

# The Worldwide NEWS



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## Ambassador prepares for '95-96 school year

By Thomas R. Delamater

**BIG SANDY**—The new semester is almost upon us at Ambassador, and we wanted to update our brethren in the Church about what has taken place at the university over the summer.

We are eager to see the students return in August. At presstime we had already received more than 700 housing reservations from new and returning students, with three weeks to go

*Thomas R. Delamater is director of Institutional Advancement for Ambassador University.*

before the start of classes. Last spring we ended the year with about 900 students, so our enrollment will be slightly lower than before. We are projecting an enrollment of 750 to 800.

While we are saddened by the fact that some students have chosen not to return—many because of their own or their parents' disagreements with Church doctrine—we expected a decline. Even so, enrollment is holding up quite well, so we are grateful for the young men and women whom God has provided for the coming year.

### Changes in the board of regents

The university's board of regents was affected by the departure earlier

this year of several board members from the Worldwide Church of God. Board member Harold Treybig of Houston, Texas, resigned from the board and the ministry of the Church. He, along with board members Carl Sable of Big Sandy, Daniel Salcedo of Anaheim, California, and John Merritt of Laguna Hills, California, were eventually disfellowshipped for cause from the Church.

In accordance with the bylaws of the university's board of regents, all four were disqualified from serving on the board at the time they were disfellowshipped. This left the board with five members.

In Dr. Merritt's case, he had been disfellowshipped by his local pastor. He was later reinstated as a member of the Church, but reinstatement in the Church does not include automatic reinstatement on the board of regents of the university. Subsequent to his reinstatement he was again disfellowshipped from the Church.

On June 16 the university board met and made a number of important decisions. They accepted the resignation of Donald Ward as president of Ambassador and approved a compensation package for him. They decided to appoint Russell Duke, chair of the Theology Department, as president pro tem.

They also approved the nomination of five new members to the board: Joseph Locke, Pasadena, secretary; Thomas H. Grede, West Bend, Wisconsin; Michael P. Harkins, Vineland, New Jersey; Helen Jackson, Alhambra, California; and John Payne, La Puente, California (see July 18 WN).

That afternoon Dr. Duke conducted a meeting with university employees. He emphasized that Ambassador is a Christian university and that the Church remains its principal sponsor. He asked employees to consider their commitment to the university and the Church.

He said that the university was not seeking to eliminate people, but that those who decided to join churches that are causing division in the Worldwide Church of God might risk losing their jobs with the university.

Any action in that regard would be

### Preliminary injunction denied

On July 27 an East Texas district judge denied a preliminary injunction against Ambassador University requested by a disfellowshipped member. Complete coverage of how the injunction request was defeated is scheduled for the Aug. 15 issue.

done in accordance with the policies of the university as set forth in the staff handbook, a copy of which is provided to all full-time employees. Section 9.14.1 of the handbook includes the following statement:

"Without limitations on reasons for dismissal, disfellowship of a baptized member from the Church, or continued nonadherence by current Church members, or Church members who are in nonattendance, to doctrines promulgated by the Worldwide Church of God, for example, are always a basis for dismissal or discharge."

On June 27 Dr. Duke conducted another meeting with employees. During that meeting he announced a decision to allow any employees who wished to leave their jobs with the university to resign with a severance package. This was done in a voluntary effort to provide for employees during a potential time of transition in their lives. About 20 employees expressed their intention to resign as a result of the university's offer.

### Letter to students

In June Dr. Duke sent a letter to new and returning students to reassure them about the future of Ambassador University.

"Surely many of you still have questions about changes in the Church and university," he wrote. "I encourage you to return to school in the fall to examine those questions and be a part of the exciting future of Ambassador University. Our goal is to continue to meet the needs of our  
See Ambassador, page 4



## Personal from...

JOSEPH W. TKACH

### Becoming good stewards while showing willingness to change

Thank you again for your love and prayers. My recovery is taking longer than I would like (I suppose that everyone who is ill wants to be better right away), and I am still experiencing some internal pains. So I appreciate your concern and your prayers.

I ask you to pray for the health of the Church, too. Things seem to be stabilizing, and morale is improving in most of our congregations. Income, however, is still less than our operating expenses, so I ask you to pray specifically about that need. Ask Christ to direct us doctrinally, emotionally and as good stewards of the resources he gives us.

Our trials humble us. They reduce our strength. They force us to rely more on God's strength, his guidance and wisdom, and his supervision of our lives. Trials remind us, whether we need it or not, that we are nothing of ourselves. We cannot lean on our own understanding—we must rely on God's power and wisdom in all situations. Our own wisdom is often faulty and unreliable.

Our own understanding can be defective. We know that—and yet it nevertheless surprises us every time we learn something new. We wonder, "How could we have been wrong for so long?"

With this in mind, I ask you to read my son's comments below. He surveys the four Gospels, noting how often the disciples themselves failed to understand what Jesus was teaching. This can encourage all of us, since we are all disciples learning from Jesus Christ. He can use us even if we don't understand every doctrine perfectly. He looks on the heart.

God has always allowed his people to make mistakes—even serious mistakes that endure for many years. He works in us despite our weaknesses, because the work is done not by our own power or wisdom, but by the Spirit of God. We can be thankful for that. We can be confident that our labors have not been in vain.

Thank you, brethren, for your faithful work. The Word of God stands sure forever and ever. It is the standard we have been given, and we look to it for the basis of all belief and behavior. We strive to apply it as best we understand how. Thank you for supporting the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout these trying times.

With love, in Jesus' name,  
Joseph W. Tkach

Many members have wondered, "How could we have been in doctrinal error for so long?" And a few have even wondered, "If we were  
See Personal, page 6

### Pastor general slowly recovering

By Joseph Tkach Jr.

My dad had his second chemotherapy treatment the week of July 17 to 21. He is happy to report that he is experiencing less pain and a bit more energy. He is not ready to enter the Olympics, but he is happy to move around on his own. And his appetite has returned and he has gained six pounds.

In the weeks that followed his surgery, he had lost some weight. He is happy to be at the same weight (175 pounds) that he was when he was 25 years old and married my mom.

