so. If I'm just saying it and don't really believe it, I won't do it.

Jas 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

If you are not obeying God as best you can then your faith will not save you; it is dead. These are the people mentioned by Christ in Mat 15:8.

Mat 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

They just make an outward show of believing but don't live their lives accordingly. They are lip servants and eye servants. They tell God they will obey Him but in their personal lives they don't. They only do their master's work when they know he can see them. When the master is out of sight, they stop doing his work.

Jas 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Saying you believe God and not making any effort to obey Him cancels out your faith. You are then a lip servant proving you don't really believe what you say you believe by not changing your behavior accordingly.

One last point of importance about faith.

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in

Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by the faith of Christ**, and not by **the works of the law**: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

This verse has been used by many to say that all you need is faith with there being no need to follow God's law as "....by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified...."

Here is where it is necessary to keep in mind that when trying to determine the correct meaning of what the Bible says, we have to consider what is being said in many other related verses about the same topic, in this case, faith. This is what we have been doing.

In the book of James, as we have just seen, God clearly tells us that faith without works is dead i.e., it cannot save us. And in Eph 2:8, God tells us that we are saved by grace through faith. In other words, God's grace is applied to us if we have faith and this faith to be saving faith, must have works which is to say, we must be obeying God as best we can.

But, our imperfect obedience to God though required is not what saves us. What saves us is God freely and willingly, because He wants to, not because He has to, not taking into account our sins. He considers us as having Christ's perfect righteousness or sinlessness though it is impossible for any of us to ever be sinless.

What is God's Kingdom?

Mar 1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Jesus preached the gospel, God's good news for mankind, of the kingdom of God but what is it?

Christ told Nicodemus that it was kingdom where one had to be born again to see it and to enter into it. They had to be born again as a spirit being by a resurrection from the dead.

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**

God's kingdom is invisible to flesh-and-blood human beings and they cannot enter it without being born again as a spirit being which is something Christ will do by a great miracle of creation. He will transform a physical, mortal human being, dead or alive, into an immortal, spirit being.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me [Christ], except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are **alive** and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent **[precede; follow after]** them which are asleep. **[Dead]** (John 11:11-14)

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

What will God's Kingdom be like?

In order to have a kingdom four things are needed: a king, subjects, laws and a territory ruled by the king.

In God's Kingdom, God will be the king, the subjects will be all those resurrected to glorified spirit existence, the laws will be God's eternal spiritual laws and the land or territory over which the king will rule will be the new heaven and the new earth that will be created after the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day.

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which **the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.**

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

The “men” mentioned in this last verse are not flesh-and-blood men. After the Great White Throne Judgment (GWTJ) there are only spirit beings left. All flesh-and-blood men losing their salvation die in the Lake of Fire and all the saved become immortal spirit beings.

The new heaven and the new earth comes into being after the GWTJ after the wicked have died in the Lake of Fire. The new Jerusalem then comes down to the new earth.

God, the Word and the Holy Spirit

In the mind of this world’s Christianity, there is much unresolved confusion about who and what is God. Some teach that God is a trinity though the word doesn’t appear anywhere in the Bible and there is no evidence in the Bible that there exists a third being, entity or personage who is a God being.

The Bible is clear that in the beginning before the creation of the universe and of spirit beings there were only 2 beings in existence.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In the beginning there was a being called the Word and that being was with another being called God. The Word who was with God was also God; that is, the Word and God both were spirit beings who had eternally existed; they both had the very same type of existence.

And, God and the Word are separate and distinct beings; one is not a part of the other. It is not 2 beings in one.

When God’s Son, Christ, God the word made flesh, died, God the Father didn’t also die with him. When Jesus while on the earth prayed, He wasn’t talking to himself, He was talking to His Father in heaven.

Joh 1:2 The same [God the Word] was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The Word created all things and without Him was not anything made that was made. This verse is problematic for those who say there exists another being called the “holy spirit” which is supposedly the means used by God to create things but this is not what your Bible says.

All things were made by God the Word.

And then, there's Heb 1: 1-2.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom [His Son] also he [God] made the worlds;

Here it is plainly stated that God made the worlds by His Son; He didn't do it Himself, He commanded it and the Son created them.

God is a spirit being.

Joh 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

God is holy.

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Therefore, God is a holy spirit being.

And as we have just read in John 1:1 the Word was with God and was also God; that is, He was also a spirit being whose existence was eternal. Therefore the Word is also holy and spirit; He is the holy spirit the Word who lived in eternity with the holy spirit God.

The holy spirit God created all things by the holy spirit God the Word. As we have just read in John 1:3, all things were created by the holy spirit God the Word and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Therefore, God's holy spirit is God the Word; He is the holy spirit by whom God does His creation work. When God sends out His holy spirit to accomplish something, it is always and can only be, the holy spirit God the Word.

God made the worlds, physical/material and spiritual, by the Word.

Col 1:15 Who [the holy spirit God the Word] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

I should point out that in this verse, God is not saying that Christ is the firstborn of every human beings; no, He is the firstborn of God's plan of salvation where Christ as a flesh-and-blood mortal being was resurrected to immortal, glorified spirit existence.

Col 1:18 And he [God the Word] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, [of God's plan of salvation] the firstborn from the dead; [the Word made flesh, Christ] that in all things he might have the preeminence. [Be first]

Let's continue our analysis.

Col 1:16 For by him [God the Word] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The Word existed with God before anything was created and He is the one by which all things consist. It is by His power that the universe He created is being kept in existence. And, it will be by Him that the new heaven and the new earth will be created after the Great White Throne Judgment to replace the current heaven and earth.

The holy spirit God the Word is the spirit being in the Godhead used by the holy spirit God, to create all things.

The holy spirit God the Word is God's spirit that does the work commanded by the holy spirit God.

Therefore, the holy spirit God the Word is God's spirit by who He creates all things.

Let's keep going.

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

In the beginning the holy spirit God created the heaven and the earth

by the holy spirit God the Word. This creation was perfect as everything created by God is “very good.”

Gen 1:31 And God saw every thing that he [the holy spirit God the Word] had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

But God’s initial creation of the heaven and of the earth became chaotic as a result of Lucifer’s rebellion. God had to restore them.

Gen 1:2 And the earth was [became] without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God [the holy spirit God the Word] moved upon the face of the waters.

Psa 104:30 Thou [the holy spirit God] sendest forth thy spirit, [the holy spirit God the Word] they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

Psa 33:6 By the word [by saying it] of the LORD [the holy spirit God the Word] were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. [He spoke it and it was done.]

The holy spirit is not a 3rd being in the Godhead and it is not simply power that emanates from God. It is the holy spirit God the Word by whom the holy spirit God created all things in the past and will create all things in the future.

God’s spirit or the spirit of God that does the work commanded by the Father is God the Word, His faithful Son who obeys Him in all things.

There is no separate and distinct holy spirit being which existed from the beginning and eternally with the holy spirit God and with the holy spirit God the Word.

Oneness What is It?

This is another concept which has served to mislead men as to what is the nature of God. They have interpreted “being one” as meaning that 2 beings exist in one person and even, for those who believe the holy spirit is a third being in the Godhead, they think that God is a being in which 3 persons exist. They understand oneness in physical terms when it is rather a spiritual thing. They are like Nicodemus who thought that being born again meant that he had to reenter his mother’s womb.

The carnal mind, which is the human mind without God’s spirit, cannot

understand God level spiritual truth.

Christ said:

Joh 10:30 I and my Father are one.

What was he saying? A great number of human beings can be one in what they believe or think regarding a specific matter; in other words, they all think or believe the same thing with respect to a specific matter. But that does not mean they are all dwelling in one body on which we would find a great number of heads which is a physical and biological impossibility. It merely means they agree.

When Christ says He and His Father are one, He is not saying they are one body in which there are 2 beings. Rather, it means that He and the Father agree and what do they agree on? One of the things is that He agrees to be under the authority of His Father. Another one is that He agrees with God's plan of salvation for mankind and possibly many other things but He is still a separate and distinct being from God.

The holy spirit God made man by the holy spirit God the Word.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, [with mind power and freedom to think] after our likeness [physical appearance]: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Men in their physical appearance look like God and the Word. If God and the Word were 2 beings in one then mankind created according to their likeness would have 2 heads on one body. And if God is a trinity where 3 beings are in one, then mankind would have been created with bodies on which we find 3 heads. However, this is not what Christ said to Philip.

Joh 14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Joh 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Christ, as we have just read, said He and His Father were one. If their

oneness was physical then the Father would have been with Christ on the earth as they are 2 beings existing in one. But, the Father was in heaven and Christ was on the earth.

When Christ prayed to His Father was He talking to Himself?

When Christ died on the stake, did the Father die with Him?

Who then would have resurrected them if both had died?

Christ was resurrected by His Father who obviously didn't die with Him.

God and the Word's oneness is their being in agreement and what they agree about, among many other things, is God the Father's plan of salvation for mankind and their respective roles in that process.

Preaching the Gospel — Who Can do It?

Christ at His First Coming commissioned the disciples He personally trained for 3 1/2 years with the task of preaching the Gospel.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

Mat 28:19 **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

Mat 28:20 **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

If Mark 16:15 effectively means that the apostles were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature then this is something which was impossible for them to do given the very basic means of travel and communications then available.

And, it is very important to notice that He did not commission God's Church to preach the Gospel which would not come into existence until the Day of Pentecost. This means that today, *no church has the commission to preach the Gospel to all nations.*

It is very safe to say, the apostles were never able to actually go into all

the world and teach the Gospel to every living person (creature) that then existed.

Christ commissioned them, not men who were never personally trained by Him and who would be born following the death of the apostles.

Would there be other apostles after the death of the original apostles? If so, who has the authority to make men apostles? Do we have any examples in the Bible of men appointing other men to be apostles? Can we find any instructions on how more apostles could be appointed after Christ's ascension to His Father?

There aren't any so how will the Gospel reach all nations.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is **the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Every man that has ever lived, dead or alive, has to have heard, believed the Gospel and repented as it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.

Who can reach those who have died without having heard the Gospel and those who are yet to be born during the Millennium and during the Last Great Day? Who can open the minds of men to understand spiritual truth?

1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us **[truly converted Christians]** by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but **[by]** the Spirit of God.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man **[the unconverted who have not the holy spirit the Word dwelling in them]** receiveth **[accepts not nor understands]** not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned**.

Can men or an organization of men claiming to be truly converted Christians appoint men to be apostles? God's holy Bible, our only sure source of truth gives us no examples of the apostles naming other apostles or of the members of God's Church after the death of the apostles, being given the power to make men apostles.

Why did Christ personally make an apostle of Paul if men can appoint other men to be apostles. Peter was the chief apostle. Couldn't he have made Paul an apostle? And, given the commission given them by Christ to go in all the world, wouldn't it make sense that Christ would have given Peter the authority to name other apostles to help them.

And, if they were to go and teach all nations, wouldn't Christ have given them the authority to continue appointing other men to continue doing the work given them after their own death. And, wouldn't these men in turn have been given the authority to also appoint other men as apostles so that there would always be apostles available to preach the Gospel to the world?

No matter how hard you try, you will not be able to find any verse or combination of verses where men are given the authority to make other men apostles. The only conclusion that can be reached is that there were no more apostles to come after the death of the men Christ made apostles and that men, today saying they are apostles are false apostles.

The question to be asked then is who can preach the Gospel to each and every man that has ever lived as for salvation everyone has to have heard and believed the Gospel. (Rom 1:16)

However, the truth contained in the Bible is God level spiritual truth which can only be known by men who are called by the holy spirit God the Father.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are **foolishness** unto him: neither can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned**.

The natural man who is someone who is not being taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman does not receive or accept God's truth because to him it is foolishness. In other words, men must have dwelling in them, the holy spirits of the Godhead who enable their minds to understand God level spiritual truth. This occurs only in men that have been called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Father.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, [the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman, the resurrected Christ] except the Father [the holy spirit God the Father] which hath sent me draw him: and I [Christ] will raise him up at the last day.

Why is it that God the Father gives His called and chosen over to the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman (the resurrected and glorified Christ)?

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever;

Joh 14:17 Even the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye [the **disciples**] know him [the **Comforter** and the **Spirit of truth**]; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: [without a **Comforter**] I will come to you.

Joh 14:26 But the **Comforter**, which is the **Holy Ghost**, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

In New Testament (NT) times, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman, the resurrected and glorified Christ, is the **Comforter** and **Spirit of truth** that will dwell in God the Father's called and chosen ones and teach them all things.

They are the teachers of God's NT Church, not men who appointed themselves as ministers of God or who were appointed by men who gave themselves the authority to appoint ministers. In both cases, it wasn't God's doing.

Is it possible for a man to call another man which is to make it possible for him to understand spiritual truth? No, as we have just read in John 6:44 only God the Father can call men.

Is God calling men through the teachings of men who have falsely appointed themselves as ministers of God? God says that His church is being built by His spirit not by the works of men.

Zerubbabel was overseeing the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the building of the 2nd temple and God spoke to him in a vision.

Zec 4:1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

Zec 4:2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

Zec 4:3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

Zec 4:4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

Zec 4:5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, **but by my spirit**, saith the LORD of hosts.

What is the meaning of the vision? It represents God's church and who is keeping it alive and building it. If we look up the Hebrew word that was translated "candlestick" in Zech 4:2, the Hebrew lexicon tells us that it is referring to a chandelier which is a lighting device which holds candles. However, this translation is misleading as the context of these verses is clearly that what God is talking about here is not a stand for candles but for lamps; it is a lampstand. It is a lampstand which holds 7 lamps burning oil which comes from 2 olive trees on either side of it. There is a bowl on top of the lampstand with each lamp receiving oil from a pipe connected to each bowl; a pipe for each lamp.

