

EXALTING CHRIST · EQUIPPING BELIEVERS · EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

CORNERSTONE

JULY - AUG 2020

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Case for the Pre-Trib Rapture

The Hope of the Believer

On My Desk

...and more

TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS · 1 PETER 2:7

Ezra 3 is the record of Israel's regathering after they returned from their Babylonian captivity. Having been exiled for seventy years from their homeland, they were now coming back to the place where they had once flourished as a nation. Led by Zerubbabel, the nation made the long journey across the waste, barren wilderness, prompted by a surprise decree from the Persian monarch, King Cyrus. It was the evidence of the sovereign unseen Hand of a greater King working for the good of His people. When they arrived however, they soon discovered that they had a monumental task ahead of them in restoring things to their former glory. The temple needed repair, as did the walls and gates of the city that was known for being "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth" (Ps. 48:2). There was a lot of work to do, but at least they were now gathered together as a people, eager to set their hands to the work.

The Timing and the Togetherness


When I think through this passage, it reminds me of what the Body of Christ have recently experienced as they have begun the process of meeting in place after an extended hiatus in a national lockdown. Like Israel, there has been a joyous anticipation of being in the amiable environs where there was once a sense of the power and presence of God (Ps. 84). But also, like Israel, before the power of God would again be felt and seen again, there were a few matters that needed special attention. There was a matter of togetherness, a corporate unity to acknowledge dependence upon Almighty God. The nation "gathered together as one man" (v. 1), a critical component if the Lord is going to command a blessing (Ps. 133:1-3). The timing was also critical to this national spiritual recovery. Although they had been given clearance to begin the road back, there still was this nagging fear (v. 3) that some other adversary might interfere with their plans. But regardless, they pushed ahead in their desire to please the One who had put before them an open door. The seventh month was the time of the Feast of Trumpets, a significant event in the life of the nation signaling a divine call to come together (Lev. 23:23-32). This feast was followed by the day of the Atonement, a time in which they sorrowed for their sin, the reason their testimony was marred. That event was followed by the Feast of Tabernacles, the joyous feast in which they celebrated that God was in their midst, as they enjoyed the harvest. What lessons we learn from Israel's past!

The Truth and the Treasure

But there was more. They demonstrated as the people of God, a dedication and commitment to God's truth. Twice we read in this chapter that they worshipped and kept God's Word "as it is written" (vv. 2, 4). If there is ever going to be a revival among God's people, it will only happen as we diligently obey "what is written." It has both a personal and a corporate application. To add to this, was a commitment to fund the work. They "willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord" (v. 5) and "gave money to the masons, and the carpenters, and food and drink and oil..." (v. 7). Their treasure was indeed where their heart was and their heart on this occasion was with the things of the Lord. Notice also, that high quality cedars logs from Lebanon were floated down the Mediterranean to Joppa, the same process that was used in the building of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 5:9). No expense was spared, and no quality was sacrificed as they attended to the work. May the work of the Lord always be characterized by quality and commitment as a testimony to the best of Masters.

The Thanksgiving and the Tears

Eventually, when the foundation of the temple was laid, a great celebration ensued. Trumpets were blown, songs were sung, cymbals were clashed and praise for the Lord was prominently heard. What a joyous occasion it was. "The Lord inhabits the praises of His people" (Ps. 22:3) and when praise is the order of the day, the Lord is glorified, and God's people are edified. Tears may flow, especially from the older generation who can always call to mind the greatness and glory of God's dealing in the past with His people (vv. 11-13).

May the account of the regathering of God people in Ezra 3 serve as a spiritual blueprint for us of the important features that should characterize the Church as it comes together again to head down the path to spiritual recovery. 



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by Mark Kolchin

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TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS • 1 PETER 2:7



THE CASE FOR THE PRE-TRIB RAPTURE

Introduction

The teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture has been taking quite a beating over the past couple decades. It comes from teachers that have abandoned ship and embraced the popular view which insists that the Church will go through the Tribulation. I, however, am not among this number.

This is not because you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. Serious Christians do not stop learning until they are called Home, whether by death or by the rapture. This is not because I blindly follow pre-trib teachers. Some of the arguments that men use to defend this position are unsound and harm the very cause they are trying to help. This is not because I have never investigated the other positions. While several sound plausible at first investigation, they lack theological consistency and contain fatal flaws.

So why do I still believe in a pre-trib rapture? It would be far too much material to present all the reasons, so let us address the nature of the seals in Book of Revelation, one of several exegetical reasons for a pre-trib rapture.

The Nature of the Seals

Various versions of the pre-wrath rapture position and the pre-trib rapture position agree that the Church will not be on earth during the time of God's wrath (eschatological judgment). But they disagree on when this time begins. Pre-tribulationism observes that all of the visitations of the seventieth week are judgment. The pre-wrath advocates, on the other hand, insist that the first five seals are not judgment. They regard the persecution, wars, and famine which they introduce as more of the same man-caused problems that have roiled the world since the beginning of time. In keeping with this view, the pre-wrath rapture advocates typically locate the rapture at either the sixth seal or the seventh trumpet.

So who is correct? Are the first five seals judgment? I answer with a resounding, yes. This point is not that difficult to establish if we let the testimony of Scripture have a fair hearing in the court of theology.

First of all, the seals are qualitatively different than the man-caused problems that have plagued the world during the course of this age. Observe that only the Lamb is worthy to open the seals. No one else in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth is worthy to open them (Rev. 5). Man cannot open them and introduce their contents. Nor can the fallen angelic realm. Only the Lord Jesus Himself can open them. This is not more of the same man-caused problems that have occurred for the past 3500 years. This is a series of transcendent visitations appointed for the last times.

For instance, with the opening of the first seal, God removes His restraint on the mystery of iniquity and unleashes a strong delusion (2 Thess. 2:8-12)—a humanistic “messianic” delusion—that shall engulf the entire globe. This is retributive judgment. The world rejected the true Messiah who shed His own blood for the world, so God will send them an anti-messiah who will spill a river of blood.

The other four seals also involve God relinquishing the restraints that he has graciously exercised over wickedness and the mystery of iniquity throughout the age. This removal of restraint is not, as some have supposed, an argument against the seals being judgment. It is an argument that they are judgment. Make no mistake, this change from restrained evil to unrestrained evil is the qualitative difference between the non-eschatological visitations of this age and the eschatological visitations of the seals which shall be unleashed in the seventieth week. The seals introduce troubles far beyond those permitted during the course of the age.