He sends his love to all of you and mentioned that he prays for everyone's growth and well-being.

# AU update: chapel services, religious beliefs

By Russell Duke

Several have asked about the statement that Ambassador students "may not attend churches that we deem to be dissident to the Worldwide Church of God and remain a student of the University."

This does not refer to the Baptist, Methodist, Church of God (Seventh Day), or other established churches, for they did not get started based on their opposition to the Worldwide

Church of God. We deem churches as "dissident" that were formed by members separating themselves from the Worldwide Church of God. Many students complained about unrest on campus last year because of pressure from those in opposition to the teaching of the Worldwide Church of God. Some tried to persuade other students to attend churches that oppose us.

Although we require attendance at chapel on Tuesday, just as we did forum, we do not require attendance on Saturday. We do *expect* students to

attend our Saturday worship service. Most Christian universities require attendance at two to five chapel services per week. Some limit the churches they may attend on the weekend.

Some parents who have left our Church have asked if their children would be allowed to attend with them when they are at home. When students do not live on the Ambassador campus during the summer or school breaks (fall, winter or spring), attendance at any other church is not our concern.

Some have also expressed concern that this approach might adversely affect our accreditation status. Academic freedom in the classroom allows faculty and students to examine multiple facets of any issue, yet that freedom does not mean that opposing views can be presented as equally right, nor that personal beliefs of any faculty member may hold sway over instruction.

A university may endorse religious beliefs, and those beliefs may influence matters regarding selection of faculty, staff and students.

Following is a paragraph from the SACS *Criteria for Accreditation*, 1995 edition: "Faculty and students must be free to examine all pertinent data, question assumptions, be guided by the evidence of scholarly research, and teach and study the substance of a given discipline. Institutions may endorse particular religious or philosophical beliefs, or specific social principles as they relate to the institutional statement of purpose. Such beliefs and principles may influence the curriculum and the selection of students, faculty and staff. Nevertheless, institutions of higher education exist to further the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge."

At Ambassador we strive to educate our students about religious and secular matters to enable them to build their own belief system; however, the principal sponsor of Ambassador University is the Worldwide Church of God. Thus, the "religious beliefs" that the institution endorses, to use the language of SACS, are those of the Church. We endeavor to accomplish this in an environment of peace.

## Church's statement regarding the identity of ancient Israel

The following statement was prepared to answer media inquiries about the Church's doctrine about the modern identities of the lost 10 tribes of Israel:

The Worldwide Church of God teaches that national identity and ethnic origin have absolutely nothing to do with the believer's standing before God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Certainly, the knowledge of any proposed biblical identity of modern nations does not forgive sin, assure salvation or improve human relationships.

For over 50 years, the Worldwide Church of God taught that Great Britain and the United States of

America descended from two of the lost 10 tribes of Israel. However, while the Church has held certain beliefs concerning the identity of the lost 10 tribes, it has never embraced all the tenets of what is commonly called British-Israelism.

Today, after having carefully researched the tenets and history of its belief that the United States and Britain are the descendants of the ancient Israelite tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, the Worldwide Church of God no longer teaches this doctrine. While it may be an interesting theory, there is simply a lack of credible evidence, either in the biblical account or the historical record, to support a conclusion regarding the modern identity of the lost 10 tribes of Israel. We recognize that there were hermeneutical and historical inaccuracies in the Church's past understanding of this issue.

Therefore, in accordance with the Church's historical position of a willingness to change when convicted that its teachings are biblically inaccurate, the Church no longer attempts to identify the modern day descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.

The Church has withdrawn from circulation all editions of its publication *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

## Prison Fellowship OKs volunteers

Several in our Church have expressed interest in volunteering to help in the Prison Fellowship Ministry, a nondenominational effort led by Charles Colson. Volunteers in this ministry have helped lead many prisoners to repentance and belief in Jesus Christ. This is an important part of their rehabilitation and reintegration back into society.

In the past, members of the Worldwide Church of God could not participate in the program because of doctrinal positions we used to hold. However, Prison Fellowship Ministry has reviewed our Statement of Beliefs and reversed its stance toward the Worldwide Church of God.

Bob Brunelle, area director for Prison Fellowship in California, wrote the Church: "I would like to confirm the willingness of Prison

Fellowship to train and use the volunteers from the Worldwide Church of God based out of Pasadena, California. We look forward to working with you and welcome the participation of your members in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with the least of these."

We already have some members in the program, and they have been greatly praised for their work. Participation in Prison Fellowship is a wonderful way for our people to be involved firsthand in bringing the good news to those in desperate need.

If you want to find out more about opportunities in your area, contact the following address: Prison Fellowship, Box 17500, Washington, D.C., 20041-0500, phone 1-703-478-0100, fax 1-703-478-0452.

## The Worldwide News



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## Letters to the Editor

Letters for this section should be addressed to "Letters to the Editor." The editor reserves the right to use letters so addressed in whole or in part, and to include your name and edit the letter for clarity or space. We welcome your comments.

I am writing in regard to an article by Clayton Steep in the July 4 *WN*. In it he quotes Mr. Armstrong: "Your faith must not be in me; it must be in Jesus Christ. He is the Head of the Church, I am not. And if I were not here there would be another who'd become the pastor general. And if that should ever happen, if you want to get into God's kingdom, you will follow that pastor general. And your eternity depends on that."

However, the Bible says that salvation is through faith in Christ. This article implies to me that we in the Worldwide Church of God are the only church with members in Christ's body. We know that there are many members in many different organizations that are a part of Christ's body.

Tammy Grovak  
Lafayette, Indiana

*The purpose of the article was to encourage members of the Worldwide Church of God to remain united under its current leadership, rather than follow various dissident groups. The article was not directed to Christians of*

*other fellowships, nor was there any intention to imply that all Christians must belong to the Worldwide Church of God or that sincere believers who have left our fellowship have lost their salvation.*

### Peace and joy

Dear Mr. Tkach, how beautiful are your feet upon the mountains! I rejoice in every word you have said and written about the new covenant. You have brought the peace and joy God intended us to have—and I thank you!