This is God showing Zerubbabel and us today that God's Church is not being kept alive and growing by what men do but by the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman represented by the 2 olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand.

The Jews returned to Jerusalem from their captivity under the Persian Empire were building a second temple to God but this physical material temple was not the temple in which God and the Word dwelt. They would dwell in the spiritual temple whose living stones are the truly converted Christians called and chosen by God the Father and taught all things by God the word, and who are remaining faithful.

This is why God tells Zerubbabel and men today who think they are busily building God's church or temple that God's church is being built and maintained in existence by the holy spirits of the Godhead, not by men.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

The Gospel is spiritual truth which can only be believed by those called by

God who is the one who decide who and when someone is to be called. Until called men are hostile to God.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

And, they can't understand spiritual truth.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Is God's ability to call men dependent on what men do? Was God's church dead before the arrival of Mr. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) And, is it dead now that he's dead and the WCG no longer exists? Is the preaching of the Gospel the means used by God to call men to salvation? If so, did the church cease to exist during the centuries of persecution when it was scattered and no one was preaching the Gospel?

Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell [death] shall not prevail against it.

There would always be true Christians continuing God's church as their calling is by the eternal and almighty God not by men. The success of God's plan of salvation does not depend on any man or organizations of men nor does it depend on them preaching the Gospel.

What is Free Moral Agency?

God has decreed that man must be free to choose life or death when it is offered to him.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

In order for man to be able to choose, there must be no other higher power in the universe which can force him to choose something against his will.

This is the free moral agency given man by God.

If there were a power that could force men to choose something against their will then man would not be free to choose and God could not judge man for the evil that he does.

The world —all those not converted — is not under judgment because it has yet to be given the opportunity to choose. Until called by God it is deceived by Satan and doesn't know the true difference between good and evil.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, **which deceiveth the whole world:** he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

This is why judgment can only be upon God's Church who are those who have been given to know the true difference between right and wrong.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

When we are called by God, He sets life and death before us as He had done for ancient Israel and He commands us to choose. (Deu 30:19) We have life if we choose to try to obey Him to the best of our abilities until the end of our lives and if we choose to not follow our calling, then we will be part of those who suffer the second death in the Lake of Fire from which no resurrection is possible. They will be as though they never were.

The Human Spirit

Man was created from the dust of the ground which is dead matter which has no life of its own. What gave life to man, the dust of the ground, is God's breath of life He breathed into the nose of the first man created, Adam. Man then became an air breathing animal. The word "soul" is from the Hebrew word "nephesh" which means, air breathing animal.

Gen 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

This is one of the things the spirit in man or the human spirit does, it gives and maintains the animal life all men have.

Ecc11:5 As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

When God removes this spirit from man, the man dies.

Ecc 8:8 There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

Jas 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The human spirit also gives man's animal brain mind power which no other animal created by God has.

Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

At the time of death, when God the human spirit goes back to God, man returns to being dead matter, dust.

Ecc 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

The spirit in man is not a conscious being that lives in man and which at the time of death retains his consciousness and through which man goes on living in another dimension. It is best understood as being the means used by God to give life and mind power to His creation, man.

God Reproducing Himself

Why did God create mankind? It is in order to reproduce Himself? How can we know for sure?

We read in the Bible that God is a Father and that Christ is His Son. How did these things happen? In the beginning, there was only God and the Word who had existed eternally. Then God created man in their image and after their likeness and made it possible for them to become God beings conditional upon maintaining an attitude of obedience to Them in all things until the end of their natural lives after having been called and chosen

God became a father when He conceived Jesus in Mary's womb. Jesus was the Word made flesh. When born He became God's Son.

God the Father is the holy spirit of the Godhead who spiritually begets men by calling them.

Heb 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

This verse is talking about God the Father and His begotten Son, Christ. To be begotten is to be conceived and to be born is when the begotten child leaves its mother's womb at the time of birth. Being begotten and being born are two different processes; conception first occurs followed several months later by a birth.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten** us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Christians are spiritually begotten by the holy spirit God the Father and their hope or that which they anticipate with pleasure, is to be born as was Christ by a resurrection from the dead to immortal, spirit glorified life. In this life we are only begotten or conceived embryonic spiritual beings; our birth will occur at the time when God the Word resurrects God the Father's spiritually begotten son.

1Jn 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born **[spiritually begotten or conceived]** of God: and every one that loveth him **[God]** that begat loveth him **[his spiritual brother]** also that is begotten of him **[God]**.

1Jn 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God **[by a resurrection from the dead]** sinneth not; but he that is begotten **[spiritually conceived but not yet born]** of God keepeth himself, **[tries not to sin]** and that wicked one toucheth him not.

Once born as a holy spirit God being we will no longer sin but while begotten and not yet born, we remain human and have to use our freewill to keep ourselves from sinning as much as we can.

Rom 8:29 For whom he **[God]** did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be **the firstborn among many brethren**.

Presently, there are only God the Father and God the Word in God's Kingdom but many others are to be added to it at the time of the first and

third resurrections. Christ is the bridegroom (Mark 2:19) and God's Church is the bride (Rev 19:6-8). Those resurrected to glorified spirit life will constitute God's family, nation and kingdom.

Salvation

What is it? What is it that we are being saved from?

The Bible tells us that:

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

All men die because of the sin of Adam.

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man **[Adam]** sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and **so death [the first one] passed upon all men**, for that all have sinned:

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Those who are called and chosen are now being judged.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Those not called since the creation of Adam and Eve until the time of Christ's Second Coming will be judged during the Last Great Day. They will be in the second resurrection where they will live again as flesh-and-blood human beings. They will all be called and given a 100 year lifespan (Isa 65:20) during which to show God whether or not they will obey Him to the best of their abilities until the end of their lives.

The "judgment" is a time period during which the called and chosen will be evaluated. Judgment is also the time when sentence will be passed on those called and chosen.

Judgment both means to evaluate and to sentence. First there must be a time when after having been given to know the truth, God evaluates the person's attitude of obedience as he lives out his life. Then, in the 3rd resurrection of the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day God will pass sentence on them with some being burnt up in the Lake of Fire and some becoming glorified spirit being and part of God's Kingdom.

So, what is salvation? It is being saved from the 2nd death from which no resurrection is possible.

Rev 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh **shall not be hurt of the second death.**

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: **on such the second death hath no power**, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in **the lake which burneth with fire** and brimstone: which **is the second death.**

Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into **the lake of fire.**

The consciousness of those who are not saved will be forever lost. They will be as though they never were.

Mat 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him [God] which is able to destroy both **soul and body** in hell.

In this verse, the words “soul” and “body” have the meaning of “spirit” and “body.” The spirit in man (Job 32:8) goes back to God at the time of death (Ecc 12:7) and the body goes back to being the dust of the ground from which it was formed.

Ecc 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Why does the “spirit in man” go back to God at the time of death?

Because this spirit essence contains a full record of all the man has ever been physically, mentally and spiritually. It will be used by God to resurrect him and all of mankind who has ever existed, some to salvation and some to damnation.

Salvation then means to not suffer the 2nd death from which no resurrection will ever be possible and to become God as God is God. In other words, to have the very same kind of existence as God and the Word, to

be spirit beings in whom dwells immortality and perfect, holy righteous character.

2Pe 3:13 Nevertheless we, [truly converted Christians] according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The righteousness that will dwell in the new heavens and the new earth will be that of God, the Word and all truly converted Christians who were called, chosen and remained faithful until the end of their lives.

That Prophet — the Second Elijah

In the Bible, God tells us that He would raise up a prophet unto Israel similar to Moses.

Deu 18:16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

Deu 18:17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

Deu 18:18 I [God] will raise them [Israel] up a Prophet from among their brethren, [will be an Israelite] like unto thee, [Moses] and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Deu 18:19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken [obey] unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. [He will be held responsible]

God also tells us that He would send Elijah the prophet to the physical nation of Israel before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you [Physical Israel] Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: [The Great White Throne Judgment]

At His Second Coming Christ is coming back to the same nation He came to the first time, physical Israel.

Act 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you

into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Zec 14:4 And his [Christ's] feet shall stand in that day [of His Second Coming] upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

In the book of Acts, we are given more information about the prophet mentioned by Moses which is to come to the physical nation of Israel.

Act 3:19 Repent ye [the Israelites that will hear Jesus (Act 3:20) when He comes to them at His Second Coming] therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; [The Lord, Christ, will then be present among them.]

Act 3:20 And he shall send [to you Israel; Peter here is talking to Israelites not the Gentiles; Acts 3: 11-17 makes it very clear that Peter is talking to members of the physical nation of Israel] Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: [Christ or the Messiah had been preached to them by the prophets and they put Him to death is to be sent back to them, physical Israel, not the world and not to spiritual Israel or God's Church.]

Act 3:21 [Christ] Whom the heaven must receive [who is to remain in heaven] until the times of restitution of all things, [the foundational truths of God's Church that Christ taught the apostles and Paul (1Co 3:10)] which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Act 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, [Deu 18:15] A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you [Moses was talking to the physical nation of Israel] of your brethren, [Christ was an Israelite of the tribe of Judah] like unto me; him shall ye hear [understand] in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Act 3:23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, [man] which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. [Those that refuse to follow the teachings of that prophet will not become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel.]

The restoration of all things to the physical nation of Israel and the making of the New Covenant mark the beginning of the conversion of Israel spoken of by Paul in the 11th chapter of the book of Romans. Their conversion begins with Christ coming to them to complete the 2nd part (3 1/2 years) of his His 7 year ministry (Dan 9:27).

This conversion process will continue during the Millennium and during the Last Great Day for physical Israel and for all those alive during the Millennium. It will also include those who were never called and who will be resurrected to flesh-and-blood existence at the beginning of the Last Great Day where they are given their first chance to be saved. Christ is the Elijah that He told the disciples would come to physical Israel and restore all things which are the truths they refused to accept at His First Coming to their forefathers.

Mr Armstrong restored many truths to God's Church, the spiritual nation of Israel, but he wasn't the promised 2nd Elijah who was to go to physical Israel and restore all things to them not to God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church.

God's Church — The Little Flock

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

It has been preached in the WCG and is preached in many of the religious organizations of this world that it will be a small minority of people who ultimately will not be saved. God, they say, is a God of love, compassion and mercy and not some kind of monster that delights in seeing people lose their salvation. But, what does the Bible tell us about how God is proceeding to make salvation accessible to mankind?

Does the Bible reassure us that all will be saved except a few exceptionally stubborn individuals and that most of us really don't have to worry that much about it?

Here is what God has to say about it.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but **few are chosen.**

And,

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to **destruction, and many there be which go in therat:**

Many are called but are not chosen because they don't follow their calling and, of those who do, it is the many who take the broad way that leads to perdition or loss of salvation.

All will have been called and given an opportunity for salvation before God's plan of salvation for mankind comes to a close in the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day but it is the few that will be saved.

God plan of salvation is to last 7,000 years that all men may be called and given the chance to repent. God's wish is that no one should perish or lose their salvation but repentance (obedience to God) is something they must choose when called and keep on choosing every day of their lives until their death.

2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Since the day of Pentecost, the holy spirit God the Father has been calling men but it is the many who do not follow their calling and who as a result, are not chosen. During the Millennium and the Last Great Day, all will be called, and if we will believe Christ, it is the few that will choose to follow their calling.

It is not a very encouraging or feel-good message but a rather grave warning to those being called. It is their first and only chance to be saved; if they don't follow their calling, they lose their salvation as God will not call them a second time. Why should He? They've already indicated that they prefer the temporary pleasures of this world to eternal life. A second calling would not cause them to change their minds.

God's sons are rather to choose to patiently endure affliction for a time than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Heb 11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Those called and chosen, in this life, eagerly look forward to the much grater reward that will theirs at the time of their resurrection as sons of God.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit [[the holy spirit God the Word](#)] itself beareth witness with our spirit, [[the spirit in man](#)] that we are the children of God:

Rom 8:17 And if children, then heirs; [we are to inherit] heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Rom 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rom 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature [true Christians are a new creation or creature in Christ] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. [Eagerly await their change from flesh-and-blood to glorified, immortal spirit beings as born sons of God the Father who begat them.]

What about those who follow their calling? Is their salvation assured? Do they all or most of them remain faithful to their engagement to obey God in all things to the best of their abilities?

Mat 7:13 Enter ye [God the Father's called and chosen ones] in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

The many chose the broad way, the wide gate which leads to destruction because it is something that is easy to do. They choose the way of compromise with the world thinking they can keep a foot in the church and a foot in the world and still become part of God's kingdom.

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The way to salvation requires constant effort to resist the sin in our lives, to grow in knowledge and understanding of God's spiritual truths by regular and attentive study of God's word, the holy Bible, to stop associating with friends and frequenting places that lead us to sin and to basically change our lives as much as we can for us to better be able to obey God.

The easy way of compromise is chosen by the many and God tells us plainly that it is not possible to serve 2 masters.

Mat 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

And in Mat 7:13 Christ tells us that those who chose the way of compromise with the world's ways lose their salvation.

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereto:

They gradually drift back further and further into the world until they are fully back into it as they were before being called. Mammon wins out every time.

This is why Christ said to His disciples that true believers and Christians like them would be a little flock hated and persecuted by the world whenever it comes to its attention.

They felt alone and insecure and maybe a bit scared but Christ reassured them that though they are few and hated by the world, they are the ones to whom God the Father will give His Kingdom.

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Repentance

In most religious people's mind, the word "repentance" only has one meaning and that is turning away from sin and wanting to obey God. However, there are verses in the Bible where we find God "repenting."