Secondly, the Scriptures demonstrate a quantitative difference between the first five seals and the man-caused problems that have plagued the world during the course of this age. The fourth seal alone takes twenty-five percent of the world's population. If we assume a population of eight billion, this would be a death toll of two billion. That


is twenty times higher than the death toll for the most devastating war in the history of the world—World War II.

On top of this, the second seal brings a great sword which takes peace from the earth. If we assume that a meagre five percent of the world's population is killed by this seal—likely an underestimate—that comes to another four hundred million lives, which is four times the death toll of World War II. And we have not even hazarded a guess for the death tolls that shall arise with the first seal, which is the rise of the antichrist to world domination (we know he conquers three of the ten toes), and the third seal, which is world-wide famine.

Furthermore, the fifth seal brings a time of great tribulation beyond anything that has been seen since the beginning of the world. It is worse in its intensity than Hitler's persecution of the Jews, and it covers the whole-world, not merely Nazi-held territory. There is nowhere to run or hide.

Now those that oppose a pre-tribulation rapture cannot get rid of the fifth seal as a judgment of God by appealing to the distinction between persecution and judgment. While these are distinct ideas, they are not mutually exclusive. The antichrist's persecution of the people of God is plainly described as war against the saints (Rev. 12:17; 13:7), a war that culminates with all the nations of the earth gathered against Jerusalem. In times past, God often used war and persecution against His people to judge them — queue up Babylon, the Philistines, and Assyria. In the last days, he will again employ these terrible trials against Israel as judgment.

Conclusion

The qualitative and quantitative differences between the normal course of troubles throughout this age and the visitations unleashed with the opening of the seals cannot be swept under the rug. The seals involve a removal of the divine restraint that characterizes this age. And they are vastly worse in their extent and degree, and much closer in their proximity, than the visitations mankind has faced in the centuries past. These facts are fatal to the pre-wrath rapture and every other rapture theory that challenges the pretribulation rapture. It is reckless, ad hoc exegesis to claim that the seals are not eschatological judgment. 



Lee W. Brainard was born again in 1978 and discovered NT principles from reading the Bible on his own. He was introduced to NT assemblies in 1983 and currently fellowships at Harvey Gospel Chapel in Harvey, North Dakota. He is commended to the work of the Lord and has authored several books on prophetic themes. Lee and his wife Nita have four children, two of whom are missionaries. He also maintains www.soothkeep.info.

by Lee Brainard

THE HOPE



OF THE BELIEVER

The apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians gives a true picture of the world we live in when he says, it is without God, without Christ, and without hope. The Lord Jesus in Matthew 24 gives some answers to the question asked by His disciples, *“what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?”* Here are a few signs: wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation, famines, pestilence (pandemics, viruses), earthquakes in various places, lawlessness, false Christs, false prophets ... and the list goes on. To sum it all up, human hearts will fail them for fear at the expectation of the things that will come upon the earth (Luke 21:26). In other words we live in a world without hope. The believer has a whole different outlook and no matter what is transpiring in the world we have a wonderful hope.

A Believing Hope

The hope we have is not vague or some imaginary fantasy as though we are clutching at straws hoping in the end it will give some comfort when the going gets tough. Speaking to a man one day he told me that Christianity was invented to give a crutch to lean on when we die. I asked him what he was leaning on and he answered me, “nothing.” What a sad man to have nothing to lean on. I told him I have a great crutch and I will trust its support when I will need it most. Paul in Romans 10:9 says, *“if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* True hope is based not on an idea, dogma, religion, or philosophy but on a person, the Son of God who died and rose again. If you want true hope for the future this is where you start, believe in your heart and confess him as your Lord and Savior.

A Living Hope

The apostle Peter in 1 Peter 1:3 says, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according*

to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Peter is writing about his and others' amazing encounters with the Lord after He rose from the dead. The resurrection brought restoration to Peter after he had denied his Lord three times. It brought true assurance to a doubting Thomas. Two very sad disciples on their way home from Jerusalem were irresistibly drawn to the stranger who joined alongside them. They said one to another, "did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while he opened the Scriptures to us" (Luke 24:32). Then there was the broken heart of Mary when she supposed Jesus to be the gardener said, "Sir if you have taken Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away" (John 20:15). Jesus turned to her and called her name, "Mary." Her broken heart was healed when she realized who He was. These are just a few of the many encounters Jesus had with His disciples. To someone reading this article, are you distressed by letting your Lord down like Peter? Are you filled with doubts like Thomas? Are you sad at the loss of a loved one like the two on a journey? Are you broken hearted like Mary? The answer lies in the fact that Jesus died and rose again. This lifts the spirit up and brings alive that wonderful hope that comes through trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ. Now you may say, they had seen the Lord but we have not. Listen to the words of the risen Savior, "blessed are those who have not seen me, yet have believed" (John 20:29).

A Purifying Hope

The apostle John writes those beautiful words "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved now we are the children of God; and it has not been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is, and everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as he is pure." Most of the time we consider the Savior's love demonstrated at Calvary and forget the major role the Father had in it all. This verse reminds us of the special relationship we have as the children of God. Bill Gaither's hymn sums it up:

I've been washed in the Fountain
Cleansed by his blood
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod
For I am part of the family, the family of God


All these blessings are ours in our Lord Jesus but he now moves from time to eternity. There is an absolute certainty when our beloved Lord is revealed we will be like Him! O how there is that longing in the soul to be like Him! John then adds, "for we shall see Him as He is!" We will never see His sufferings, shame, cruel mocking, scourging, and all He went through on the cross for us. Instead, we will see Him in

all His glory, majesty, power, riches, and absolute supremacy. King of Kings and Lord of Lords! In that glorified body we are going to be like Him! The future contemplation of what it is going to be like will help in our most difficult days. This hope should also have a profound effect on how we live our lives, seeking to live it in purity because He is pure.

A Sure and Steadfast Hope

Hebrews 6:18-19 says, "that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil." The Hebrew Christians like many today were going through tremendous times of persecution and opposition. Yet while the stormy waters were raging their vessel was safely secured (anchored) because of the hope they had. Their hope rested in a God who cannot lie! Later on, He says to them, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Dear reader you can absolutely trust the One who said it and it is your anchor through the storms of life until you meet the Lord above. This hope is sure (certain) and steadfast (unmovable) and trusts Him who is already in heaven waiting for us.