Debra Owens  
Bethany, Oklahoma

### Saddened by divisive ministers

I have read several articles in *The Worldwide News* over the past few months concerning ministers who resigned because they could not accept the way Christ is leading his Church today. It is sad to know that some of his ministers have become a divisive element in the Church by starting their own churches thereby leading blindly some brethren to their ways.

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

### Christians follow Christ

Thank you for the wonderful article "Why These Changes in Our Church?" in the April 25 *Worldwide News*. In the past we have been

so occupied with making sure we kept the Old Testament Jewish laws that we were overlooking the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Thank you again for your article that explains how Christians should follow Jesus Christ.

Carmen Cook  
Columbia, Louisiana

### Finding God

I wanted to say how much I appreciate Jeff Zhorne's articles in the *WN*. He writes out of powerful personal experience, unafraid to share intimate spiritual insights and weaknesses. Nothing is more effective in reaching people.

I'm also excited that he liberally quotes from Larry Crabb's *Finding God*, one of the most profound books I've ever read. I used to think I was a mature Christian until I read that book.

You might be interested to know that I once wrote to and received a kind reply from Mr. Crabb. He said his intention in writing the book was "to trouble and disrupt whatever stands in the way of our knowing Christ more fully."

The changes in our Church have had the same effect, haven't they? God has graciously led Mr. Tkach to rightly set aside many things that have gotten in the way of our knowing Christ more fully.

The congregations here have lost only a handful of members. Almost everyone is excited and rejuvenated by the changes that have taken place.

Kevin Struck  
West Bend, Wisconsin

# Questions & Answers

FROM THE PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

## Why does the *Statement of Beliefs* use the word *Persons* rather than *Hypostases* when referring to God?

The *Statement of Beliefs* is meant to be relatively concise, not a detailed explanation. Both *Persons* and *Hypostases* need further explanation, and these words are explained in greater detail in our booklet *God Is...*

The advantage of *Hypostases* is that it is an unfamiliar word and therefore automatically indicates that God's existence is not easy to define. The disadvantage is that some people are discouraged by strange words and may conclude that God is vague and unknowable.

Moreover, if they look up *hypostases* in an average dictionary, they will not find it. If they realize that *hypostasis* is the singular form and they look that up, they will learn that it means "Person" when referring to God. Thus the word *Hypostases* (without an explanation that would be too long for the *Statement of Beliefs*) could annoy and detract rather than illuminate and clarify.

Our booklet notes the problem with the word *Persons*: It can cause people to think of three separate beings (*God Is...*, 1994 printing, pages 39-40). However, the *Statement of Beliefs* clearly says that God is one divine Being. That in itself helps readers understand that God is not three beings and that the Persons of the Godhead are not persons in the same way that humans are persons.

*God Is...* also notes the advantage of the word *Persons*: "One reason the word *Person* is helpful, if it is understood correctly, is that God interacts with us in a *personal* way. It is wrong, therefore, to say that God is *impersonal*. One does not worship a rock or plant, or an impersonal power 'behind the universe,' but a 'living Person.' God is personal, but he is not a person in the way humans are persons" (page 43).

The booklet also comments on the limitations of language: "All words that refer to created things tend to mislead [when used to describe God] by their very context in ordinary language. Most words, including the word *Persons*, tend to confuse God's nature with the created order. On the other hand, all our words are in one way or another in reference to the created order. So it is important to know what we do mean, and what we do not mean, when we use any word in reference to God.... God is infinitely more than any human word can possibly convey, yet he is personal and loves us dearly" (pages 40, 44).

We believe that the word *Persons* is less objectionable than *Hypostases*. If anyone has questions about the terms, of course, the booklet *God Is...* is readily available.

## The New International Version (NIV) says that the old covenant is obsolete (Hebrews 8:13). The King James Version, however, says only that it is decaying and growing old, implying that it is still here. Can you prove from the King James Version that the old covenant is obsolete?

Hebrews 10:9 (KJV) says that Jesus Christ, as God in the flesh, came to do the will of God the Father. He took away the first covenant so he could establish the second. Hebrews 8:6 (KJV) says that he is the mediator of a better covenant, and that the better covenant has already been established. These two verses show

that the old covenant has ended.

When he established the new covenant, Christ made the old covenant obsolete. The new agreement replaces the old. Our relationship with God is on the basis of the new covenant, not the old.

The old covenant included both the tabernacle and the sacrificial system (Hebrews 9:1). These are now obsolete, indicating that the law requiring them is also obsolete. We do not have to offer both physical and spiritual sacrifices; we do not keep all the old laws and simply add the Holy Spirit to help us keep them in their spiritual intent as well as in the letter. Instead, such commandments are set aside, disannulled, no longer required, made obsolete (7:18).

For example, the old covenant required sabbatical years, jubilee years, tree-branch booths, phylacteries and the destruction of mildew-infested homes. The reason that we do not have to obey these laws is because the covenant itself is obsolete. (Some old covenant laws, however, such as the law forbidding adultery, are continued into the new covenant. But their validity rests on their affirmation and restatements under the new covenant.)

Second Corinthians 3 also discusses the old and new covenants. Verse 3 refers to the tables of stone on which the old covenant was written, and the writing of the Holy Spirit on the heart, which is the new covenant. Paul notes that the new covenant is already being administered (verse 6). The old covenant was glorious, Paul said (verse 7), but he also refers to that covenant as "that which is done away" (verse 11).

Galatians 3 also makes it clear. Verse 17 mentions the Abrahamic covenant and a law that was added 430 years later. What law was given 430 years after a covenant was made with Abraham? The law at Sinai, including the covenant and all its sacrifices—both commandments and penalties.

This law was added long after the covenant of promise through faith that was made with Abraham. The covenant at Sinai was made with Abraham's descendants in Moses' day "because of transgressions, till the seed [Christ] should come to whom the promise was made" (verse 19, KJV).