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Was God repenting because He had sinned? But, God cannot sin

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

1Jn 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God [by a resurrection from the dead] sinneth not; but he that is begotten [not yet born] of God keepeth himself, [tries to restrain himself as best he can from sinning] and that wicked one toucheth him not.

1Jn 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, [sinless] and in him is no darkness [sin] at all.

So, when God repented it was not because He had committed a sin. This means that the word "repent" means something else in these verses. In

Gen 6:6, the word “repent” means that God was sorry He had created mankind given it so much more easily was evil than good.

1Sa 15:35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the **LORD repented** that he had made Saul king over Israel.

In this verse, the word “repent” is also referring to God being sorry for something He had done and that is having made Saul King of Israel.

1Ch 21:15 And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, **the LORD beheld**, and **he repented him of the evil**, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

In this verse, God’s repentance was to not let the angel He had sent to Jerusalem, to continue destroying it. He stopped it, before Jerusalem was fully destroyed. God repented of His intention to fully destroy Jerusalem.

Jon 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and **God repented of the evil**, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

God sent Jonah to Nineveh to give them a warning message that if they didn’t stop (repent) from doing certain things (we are not told what they were) that He would destroy them. Nineveh repented, they stopped doing what it was God disliked and God, repented of the evil He would do to them which is that He did not go through with his intention of destroying the city.

When Nineveh repented they did not become converted Christians. The holy spirit God the Father could not start calling men to salvation until the holy spirit God the Word had died after having become a man for the remission of the sins of mankind.

Mat 21:29 **He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.**

In this verse, we have Christ talking about 2 sons (the parable of the two sons). One was asked by his father to go work in his vineyard and said he wouldn’t and the other said he would. The one who said he would, didn’t go and the one who said he wouldn’t go, changed his mind and went.

So Christ asks the chief priests and elders of the people, the religious elite of the day who opposed Him, which one of the two sons obeyed his father? The one who went to work in the field after having said he wouldn't go is the one who obeyed him.

The son's repentance was that he changed his mind and went to work in the vineyard even though he had initially said he would not. He hadn't committed any sin, he simply changed his mind about something that whether he did it or not, was not sin.

Luk 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentence.

In this verse, we come to the generally understood meaning of what is repentance and that is deciding to stop doing something which is sinful. Sin is breaking God's law.

Act 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give [repentance](#) to Israel, and for-giveness of sins.

Christ was glorified by God the Father and now sits on the throne of God at His right hand. He will be sent at His Second Coming to make it possible for Israel to repent and upon repentance for their sins to be forgiven. Those that repent then become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church.

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentence.

Here the word "repentance" is used to mean that God will not change His mind about giving immortality to those He calls who follow their calling and remain faithful.

Heb 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentence; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Here the word "repentance" is used to mean that it is impossible for someone who did not follow their calling or who followed it and then left it, for that person's spiritual blindness ever to be removed again. They have irretrievably lost their salvation.

Ezekiel Warning Message

Ezekiel was sent to Old Testament Israel as clearly stated in the following Scriptures:

Eze 1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

Ezekiel was with Israel which was in captivity under the Persian Empire.

Eze 3:11 And go, get thee [Ezekiel] to them of the captivity, [Israel in captivity under the Persian Empire] unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

Those with whom Ezekiel was in captivity, were the tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah (the Southern Kingdom). The 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom had gone into captivity under the Assyrian Empire some 100 years before the Southern Kingdom and to this day, they are lost to the world.

They are scattered among the Gentile nations, living as Gentiles.

Ezekiel was charged by God to give a warning to [Israel, the Southern Kingdom, in captivity](#) not to a nation of Israel that would exist far in the future. God stirred up the spirit of the King of Persia to let those captives who wanted to, to go back to Jerusalem.

2Ch 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, [the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia](#), that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2Ch 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and [he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah](#). Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and [let him go up](#).

The three tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah making up the Southern Kingdom came to be known as the Jews. Ezekiel gave them the following warning while they were in captivity.

Eze 5:1 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair.

Eze 5:2 Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the [siege](#) are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

Eze 5:3 Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts.

Eze 5:4 Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

Eze 5:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; [This is Jerusalem](#): I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.

Eze 5:6 And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them.

Eze 5:7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you;

Eze 5:8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

Eze 5:9 And I will do in thee [[Israel](#)] that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, [[unto you](#)] because of all thine abominations. [\[Sabbath breaking and idol worshiping \(Ezekiel 20:24\)\]](#)

Eze 20:23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that [I would scatter them among the heathen](#), and disperse them [through the countries](#);

Eze 20:24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.

Following the proclamation made by King Cyrus, some of captives of the Southern Kingdom went back and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and built a second temple. How can we know that those members of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) who were allowed to go back to Jerusalem are Israel? All we need to do is look at what the Bible says. Here are a number of verses where those returned to Jerusalem from their Persian captivity are called Israel.

Mat 2:19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

Mat 2:20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the **land of Israel**: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

Mat 2:21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the **land of Israel**.

Mat 8:10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, **Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

Mat 9:33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in **Israel**.

Act 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

These verses show that Ezekiel's warning message was to the tribes of the Southern Kingdom in captivity under the Persians (Eze 3:11). Once reestablished in the land of Israel, those who came back from captivity are referred to by Christ and Peter, the chief apostle as being Israel even though they are only a part of Israel.

Eze 3:11 And go, **get thee to them of the captivity**, unto **the children of thy people**, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

But there is a time coming when God will restore all of Israel to the Promised Land. The 12 tribes of Israel (13 if we count the 2 sons of Joseph adopted by Israel (Jacob)). Joseph then represents 2 tribes. Presently there are only 3 tribes of Israel living in the original Promised Land. The other 10 remain scattered across the nations as well as many members of the 3 tribes (Benjamin, Levi and Judah) collectively known as the Jews who are not all living in the modern-day nation of Israel.

Eze 20:33 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you:

Eze 20:34 And I will bring you out from the people, and **will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered**, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. **[Not on Israel but on their captors]**

Eze 20:35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.

Eze 20:36 Like **as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt**, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 20:37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, **[to become subject to the law]** and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: **[the New Covenant]**

Eze 20:38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD

A very important point to note here is that Joseph's 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh did inherit the blessings given them by Israel but though being part of Israel, they are not all of Israel (13 tribes). When God restores Israel at the time of Christ's 2nd Coming, Ephraim and Manasseh will be only 2 of the tribes of Israel which will be restored to the original Promised Land. Though having become great and powerful nations they do not constitute the entirety of the OT nation of Israel that God will restore to the land of Israel, there's 11 other tribes that also need to be restored.

They and the descendants of the other tribes of Israel will be gathered from the nations where they have been scattered since the time they went into captivity in OT times and restored to the land of Israel by Christ at His 2nd Coming. The 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom are still scat-

tered and so are many of the members of the Southern Kingdom; they have yet to be restored to the land of Israel.

No Warning to be Given to Modern Day Israel

All the tribes of Israel, along with the whole world, will experience the worldwide disasters that will occur during the Great Tribulation. God is not bringing about these disasters because people or a specific nation are not converted; no, It is simply because God is angry as He was at the time of the Deluge with this difference that this time He will not destroy all of mankind except a specially chosen family, Noah's.

God's wrath is not punishment on the nations of the world because they are unconverted. And, it is certainly not punishment specifically on any of the current day descendants of ancient Israel because they have not responded to a warning message that was supposedly to be given to them by an organization of men claiming to have an Ezekiel warning type message for them.

It is a complete misunderstanding of the Scriptures to believe Ezekiel's warning message to ancient Israel is to be delivered to the present day descendants of the OT nation of Israel.

Whether or not a warning is given to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh (assuming it is necessary to do so) or not, it will make absolutely no difference as the Great Tribulation will occur anyway. It is God's wrath upon the nations of the world not just Israel.

Many will die in the Great Tribulation but God will call them all at the time of the second resurrection at the beginning of the Last Great Day. Those dying during the Great Tribulation are not forever lost.

Kings and Priests Reigning on the Earth

It was taught by HWA that after Christ's Second Coming, God's resurrected saints would with Christ, take over the nations of this world and conduct a vast, worldwide reeducation campaign to teach the true values of life to the world. It was considered that just about everyone except a few really stubborn individuals would become converted during the Millennium. This new worldwide government headed up by Christ assisted by His resurrected saints and the conversion of just about everyone then alive would make the Millennium a time of peace, prosperity, safety, abundance and joy such as the world has never seen and which it could never achieve by its own means while cut off from God.

However, Christ clearly tells us that although many are called, few are chosen.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

And, of the few chosen it is the few of them who remains faithful.

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therat:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The called and chosen overwhelmingly choose the broad way that leads to destruction or loss of salvation.

This doesn't make for a lot of people being converted during the Millennium and God tells us clearly that He can only reign over those who self-willingly choose to obey Him when they are called.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led [not forced] by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Therefore, God nor His resurrected saints will be ruling over the nations and people of this world during the Millennium as though all will have been called, it is the few that will follow their calling and of those who do, it is the few that will remain converted.

So, when is Rev 5:10 to happen?

Rev 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Old Testament Israel was to become God's holy nation and kingdom of priests if it would have obeyed God.

Exo 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

But Israel could not obey God because the Old Covenant did not include their being given access to the holy spirits of the Godhead, God and God the Word. On the day of Pentecost, God opened up salvation to the Gentile nations of the world. Those who were called, chosen and faithful

became part of God's kingdom of priests and holy nation in embryo; conceived or begotten but not yet born.

The New Covenant that is to be made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah is already being made with the Gentile nations since the day of Pentecost.

Jer 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

The making of this new covenant will be the beginning of the conversion of Israel which will continue along with that of the Gentiles during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

This conversion process will start with Christ's 2nd Coming to the descendants of the physical nation of Israel whom Christ will have gathered from the nations where they had been scattered and resettled in the original Promised Land.

It will be the time of restitution of all things.

Act 3:21 Whom [Christ] the heaven must receive until the [times of restitution of all things](#), which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Christ is to remain in heaven until the time comes for Him to come back to Israel to restore all things to them as a first step in making the New Covenant with them.

Act 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, [\[of the nation of Israel\]](#) A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, [\[will be an Israelite\]](#) like unto me; [\[Moses\]](#) him shall ye hear [\[understand\]](#) in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Christ was of the tribe of Judah and is the prophet that will come to Israel returned to the Promised Land and who will restore all things to them. His ministry is to last 3 1/2 years.

Dan 9:27 And he [\[Christ\]](#) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

There is another 3 1/2 year of Christ's ministry to Israel that needs to be carried out in fulfillment of Dan 9:27. His ministry was to last 7 years but it was cut off after 3 1/2 year when He died on the stake.

The Israelites who enter into the New Covenant become part of God's kingdom of priests and holy nation in embryo; spiritually conceived but still to be born again by a resurrection from the dead.

God's faithful saints from Adam and Eve to the Great White Throne Judgment will be resurrected as immortal spirit beings and become God's born kingdom of priests and holy nation at the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind.

Rev 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

After the Great White Throne Judgment, God creates a new heaven and a new earth and the saints of the most high will rule over the new earth and the new heaven.

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The ancient physical nation of Israel must become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel to rule over the new heaven and the new earth.

What is Prophesying?

In the Bible, Christians are told to not despise prophesying and even to covet to prophesy.

1Th 5:20 Despise not prophesying.

1Co 14:39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

Why, isn't it only specially chosen men of God who can prophesy? Why is Paul telling Christians to prophesy?

The answer lies in understanding what it means to be a prophet. In most people's minds, the words "prophet" and "prophesy" have only one pos-

sible meaning. It is someone who has been given knowledge of future events by God and who is to give this information to others as directed by God.

This is but one of the meanings of the word “prophet.” Let’s see what is the basic meaning of the word. In the book of Nehemiah we read about the walls of Jerusalem being rebuilt and a new temple being built. There were some in the land who opposed the rebuilding being done and through different means sought to have the work stopped.

One of the things they did was to accuse the Jews of wanting to rebel against the king in the hope that the king would order Nehemiah to stop the rebuilding work.

Neh 6:6 Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou [Nehemiah] and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause [and this is why] thou buildest the wall, [of Jerusalem] that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

And, moreover, they accused Nehemiah of having appointed prophets to preach in Jerusalem that there is a king in Judah.

Neh 6:7 And thou [Nehemiah] hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

By saying these things, they were hoping to provoke Nehemiah to go to them and they would then kill him.

The point of interest here is that Nehemiah was accused of appointing prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem that there is a king in Judah. So, here we have a man who is accused of using other men to give out a message on his behalf which the Bible calls prophets.

Basically, a prophet is a man speaking on behalf of another man and transmitting a message given him by that man to another person or to a group of persons. The message in this case was not religious, it was not about future events and the prophet in this instance is a man appointed by another man, not God.

So, we can have prophets appointed by God with a message from God to be given to a man or a group of men as was the case by the

prophets used by God in the Old Testament. But, individual Christians can also prophesy.

Truly converted Christians are being taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to God the Father's called and chosen ones as they study God's holy Bible their only sure source of truth.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I [Christ] have said unto you.

As they study their Bible, Christians are given understanding of the many and different truths of the Bible but each Christian is not given understanding of the very same truths as those given to others.

This is why, God commands Christians to prophesy and even to covet to prophesy which is to have a very strong desire to do so.

1Co 14:39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

When a Christian prophesies, he is sharing with other true Christians, truth he has discovered through his studying the Bible. In doing so, he is speaking to them on behalf of God and he is fellowshipping with the Father and his son Jesus-Christ.

1Jn 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

John had been taught by Christ and when he was teaching he was transmitting to them the truth given him on behalf of Christ or God. In doing so he was having fellowship with them and with the Father and his son Jesus-Christ who dwelt in them and in him.