A Heavenly Hope

The apostle Paul writing to the saints at Colossae says, "we give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col. 1:3-5). The gospel is still the only message to give hope in a hopeless world, whether by the public preaching of the Word or by sharing it on a personal basis. There are so many excellent ways it can be communicated to the lost. Peter challenges us to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). We are to remember that our hope is centered in heaven. May we ever keep that upward look and live each day with His interests foremost in our everyday experience until we see Him face to face. 



Jim was commended to the work of the Lord by his assembly in Broxburn in 1981 and by the Bridlewood assembly in Ottawa Ontario in 1991. Jim has been involved in prison ministry, camp work, hospital chaplaincy, and has preached the Word throughout Canada and the US. He presently lives in Port Colborne, Ontario with his wife, Elizabeth.

by Jim Paul

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS *Lamentations 3:23*

On My Desk

The Testimony of John Duckhorn

On my desk is a picture of a family. The husband is dressed in a military uniform, a good-looking man, proud and smiling. But he was an alcoholic. The woman next to him is sad and unhappy. The children, a girl of seven is smiling because she hasn't seen her dad in a long while. The boy about four years old looks bewildered. He has never seen his father. This is the only photo I have of the four of us together. World War II was on, and many families were separated. The family in the photo was separated by war and a three-year old divorce. Mom worked making airplane parts. After the war, when the men came home, women were let go. She took other jobs. Soon she married a recently divorced soldier. The man in the photo, my father, remarried, but wanted to be a part of the lives of his children. My mother objected and so the battle began for the children's affections. It would be a battle that eventually led me to the Savior.

For some reason I was the designated church goer in our family. As a seven-year old boy I was sent off to the local Catholic Church



on Sundays. Both sides of my family were staunch Roman Catholics and they were pleased that “Jack” went to church. We moved around Wisconsin a lot and the first move was to the country where I made my first confession and first communion. We lived for seven years in a veterans housing project in Milwaukee where I made lifelong friends, and years later, was able to lead one of them to Jesus Christ. At one point, I attended a one room schoolhouse with only eleven students while the next two schools were parochial.

I continued my religious activities during public high school. Confession and communion were weekly habits. The frequency of practicing the “ordinances” made me wonder about their effect on my life. Two things started to bother me and prepared me for the events of the next few years. My friends and I began to make fun of confession by timing the length of each other’s confession. If one of us was too long, we would tease him about the length of his penance. The second matter was the devotion that both sides of the family showed to the Church, along with strong insistence that it was the only true way of salvation. Both families were rife with divorce and drinking. By this time my father was kicked out of his second marriage, lost his job, and was a hopeless alcoholic. Questions started to bother me. Was religion not to be life-changing? What good was it if I stubbornly held on to something that did little for me?

I developed good communication skills in high school and was encouraged by my teachers to pursue radio announcing. I even did standup comedy routines during the band breaks at our school dances. So, I set my future hopes on being a disc-jockey and was accepted at a communications school in Minneapolis. The summer before my senior year, God began to track me down. Two classmates went to a Bible camp that summer and one of them, a girl, came back and told me I needed to be saved, to be “born again.” The other one a boy, had often previously told off color jokes with me, but now when I began to tell him one, he cut me off, saying that he was “born again.” I was upset and confused. This was the beginning of the Lord working to convict me and I struggled with this during my senior year. I tried hard to understand the Roman Catholic Church with many significant things happening that year where I saw God’s patience in dealing with me.


I graduated in 1959 and took a job to save money for broadcasting school. I thought I was now free from having to listen to the “Holy Rollers,” but I was mistaken. I met the youth worker at the Evangelical Free Church where both the campers attended. He had heard of me and tried to get me to attend their youth meetings. I went to a couple but was more of a wise guy than a good listener.

That summer my father came back to Milwaukee. He wanted me to join him, to find work, and live with him in California. He was working small jobs and living with old drinking buddies from Milwaukee. I took a leave of absence from my

job to go with him but had little desire to be around him for very long. I went to California, not to get a job, but to get away from the stress of life in Milwaukee. While travelling to California on Route 66, on the first night there was a Bible on the table in the motel opened at John 3, which had the only verses I knew. I was curious and actually thought of taking it with me, but how could God forgive someone for stealing a Bible? At the next motel on the second night I was shocked to see a Gideons Bible opened to Psalm 23. Although I wanted a Bible, this one said it was not to be taken from the room. We finished our trip at the end of Route 66, and we then headed north to Oakland.

We spent a day walking around a famous mission in Santa Barbara. I wanted to find literature that would answer all my questions, but I found nothing in the free literature rack. In Oakland, the Lord continued to hound me. My dad’s friends were all drunks, womanizers, and lost money betting on the horses. I was not interested in being with them. One night we were in the bar below their apartment and two young women came in and talked to my dad. He came over to me and said, “It’s time to try some new things kid, and grow up.” He went upstairs with one of the girls, but I grabbed the car keys off the bar and took a drive. I saw a flashing sign on a church that said: “Jesus Saves.” I exploded in a rage of anger, pulled the car over, and began to swear at God. It was a horrible outburst of profanity, and then I suddenly stopped. I decided to take the train home the next day and find the youth worker and get his help to receive the Lord as my Savior, to be sure I did it right.

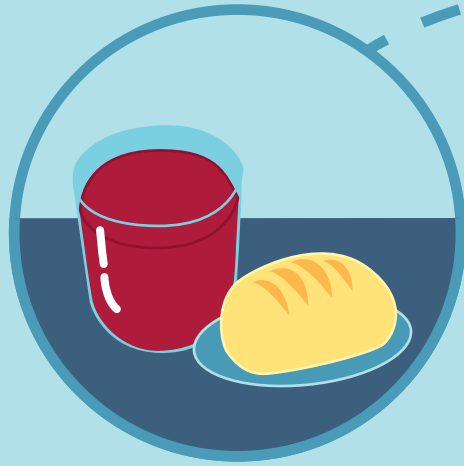
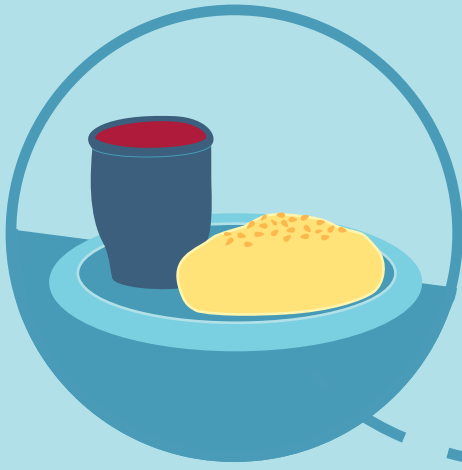
The next morning, I left California and thought about everything that had happened over the last few years of my life. I had slept little, smoked too many cigarettes and ate only a couple of meals per day. Once home, I was able to contact the youth worker, and on October 7, 1959, I came to know the Lord as my Savior.