The laws and penalties were designed to be a "schoolmaster" (KJV) to bring us to Christ (verse 24). Before we were brought to faith in Christ, we were "held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed" (verse 23, NIV), but after faith has come, we are no longer under a "schoolmaster" (verse 25). It is clear that Galatians is talking about an added law that has become obsolete.

Is it true that this additional law was only the law of sacrifices? Were the sacrifices temporarily added to the Ten Commandments, which are (according to this interpretation) a permanent covenant? If so, verse 17 would then need to be understood in this way: "The law, which was added two months after the covenant was made, cannot disannul the covenant." But this is not what verse 17 says.

The covenant mentioned in verse 17 is the promise given to Abraham, and "the law" is the covenant made at Sinai 430 years later. Galatians is not arguing about sacrifices at all. Sacrifices could not be performed in Galatia, and they were not part of the

controversy Paul was addressing.

Galatians 4 makes it clear that Paul is contrasting the covenant given to Abraham with the covenant given to Moses. Abraham had two sons, and in an allegory they are compared to two covenants (verses 22-24).

The son of the bondwoman corresponds to Sinai and the temple in Jerusalem (verses 24-25). But Christians are children of the promise—we are under the Abrahamic covenant, not the Sinaitic covenant (verses 28, 31). "Cast out the bondwoman and her son," Paul quotes with approval (verse 30). Do not put yourself under the old covenant, but under the new.

## You say that the Fourth Commandment, at least in its physical requirements, was temporary, and the other nine are eternal. What makes you think that this one paragraph is different from all the others around it?

First, in strictly literal and physical terms, it would not make sense to understand the Sabbath as an eternal commandment. The Sabbath did not exist before humans were created, and it will not exist in the new heavens and new earth, since the day-night cycle will cease. It is not eternal in the past nor eternal in the future.

Second, God does not keep the Sabbath; it is not part of his character. He does not have a work-rest cycle every week. The work of the Holy Spirit in us, for example, continues seven days a week. God does not "dwell" within time or space.

Third, physical and literal portions of the other commandments also do not apply to us. Gentile Christians cannot say that the Lord has literally brought either them or their ancestors out of Egypt (Exodus 20:2). And we do not consider verse 12 to be a

## You might also ask, why did God give any temporary laws at all? The reason is that he was forming a large group of slaves into a nation. They needed detailed guidance for their specific location and time. We should not expect all these laws to apply in every culture and climate.

universal promise that everyone who honors his or her parents will have a long life. Even within the other nine commandments, we see indications that this set of laws was given to a specific people at a specific geographic location at a specific segment of history.

Fourth, we are not alone in treating the Fourth Commandment in a different way because the New Testament treats the Sabbath in a different manner from the other nine commandments. Although it mentions the Sabbath many times, it never commands anyone to keep it—unlike other commandments, which are often quoted in the New Testament.

The New Testament is not afraid of repeating the obvious, but it doesn't command the Sabbath. This fact drives those who would require the Sabbath to be observed as holy

time to the subjectively applied "argument from silence."

Fifth, the New Testament directly says that we should not let anyone judge us regarding the Sabbath (Colossians 2:16). It does not criticize or judge anyone for breaking the Sabbath. In contrast, the New Testament does make judgments regarding idolatry, murder, adultery, lying, coveting, etc. The New Testament takes a different approach to days than the Old Testament does.

Both reason and Scripture indicate that the Sabbath is different. On the other hand, we might ask, Why do you think the Ten Commandments are a permanent group of laws? The next three questions and answers address this topic.

## God spoke the Ten Commandments. Wouldn't this indicate permanence? Would God ever take back a commandment he himself gave?

In the books of Moses, God gave hundreds of commands. Moses did not create these laws. God spoke every one of them. He would have spoken to the people directly if they had been willing. He spoke privately to Moses not because those other laws were temporary, but because the people were afraid.

God spoke all these laws, including instructions on how to build altars, offer sacrifices, wear tassels, celebrate festivals, destroy mildew, deal with slaves, divorce and remarry, etc. God has given many laws that are now obsolete. The fact that he once spoke them does not prove their permanence.

Throughout the law of Moses, the permanent laws are intermingled with the temporary. For example, Leviticus 19 is a collection of laws containing the second-greatest commandment (verse 18). This chapter has good laws about honoring parents, honesty, fair treatment of the handicapped and foreigners. But this chapter also contains laws about sacrifices, wool and linen garments, harvesting fields, harvesting fruit trees, punishing bondwomen who fornicate and other matters that are obsolete or that we would administer in different ways today.

Because different types of laws are frequently mixed together, it is wrong to assume in advance that any particular group of old covenant laws is of permanent validity. Each law must be examined on its own merits, as judged by the new covenant writings and the standard of Jesus Christ.

Why, you might ask, did God mix temporary laws among the permanent? Why didn't he clearly separate them and label them? The Bible doesn't tell us *why* he did it that way, but we see clearly *that* he did.

You might also ask, why did God give any temporary laws at all? The reason is that he was forming a large group of slaves into a nation. They needed detailed guidance for their specific location and time. We should not expect all these laws to apply in every culture and climate. And many of the religious laws were designed to lead us to Christ. They contain symbolism of spiritual facts, and they foreshadow things that Jesus fulfilled.

We may not understand exactly how he fulfilled all the details, but we read that the old covenant led to Christ and is no longer authoritative over us. Permanence of old covenant laws should not be determined on the basis that God spoke them. Our criteria for judging the validity of old covenant laws is the life, death, burial and resurrection of God in the flesh.

# Ambassador endeavors to meet students' needs

Continued from page 1

students as we prepare for the twenty-first century. Your involvement is needed. We welcome comments from your perspective so we can better serve you, and look forward to seeing you in the fall."

In the letter Dr. Duke also reiterated the long-standing position of the university, that students "may not attend churches that we deem to be dissident to the Worldwide Church of God and remain a student of the University." This is not a new practice, but rather one that has been in effect for decades.

(Please see article on page 2 for Dr. Duke's clarification of this position.)

## Legal action against university

In July the university was served with a temporary restraining order because of legal action taken against the university by Dr. Merritt. The order was signed by Judge Tommy Wallace of the 294th District of the State of Texas.