The true fellowship of Christians is with God and His son as they are the ones who provides Christians with understanding of the spiritual truths of the Bible.

When Christians come together and share in an orderly fashion, among themselves the different truths given them by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman, they are prophesying. They are speaking to each other on behalf of God the truth He gave them through their study of the Bible.

This is what Paul was talking about in 1 Cor 14: 26-40. It was something he wanted them to do and insisted they should do.

1Co 4:39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

Through well ordered discussions among true Christians they could check out the validity of their Bible study findings. Sometimes, their findings would be confirmed, sometimes it would be necessary to study more into the matter, and sometimes, some findings would be found to be incorrect and, always, by comparison with the Bible; not based on individual convictions.

All Christians are to prophesy which is that they must have spiritual fellowship with other truly converted Christians.

When is Self-Righteousness Sin?

There is an almost universal belief that self-righteousness is sinful.

Is it possible to be self-righteous and not sin?

What does it mean to be self-righteous?

The basic meaning of the word is that when discussing a matter with another person, one or both of the individuals, are of the opinion that he is right and the other is wrong in what they are saying. Both are then being self-righteous.

When I disagree with another person's point of view, I am being self-righteous in that I am saying I, self, is right and you are not. There is no sin involved in disagreeing with another man.

Sin only occurs when we personally disagree with God. This would occur when we say to God that it is wrong for Him to say that the Sabbath day is only the 7th day of the week and that rather any day of the week can be considered to be the Sabbath. We are then disagreeing with God on a plain and clear Bible teaching. We then say we are right and God is wrong. Our self-righteousness then becomes sin as we are then disagreeing with God and not with just another man.

Tithing in New Testament Times

When it comes to tithing, the ministry of the several "true" churches of God in existence today are firmly of the opinion and thoroughly convinced that tithing is a requirement for New Testament Christians.

The first, second and third tithes as requirements for NT Christians is something that originated with the Worldwide Church of God and that is listed as part of the 18th truths restored to God's Church. When any discussion arises about tithing, the response varies from "it has always existed" to being "a subject which is best left undiscussed" with a lot of unchristian push back on anyone daring to disagree with the practice.

Christians have to be led by the truth as found in the Bible and not in accordance with the desires of men who were appointed as ministers by an organization of men who gave itself the authority to appoint men ministers.

Ancient Israel was never asked to pay a first tithe which would have consisted of their giving the Levites a 10th of the yearly increase of their fields, flocks and vineyards. The Levites were sustained by God's part of the offerings commanded under the law of offerings which was not a command to tithe. They were given no part in the Promised Land. They had no land to raise animals, plant crops, have vineyards, etc.

Israel was commanded to make several different types of offerings. There were trespass offerings, drink offerings, fellowship offerings, etc. All of these offerings were brought to the levitical priests (Aaron and his sons) who made the offerings to God on behalf of the people.

Aaron took a 10th part of the offering and heaved it before God to be accepted by Him. The part of the sacrifice used to make the heave offering was given to Aaron and his sons; it was God's part. The other parts of the offering which were not to be burnt outside the camp was for the other Levites who were not priests. Not every part of the animals sacrificed were kept for the Levites to consume.

Israel was commanded to make offerings and God's part was a tenth of the offering which He gave to Aaron and his sons. God's part was not a tenth of the yearly increase of the flocks, herds and fields of the Israelites.

There was no first tithe commanded by God where each Israelite had to give on a regular basis to the Levites a 10th of their flocks, herds, fields, etc. What God commanded were the making of offerings which were not in any way a tithe of Israelites increase of their flocks, herds, fields, etc.

Israel did however have to save up a tithe for their attendance to God's annual holy days (the 2nd tithe) and every third year, they were to accumulate a third tithe which they were to share with the Levites, the widows, the orphans and the strangers within their gates; not with the needy or the poor.

Neither the 2nd nor the 3rd tithe were administered by the Levites. The 2nd tithe was for feast attendance but also had to be shared with the Levites. (Deu 14: 26-27) The third tithe was to be shared with the Levites, the widows, the orphans and the strangers within their gates. (Deu 14: 28-29)

This is quite different from the way things are done in the many “true” churches of God. They all insist that there is a first tithe that all members of their organization have to pay and they say that the 3rd tithe is for the needy or the poor. However, the Bible says it is for the Levites, the widows, the orphans and the strangers within their gates.

The first and third tithes are centrally administered by a headquarters group who decides how the money is to be spent and which ones of their members are eligible to receive 3rd tithe money. The third tithe was definitely not centrally administered in OT Israel. There were 12 tribes and the members of each of the tribes were responsible for the widows, orphans, strangers within their gates and to share it with the Levites.

The Levites were cut off from owning land in the Promised Land and therefore had no means of subsistence. In NT times, true ministers of the first century church of God were self-supporting or were provided with food and shelter by those called by God when they traveled.

The disciples were chosen by Christ and they, who had the truth Christ taught them, appointed men to be ministers; men who had access to the same truth the disciples were given. Some 2,000 years after Christ, there is no one on this earth who can honestly say he has the knowledge given the disciples. All men find themselves facing the very same requirement. All have to be, and can only be, students of the Bible. No man has absolute truth which no one can question which he would have received in a vision or in a dream. There exists no group of teachers or priesthood who have been given knowledge and understanding of the Bible that is above and beyond what is given to each and every members of God's church. God's truth is made available to every member of God's Church through the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who teaches them all things.

So, is there a ministry of men today who have “the truth” that everyone is to believe? The answer is that there are no such men.

God's Church — A Spiritual Organization

Mr. Armstrong often said that God's church was first and foremost a spiritual organism, not an organization set up according to the administrative, financial and legal requirements established for the creation of corporations such as businesses of different types engaged in marketing and selling products and services.

Many have heard it said and agree that God's Church is a spiritual organization or organism but not very many seem to know the difference and how this difference would manifest itself in practical terms.

So, let's see how God's NT church is a spiritual organization or organism.

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Those called and chosen by God all over the nations of this world are God's royal priesthood and holy nation in embryo to be born by a resurrection from the dead as kings and priests in God's Kingdom.

1Pe 2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

God's called and chosen ones come from the many different nations of the world. They don't constitute a nation as the world defines a nation. They don't all live in the same geographical location, speak various languages, have different national identities (Italian, Norwegian, German, etc.) and have different traditions and customs. But when called and chosen by God they become a nation, God's nation. They are not linked together by language, customs, traditions or geographical location. What they have in common is having been called and chosen and having become sons of God in embryo that are to inherit God's Kingdom in the resurrection.

The links between them are spiritual, not physical.

As God's priests what is their offerings to God.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present **your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

What does that mean in practical terms?

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, **that henceforth we should not serve sin.**

Christians died **spiritually** speaking to their old body of sin.

Rom 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life.**

They are raised up from their dead body of sin to live a new life where they seek to obey God.

1Pe 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

God the Father's called and chosen ones are the living stones of God's **spiritual** house, not a physical temple.

1Co 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

They are the **spiritual** temple in which God dwells.

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

God is the one doing the work of building His called and chosen ones.

Their calling is and can only be by God the Father. (**A spirit being**)

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

And, God's called and chosen ones are taught all things by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman (**another spirit being**) as they study God's word, the holy Bible.

Joh14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Their great high priest is the resurrected Christ.

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

And their one and only mediator between them and God is Christ Jesus.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

Finally, Zechariah was given a vision about God's spiritual nation of Israel or His church regarding by what power it is being built

Zec 4:1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

Zechariah is seeing a vision with a particular message from God which pertains to God's New Testament church.

Zec 4:2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

The seven lamps represent the 7 eras of God's Church.

Zec 4:3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

The 2 olive trees represent God the Father and God the Word by whose power God's church is kept alive.

Zec 4:4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

Zec 4:5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Zerubbabel has been involved in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and in building a new temple to God. God gives him a vision in which he is saying that His temple, the one whose living stones are His called and chosen ones, is not being built by the might of men but by His spirit.

1Co 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

1Co 1:28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

1Co 1:29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

God's called and chosen ones for the greatest part are the little people of this world. They are not the rich, powerful and influential men of the world. Yet God's church will continue uninterrupted through the centuries until the completion of God's plan of salvation not because of the power of any man or group of men but by His spirit.

Christians' fellowship is with God the Father and with God the Word, their source of truth is God's holy Bible and their teacher is the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

This is what it means for God's church to be a spiritual organization. It is being sustained, built and grown by the power of the holy spirits of the Godhead. Its continued existence and the success of God's plan of salvation for mankind does not depend on any man or any organization of men.

What is Imputation?

In the Bible we read about a process called imputation.

Psa 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

What does it mean to impute something to someone?

Basically, it means to ascribe or assign a given state or characteristics to someone who does not necessarily have it.

For example, I could say that I consider a certain man to be honest. I

am then ascribing or assigning a characteristic to that person which may be more or less true. I don't know that the person is perfectly honest but as far as I am concerned, I consider him to be honest. In doing so, I have imputed honesty to someone.

When it comes to God not imputing sin it means that even though it is impossible for a Christian to not sin, that there will always be sin in their lives despite their most sincere desire not to sin, God, can choose not to impute sin to them. Because of their attitude of obedience to Him in all things to the best of their abilities, He does not take into account, any sin they commit because of the weakness or infirmity of their flesh.

Psa 103:10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Psa 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. **[Those whose attitude it is to obey Him as best they can]**

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. **[Though we continue to be sinners, God does not take our sins into account; he doesn't impute sin to us.]**

Psa 103:13 Like as a father pitith his children, so the LORD pitith them that fear him. **[Those who fear Him are those who are trying to obey as best they can.]**

Psa 103:14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. **[God knows that we don't have the strength to always resist sin, that we are dust.]**

Psa 103:15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

Psa 103:16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Man's existence is like the grass and the flowers of the fields. It is short and after death, they are forgotten as though they never were.

Psa 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

God's mercy is without limits for all those whose attitude is to try to obey Him the best they can in all things; it is from everlasting to everlasting.

Psa 103:18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

A practical and easy to understand example of God's mercy and of the process of imputation can be found in how parent treat their children.

Children as they grow up have to learn and master many skills which they do not possess from birth. Eating with forks, knives and spoons is something that has to be learned. If a child while learning to use these things makes a mistake and let's say, drops his spoon or fork on the floor, the parent doesn't punish the child, he simply gives him another spoon as he knows he didn't on purpose throw the spoon on the floor but simply dropped it from a lack of skill. The parent acts as though the spoon was never dropped.

It's the same process with God who doesn't take into account the sins we commit because of the weakness of our flesh as opposed to sins we would commit in rebellion against Him which would be like a child, on purpose, throwing his spoon on the floor.

This is what it means when in Ps 32:2 it says the LORD doesn't impute iniquity or sin.

Psa 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Not only does God not impute sin to those whose attitude it is to try to obey as best they can in all things, He imputes to them Christ's perfect holy righteous character which is what saves them. To be sinless is to have Christ's perfect holy righteous character who was also sinless.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

God imputes Christ's righteousness to us but we don't actually have it; we do not as a result become perfect in our obedience to God. But that's not what matters or what God expects of us. What matters is that in God's eyes, we are sinless. God is the one that has the power to save us and if He decides not to take into account our sins, so it is as there is no higher power in the universe that can force Him not to do so.

God's Government in God's Church

In organizations of men calling themselves churches of God there has been a tendency to see God's government as being that church members had to obey the Pastor General. If not, then members were said to have a government problem. The Pastors Generals saw themselves as being the embodiment of and the perfect representatives of God's government to the members of their organizations.

What is God's government in God's Church? Is it being in submission to men calling themselves Pastors General? Does God govern His church through fallible and imperfect men subject to the lusts of the flesh and of the mind?

This particular way of thinking is based on understanding God's church as being an organization of men headed up by a man, which it is not. We'll explain why in the following paragraphs.

What happens when someone is called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Father? Ez 36 quoted below, is about the time when God will call Israel to conversion after He has gathered them from the countries where they had been scattered.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

God gives all new converts a new heart or mind. When God calls men, He gives them the ability to know and understand spiritual truth which before he had always rejected.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

For those who follow their calling, the holy spirit God the Word will come into them and teach them all things. The holy spirit God the Father's called

and chosen ones will then have an attitude of wanting to obey God in all things as much as it is humanly possible for them to do so.

Eze 36:28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Those that enter into the New Covenant that is to be made with Israel following Christ's Second Coming to Israel will become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel which began on the day of Pentecost and they will dwell in the original Promised Land.

The point of interest to us is given us in Ez 36:26-27 where God says He will give them a new mind or heart as the Bible states it. This new mind will be one that is receptive to the truth the holy spirit God the Word will teach them and they will want to follow it as best they can.

Once converted, they come under God's government which is their being in submission to God's law which is in their minds as God reveals more and more of it to them as they study their Bible. Their changed attitude of mind has gone from one of rejecting God's truth to one of wanting to obey God as much as they can. Their standard for doing so is not being in submission to any man but to God's law as it is revealed to them.

God's government is by God's law in the mind of God's called and chosen ones. The truly converted are under no obligation to be in submission to any man or organizations of men.

Why Lucifer, Angels and Men Sin

The Bible tells us that the spirit beings and mankind created by God can sin. Lucifer and the angels placed with him on the earth sinned when they sought to overthrow God on the throne of the universe. Lucifer then became Satan and the angels that sinned became devils. Mankind created by God also sinned. Adam and Eve chose to determine good and evil on their own rather than trusting God to do it for them ignoring God's warning that if they were to do so, they would surely die.

Gen 3:3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

1Ti 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Adam is responsible for sin having come into the world because he was not deceived by the serpent but Eve was.