I soon decided to go to a Bible school to catch up for lost years. Although I was hoping to wait a year and first go to the school of broadcasting, I never got there. After the year of Bible study, I wanted my life to be used as the Lord willed. The Lord pursued me, in His grace followed me, and tenderly received me into His eternal kingdom. 



John and Dona Duckhorn labored for the Lord in Columbia, South America from the time they were married in 1966 until 1979 when they returned stateside. They are commended by the Wauwatosa Bible Chapel in full-time ministry. They have two adopted sons, Michael and Steven.

by **John Duckhorn**



Remember the Lord DURING PANDEMIC

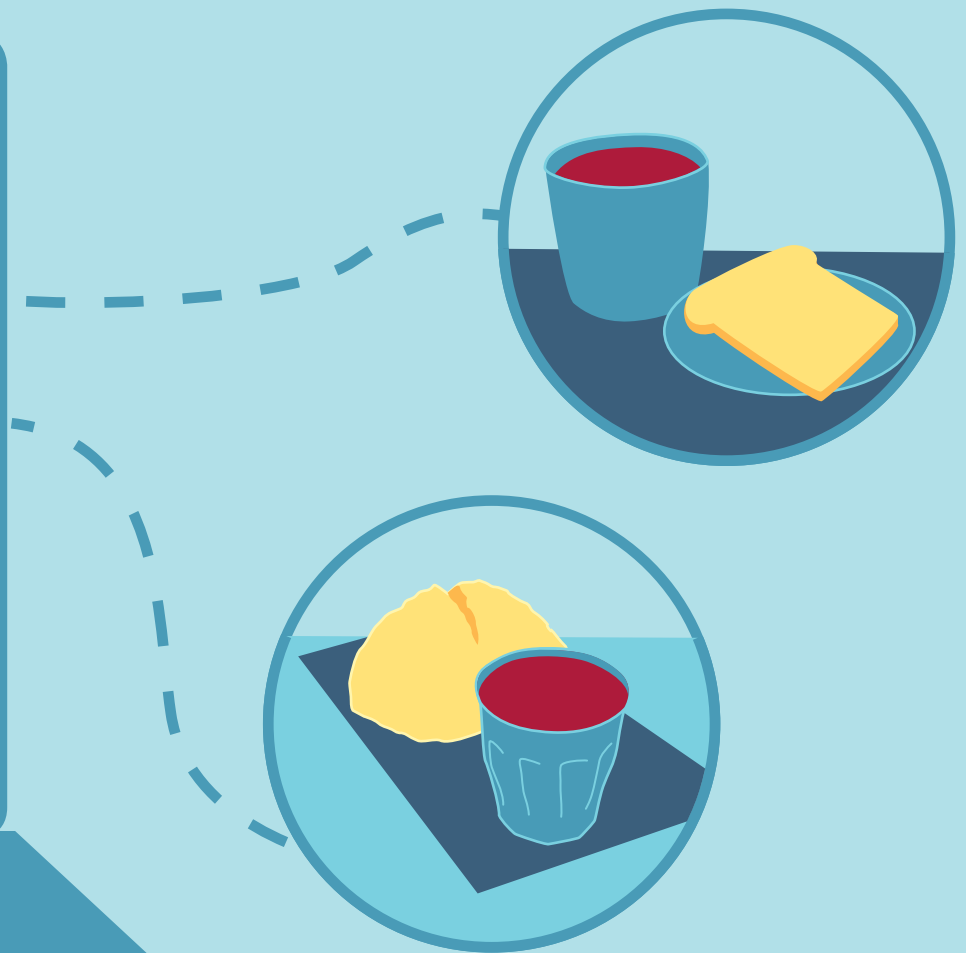
On the eve of His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus instructed His disciples to keep the Lord's Supper often and as He had prescribed it. When they did gather to break bread, they were to maintain the feast's intended purpose of remembering Him. Paul conveys the Lord's commands to the church at Corinth: *"Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."* In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, *"This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me"* (1 Cor. 11:24-25). Believers are to keep the Lord's Supper often, but no specific regularity was stated. The first Lord's Supper was not held in a local church building, in fact, the Church did not exist at that time. In the early days of the Church Age, believers obeyed the Lord's command by continuing steadfastly in the breaking of the bread (Acts 2:42), and they did so often from house to house (Acts 2:46). Clearly, believers were meeting informally and often to remember the Lord (not just on Sundays or as a local assembly).

Years later, the practice of the local church gathering together on Sundays to break bread became the standard pattern of the Church. For example, Paul uses the language

"when you gather together" five times in 1 Corinthians 11 to speak of the local church keeping the Lord's Supper while together in one place. On another occasion, Paul waited a week in Troas to break bread with the saints there on Sunday (Acts 20:7). However, because Paul preached long, they actually did not break bread until the wee hours on Monday morning and that was completely acceptable. To summarize then, the commands for the Lord Supper are to do it often and to preserve its protocol and purpose. The developed pattern of the Church was that saints gathered together in local assemblies on Sunday's to break bread together. The latter point is a scriptural observation, which means there is no prohibition in Scripture preventing saints from remembering the Lord on other days of the week or in smaller groups.

Through the years we have often remembered the Lord through the breaking of bread with those who were sick in the privacy of their homes and on weekdays. There have been times while traveling that our family has remembered the Lord at a picnic table in a roadside park because that was the best opportunity available for us to do so. The Lord wants us to remember Him by breaking bread and we should

Remembering the Lord during the pandemic



seek to be with others if physically possible to do so, unless there are good spiritual reasons for not doing so. Such as someone professing Christ but is unsound in doctrine or in life (i.e., a person is continuing in unconfessed sin, perhaps under church discipline). But these are spiritual factors not limited by a physical location. The Lord's fellowship is spiritual and all believers should remain seated with Him at His Table in glory every moment of every day (1 Cor. 10:16-22). The Lord's Table reaches beyond just the physical gatherings of saints. How else can we gather to the Lord seated on the throne of God, unless He spiritually is with us (Matt. 18:20).