In a lawsuit filed against the university, Dr. Merritt contended that actions taken at the June 16 university board

meeting violated the bylaws of the board and sought to have the decisions and results of that meeting overturned. He named as defendants the Church, the university board and Dr. Duke.

Included in his allegations were statements to the effect that Dr. Duke has engaged in "purging" and "harassment, intimidation and harsh treatment of AU faculty, staff and students."

Dr. Merritt alleged that his removal from the board of regents was in violation of the bylaws of the board. He said that he had filed a formal complaint with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), of which Ambassador is a member.

He also predicted a "sudden drop" in enrollment at the university, which he believed would cause "irreparable harm" to the institution and put at risk its membership with SACS.

Because of the restraining order the university was temporarily prevented from carrying out certain administrative functions, and Dr. Duke was temporarily prevented from functioning as president pro tem. Attorneys for the university appeared in court July 27 to respond to Dr. Merritt's lawsuit (see page 1).

Our financial situation at Ambassador is stable. We are completely debt-free, which is a rare thing for any college or university to be able to say.

Our annual operating budget is about \$13.5 million, and nearly half that, more than \$6 million a year, comes from a generous subsidy provided by the Church. The Church's commitment to the university has not wavered.

## Private contributions increase

In addition, private donations to the university are on the rise. During 1994 we processed more than \$1.2 million in direct contributions to the university. Our projection for this year is that we will receive more than \$2 million in direct contributions. Your prayers would be appreciated

for the continued success of our fund-raising efforts.

We are moving forward with plans to go on the air with our 10,000-watt campus radio station, KBAU-FM, later this fall. The radio station will represent an outstanding public service to the East Texas community.

Site preparation is being completed for construction of the first building in a new men's residential complex on the east side of the campus. We hope to have students move into the building upon completion later this year.

Plans are proceeding on schedule for the beginning of the fall semester at Ambassador, and we are confident that a successful academic year lies ahead of us. Thank you for your concern, support and prayers for Ambassador.

## SACS committee to visit AU in fall

By Reginald Killingley

**BIG SANDY**—James T. Rogers, executive director of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), wrote to Russell Duke, AU president pro tem, July 11, to inform him that the university's progress report had been accepted at the commission's June meeting. This means that Ambassador maintains its status as an accredited institution.

In his letter, Dr. Rogers also informed Dr. Duke that the commission had authorized a special committee to visit the university in the fall to evaluate AU's continuing compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*.

The committee will look at various governance, academic freedom and financial issues and will report its findings in December. The decision to send a special committee was taken because of several inquiries about the university.

Ambassador can respond in writing to the committee's written evalu-

ation if there is sufficient time to do so between the appraisal visit and SACS' annual December meeting. Otherwise, university administrators can respond to the report in person at that meeting.

AU's governing body, the board of regents, has been notified of the coming visit and is aware of the needs of the university. Ambassador continues to enjoy the commitment and financial support of the Worldwide Church of God.

In an accompanying article on page 2, Dr. Duke emphasizes that the religious beliefs the institution endorses are those of the Church and that this position is supported by the Southern Association.

On the subject of Church doctrine and academic freedom, SACS' *Criteria for Accreditation* states: "Institutions may endorse particular religious or philosophical beliefs, or specific social principles as they relate to the institutional statement of purpose. Such beliefs and principles may influence the curriculum and the selection of students, faculty and staff."

## Good News Grapevine spreads word

Having read so many of the positive comments submitted by so many, it is obvious that God's Spirit is doing a great work in the Body of his Son. These are exciting times we're living in.

As events unfold in the world and in the Church, we can see the veracity of God's Word coming into focus. It is sad, indeed, to see so many opting for darkness while others are rejoicing in the newly revealed light.

Our hope and prayers are that ultimately all will be enlightened and of accord. God is full of grace, which is what the new covenant is all about, and one day we'll all look back in retrospect and realize how true that is.

These positive comments can have a positive effect such as the leaven spoken of by Christ in Matthew 13:33.

When the dust settles, I'm sure we're all going to give thanks for the leadership over the Body of Christ—and for the caliber of leadership he has set over the churches of God worldwide.

Let's all keep growing in God's grace and in the knowledge of his Son while remembering our brethren who have not as yet come to understand nor experience the newfound freedom extended to us under the new covenant.

Carlos E. Perkins  
retired pastor

## Q&A: Jesus Christ fulfills spiritual symbolism of the Sabbath

Continued from page 3

**God wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone, thereby designating them as a separate and more important group of laws. Doesn't this indicate permanence?**

This is an assumption many people have made, but there is no proof for it. The Ten Commandments are a distinct group, but there is no reason that the group can't contain both temporary and permanent laws. That group is called the old covenant (Exodus 34:28), and the old covenant is called obsolete. It's not just the added statutes and judgments that are called obsolete—the old covenant as a whole is declared obsolete.

The old covenant was glorious, Paul said—and he is clearly referring to the Ten Commandments on tables of stone (2 Corinthians 3:7). But the Ten Commandments as spoken at Sinai are a fundamental part of the ministry that was designed to bring death and condemnation (verses 7,

9). That ministry has now passed away, and only the new covenant remains (verse 11).

The commandments written on tablets were good, but they have been superseded by a covenant that has more glory. There is not just a change within the law—there is a change of the law. A more basic law has been given. Although some of the behavioral standards are the same, the law now has a different foundation, and that foundation is Jesus Christ.

**Various Christian scholars say that Christians should keep the Ten Commandments. Although they themselves usually do not keep the Fourth Commandment, their conclusions indicate that the Sabbath should be kept. Why do you reject these scholars?**

We are basing our doctrine on Scripture, not on scholars. When the Bible says that the old covenant is obsolete and that gentiles do not have to obey the law of Moses, it does not make or imply an exception

for the Ten Commandments as a group. It reaffirms the validity of various old covenant commands (some are in the Ten and some are not), but it indicates that the Sabbath is not a requirement for Christians.