Adam failed to lead His wife as it was his duty as he was married to Eve.

Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Christians are to submit themselves to each other in the ways described by God in Eph 5 out of a desire to obey (fear) God who tells us that this is what must be done.

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

What makes it possible for a being created by God to sin?

The 2 following factors are needed: mind power and the absolute freedom to choose.

Of all the animals created by God, only man can sin. All other animals don't have mind powers nor the freedom to choose. All their actions are governed by instinct. Animals live by reacting to different stimuli in their environment that prompts them to eat, sleep, flee, reproduce, etc. They cannot act in ways different from their instinct even if doing so would save their lives.

Animals cannot sin not being able to deviate from the limited range of reactions available to them in different situations. They cannot make conscious decisions to choose one course of action over another as this requires mind power.

Giving mind power and the freedom to choose to spirit beings and man was a risky thing to do as it was impossible for God to know ahead of time whether these powers would be used for good or evil.

Why did spirit beings sin and why do men sin?

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his **own** lust, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Jas 1:16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

2Pe 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through **lust**.

1Jn 2:16 For all that is in the world, the **lust** of the flesh, and the **lust** of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Lust is made possible by mind power and free will; without them, man would be an animal unable to sin like all the other created by God. Our behaviors are not limited by instinct.

Additionally, men's mind have a logical and an emotional component to them. Emotions is the crazy aunt who lives rent free in our minds and who influences most if not all the decisions that we make. It is the cause of most of the bad decisions we make. Pride, anger, hate, love, etc. are very strong emotions that can and do at times overwhelm the objections of our logical mind and cause us to do things we would never have done otherwise.

Spirit beings created by God sinned because of their own lust. In their case, it was lust for power, the power of God as ruler of the universe.

Adam and Eve sinned because of their own lust. Eve wanted to be like God deciding good and evil for herself and Adam, feared displeasing his wife and also took of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In all these cases, unrestrained emotions made it possible for the objections of their logical mind to be ignored and to not take into account the sure penalty from God that would result.

Lucifer became Satan, the angels who followed him became devils and will forever be prevented from participating in the government of the universe under God's authority. Adam and Eve and all their human descendants would surely die as God said they would.

Lucifer and his angels, and Adam and Eve were given a clear and strong

warning of what would happen to them if they disobeyed. Knowing the severity of their punishment, there was a very strong incentive for them to obey. But, they failed to restrain their emotions, gave in to their lust for power and sinned.

Men sin because of the lust of their bodies and minds that need to be restrained by constant effort and vigilance.

Men do not sin because of Satan forcing them to do so. All that Satan can do is influence men's minds, not control them. If Satan could control men's minds, men could not be held responsible by God for sinning.

God's Little Flock

In the Bible we read of Christ referring to His Church as being the "little flock."

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Why wouldn't it be big?

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

God would call many to salvation and even, during the Millennium and the Last Great Day, He would call everyone that has ever lived since the creation of Adam and Eve. However, though all of mankind will be called, it is the few that will be chosen-as most will not follow their calling and choose to remain in the world out of which they are being called.

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therewith:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

And, of the few who are called and follow their calling, it is the many that take the broad way that leads to destruction or the loss of salvation.

In all likelihood, there will be thousands and possibly hundreds of thousands who will be saved but as compared to the billions of individuals that will have existed by the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind, it will be the few.

Baptism and the Laying On of Hands

Is it impossible for the holy spirit God the Father to call men and for the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to teach all things to the Father's called and chosen if they have not been baptized and have not had hands imposed on them?

What about those times in the history of God's one true Church when there were no true ministers of God as during the centuries of persecution that came upon true Christians where many died and the survivors had to flee into the wilderness to save their lives?

Did there then exist highly visible buildings with steeples with a cross on them signaling this is where the church met and where those who wanted to become part of it were to go? Or, is God's Church invisible to the world with its members walking unknown among the unconverted of this world and also, most of the time, unknown to each other.

Conversion occurs in the mind, a change of attitude from one being hostile in all ways to God to one of wanting to try to obey Him as best we can in all things. Is this changed attitude visible to others? Can you pick out in a crowd who are the truly converted Christians. If you are being honest, you know you can't and it has always been that way.

If Christians don't know who are their fellow Christians, is it possible to visualize God's Church as being a large group of people or groups of people organized according to the standards of this world with a man heading it up who is its spiritual leader who establishes what is to be taught to church members with subordinate ministers whose responsibility it is to teach the truth placed in the church by its spiritual leader?

Does God the Father call men by advertisements placed on the Internet, through social media or maybe through newspaper ads? If so, how did He call them when none of these things existed. Does he call men to salvation by leading them to find groups of people advertising themselves as being God's Church of which there are several of them in our days? In the past, the words "church of God" were not in common use but just about every false church would say it was God's true church as do the many religious groups of this world.

Is God's ability to carry out His plan of salvation for mankind dependent on the existence of organizations of men who call themselves God's Church but who hold services separately because they don't all teach the same things and are unwilling to change or even make any effort to unite?

Is God's church divided?

1Co 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

They should all have been believing the truth Paul taught them and not begin to believe what other men in their congregations were teaching.

1Co 1:11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

Paul could not be with all the congregations and what he knew about them was from reports he would receive from some of the members. In this case, Paul had been informed by those meeting in the house of Chloe that there were debates among them as to who was preaching the truth and what was the truth.

1Co 1:12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

Some agreed with Paul, some were following Apollos, others Cephas and others still, Christ. So, Paul says the following to them.

1Co 1:13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

Today some follow different groups calling themselves churches of God who don't preach nor believe the same things.

1Co 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

1Co 1:15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

Given their state of mind, Paul says he's thankful he didn't baptize none of them except Crispus because then if he had baptized more of them, they would have been saying they were of Paul which would have been one more division.

God's Church is not and cannot be divided in what it believes. Paul had been taught by Christ and what he taught was the truth given him by Christ Himself.

Now regarding baptism and the laying on of hands, at the beginning of God's Church, there was a false prophet who wanted the power to lay hands on people and have them receive the holy spirit.

Act 8:9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city **used sorcery**, and bewitched the people of Samaria, **giving out that himself was some great one**:

Simon the sorcerer was one of many false prophets who had people following him because he had succeeded in making them think he was some great person of God.

Act 8:10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, **This man is the great power of God**.

The people of Samaria all thought he was a man who represented the great power of God.

Act 8:11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

Act 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

The people of Samaria then turned over to the truth of God preached by Philip and not only them but Simon himself also believed and was baptized.

Act 8:13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

He followed Philip and was amazed by the miracles and signs which he did.

Act 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

Act 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

Act 8:16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Act 8:17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Peter and John prayed for the baptized that they should receive the holy spirit and laid hands on them and they received the holy spirit.

Act 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Act 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Simon wanted the power that the apostles Peter and John had and tried to buy it from them thinking it was something that could be bought.

Act 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that **the gift of God** may be purchased with money.

Act 8:21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

The power to lay hands on the baptized and have them receive the holy spirit is a "gift" from God and it was given to the apostles.

Let's look at some more Scriptures.

Act 6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

Act 6:2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

Act 6:3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

Act 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Act 6:5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they

chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

Act 6:6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

These members of God's Church were appointed deacon by the apostles to help out with providing services to the Grecian widows. Note that it was the apostles who laid hands on them; not anyone else.

Let's continue our review of Bible verses where we find mentioned baptism and/or the laying on of hands.

Act 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Act 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and **Saul** for the work whereunto I have called them.

Act 13:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

In these verses, we have the members of the church that was in Antioch laying hands on Barnabas and Saul who were tasked with going to Cyprus.

Act 13:4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Act 13:5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

This time the purpose for the laying on of hands was not for the holy spirit to be given to Saul and Barnabas, it was to send them on their way. It was similar to wishing someone good luck who is embarking on a mission or one kind or another.

The individual identified as Saul in Act 13:2 is Paul the apostle as made evident in Act 13:9 -11.

Act 13:9 Then [Saul, \(who also is called Paul\)](#), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

Act 13:10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Act 13:11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

In the following verses of Act 19, it is brought to our attention that there are more than one type of baptism.

Act 19:1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

Act 19:2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Act 19:3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto [John's baptism](#).

Act 19:4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Act 19:5 When they heard this, they [were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus](#).

They were baptized a second time by Paul but this time it was in the name of the Lord Jesus. Apparently, this is the baptism which was to be used after the death of John the Baptist.

Act 19:6 And when Paul had [laid his hands upon them](#), the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

This is an interesting Scriptures. When they received the holy spirit, they spoke in tongues and prophesied. Does this mean they broke out in incomprehensible gibberish which did not correspond to any spoken human language or is it that they spoke in their own language which was different from the language Paul and those who were with him spoke? Did they

start making prophecies about events to come which God revealed to them after their baptism?

The answer is that they didn't start making incomprehensible noises (speaking in tongues) nor did they begin speaking about future events.

They merely spoke in a different language than Paul's and those accompanying him and they started speaking the wonderful truths of God to each other which they had not known before the holy spirit God the Word came upon them and revealed some of God's truths to them.

Let's continue reading Acts 19.

Act 19:7 And all the men were about twelve.

Act 28:7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

Act 28:8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and **laid his hands on him, and healed him.**

Paul laid hands on this sick person and God healed him.

Act 28:9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:

Paul, an apostle with the gift to lay hands on those called by God the Father and have the holy spirit God the Word come unto them also could heal the sick by laying hands on them.

Act 28:10 Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, **they laded us with such things as were necessary.**

Those who were or became Christians supported the apostles with shelter and food; not money.

According to the Bible record, the power of laying hands on someone and they receiving the holy spirit or being healed was given to the apostles. There are no examples of preachers, teachers, prophets and evangelists laying hands on someone for them to receive the holy spirit or to be healed.

If other men were to have this power wouldn't the Scriptures give us examples of men other than the apostles having the power to have the holy spirit come upon people and to heal the sick?

So, how did others receive the holy spirit after the death of the apostles?

And, in NT times there are to be no more apostles, evangelists or prophets (Heb 1:1-2).

Can any man decide on his own that he has the God's gift of laying hands on a baptized person and God then giving them access to the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman? Or, of laying hands on the sick and healing them?

There is now no true ministry in existence and there won't be any until Christ's 2nd Coming and those of physical Israel who enter into the New Covenant. That ministry will also not last for the whole Millennium for the same reason that the apostles' ministry did not endure until our days nor past their death.

The question then becomes how are those called today ever to get the holy spirit?

The only conclusion that can be reached is that those called by God the Father after the death of the apostles, upon repentance and belief, are given access to the holy spirit God the Word by God the Father.

This is why it says in John 6:44 that no man can come to Christ (the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman) unless the holy spirit God the Father calls him.

God the Father is the one that makes it possible for those He calls and are chosen to be taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

According to the Bible information that we have, the gift of laying hands on the baptized and having them receive the holy spirit God the Word or to heal people was only given to the apostles. There are no instances where we see anyone else but an apostle being able to do so in the New Testament.

Baptism replaced circumcision in NT times as an outward sign visible to others that someone had made the commitment to obey God. Just being baptized however, in the days of the apostles wasn't sufficient, it was necessary to have hands laid on them by one of the apostles.

After the death of the apostles and the destruction of the early church through persecution and the scattering of the remnant in the wilderness, the conditions that existed during the life of the apostles came to an end. There would be no more apostles, evangelists, prophets, teachers, preachers, etc. because there are no men who can honestly say they have absolute truth that no one can question. Christ will not appear to anyone to train them as He did his disciples. All that those called and chosen by God can be today is students; students of God's holy Bible.

After the death of the apostles and those trained by them, God's Church changed from being a physical organization to a spiritual one.

Truly converted Christians are its royal priesthood offering themselves as the daily sacrifice by dying to their old lives of sin (their old man) and living in newness of life (a life of trying to obey God as best they can in all things). Their only mediator between them and God the Father is the resurrected and glorified Christ who is their great high priest. They are the living stones of the temple in which God the Father and God the Word dwells and they are taught all things by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. Their only material link with God the Father and God the Word is through God's holy Bible whose spiritual truths can only be understood by revelation from God the Father through the holy spirit God the Word.

Men or organizations of men are not the link between the truly converted and God.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners
spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,
whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he
made the worlds;

God spoke to the physical nation of ancient Israel by men he sent them bearing a message from Him, the prophets. However, in the last days which began in the days in which Paul wrote these 2 verses, God is already speaking to truly converted Christians by his Son, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

No men are being sent to teach God the Father's called and chosen ones.

This is why in God's spiritual nation of Israel there are no apostles, evan-

gelist, prophets, preachers, teachers, etc. Additionally, It is no longer a visible, physical organization of men or nation. Conversion occurs in the mind and is something not outwardly visible to others.

Baptism and the laying on of hands which were required in the early church when the apostles were alive are no longer a requirement in God's NT spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church as there are no men who have been given the authority to do so, there are no organizations of men which constitute God's spiritual nation and Christians most of the time don't even know who are the other true Christians who may be living among them.

The Bible, our only sure source of truth, does not describe any mechanism by which men can be given the gift of laying hands on those called and chosen for them to receive the holy spirit or to heal the sick.

Men are not free to declare themselves as having the gift of laying hands on new Christians for them to receive God's holy spirit. Anyone doing so is a false prophet.

God's Church — A Spiritual Organization

Mr. Armstrong the Pastor General of the Worldwide Church of God used to say that God's Church is first and foremost a spiritual organism or organization. We all heard him say it but how is God's Church a spiritual organization? The use of the word "spiritual" should mean that it is not a physical organization and if it is not physical, then it cannot be represented by organizations of men who are very physical. But, Mr. Armstrong understood God's Church being a spiritual organization as also having a physical component which basically turns out to be an organization of men through which God is working out His plan of salvation for mankind.