On this point, notice Paul's language towards believers in other locations, *"For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed"* (1 Cor. 5:3-4). *"Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ"* (Col 2:4-5). Though Paul was separated by distance, he was still with these saints in spirit. This means that if he had had the opportunity to video conference with those he

was connected with in spirit (to see and hear the saints in real time) I think he would have gladly done so. So, while we are in physical isolation because of the COVID-19 crisis, it seems pertinent for us to obey the Lord's command of remembering Him the best way that we can by gathering in spirit with others who can. It is realized that during this interim we cannot follow the practice of the Church witnessed in Scripture. While following the scriptural pattern is safe for guiding our behavior, not observing what is observed should never negate what is commanded. Let us follow the Lord's command and remember Him the best possible way we can! [CM](#)



Warren Henderson is a full-time worker living in northeast Kansas. He is involved in writing, evangelism, and Bible teaching. Currently, he is pioneering a new assembly in Ottawa, Kansas. Many of his books may be purchased from Gospel Folio Press.

by **Warren Henderson**

FOUNDATIONS

of the faith

THE KINGDOM OF GOD



God is the sovereign Lord of the universe and the centrality of divine Lordship is a prominent theme in the Bible. Scripture reveals that God possesses absolute authority and rule as King. He is the living God, the eternal King. *“But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God and the everlasting King”* (Jer. 10:10). As King, God has authority (a throne), a realm (the heavens), and subjects (all). His Lordship and absolute sovereign authority over all confronts and opposes our autonomy. It demands our recognition of Him as Lord of all, that all things belong to Him and are subject to Him. Divine Lordship as a central theme in our faith will transform our thinking about God and it will radically alter our attitude in worship. It is a theology that not only educates but sanctifies everyday life.

The doctrine of divine Lordship naturally leads us to His Kingdom authority and the various concepts of the Kingdom of God in the Bible. The word “Kingdom” means “rule or authority.” The concept of the Kingdom of God takes on various shades of meaning in Scripture and needs to be distinguished. Broadly speaking, the Kingdom of God is the rule of an eternal sovereign God over all the universe. When we become part of God’s Kingdom, we come under God’s rule; we are under new management. What a sobering truth for our lives!

Various Concepts of Kingdom

1. The Universal Kingdom

God is the ruler of the whole universe (1 Chron. 29:11; Psa. 145:13). He is King over all the earth (Psa. 47:2, 7, 8,

9). The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His Kingdom rules over all (Psa.103:19). Dominion belongs to the Lord and He rules over the nations (Psa.22:28). God’s sovereignty and authority is unlimited in scope. He exercises His rule over all His creation. In the universal Kingdom God is the absolute ruler. He rules over all in time and eternity.

2. The Spiritual Kingdom

All believers have been delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of His beloved Son (Col.1:13). God’s mighty rescue operation of His people does not stop with deliverance from the authority of Satan. He has also “brought” or “transferred” them positionally into the Kingdom of the Son He loves. The Greek word translated “transferred” was used in secular literature in reference to removing persons from one country and settling them as citizens in another country. They were “reestablished.” Deliverance and transference are two fundamental realities of the new birth.

Christians are already within the sphere of the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom which is totally a spiritual realm of redemptive blessings. It is a present reality. The entrance to this spiritual realm is through the new birth. We are *“blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”* (Eph. 1:3), and *“seated with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”* (Eph. 2:6). Christ is the ruler of this Kingdom and in this aspect of the Kingdom He rules over believers only. It is the sovereign rule of the Lord over human hearts. The Kingdom referred to here is a spiritual

reality right now. Paul further explains it in Romans 14:17: *“The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*

3. The Mystery Form of the Kingdom

The parables of Matthew 13 revealed the mysteries concerning the concept of the Kingdom. These truths about the Kingdom were previously unknown. They are revealed by Christ only to those who are properly related to Him (Matt. 13:11-13). The mystery phase of the Kingdom (the present day) encompasses the period between the two advents of Christ. During this period wheat (children of the Kingdom) and tares (children of the wicked one) grow together until the judgment time (Matt. 13:30, 38, 40). The tares or weeds may resemble wheat but can only be distinguished from wheat when fully ripe. Satan will be active during this phase of the Kingdom. He is called the *“evil one,”* and *“enemy”* (Matt. 13:19, 25, 39).

In the mystery phase of the Kingdom, the King is away for a time, but He will come back at the end of the age to execute judgment. Meanwhile, wheat and weeds are permitted to coexist. In this phase of the Kingdom the ruled are people who have related themselves to the Kingdom—*“Christendom”* as a whole, including mere *“professors”* and genuine *“possessors.”*

4. The Millennial Kingdom

God’s Word tells us that the next great event after the Second Coming, is the establishment on earth of a thousand-year reign of Christ (Rev.20:1-6). The prophets, apostles, and Christ preached the coming of this Kingdom. The Millennial age will bring about the complete fulfillment of God’s covenants and promises with the nation Israel in the Old Testament. The Millennial Kingdom is sometimes referred to as the Messianic or Davidic Kingdom. The land promise made to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 15:18-21) and the Kingdom-throne promises made to David (2 Sam. 7:12-16) will be fulfilled literally during the reign of Christ on earth. The Messiah’s rule and reign on earth is a major theme in Bible prophecy (Isa. 11:1-10; 32:1-20; 35:1-10; Jer. 23:5-8; Joel 3:17-21; Zech. 14:9-21). Revelation 20 specifically tells about the duration of the Messianic Kingdom on earth. Christ, the Messiah, will rule over the earth and its inhabitants during the 1,000 years that follow His glorious return. During this time the Church will reign with Christ.

The Church & the Kingdom


The Church is the body of Christ; it is not the Kingdom. The Church is not building the Kingdom today. The Church’s mission is to preach the gospel and fulfill the Great Commission. The Kingdom will be established by the King when He returns. When the Lord addressed the Kingdom with His disciples (Acts 1:6-8), He did not deny their expectation of a literal, earthly Messianic Kingdom.

But the Lord did not want them to engage in speculations over the time of the coming of the Kingdom. They were to focus on the work at hand—*“You shall be My witnesses...”* (Acts 1:8). God by His own authority, at the right time, will establish His Kingdom on earth. The Lord did not teach that the preaching of the gospel will usher in the Kingdom. The Church is not the agent in accomplishing Christ’s lordship over all the structures of the world.

Contemporary theonomy (from the Greek word for God and Law) advocates argue that the Church, like Israel, has the solemn responsibility to pressure governments to confirm God’s laws, including those given through Moses—the precepts and the penalties. When this has been realized, they say that God’s Kingdom on earth will have arrived. This is just a reiteration of Postmillennialism (the view that Christ will return after the Millennium. The Kingdom of God is now being extended in the world today through the preaching of the Gospel and the world will become progressively better). You will not find such teaching in the Word of God.