Calvinist scholars tend to advocate the Ten Commandments and say that the Sabbath has been changed to the first day. Their proof for the latter is inadequate, as is any proof that the Ten Commandments as given under the old covenant are required for Christians. Christians look to the new covenant for their standards of behavior and conduct. Much of the new is based on the old, but our standard remains "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2).

Historically, it was convenient for churches to teach the Ten Commandments. It was convenient for them to require a day on which no one could do anything except go to church. Also, many of the members of these churches were Christian in name only. They were not converted and did not have the Holy Spirit. It was therefore convenient for the

churches to give rules to control and limit the people. It was convenient, but not scripturally accurate.

Scripture says that the Sabbath is a shadow of things to come (Colossians 2:16-17). Since it is not a basis for judging a Christian brother (verse 16), we conclude that Christ has fulfilled the spiritual symbolism of the Sabbath. We see additional evidence of this in Hebrews 4, which indicates that the Sabbath pictures our salvation-rest, which we enter by faith in Christ. We have come to Christ and he has given us divine rest (Matthew 11:28).

Faith in Christ is the spiritual fulfillment of the Sabbath command, and it is in that sense that the Fourth Commandment applies to Christians today. Some scholars agree with that, and some do not, but the question has to be answered by Scripture—and Scripture says that the Ten Commandments are the old covenant, and it does not say that all 10 points of the old covenant are valid for the same length of time.

# Internauts of the Internet navigate cyberspace

By Neil Earle

Imagine living in a world where you could order flowers for mom on Mother's Day half a world away through an electronic shopping mall. You simply crank up your computer, transfer to a menu that brings up a colorful graphic image of those red roses your mother loves, order them by computer form and pay for it all by typing in your credit card number.

All without leaving home. Or imagine planning a trip on the Paris Metro from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, by hooking up to an international computer network that shows you times, prices and routes from the Eiffel Tower to Napoleon's Tomb.

Well, imagine no more. Thanks to the marvels of a powerful tool called the Internet, such things are being accomplished.

The Internet is a collection of computer networks connected on local, national and international levels. Whereas a computer network is a group of computers linked together to communicate and share information, the Internet refers to a network of networks.

Like so many technological marvels, it traces to a military origin. In the late 1960s, a branch of the United States Department of Defense—the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA)—connected four computers in California and Utah to ensure communication flow in case of nuclear attack. Other research centers soon came on-line to speed information.

Neil Earle is international editor for The Plain Truth.

By 1990 ARPA had dropped out of the business, and agencies such as the National Science Foundation started maintaining the net. Commercial users soon got involved, until today one million computers hook up 20 million people on every inhabited continent. The Internet is growing 10 percent each month and is already in 100 countries. The Internet represents the cutting edge of a technology that is changing our lives.

It is easy to see why. The March-April edition of *Utne Reader* documents a case of parents receiving medical help for their child over the Internet quicker than the phone call back from the pediatrician's office.

## Snail mail to e-mail

The Church has not been slow to use electronic mail. If I want to reach Aub Warren, our *Plain Truth* regional editor in Australia, about an article he is writing, I don't need to telephone long distance. I simply switch my computer to e-mail, type in his name and leave my message.

Both cheaper and more convenient than a telephone, it makes traditional mail so slow that "internauts"—a phrase adapted from astronaut to describe users of the Internet—refer to regular postage as snail mail.

David Smith, director of Computer Information Services in Pasadena, estimates the Church daily receives tens of thousands of messages. The convenience of electronic mail is part of its attraction—you answer the message according to its priority level.

Smith said: "The Church's internal e-mail has revolutionized the way we communicate as an organization. For example, here at CIS we work with our international offices on technical

problems we've been able to fix overnight—especially where there are significant time differences."

## Here comes the future

So welcome to cyberspace, a term invented by a science fiction writer in the 1980s to describe an imaginary network where people and computers work together. That world is here.

The Church is exploring many positive uses of the Internet, including giving some form of access to *The Plain Truth* and our other publications. We see the possibilities and are exploring them.

But there can be a downside in

cyberspace. It is sad, but individuals misuse this new form of communication. *Time* estimates that more than 80 percent of the visual images transmitted on-line are pornographic. Thousands of computer bulletin board services attempt to lure customers to X-rated material. So one always needs to be aware of the hazards of the new technology. Use, but use wisely.

The Internet and the world of cyberspace are already with us. They will play a larger role in our lives in the future. The important thing is, as always, to sort out the good from the bad and remember that a rumor traveling at cyberspeed is still a rumor.

## The World of Cyberspeak

Because the Worldwide Church of God has already set sail on the seas of cyberspace, we wanted to share a basic glossary of terms needed to understand the new media tools, tools that could mightily enhance the spreading of the Gospel.

**On-line:** Being hooked into the system, whether it be the Internet, a printer or your own personal computer (PC).

**Software:** The series of instructions that gets a computer to perform a particular task such as word-processing, desktop publishing or surfing the Internet.

**Download:** The process of transferring information from one computer source to another.

**Modem:** The device that allows a computer to transmit information over a phone line.

**Hacker:** A serious and skilled user of the system or a user with a mischievous bent.

**Posting:** Writing your message to the many programs, bulletin boards and on-line services of the Internet.

**BBS:** Bulletin board system, a reference to formal or informal groups—political, commercial or social—that share common interests along the electronic net.

**CD-ROM:** Compact disc-read only memory, a system that can store vast amounts of information.

**Userid:** short form of user identification, the unique signature of each Internet user that precedes the @ (at) sign in an e-mail address. For example: "Bobby Scotland Yard.gov.UK"

# Steering clear of potholes on the information highway

By Neil Earle

Oct. 30, 1938, Hollywood's boy genius, Orson Welles, took a scripted-for-radio version of H.G.'s classic *War of the Worlds* on the air live at 8 p.m. over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

With the help of music and sound effects, Welles sent a war-jittery American public into one of its most famous mass panics.

Despite the announcer's clear warnings that this was only a radio play, residents of Newark, New Jersey, swarmed into the streets, faces covered with wet towels and handkerchiefs to protect themselves from the poison gas of alien invaders. Traffic was jammed, patients checked into hospitals reporting shock.