These 2 ideas are contradictory. God's Church cannot be a physical and a spiritual organization at the same time. It has to be one or the other.

What is a spiritual organization? It is an organization that is not administered nor led by men. Its leadership is from the holy spirits of the God-head. The men making up God's Church are those called and chosen by God the Father for the purpose of growing in knowledge and understanding of the spiritual truths contained in God's holy Bible and to grow in the perfect, holy, righteous character of Christ. This they do by studying God's holy Bible with the holy spirit God the Word dwelling in them making it possible for them to understand Bible truths.

God's spiritual nation started off as an organization of men: Christ, the

apostles and the congregations they raised up but it was not to remain a physical organization.

The persecutions effectively eliminated the physical congregations or organizations of men that existed at the beginning of God's church. How the church existed after these persecutions is the way it was to exist in NT times; as a spiritual organization not led by any men or organizations of men.

The record of what the Christ did (the Gospels) while on the earth and the teachings of the apostles to their congregations became part of the Bible record that we have today and which God's spiritual nation would need. It is the physical link between God and called and chosen men.

When and how did God's Church become a spiritual organization?

When the apostles and those they had trained died and the congregations they had raised up were persecuted with some being put to death and the others having had to flee in the wilderness to save their lives.

It was not to be a visible organization of men led by men. It would be among men but invisible to them as it is spiritual.

Being spiritual means it exists by the power of God the Father and God the Word, spirit beings. It means it is being taught by God, is being maintained in existence by God and is being built on an individual basis by God the Father calling men and God the Word teaching them all things.

There are no men nor organizations of men standing between God's called and chosen ones and Himself. The only mediator between God's elect and God is God the Word who is their great high priest.

God's called and chosen ones are taught by God the Word as they study God's holy Bible their one and only physical link between them and God.

There are no men nor organizations of men representing God in God's spiritual nation of Israel. The only spiritual fellowship Christians can have is with each other and with God the Word and God the Father. Their spiritual fellowship is not with an organization of men with a man leading it.

Christ said to call no man father, spiritually speaking, as their only spiritual father is God the Father as He is the only one who has the power to call men to salvation and open their minds to understand spiritual truth.

There are no men who are apostles, evangelists, prophets, preachers,

teachers, elders or deacons in God's spiritual nation of Israel as there is no need for them. God speaks directly to His called and chosen ones by His Son, the holy spirit God the word and Spokesman as they study God's holy Bible.

There is no need for money in God's spiritual nation as there is no organization of men needing to be supported through salaries, automobiles, to rent halls, be on television, print publications, etc. God is not working out His plan of salvation through men, He is doing so Himself, one person at a time as he calls and chooses them.

Being part of an organization calling itself "church of God" is not the same thing as being part of God's spiritual nation which is not a physical organization of men visible to the world. One is a fraud and the other is the real thing.

Not having men we can see leading an organization of men we can see goes against our basic human nature as physical beings living in a physical world that we relate to by our physical senses. This is why it sounds so nonsensical to men that God's church would be a spiritual organization that no one can see. But the whole process of conversion and salvation is something that goes on in our minds and is solely between us and God.

Whether we are in obedience or not to men in organizations calling themselves "churches of God" is irrelevant to the salvation process. God the Father is the one who must be satisfied with our obedience and according to the conditions He has established, not those of men leading "churches of God."

The Laodicean Church

There is a lot of confusion that remains among the former members of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) many of which we now find being members of one of the several "true" churches of God that arose after the WCG ceased to exist after the death of Mr. Armstrong (HWA).

Some think that since the death of HWA we have entered the Laodicean Era of God's Church mentioned in the book of Revelation. There is a tendency for the different churches of God to call each other Laodicean and themselves Philadelphian. Since they are all supposedly true churches of God, it makes little sense for some of them to be Laodicean and others to be Philadelphian. The church is either still in the Philadelphian Era or it has now entered into the Laodicean Era. It used to be commonly understood that the different church eras did not exist at the same time.

Then the question to be answered is when does the Laodicean Era of

God's Church begin.

Those who are part of God's Philadelphia Era Church are to be spared from having to go through the Great Tribulation; those that have patiently kept the word of God are to be taken to a place of safety; those who haven't will go through the Great Tribulation. In the Philadelphia Era of God's Church as in all era churches, there will be some who are zealous, some who are compromising with the world and some who will fall away. So, not all those called and chosen during the Philadelphia Era of God's Church will have remained part of God's Church and be taken to a place of safety.

When does the Laodicean Era start?

The fifth seal of the book of Revelation is the time of the martyrdom of God's saints who find themselves in the Great Tribulation.

Rev 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

Rev 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Rev 6:11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

This is followed by the opening of the sixth seal, the heavenly signs.

Rev 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

Rev 6:13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

Rev 6:14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Rev 6:15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and

the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

Rev 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Right after the heavenly signs, there is the sealing of the 144,000 of the 12 tribes of Israel (12,000 from each tribe) and the conversion of the great multitude from all nations, kindreds and tongues.

Rev 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Rev 7:10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Rev 7:11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Rev 7:12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Rev 7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

Rev 7:14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Rev 7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

The great martyrdom of saints has not yet occurred and the events of the sixth seal are still future to our time. What is the next time in the Bible when there will be a massive conversion of men? It is after the events of the sixth seal when 144,000 are sealed and a great multitude who has

washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Their sins have been forgiven, their robes were made white by the blood of the lamb or Christ's perfect sacrifice for sin.

These two groups of converts are God's remnant era church, the Laodicean Church. They were not God's Church during the Great Tribulation as they would have died in the great martyrdom of saints of the 5th seal. They were in the Great Tribulation but did not die in it. Their conversion occurs after the sixth seal, the heavenly signs.

They are the largest church of God that will have ever existed, they are a great multitude. Half of them will lose their salvation because of their compromising with the world, they are neither full of zeal for the truth they have nor are they fully in the world (Matt 25: 1-13). They are spiritually lukewarm keeping a foot in the world and a foot in the church; they lose their salvation.

Rev 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

Rev 3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Rev 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. [They will be expelled from the body of Christ, His Church.]

The Laodicean Church will last but a short time as at the blowing of the 7th trumpet of the 7th seal when Christ's Second Coming occurs, they will become immortal spirit beings and part of the Bride of Christ.

In Spirit and in Truth

A major change occurred in who are the people that would constitute God's nation. In OT times, this was the physical nation of Israel but in NT times, God has a new nation, spiritual Israel.

Rom 2:28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

A Jew or Israelite is no longer one who is a physical descendant of the ancient nation of Israel.

Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circum-

cision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

A Jew in NT times is someone who has been called and chosen by God the Father, whose mind or heart has been changed from being hostile to God to wanting to obey Him in all things. They are responsible for observing the spirit of the law, not solely the letter of the law. They do what they do not to be praised by men but by God.

Ancient Israel worshiped God through the offerings and sacrifices commanded by God. They had repetitive physical and symbolic rituals and ceremonies which they performed as requested by God. But these rituals, ceremonies and animal sacrifices never gave them God's righteousness; their sins were not forgiven.

Heb 7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

A new covenant was needed that would make the forgiveness of sin possible.

Heb 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

A new covenant is to be made with the physical descendants of the physical nation of Israel after Christ's 2nd Coming. Those that convert at Christ's teachings become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel. God's Church since its founding on the day of Pentecost is a new covenant Church. The sins of its members have been forgiven by the same process God will use to forgive the sins of the physical nation of Israel when He makes the new covenant with them.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

This is precisely the process used by God with those who have been called and chosen since the day of Pentecost.

With the coming into being of this new spiritual nation, there is a new way of worshiping God. It is not longer by repetitive, physical rituals and ceremonies which could never forgive sin. God's new covenant spiritual nation of Israel is to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Joh 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Joh 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

God's spiritual nation worships God by their obedience to the truth the holy spirit God the Father reveals to them by the holy spirit God the Word as they study God's holy Bible.

God's Plan of Salvation Not Dependent on Men

God and the Word have existed eternally and God through the Word created the universe and the earth. Considering the great power of God and the Word, would it be sensible to think that God the Father's plan of salvation for mankind would depend on men?

Would God the Father not be able to call men and would God the Word not be able to teach them?

Has God's Church ever been a physical organization of men and is the existence of such an organization the means by which God can successfully carry out His plan of salvation?

God created mankind with absolute free moral agency which means that no man can be forced to believe something they have not chosen to believe and that God will not force anyone to obey Him.

Rom 8:14 As many as are **led** by the spirit of God they are the sons of God.

There is therefore no assurance that organizations of men having the words "church of God" somewhere in the title of their organization are God's church. God will not force anyone to be true ministers nor will Christ come back to teach them as He had His disciples. Men presenting themselves as true ministers do so on their own authority or on the authority of an organization which gave itself the authority to appoint ministers. They are not appointed by God.

Can a true ministry exist since the death of the first century church of God who are the only ones who had first-hand knowledge of the truth taught by Christ? No one today has absolute truth that no one can question. No one has been personally trained by Christ and no one has the truth Christ taught His disciples.

The most that anyone called by God can be is a student of God's holy Bible. No one can present himself or their organization as being the great and to be highly respected teachers of God's truth. They don't have it any more than anyone else.

God is working in the minds of each of His called and chosen teaching them spiritual truth as they study God's holy Bible. No man can be the source of God's truth for any man.

God the Father calls men to salvation and those chosen are taught by God the Word not by men.

The Millennium God's Kingdom on Earth

According to the teachings of the WCG while headed up by Mr. Armstrong as its Pastor General, the Millennium or 7th day of God's plan of salvation for mankind would be like heaven on earth.

It was taught that God at His Second Coming would take over the governments of this world and with His resurrected saints would rule over the nations. A worldwide educational campaign would be held to first teach the nations the true values by which they should live and since all would be called during the Millennium, all but a few really stubborn individuals would become converted. This would make for a world of peace, safety,

prosperity and joy such as has never been seen or possible before.

The physical conditions on the Earth would be changed and this is mentioned in Isa 11 and 35.

Isa 11:6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

Isa 11:7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Isa 11:8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

Isa 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isa 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Isa 35:6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Isa 35:7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

The nature of animals will be changed, they will no longer eat each other, snakes will no longer be dangerous and there will no longer be any animals that will be dangerous to men.

Recall, that just before Christ's 2nd Coming and the beginning of the Millennium there was the Great Tribulation. At the time of the blowing of the trumpets of Rev 8:6-13; 9 the Earth will have been subjected to planet-wide levels of destruction which will basically render the planet uninhabitable.

God, as at the time following Satan's rebellion, will have to intervene to restore the earth to a state once again suitable for human life. If God were not to repair the great damages done to the Earth's environment, it would

be impossible for the survivors of the Great Tribulation to continue living. The Great Tribulation would have effectively put an end to mankind. But, the environment will be restored and mankind will continue for another 1,000 years in fulfillment of God's 7,000 years plan of salvation for mankind.

What about the spiritual condition of those who will be born during the Millennium? Will there be a great conversion of the people living during the Millennium? Will God's resurrected saints carry out a worldwide re-education campaign to teach the masses the true value by which they should live? Will Christ take over the governments of this world and rule over its nations?

Will the conditions established for salvation be changed? Will God change human nature?

Let's get started answering these questions.

Will just about everyone be saved?

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

They are not chosen because they don't follow their calling.

And of the few that are chosen, it is the few who remain faithful.

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

If you will believe your Bible, it is the few who will be saved. Then this means that during the Millennium, unless the preceding Scriptures are unreliable, there will be no massive conversion of the nations. Spiritual truth cannot be taught to the unconverted; the carnal minded.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

God will not rule over anyone who will not voluntarily submit to Him.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

The administration of God's plan of salvation will not change during the Millennium. The holy spirit God the Father will call and choose men and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman will teach all things to them.

Salvation is something that occurs on a personal and individual basis between God and those He calls and choose. Spiritual truth is revealed to them as them as they study God's holy bible.

1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:
for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

The only mediator between men that have been called and chosen is the resurrected Christ; not men nor any organizations of men.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

And so it will be during the whole Millennium.

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

No Man has Gone to Heaven

There are many who think that when someone dies, their soul goes to heaven, the life of the one who died is maintained and all that has happened is that the physical, mortal human being has become an immortal spirit being and is in God's Kingdom.

Does the Christian Bible teach that upon dying, those who have been good Christians in accordance with the requirements of the Christian organization they followed (there are many different ones) their soul goes to heaven.

However, the Bible tells us that souls can die, that they are not immortal.

Eze 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: **the soul that sinneth, it shall die.**

Eze 18:20 **The soul that sinneth, it shall die.** The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be

upon him.

And, what does the Bible say about those who are dead?

Ecc 9:5 For the living know that they shall die: but **the dead know not any thing**, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Ecc 3:19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: **as the one dieth, so dieth the other**; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

Psa 115:17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

The dead are not alive in God's Kingdom praising God.

Gen 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. **[An air-breathing animal]**

Gen 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Does man have immortality dwelling in him?

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Gen 3:23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken

And, Christ tells us that no one has gone to heaven.

Joh 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

No man, not even Ahraham, Isaac or Jacob have gone to heaven. The time when they and all those from the day of Pentecost to Christ's 2nd Coming who have been called, chosen and faithful wil go to heaven at

Christ's Second Coming. They will be then if dead at that time, be born again by a resurrection from the dead to immortal spirit life and if alive, they will be instantaneously transformed from flesh-and-blood mortal to immortal spirit life.

All those called, chosen and faithful during the Millennium and during the Last Great Day will become part of God's Kingdom at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day .