The Church stands unique in the purpose of God and it remains distinct. The Church and the Kingdom should not be equated; these are two different entities. The relationship of the Church to the Kingdom must be carefully discerned. Having briefly surveyed the various concepts of the Kingdom, we can safely conclude that:

1. The Church comes under the concept of universal Kingdom and is a part of it as God is the ruler of everything in the universe.
2. The Church, the Body of Christ, is equivalent to the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom into which all believers have been placed.
3. The Church is also part of the mystery form of the Kingdom since the Church is part of Christendom.
4. The Church is not part of the Millennial Kingdom, but the Church will reign with Christ in His Kingdom.

*Above all powers, above all kings,
Above all nature, and all created things...
You were here...
Above all Kingdoms, above all thrones...
... Above all. *



Alexander Kurian is a commended full time worker serving the Lord for the last forty years in itinerant ministry of evangelism, teaching, training, writing, and equipping. He and his wife Valsa fellowship at their commending assembly, Edmonds Lane Bible Chapel in Lewisville, Texas.

by Alexander Kurian

Report: Cornerstone Magazine Webinar Ministry

On April 13, Cornerstone Magazine introduced its first ever online webinar using video conferencing technology. Due to the country-wide stay at home orders by civil government, people were looking for ways to continue to communicate and stay in touch. Video conferencing has been used for years by business organizations, but it has now been brought into wider use with the general public. Robert Youssef of Axios One International, Allentown, Pennsylvania, provided the technical expertise utilizing the GoToWebinar service.

Since the pandemic occurred, there have been some wild speculations made by professing Christians, often citing prophetic passages, and offering explanations for the meaning of the present worldwide pandemic known as COVID-19. Therefore, to provide accurate biblical exegesis, we thought it would be profitable for interested believers to hear reputable Bible teachers comment on the present situation in light of what the Scripture actually teaches.

The first video conference was called “Is there Prophetic Significance to COVID-19?” Panelists including Randal Amos (Oregon City, Oregon), David Dunlap (Land O’ Lakes, Florida, President of Cornerstone Magazine Inc.), Keith Keyser (Birdsboro, Pennsylvania) and Mark Kolchin (Lanoka Harbor, New Jersey, Editor of Cornerstone Magazine Inc.) were asked by panel moderator, Brian Gunning, to discuss the following questions:



1. Is COVID-19 one of the pestilences mentioned in Matthew 24?
2. Should Christians pray the prayer of Psalm 91?
3. Does 2 Chronicles 7:14 promise healing of our land through prayer?
4. Does Scripture teach that the rapture generation will see signs of the tribulation?
5. Are churches obligated to follow government mandated banning of public meetings or is this a forsaking of assembling of ourselves together and obedience to man instead of God?

6. What practical things can Christians do in the present pandemic in terms of evangelism and ministry to fellow believers?

Almost 1,000 devices registered to view the video conference and subsequently the recording has had over 3,300 views on YouTube. In light of this high level of interest, Cornerstone Magazine then arranged for a follow up webinar titled, “Prophecy and the End Times.” This was held on May 4 with the same panel members discussing the following questions:

1. What is the difference between the rapture and the second coming of Jesus Christ?
2. Will the church go through the Tribulation?
3. Does Matt 24:34 apply to Christians today?
4. What is a timeline of prophetic events at the end of the world?



Again, there was a tremendous response with a viewership of over 600 people with many follow up questions and encouraging emails.

If you missed these conferences, you can view them at the Cornerstone Magazine’s YouTube channel called Cornerstone Conferences. Lord willing, we hope to hold more video conferences later this year to discuss a variety of subjects of interest to believers. Please send us your comments or suggestions. [CM](#)



Brian Gunning is married to Marlene and they have four children and eight grandchildren. They make their home in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. Brian is a self employed accountant. He came to know the Lord at the age of seven and has been in fellowship at Brockview Bible Chapel since his early teens. He currently is an elder in that assembly. In addition to itinerant preaching he is on the boards of the Ontario Workers and Elders Conference, Gospel Folio Press, Bible Conference Corporation and Cornerstone Magazine Inc.

by **Brian Gunning**

Report: Taking the Gospel to the Nations

An interview with Ruben Ruga as told by George Ferrier

“And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

For close to 45 years brother Ruben Ruga has travelled all over the world, handing out packages of gospel literature. Unfortunately, his health no longer allows him to take these trips. He now solely concentrates on distributing literature in his home state of New Jersey. Only eternity will reveal the fruit of his labors. For this, He gives all the glory to God. This is his story.

Q. When did you begin doing this?

A. I made my first trip 45 years ago at the age of 40.

Q. Can you remember what led you to making that first trip?

A. I had a carpet cleaning business and the Lord gave me a desire to use the surplus profits for His glory and sharing the gospel with the lost.

Q. How did you normally go about choosing a country to visit?

A. The Lord would often place a country on my heart. Practically, there were two main considerations. First, would the country allow me to enter to openly distribute literature on the streets? Second, did I have the materials in their language?

Q. What materials went into each package?

A. The packages included tracts, wall hangings with a beautiful picture and verse, as well as bookmarks with an attractive picture and verse. We made sure that the pictures

would not be offensive to that particular country. The most common tract we put in was a Chick tract called, “This Was Your Life.” There were volunteers that helped make the wall hangings and put the packages together before each trip.

Q. How many trips have you made?

A. I would estimate more than 100, averaging more than 2 trips per year. The

length of each trip would vary but on average would be about two weeks. My goal was to distribute all the literature that I brought with me. I have been to over 100 countries on these short-term mission trips. I went to Greenland more than once because I felt led to cover the whole country.

Q. Did you always go alone, or did you have someone join you on some of your trips?

A. Sometimes my wife would join me, other times another Christian brother, still other times I went alone.

Q. Give a few examples of countries you have visited with the gospel?

A. I went to Mongolia, Russia, China, Israel, Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Congo, Haiti, Denmark, Iceland.

Q. What kind of accommodations did you have?

A. Once I arrived at the airport I would see what was available in that country. In the more advanced countries I would stay at a hotel, other times a guesthouse or an apartment. I took what was available, preferably something with running water and air conditioning.

Q. Were there ever any problems with the authorities?

A. By God’s grace, I never did. When the Lord lays a place on your heart, He goes on ahead of you.

Q. Did you have any interesting conversations?

A. Yes. When people were willing to talk and we were able to understand one another I had the opportunity to share what I was doing and discuss the gospel with them. Besides handing out the packages myself, occasionally I would ask locals to help me.