The Orson Welles' incident has been described as "one of the first modern happenings ... the absurd exaggeration of impact stemming from the special relationship between the media and the people," wrote David Thomson in *America in the Dark*.

Today we hear about the information superhighway, Internet, cyberspace, virtual reality. The opportunity to use fast-spreading technology to help spread the gospel of Jesus Christ keeps pace with the potential for more mass panic and confusion than Orson Welles ever imagined. That is because of the ever-widening reach of global telecommunications.

The Worldwide Church of God has used electronic media from the

beginning. We went from being a radio force from the 1930s through the 1960s, to a television presence in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the 1990s, headquarters in Pasadena receives thousands of electronic mail messages from our ministers, regional offices and business partners around the globe.

With our worldwide AS/400 (the Church's central computer system), desktop publishing capabilities and personal computer networks, we are a major user of electronic technology. In 1984 Publishing and Editorial began the use of digital technology, which has advanced enough to allow more regionalized editions of *The Plain Truth*, booklets and reprints. Our regional offices in Sydney, Australia, and Manila, Philippines, are making rapid strides in this area.

All of this helps make spreading the gospel more efficient and effective. But for every benefit of new technology often comes a corresponding negative. Computer systems can be betrayed. Preliminary, unedited *Plain Truth* articles have been stolen and downloaded to be read worldwide. Rumors fly along the Internet at the flick of a cursor. Never has it become more imperative for the membership and ministry of the Church to be wary of misinformation and false rumors.

## Rumors in Paul's day

In discussing misinformation about a doctrinal position then being exaggerated, the apostle Paul warned members:

"We ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us.... Don't let anyone deceive you in any way" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3).

The context is describing rumors relating to Jesus Christ's second coming. But the principle is applicable today: Don't be a victim of someone else's misinformation campaign; don't slip and fall along the information highway.

Paul was often a target of slander and misinformation (Acts 24:5-6). He was dogged by hardliners who could not accept the liberating, nonexclusive decrees of the Jerusalem conference (described in Acts 15), which offered full incorporation of the gentiles (Galatians 1:6-9).

To them, Paul was a liberal. Because he exalted new life in Jesus Christ against the constraints of the Torah, he was often painted as a teacher of lawlessness (Romans 6:1-2). Some slandered him as a leader who taught "let us do evil that good may result" (Romans 3:5-8).

Jude spoke against subversion and misinformation plaguing the churches near the end of the first century. He warned about those who "have secretly slipped in among you" (Jude 4). The touchstone of their slander and faultfinding, according to Jude, was a denial of the supreme sovereignty of Jesus Christ in all things to do with salvation.

Warned Jude: "Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they

do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals—these are the very things that destroy them" (verse 10).

Strong words! Yet an old saying goes that gossip is five times around the world before the truth can get its boots on. The Internet proves the truth of this saying every day.

Many new technologies are often wild and unpredictable when first introduced. It takes a while for a new communications craze to settle into stable patterns and structures. This is the way it was with television in the 1950s and the personal computer in the 1980s. Exciting new technologies are often subject to abuses and mishandling, as the famous War of the Worlds panic reminds us.

## Exercising good judgment

In the meantime, as the global community prepares to venture forth into this Brave New World of cyberspace and virtual technology, let us be guided by the ancient wisdom of Isaiah. His inspired description of certain intellectual attributes of Jesus Christ the Messiah are always relevant:

"He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth" (Isaiah 11:3-4).

Righteousness and good judgment—the spiritual imperatives—these will stand us in good stead no matter what the future will bring. Let's not be deceived; let's not be victimized by the potholes along the information highway.

# Personal: Becoming learning disciples of Christ

Continued from page 1

wrong on a point we thought so vital, were we Christians at all?"

Let me answer the second question first: Yes. We were Christians, and we still are Christians. Thankfully, Christianity is a matter of the heart. God can supply information as accurately and as often as he wants to, but he can't force us to have a repentant attitude.

That's why attitude is so important—and our collective attitude was right in the past. We have always wanted to please God, and that is what God wants most. We obeyed what we thought we had to obey, and that is good. We misunderstood a few things about which laws we had to obey, but that didn't thwart our salvation. Our hearts have been in the right place all along (generally speaking, of course, since some of "us" still don't have a good attitude).

## Why our calling now?

Why did God call us to this fellowship and not to some other? Why did he call us at the time he did and not some other? The answer may be slightly different for each person, and for some of us we may never know. The important point is that God has called us, and he wants us to go forward without fretting about mistakes of the past.

Christianity has never been doctrinally perfect. Even the apostolic churches were not perfect. In fact, much of the New Testament was written to correct various wrong ideas. In Corinth, for example, Christians were tolerating incest, suing one another in court, eating in pagan temples and misbehaving at the Lord's Supper.

Some thought they should be celibate, and some thought they should divorce their non-Christian spouses. Paul had to correct all these ideas, and history tells us that he had only limited success. But the people were Christian despite their mistakes and carnal mindedness.

Paul told us what was most important: the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-4) and the importance of love (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8). Our knowledge, he says, is only partial (verse 9). It will be completed after Christ returns, but for now, love is more important than knowledge (verses 13, 2). In saying this, I don't mean to imply that doctrinal correctness is not important. We strive for correctness, but admit that we are not infallible.

It encourages me to know that Jesus' own disciples, both before and after Pentecost, frequently didn't understand what the Master was doing. Although they had a perfect Teacher, they often failed to understand him correctly. Nevertheless, Jesus used them. This demonstrated that the disciples' success was a result of God's work, not human achievement.

For example, after Jesus miraculously fed thousands of people, he and the disciples got into a boat, and Jesus warned them, "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod" (Mark 8:14). The disciples concluded that Jesus meant that, since they hadn't brought any bread and would have to buy some on the other shore, they shouldn't buy any bread from a Pharisee or Herodian because something was incorrect about the yeast they used.