Until then, no man will have gone to heaven.

More Apostles to Come?

Christ ordained His disciples as apostles. They were given was has come to be referred to as the Great Commission.

Mat 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [spirit]

Mar 16:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Do we have any indication in the Bible that other apostles were to come and continue the task of preaching the gospel into all the world to every creature or person?

Are we provided with the process that men would have to follow to appoint more apostles? Can men appoint themselves as apostles or can they be appointed by other men to be apostles?

The original apostles and Paul were appointed by Christ. and God the Father

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

It was not something done by any man. But for the original apostles no mention is made anywhere of other apostles in all of the New Tes-

tament. Furthermore, God plainly tells us that in the last days, He only speaks to His faithful called and chosen ones by his Son, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

We have been in the last days since the day of Pentecost.

Christ will not appear to any man to ordain him as an apostle nor will he speak to them in dreams and visions as He had done in Old Testament times.

Num 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a **vision**, and will speak unto him in a **dream**.

God the Father speaks to His faithful called and chosen ones by His Son, the holy spirit God the Word which we have in writing, God's holy Bible.

Since Christ will not appear to anyone or speak to them in dreams and visions and since there are no instructions provided in the Bible as to the process men could follow to appoint apostles, it means that no other apostles were to come following the death of the original apostles.

The Great Commission was given to them and they appointed evangelists to assist them but when there are no apostles there can be no evangelists. It is not in the power of men to appoint apostles or evangelists. Those appointed by organizations of men who have given themselves the authority to do so are not true apostles and evangelists.

The Gospel has to be preached to every creature or person who has ever existed as to be saved, it is necessary to have heard and believed the gospel. It should go without saying that this is not something that can be done by any man or organization of men.

This can only be done by God and the Word. Before God's plan of salvation comes to an end, all who have ever lived will have been called and given an opportunity for salvation. This is the time when they will all be exposed to the Gospel message and given the chance to believe it or not.

There are no more apostles to come who will continue the Great Commission given by Christ to His disciples.

The Carcase and the Eagles

In the Bible there are many hard to understand Scriptures and one of them is the following that we find in Matthew the 24th Chapter.

Mat 24:28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Luk 17:37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

When Jesus spoke these words He had been telling His disciples about the conditions that would surround His Second Coming and what some of the people would say as to where He might be. Please read Mat 24: 23-27 to familiarize yourself with the context of Mat 24: 28.

As usual, the Bible interprets its own symbols and if we know where to look and how to correctly connect the different related Scriptures, we can discover what it is Christ meant when He spoke the words of Mat 24:28.

A first thing to notice is that a carcase, also spelled, “carcass” is a body. We know that God’s Church is the body of Christ.

Col 1:18 And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

And, in the Bible we find that God is referred to as an eagle.

Exo 19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

The word “eagle” in Ex 19:4 is plural which means there is more than one eagle. And we also know that the eagles here are God the Father and God the Son. Israel came out of their Egyptian captivity by the mighty hand of God. Ex 19:4 indicates that it was as a result of the 2 of them working together. Israel was borne on eagles’ wings.

So, if we put these Scriptures together and reexamine Mat 24:28 we can determine what it is Christ was telling His disciples. He was telling

them that when His 2nd Coming occurs, God the Father and God the Son would be where they have always been and that is with the body which is God's Church. The members of God's Church are the temple in which God the Father and God the Word dwell.

At His Second Coming Christ will not be in the desert nor in the secret chambers. He and His Father will be with the Father's faithful called and chosen ones.

God's Government on the Earth

On the Earth, we have converted and unconverted men who are physical mortal beings who are limited to knowing what they can perceive by their 5 physical senses. So how can God, a spirit being, exercise government over men.

God governs the material universe by the unbreakable laws that were put in place at the time of the creation of the universe. These are referred to as physical laws and are always in effect. For example, the law of gravity applies to everyone and everything all the time. If I accidentally step off the roof of a building, the law of gravity will take effect and I will be drawn toward the ground.

But, how can God influence men who for the most part are not aware of the existence of such a thing as God. How this is done is by the human spirit or the spirit in man which is a spirit essence added to men's physical brains to give them mind power. God can influence the minds of unconverted men as needed for Bible prophecies to be carried out exactly as written. God can place ideas, suggestions in men's minds that will cause them to take certain actions desired by God.

God placed the idea Cyrus, King of Persia's mind to let as many of the captives of Israel as wanted to do so to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city and to build a second temple.

Ezr 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

Ezr 1:2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Ezr 1:3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

As concerns converted men, God's government is by His law which upon conversion is written in their minds or hearts as the Bible states it.

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Christians obey God because they have freely and knowingly chosen to do so and they do so by submitting themselves to God's law as best they can as they learn more and more about it as they study God's holy Bible.

In this way, the physical universe, unconverted men and truly converted men are all under God's government.

The Laodicean Church

There continues to exist a great deal of confusion about who are the Laodiceans, when will that Church era begin and whether it is somewhat of a curse to be a Laodicean?

First it should be noted that the Laodicean Church is a Church of God and that God's faithful Laodiceans will have the following great reward in God's Kingdom.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Becoming a Laodicean does not mean that loss of salvation will result anymore than being a Philadelphian. The faithful Philadelphians are promised to be preserved from the Great Tribulation; but what about those who are not being faithful? And, belonging to an organization of men with the words "church of God" somewhere in the name of their organization, does not make you a faithful Philadelphian. Your personal commitment and your effort to follow the truth that you have is what will save you.

The Laodiceans will not be protected from the Great Tribulation because there is no need to do so. This Church of God era only appears

after the events of the 6th seal of the Book of Revelation. At the time of the martyrdom of Christians of the 5th seal, the conversion of those who will become the Laodicean Church has not yet occurred.

The Laodicean Church is pictured by the parable of the 10 virgins of Matthew 25. They were on their way to meet the bridegroom, Christ's Second Coming was about to happen but the bridegroom tarried, took longer to come than expected. The light (the presence of the holy spirits of the God family) went out in 5 of the virgins lamps and they had to go back to get more oil. The other 5 virgins had taken oil with them and were able to replenish their lamp. While the 5 virgins who did not have enough oil had gone back to get more, the bridegroom came and they went in with Him to the marriage and the door was shut.

Half of the Laodiceans lose their salvation and they are a great multitude.

Rev 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great **multitude**, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Rev 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great **multitude**, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

The Laodiceans who inherit salvation are a great multitude and this great multitude is half of the Laodicean Church. This means that the other half who loses its salvation is also a great multitude.

The Laodicean Church will be the biggest church of God that has ever existed and it will have been the one which will have lasted but a short time. Their conversion occurred after the events of the sixth seal and they will become part of God's Kingdom at the blowing of the 7th trumpet of the 7th seal of the Book of Revelation.

Every era of God's Church had its weaknesses including the Philadelphian era where not all are remaining faithful and all era churches have their reward. All, including the Laodicean, are God's Church.

Jesus God in the Flesh?

There are some today as they were some in the apostolic era of God's Church who refuse to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the holy spirit God the Word made flesh. The apostle John gives us a lot of good information on who are the ones who are denying that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

1Jn 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

1Jn 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

1Jn 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2Jn 1:7 For many **deceivers** are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an **antichrist**.

John calls them deceivers and antichrists.

Do you know of men in some of the many so-called churches of God today who are saying that Jesus was just a man? God says they are deceivers. Should you continue associating with them?

The Bible is clear that Jesus was the son of the most high, God the Father.

Luk 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that **holy thing** which shall be born of thee shall be called **the Son of God**.

Paul in his epistle to the Philippians tells us that the mind that was in Jesus Christ was that of God the Word who dwelled in eternity with God the Father and that Christ was a God being who took on the likeness of men (Php 2:7).

Php 2:5 Let this mind [**the mind of God the Word and Spokeman**] be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Php 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the **likeness of men**:

Php 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

When Christ was baptized, God the Father's voice was heard saying:

Mar 1:11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Christ walked on water, fasted 40 days and 40 nights, resurrected the dead, healed the sick and cast out demons. If He was just a man could He have done these things. Do you know of any man who can do what Christ did?

Jesus Christ's father was God and his mother was Mary. Christ was fully God and fully a physical man. He was God in the flesh by the mind that dwelt in the flesh-and-blood body of Christ which was the mind of God the Word and Spokesman.

Anybody saying that Christ was just a man is of the spirit of antichrist and is a deceiver.

A New Commandment

In the Old Testament, God gave the 10 Commandments to Israel through Moses. In the New Testament, Jesus gives the disciples a new commandment and so does John.

Joh 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

1Jn 2:7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

1Jn 2:8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which

thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

2Jn 1:5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

Some have said that this “new” commandment replaced and superseded God’s 10 Commandments. In other words, there was no longer any need to keep the 10 Commandments but simply to have love for one another.

The 10 Commandments are a high level summary of God’s law. The statutes and the judgments were given to provide us in a more detailed fashion the practical application of God’s law in different types of human interactions. God’s law is spiritual and has always existed. The angels sinned and where there is no law no sin is possible.

Rom 5:13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but **sin is not imputed when there is no law.**

Christ made it very clear that He did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.

Mat 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

And, that not the smallest requirement of the law will no longer be in effect until the current heaven and earth pass.

Matt 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

So what was John really doing when he said he was giving them a new commandment? There was a problem in the congregations that he oversaw.

1Jn 2:9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

Some were not loving their brothers-in-Christ for one reason or another and John was correcting them but in a gentle way. He was saying he was teaching them a new commandment so that they would not feel as though there were being accused of wrongdoing. Christians must love

their brothers; it is not something that is optional. So John talks to them as though it was something they did not know but which in reality they all knew it. That's what the "new" commandment was all about. It was definitely not that it would replace the law of the 10 commandments.

Let's suppose for an instant that this new commandment did away with the 10 Commandments. What would have been the results. Love is an abstract word which can and does mean different things to different people unless there is a commonly agreed definition of what it means in practice to love your brother. If every man would be left to himself there would then be as many different ways of "loving" your brother as there are members of God's Church. And, it would not be unexpected that one person's understanding of what it is to love his brother would come in conflict with the definitions of others. The result would be that we would have in the Church what we find in the world, chaos. All would be doing what seems right in his eyes but that is not God's way.

Ministers and God's Truth

In the day of the Worldwide Church of God headed up by Mr. Herbert Armstrong, (HWA) its Pastor General, it was taught that God works through only one man at a time and that truth enters the Church through the Pastor General. As HWA used to say "If it didn't come from me, it's not doctrine." The Pastor General was to be considered as the spiritual leader of the church.

However, since the day of Pentecost, the holy spirit God the Father began to call men and those who followed their calling were to be taught all things by the holy spirit God the Word as they study God's holy Bible. In other words, since Pentecost, God is working with all His faithful called and chosen ones not just one man.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Each and every Christian is responsible for growing in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures; failure to do so leads to loss of salvation. Christians are rewarded according to their own works; not that of others.

Mat 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Read Mat 25:24-30 to get the whole context of Mat 25:30.

God's command to every Christian is to study.

2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Christians are to study God's holy Bible with a mind enabled by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to understand the spiritual truth it contains.

God's Church is spiritual which is to say that its members have been called by God the Father and are being taught by God the Word and Spokesman. Their only mediator between themselves and God is Jesus Christ.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

Christians are the living stones of God's temple, they are God's spiritual house and God's holy priesthood who offer up spiritual sacrifices.

1Pe 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a **spiritual** house, an **holy priesthood**, to offer up **spiritual sacrifices**, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

God and the Word are working directly with every called and chosen ones who are remaining faithful revealing to them spiritual truth which they follow as best they can.

Every one called and chosen by God the Father is a priest who offers up spiritual sacrifices accepted by God through Jesus Christ. The spiritual sacrifice they offer is putting to death their old man of sin and striving to live in newness of life.

Eph 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Eph 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Eph 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

In other words, there is no man or organization of men standing between truly converted Christians and God. *The salvation process is an individual and personal relationship between true Christians and the holy spirits of the God family.*

Ministers, assuming there were any in God's Church today, are just men who have the very same responsibilities as any other man who has been called and chosen. They don't have a special relationship with God so that they are the way used by Him to reveal truth to other Christians. God's church is spiritual which means it is not an organization of men with a supreme human leader to whom God reveals truth that they then teach to the Church. These ministers have appointed themselves or were appointed by an organization of men who gave itself the authority to appoint men as pastors, teachers, elders, deacons.

God's Church is the little flock scattered all over the world living invisibly among the unconverted. They are invisible because conversion is a process that goes on in the mind, a changed attitude from being in opposition to God to trying to obey Him in all things to the best of their abilities. This is something which is not outwardly visible to others.

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.[they don't follow their calling]

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therewith:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Many are called, few are chosen and of the chosen few remain faithful.

True ministers of God even when they existed in God's First Century Church before its scattering because of persecution, had no power to give those they taught understanding of the Scriptures.

1Co 3:6 I [the apostle Paul] have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. [the growth in understanding]

Understanding of the Scriptures is by the holy spirits of the God family dwelling in truly converted Christians.

What and When is the End of the World?

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus mentions that there is a time when the end will come.

Mat 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

What “end” was He talking about? In the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) it was taught that the “end” is the time when after Christ’s 2nd Coming, Christ and the resurrected saints would take over the governments of this world. For the WCG, the “end” spoken of by Christ was the end of men governing themselves and Christ establishing His Kingdom on the earth.

But, for the end to come, the Gospel must first have been preached in all nations. The Bible tells us that hearing and believing the Gospel is necessary for salvation.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the **gospel** of Christ: for it is **the power of God unto salvation** to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Mar 1:15 And saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

Therefore, every man that has ever lived must have heard and believed the Gospel including all those who died in the first 4,000 years of mankind’s existence and those who are yet to be born during the Millennium and those who will rise up in the resurrection of the Last Great Day.