Q. Describe your experience on your last trip?

A. In 2018, I went to Pemba an island in the Indian Ocean off the east coast of Tanzania. A Roman Catholic priest invited me into his church. When I offered him a few shillings and a supply of Swahili tracts to pass out to his parishioners,





he gladly accepted and gave me a hug and kiss! I wasn't expecting that, but it shows how the Lord works in the heart of others. As we drove on through remote villages, my chauffeur,

Shaub knew many friends who were happy to pass out the gospel to their neighbors. These people are so poor that they appreciate a few shillings for their labors (Gal. 2:6). We arrived at Chake-Chake, where for lunch we had hot soup with potato, cassava and meat in it. A number of "friends" were given tracts to pass out along with 2,000 shillings (not that much in value) for their labors.

Q. Any advice for the younger people who might want to do this or something similar?

A. I would advise: pray and seek the Lord's mind; let your elders and other believers know your desire; find out if the country will allow you to openly do this and gather as much material as you can in their language.



Ruben Ruga fellowships at the Linwood Gospel Chapel in Linwood, NJ. He and his wife Jane have lived in Dorothy, NJ most of their lives and have three children, nine grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. You may correspond with him at rugaruben@gmail.com.

by Ruben Ruga

May We Introduce...

Sarah Bhatt

Social Media Manager

Sarah Bhatt is Cornerstone Magazine's new social media manager. It is a position that Cornerstone created recently to raise the magazine's visibility across various social media platforms. Sarah is currently a sophomore studying public relations at the University of Florida. When not at school, she lives at home in Lutz, Florida, fellowshiping at Land O'Lakes Bible Chapel. "I have not always been a Southerner", Sarah states. "I was born in Newark, Delaware—twice. My spiritual birth, I distinctly remember, was on a drive home from preschool". Sarah recalls with delight the memorable spring day when she trusted Christ as her Savior. She also remembers well her faith-building conversations and experiences growing up at Greenwood Hills Bible Conference in PA, where she spent many of her summers. "These summers brought me godly friends and mentors who taught me to serve the Lord and spend time with Him often. Their encouragement journeyed with me into public school, where I learned to defend my faith and hold fast to God's Word amidst diverse trials". Sarah's experience has also included Cru, formerly Campus Crusade for Christ. Sarah looks forward to working with Cornerstone Magazine and the tremendous open door available to edify and uplift the saints through social media.




Danielle Robins

Graphic Designer

Danielle was born into a loving home in Flamborough, Ontario, Canada. Growing up, she attended church and Christian schools but never heard the Gospel. She attended a three-year Graphic Design program at Conestoga College leading to employment at Gospel Folio Press in Port Colborne. As time went on, God revealed Himself to Danielle and on October 18, 2010 she trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. On the fourth anniversary of trusting in the Lord, she made the second-best decision she had ever made by marrying David Robins. They fellowship at Brockview Bible Chapel in St. Catharines and make their home in Niagara Falls, Ontario. As Cornerstone's graphic designer, Danielle says, "I can see how clearly the Lord has led me up until this point in my life. Even before I trusted in Him, He faithfully brought me through situations that would shape my life personally and professionally. It is a blessing to have the opportunity to use the skills God has given me to edify His saints through Cornerstone Magazine."



The Cornerstone Ministry committee is thankful to the Lord for bringing these gifted people to us to encourage His people through this far-reaching ministry. 

ISSUES *and* ANSWERS

"Search The Scriptures..." John 5:39

Question: Should believers always obey the government?

Not only now during this pandemic but always it is helpful for the believer to know what the Bible says about our responsibility to obey the authorities. We read in Romans 13:1-4a, *"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good"* (NKJV).


God ordained government after the flood, appointing the "authorities that exist." Therefore, governments are ministers (servants) of God to ensure order by protecting and preserving society. Without it, there would be anarchy and unrestrained evil. Therefore, bad government is always better than no government. We also see God's desire for order in other structures. For example, He has appointed man to be the head of the home, to lead his family by following Christ's example in His love for the church (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-33). Also, He has ordained elders to shepherd believers in the local church (Titus 1:5). In these instances, there must be submission—by the family in the home and by the believers in the local assembly for there to be order.

Similarly, to maintain God's order in the world the governed must submit to the authorities. Believers especially must do so for the Lord's sake (1 Pet. 2:13-15). Since we are identified with Christ, we must not provide an opportunity for people to slander His Name. We should not be selective in what laws and what authorities we obey. Instead, we are to fully submit to every ordinance and every authority over us (vv. 13-14). By doing so, we are doing God's will (v. 15). To resist government is to rebel against God and any punishment that the government administers in response to our disobedience is just.

Though we are citizens of heaven we are still in this world and we can testify to Christ and bring honor to God by giving authorities the respect, honor, and obedience due them as

God's appointed servants. The exception to the rule is when the government demands something that goes against God's will such as forbidding the preaching and teaching of His Word. In those circumstances, we must be true to God and be willing to suffer the consequences for our obedience to Christ. As the apostles said in Acts 5:29, *"we ought to obey God rather than men."* However, most of the time obedience to God means obedience to the authorities.

The Cretans were rough people and hard to govern but Paul told Titus that he should teach them to obey their rulers. Things that characterized them before their salvation were now to be absent. Among these former things were foolishness, disobedience, and speaking evil of others including their rulers. (Titus 3:1-3). In western civilization we have freedom of speech which we can prudently exercise to both commend and criticize our government's actions. However, we should not demean and belittle God's servants with personal attacks. Instead, we should pray for our rulers that they will serve righteously so that we may live a quiet, peaceable, and godly life. (1 Tim. 2:1-3).

Regardless of whether we feel their measures are wise or useful, when governments pass laws we honor God by obeying them. However, should they enact ungodly regulations that oppose God, we must then choose the Lord. During the current medical crisis, believers have still been able to worship and hear God's Word virtually, and while not ideal, it has allowed us to concurrently obey the authorities. 

If you have a question for this column please submit it to gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org



George Ferrier is a commended full-time worker who fellowships at Bridlewood Bible Chapel in Ottawa, ON. In addition to itinerant preaching and teaching in North America and overseas, he is a regular contributor to Choice Gleanings Calendar. He is on the board of Cornerstone Magazine Inc. and also serves as assistant editor.

by George Ferrier

News & Notices



IBF Family Conference Cancelled

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IBF committee after much prayer and deliberations, has cancelled the conference scheduled for July 2020. Though it was not an easy decision, they felt it was necessary for the wellbeing of all who attend as well as to give early notice to the speakers and conference facility. Lord willing, they plan to hold next year's conference from June 30-July 4, 2021.

Discipleship Training Program

**Morning Star Bible Camp,
West Kelowna, BC, Canada**

With a vision to see the upcoming generation equipped in New Testament church principles, Morning Star Bible Camp will be running it's fourth summer of the DTP Program. Volunteers will be given practical opportunities to serve in the camp ministry while also participating in daily Bible studies, For more information, or to apply, please go to moringstarbiblecamp.com/discipleship-training-program/ or contact the Camp Manager, Josh Caplan at 250-718-2021 or manager@moringstarbiblecamp.com.

Kenosha, WI Bible Conference

July 18, 2020

Grace Bible Chapel

3917 - 59th Street, Kenosha, WI

Grace Bible Chapel in Kenosha, WI would like to announce a Summer Conference on Saturday, July 18, from 10am to 4pm. The title of the conference is "The Battle is the Lord's" with David Dunlap (FL) speaking on the theme of Practical Holiness. Contact Jim Greenwald at gymgreenwald@gmail.com or 262-237-4054 with your attendance plans or questions by July 16, 2020.

109th Labor Day Conference

September 4-7, 2020

Twin Cities, MN

Expected speakers, in the will of the Lord, are Randy Amos and Scott DeGroff. For more information see www.mnldc.net or Glen Ellis at (763) 572-1379.

Bible Conference on the Bay Harvey Cedars Bible Conference

September 14-18, 2020

Long Beach Island, NJ

Paul Young from Wales (UK) will be the special speaker for Know the Word's annual Bible Conference on the Bay. It will be held at the deluxe Harvey Cedars Bible Conference on Long Beach Island in Ocean County, NJ. Join with other believers for five uplifting days of rich ministry and great time of fellowship. Events for the week include a visit to a New England-style seafood restaurant followed by a tour of the historic town of Ocean Grove, NJ, famous for its rich Christian heritage and renown Great Auditorium. The cost for the week: \$430 pp. Register online by going to www.knowtheword.com or send the full amount to Know the Word c/o Mark Kolchin P.O. Box 305 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734. Email any questions to knowtheword@gmail.com.

"I know that everywhere Christ is in the church in the power of his Spirit, *compassion for souls becomes very prominent*. Christ weeps through his people's eyes, and hears us through his children's hearts. He makes them pitiful and full of compassion. They cannot bear it that men should be damned, it grieves them that the day of a gracious visitation should come, and yet so many should reject Christ. Oh, my brethren, you who live near to Christ, and feel a sympathy with him, ask the Lord to give you heart-ache over dying souls; ask him to make you feel an anguish because men will not come unto him that they might have life, but will persist in committing spiritual suicide, by putting far from them life eternal. Oh, that we might see a holy passion for souls in the church, for that would be a blessed sign of rich grace."

—C. H. Spurgeon

"Another Royal Procession," in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, Vol. 18. Originally preached on March 3, 1872. (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1872), 129. [Italics original.]

New Assembly in Houston

We are a new assembly in the Houston area. Meetings are Breaking of Bread Sunday 9:30 am, Sunday evening service 7:00 pm, Wednesday night prayer and Bible study 7:00 pm. It is a pleasure to welcome all in fellowship with a commendation letter from the assembly you have previously been with. For more information contact E. Frank Detwiler at (979) 922-3837.

Digging Deep into Revelation

Inspired by Revelation 1:3, "DIGGING DEEP INTO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST" by Mike Copple, is a 234 page reference for anyone striving to understand the book of Revelation. A compilation of commentary notes provided by many solid brothers, this study guide contains the scripture (NKJV), commentary, verse cross references, and reference commentary in 4 columns side by side. Copies are available from Mike's website www.michaelcopples.com (check out the bulk order discounts for study groups), or online from WestBow Press, Amazon, or Barnes & Noble..

Legacy Ministries Canada - President's Position

Legacy Ministries Canada (LMC) is a Canadian assembly-based charity committed to assisting believers in the Lord Jesus Christ with their stewardship responsibilities. At the present time we are seeking an individual to fill the role of President within our organization. The successful applicant will report to the Board of Directors and will be responsible for overseeing all operational, administrative, and regulatory functions with the organization. Any interested applicants should send their resume to Robert Sullivan at rsullivan@bssmatters.com.

At the time of publication these events are scheduled to take place. Due to COVID-19 please call or check online to find out if any cancellations have occurred.

Service Opportunity: Church Planting in Goldsboro

Around 1954 Christians in Goldsboro, NC began meeting for breaking of bread, fellowship, the apostle's doctrine, and prayer. The work continued until recently with many of the saints going home to be with the Lord, leaving only Dale and Issi Harris. Pembroke Family Fellowship, which is approximately 110 miles away, would like to partner with someone willing to lead this church plant in Goldsboro and come alongside for spiritual help. The building and a home are available for someone exercised for this work. If any brother is interested please contact Dale Harris of Goldsboro at dukeblue.1@netzero.com or 919-734-8786, or Ron Locklear of Pembroke at Ronlocklear@bellsouth.net or 910-740-7782.

"The life of faith does not follow automatically when a person becomes a Christian. It requires deliberate action on his part. This is especially true in affluent society. The believer must put himself in a position where he is compelled to trust God... It is only as he gets rid of his reserves and other false supports that he can truly launch out into the deep."

—William MacDonald
True Discipleship

Attention Canadian Donors

In addition to current ways to contribute to Cornerstone Magazine, Canadian donors may now also donate through MSC Canada. To designate a gift to Cornerstone Magazine through MSC Canada via credit card, eTransfer, or pre-authorized bank withdrawal, go to <https://www.msccanada.org>.

We Want Your News & Notices!

Do you have a conference, event, or service opportunity you wish to advertise to print subscribers from across Canada and the United States, and to online readers on every continent?

Submit 2-3 months in advance of the issue you would like it to appear in for print, or 3-4 months in advance for two months inclusion.

Submit online: cornerstonemagazine.org or by email: news@cornerstonemagazine.org

Longing to Meet Together

How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the Lord;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts,
My King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;
They will still be praising You. Selah

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You,
Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.
As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
Each one appears before God in Zion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah
O God, behold our shield,
And look upon the face of Your anointed.

For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
The Lord will give grace and glory;
No good thing will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts,
Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

Psalms 84 NKJV