Christ’s 2nd Coming occurs at the blowing of the 7th trumpet of the 7th seal of the Book of Revelation. At that time the Millennium and the Last Great Day have yet to occur. So the end spoken of by Christ in Matthew 24 cannot be that He, with the resurrected saints, will take over the governments of this world.

In the Book of 2nd Peter, we are given the following information:

2Pe 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

The heavens (the material universe) is being kept in existence until comes the day of judgment and perdition or destruction of the wicked.

When will that be?

At the end of the Last Great Day, the Great White Throne Judgment will take place.

Rev 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him [Christ] that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, [according to their works.](#)

The dead were resurrected and judged according to the truth written in the Bible and the extent to which they made an effort to grow their knowledge and understanding of it and to apply it in their lives (their works).

Rev 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man [according to their works.](#)

Rev 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. [\[This is the second death which is forever; no resurrection will ever be possible.\]](#)

Those who lose their salvation die in the Lake of Fire that comes upon the whole earth and then expands to the whole universe and consumes it.

Mal 4:1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

Mal 4:3 And ye [\[God's saints who inherit salvation\]](#) shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

2Pe 3:12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

2Pe 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth**, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

After the Great White Throne Judgment, the death of the wicked in the Lake of Fire and the dissolution of the current universe, God creates a new heaven (universe) and a new earth.

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

By the time of the end of the Last Great Day, all of mankind will have been given the opportunity to hear and believe the Gospel and to repent. After the Great White Throne Judgment is the time when the "end" spoken of by Christ in Mat 24:14 will come.

The "end" is the end of mankind and of the current heaven and earth.

Rev 21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things new.** And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Rev 21:6 And he said unto me, **It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.**

Call No Man Your Father

In the 23rd Chapter of the Book of Matthew, Christ is drawing a contrast between how the Pharisees and Scribes conduct themselves and how truly converted Christians should act. The Pharisees and Scribes wanted to be treated with the greatest respect and honour seeing themselves as the ones who really knew the Scriptures and who could teach them to the people.

But, Christ tells His disciples that they were not to do as they did.

Mat 23:8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

No true Christian should accept to be called Rabbi or Master (teacher) as your only Master or teacher is Christ. As well, all of the disciples and true Christians to come, are brothers. In other words, they are all equal among themselves.

Mat 23:9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

Truly converted Christians were spiritually begotten by the holy spirit God the Father; it was not by the work of any man. No man can be considered as having been how Christians came to be converted.

As previously mentioned God's Church is spiritual, not an organization of men (page 68 of this document). God's Church is the result of the work of 2 spirit beings, the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. It is not the doing of any man.

Only God the Father calls men to salvation and only God the Word can give them understanding of the spiritual truth of God's holy Bible. No man can call another man to salvation and the only man any man could ever save is, himself.

Men nor organizations of men having the words "church of God" somewhere in the title of their organization are God's one true Church founded on the day of Pentecost. The administration and success of God's plan of salvation for mankind does not and cannot depend on men.

For a short time, God's Church had a ministry of men.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

These were some of the men who had been trained by Christ, His disciples and the men they trained to be evangelists, pastors and teachers. Organized congregations ceased to exist after the great persecution that came upon truly converted Christians first from the Jews and then from a great new false Christian church which persecuted all other religious groups who refused to follow its dictates.

Christ would not come back to train anyone and the truth given to the disciples and the converts of God's First Century Church, became lost

as true Christians were martyred, imprisoned and the others scattered into the wilderness and lost contact with each other. Some outstanding requirements such as keeping the Sabbath and observing the 10 Commandments remained but other requirements did not survive the long years of persecutions.

So, God since the scattering of His First Century Church no longer has a ministry of men as there is no man nor organization of men who have the truths originally given the apostles at the foundation of God's Church. All they can teach is their personal and more often than not, erroneous understanding of the Bible.

The only true and reliable teachers of God's truth are those who have it all and they are the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. They are the only ones who can give those called to conversion understanding of the truths of the Bible.

No man can be called Rabbi, Master and teachers of God's faithful called and chosen ones.

The Ministration of Life

A very important change occurred in the administration of God's law as we go from the Old to the New Testament. Paul, calls this change, the ministration of the spirit.

2Co 3:6 **[God]** Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

2Co 3:7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

2Co 3:8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

The law in the OT was administered according to the letter. For some offenses there was no sacrifice that could atone for it and the perpetrator died. This is what Paul calls the ministration of death. In NT times, the law is administered according to the spirit. There is then no death penalty for any lawbreaking.

This changeover was initiated by Christ when He forgave the sin of the

woman caught in adultery and did not take her life as the OT administration of the law required.

Joh 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

Joh 8:4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

Joh 8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Joh 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

Joh 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, **He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.**

Joh 8:8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

Joh 8:9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, **[they were all guilty of having committed the same sin]** went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Joh 8:10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, **Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?**

Joh 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, **Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**

The death penalty is no longer administered in God's NT spiritual nation. Why this is so is directly related to the reason why God made men of physical matter. Spirit beings once their creation is complete can never change. Beings made of matter can and do change continuously in all sorts of way. This makes it possible for God to call men who had been living in sin before their conversion, sins which would have merited the death penalty under the OT administration of the law. After their calling and coming to the knowledge of the truth, being physical beings, they

can change; their previous attitude of opposition to God can change to one of wanting to obey Him in all things to the best of their abilities. This way salvation becomes a possibility for them. If their composition was spirit, they would not be able to change upon being revealed the truth.

This is why the ministration of the spirit is glorious, it makes eternal life possible; it is the ministration of life.

The Feast of Ingathering

In the OT, God had commanded Israel to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (FOT) and on the same date, there was also another feast which is the Feast of Ingathering (FOI).

Lev 23:34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The **fifteenth day of this seventh month** shall be the **feast of tabernacles** for seven days unto the LORD.

Lev 23:39 Also in the **fifteenth day of the seventh month**, when ye have **gathered in the fruit of the land**, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

Who was to keep the Feast of Tabernacles?

Lev 23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; **all that are Israelites born** shall dwell in booths:

Why?

Lev 23:43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

The feast of Tabernacles was a reminder for the unconverted physical nation of Israel and its descendants of God's punishment on their forefathers for having refused to believe that God was able to bring them into the Promised Land. They were made to wander aimlessly in the desert until the generation of those who had refused to enter the Promised Land had died. It was not a reminder of a happy time in the history of Israel nor something that would cause them to rejoice.

Therefore the FOT was specifically for Israel and its physical descendants as a reminder of God's punishment on their forefathers.

On the same date was the feast of Ingathering. It was a time Israel was

to celebrate following the harvesting of their crops being secure in the knowledge they had sufficient food stored until the time of the next harvest.

It is a feast which is not specifically for ancient Israel as is the FOT. God in New Testament time would have a new nation of Israel which would be spiritual. It would include people from all nations of the world called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Father. They are not the physical descendants of ancient Israel and have no common history with them. Their forefathers were never made to dwell 40 years in the desert for their disobedience. The FOT is not applicable to them.

The purpose of the annual holy days is to keep New Testament Christian in remembrance of how God is administering His great master plan of salvation for mankind. The FOT is not a step in God's plan of salvation.

The FOI anticipates the gathering of God's saints into His kingdom. The process started on the day of Pentecost and will extend into the Millennium and into the Last Great Day. By the time of the coming of the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day, all of mankind will have been called and given an opportunity for salvation.

Mat 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying,
**The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed
good seed in his field:**

Mat 13:25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed
tares among the wheat, and went his way.

Mat 13:26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought
forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

Mat 13:27 So the servants of the householder came and said
unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from
whence then hath it tares?

Mat 13:28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The
servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather
them up?

Mat 13:29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares,
ye root up also the wheat with them.

Mat 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in
the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye togeth-

er first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

What is Human Nature?

In religious circles and in most people's minds, human nature is thought of as being the result of Satan causing men to do evil. But, if Satan didn't exist, would men still be capable of being evil and, if so, why?

When God created man, He created them with absolute free moral agency which is to say, there is no power in heaven or on earth that can force someone to believe something he has not chosen to believe. This requirement is directly related to God's plan of salvation for mankind.

Upon being called by God the Father, man must be fully free to accept or not God's calling. His submission to God must be fully voluntary and maintained throughout his life. Man was created in the image (same type of mind) and in the likeness (same general physical appearance) of God. Man created as a means for God and the Word to reproduce themselves. Christ tells us that He has many brothers and sisters and they are all those who are obeying God. The Bible tells us that Christ is the first among many others who are to be born again by a resurrection from the dead as He was.

Without absolute free moral agency, God could not hold men responsible for the evil that they do if it were the result of being controlled by Satan. And, if men were controlled by a superior being such as God, he would lose his individuality and personality; he would be like a robot controlled by its maker. No matter how many of these robots God would create, He would still be alone.

God wants other beings like Himself to be part of His Kingdom, beings who have mind power, independence of thought and who can spontaneously generate new and different ideas, viewpoints, thoughts, etc. based on their uniquely different personalities.

Satan can influence the minds of men but he cannot force them to do evil. In some instances, men have allowed Satan to take over their minds by not guarding their thoughts. They have allowed evil to dominate them; it was not accidental nor involuntary and they bear the responsibility for having let it happen.

Man was created with the ability to do good or evil; to submit himself or not to God when God will call him.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

God placed life and death before Israel and He will do so for every man who has ever lived. Everyone will have to make the decision to submit himself to God and have life or to keep on with his life as it was before being called and in this way choose death.

The good or the evil that men do is the result of decisions that they freely make as neither God (because He has chosen to do so) nor Satan (because God does not allow him) have the power to force them to do evil or good.

Man must be free to do good or evil so he can be held responsible by God for the evil that he does. And he must be free to choose God's ways when called by God the Father.

Human nature is neither essentially good nor bad; it defines itself by the good or evil which it is totally free to choose or not.

Why God's Church?

In the Christian world, including in the many churches of God that came into being after the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) came to an end, there is this belief that the reason why God has a church is to preach the Gospel to the world and to teach those coming to conversion.

Men's concept of what is God's Church find its origin in the way it was organized in the days of the apostles. The apostles and those they trained had the truth Christ gave the church fresh in their minds and they could teach it to those God called and who followed their calling. The church was persecuted from the beginning by first the Jews then by a great false Christian church which persecuted all other religious groups. The members of God's true Church had to flee and became scattered. After the death of the apostles and of the members of the apostolic church, the truth was lost but for the knowledge of the Sabbath and of the 10 commandments.

No man today has the truth given the apostles and all they have is their personal interpretations of the Bible. The many different Christian churches shows just how differently men interpret the Bible even in those organizations of men calling themselves "churches of God."

It is impossible today for God's church to exist as it did in the days of the apostles. True, God's Church was never to die out but this doesn't mean

that it would never change in ways that do not affect the truth.

The pastors of God's Church are the holy spirit God the Father who is the only one who can call men to salvation and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who is the only one who can give understanding of the Scriptures and who teaches all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones.

The present day church of God exists in all those who have been called and chosen by God the Father and who are being taught all things by God the Word and Spokesman as they study God's word, the holy Bible, Christ in writing. God's Church exists in God's called and chosen ones wherever they may be in the world, by themselves or in little groups.

The reason why they were called is to demonstrate to God their continuing desire to obey Him in all things as best they can and to grow in knowledge of the Scriptures and in the perfect holy righteous character of Christ as much as is possible for a human being to do.

God's church is not a hierarchical organization of men with a spiritual leader who determines for them what is the truth.

What Happens During the Last Great Day?

The Last Great Day will be a very busy time. It is the time when God's plan of salvation will come to its completion in the Great White Throne Judgment.

Let's get started.

At the beginning of the Last Great Day there will be the resurrection to flesh-and-blood life of all those who from the days of Adam and Eve to Christ's Second Coming were never called. It will be their first and only opportunity for salvation.

At the end of the Last Great Day there will be the resurrection of all those who were called, chosen and faithful during the Millennium.

There will also be the resurrection of all those who during the Millennium were called but did not follow their calling and of those who did not remain faithful to their calling. They will be resurrected to flesh-and-blood life.

And, at the end of the Last Great Day, we will have those who were resurrected at the beginning of the Last Great Day who were faithful to

their calling and of those who rejected it or were not faithful to it.

All of those alive at the end of the Last Great Day will either be part of the goats who are the wicked who will be burnt up in the Lake of Fire and the sheep who are those who remained faithful to their calling. All who are in the Great White Throne Judgment are flesh-and-blood men who are alive at the end of the Last Great Day.

The Great White Throne Judgment happens at the end of the Last Great Day. Those who inherit salvation, the sheep, are transformed in a wink of an eye into immortal spirit beings and the goat, the wicked who lose their salvation, remain flesh-and-blood human beings and are burnt up in the Lake of Fire which is the Second Death from which no resurrection is possible.

Final Words

God's truth is only to be found in God's holy Bible. The discovery of God's truth is made possible by the holy spirit God the Father at the time of our calling and by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman after we have committed to obeying God in all things as best we can.

God's Church in NT times is a spiritual organization who is taught all things by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

Truly converted Christians are God's workmanship, God's building, a new creation in Christ and their fellowship is with each other, and God the Father and God the Word. There are no physical organizations of men in existence today which can be representatives of God's spiritual nation of Israel.

The leadership and the teaching in God's Church is provided by God the Word and God the Father. No called and chosen ones is, nor can be, under the authority of any man, spiritually speaking.

Hopefully, the topics converted in this document will be useful to some of you.

To be continued