Why didn't they simply ask Jesus what he meant? The Bible doesn't tell us why, but it was probably because they were afraid of looking foolish. (That happens today, too.) But Jesus knew quite well how foolish they

were. He chided them for not understanding something that they should have been able to understand. They could remember facts (verses 19-20), but they didn't draw right conclusions. Jesus could make bread miraculously. The disciples didn't need to worry about bread or yeast.

Actually, Mark doesn't inform his readers what Jesus really did mean. He simply ends the story with "Do you still not understand?" (verse 21). Thankfully, Matthew helps us out by telling us what Jesus was talking about. The miracle of the loaves was not just a way to save money—it also had a meaning that the disciples should have understood (Mark 6:52).

It was figurative, symbolizing the fact that Jesus is our source of life. His teachings are what we need to live forever. When he warned his disciples about the yeast of the Pharisees, he was talking about their doctrines (Matthew 16:12). The disciples were to live on the teachings of Jesus, not the teachings of the Pharisees.

We learn a similar lesson in the Gospel of John. Soon after a miracle of physical bread, Jesus proclaimed himself the bread of life (John 6:32-35). He then said that people must eat his flesh and drink his blood if they want to have eternal life (verse 54). This was much too strange for many people. His disciples called it "a hard teaching," and they grumbled about it (verses 60-61). They did not understand it, and many left him (verse 66). But the Twelve remained because Jesus had the teachings of eternal life (verse 68).

They didn't understand, but that wasn't a reason to leave. They set a good example of faith and patience for us today. The disciples eventually learned what Jesus was talking about. The people who left him, however, remained in ignorance. Although the human desire is to understand everything right away, we need patience when dealing with the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Now let's look at an incident in the Gospel of Luke. The 12-year-old Jesus was in the temple, amazing everyone with his understanding (Luke 2:47). But his parents were astonished that he had done such a thing. They did not understand (verses 48-50). His mother treasured these things in her heart (verse 51), but she didn't understand her Son until many years later, probably after his resurrection more than 20 years later.

## Waiting for understanding

We need to ask God for patience like that—if there are things we don't understand, questions that haven't been resolved to our satisfaction, then we can treasure them in our hearts for a while. In time, Christ will reveal to us whatever we need to know—if our hearts are right, if we are trusting in him.

Early in Jesus' ministry, the disciples were amazed when Jesus calmed a storm, and they asked one another, "What kind of man is this?" (Matthew 8:27). It was a very good question, and Matthew gives us the answer only two verses later: He is the Son of God. A few chapters later, there was another storm at sea, and after Jesus walked on the water and calmed the storm, the disciples correctly concluded, "Truly you are the Son of God" (Matthew 14:24-33). But they still had much to learn (Mark 6:51-52).

A short while later, Jesus offended the Pharisees by criticizing their obsession with ritual cleanness (Matthew 15:2, 11). When the disciples asked Jesus to explain what he meant, he asked, "Are you still so

dull?" (verses 15-16). This doesn't seem like a very nice response, but Jesus said it, and one of the disciples wrote this down because it can help us. I find it encouraging to learn that Jesus doesn't require us to be extraordinary scholars. When it takes me years to learn things from the Bible, I take comfort in the fact that it also took years for the disciples to learn things even when Jesus was with them in the flesh.

## When concepts are incorrect

One of the most dramatic stories of misunderstanding begins with Jesus asking his disciples, "Who do people say I am?" (Mark 8:27). And Peter said, "You are the Christ" (verse 29). Peter understood this much correctly—not because he was extra clever, but because God had revealed it to him. Even so, he understood only part of what he needed to.

Peter had the right word—Messiah or Christ—but he had a woefully incorrect idea of what a Messiah would do. Peter wanted a conquering hero, but Jesus talked about suffering and death (verse 31). Peter, with zeal greater than wisdom, began to rebuke his own Teacher, as if he could teach the Messiah a thing or two. Jesus rebuked him sharply because he was thinking like a human (verse 33).

All of us, being human, naturally think the things of men. And because of that, we do not always understand the things of God. That should not surprise us or alarm us. When it happens, we need to patiently wait for God to reveal more to us. Of course, we need to do our part, searching the Scriptures and asking God for understanding. We should also take advantage of the tools that God provides—reading *The Worldwide News* and other material about the subject, and attentively listening to sermons.

We are all disciples or learners. As followers of Jesus, we have to continue learning. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth, but this doesn't happen instantly. Quite the contrary: We will die before we know it all. That's why it is reassuring to know that God looks on the heart. Salvation is not some sort of intelligence contest. God's power is made perfect in weakness.

Peter wasn't ready to accept a suffering Messiah, but he wasn't ready to accept a glorious Messiah, either. Mark 9 tells us that when Peter saw Jesus in glory, he was so frightened that he didn't know what to say (verse 6). Jesus told his disciples to keep the Transfiguration secret until he had risen from the dead—and right away the disciples began discussing what "rising from the dead" meant (verses 9-10). It seems quite plain to us today, but it was a mystery to these men. They could have asked Jesus what he meant, but they did not. Instead, they discussed it among themselves, sharing their ignorance instead of learning from the Master. Sometimes modern disciples do that, too.

In verse 31, Jesus again predicted his own death and resurrection, and the disciples still didn't understand. Not only that, they were afraid to ask him! Jesus was the perfect embodiment of love and truth, but his disciples were afraid to ask him what he meant (verse 32). Perhaps they were afraid of the truth. That continues to happen to people today.

Jesus not only predicted his own death, he also said that his followers must take up their crosses and forsake all (Mark 8:34). Nevertheless, it was not long before his followers, probably thinking of a physical kingdom again, argued among themselves

as to who would be the greatest. Jesus knew their thoughts and asked them about it, but they were too ashamed to answer (Mark 9:33-34). They had been acting like unconverted men.

A little later, the disciples were again amazed at what Jesus said (Mark 10:24). Jesus explained what he meant, and the disciples were even more amazed (verse 26). And soon they were astonished, and some were afraid (verse 32). How long had they been with their Teacher, and yet continued to be surprised by what he taught! They understood only a fraction of what he said, and yet they continued to follow him, because he had the words of eternal life. Their faith was not perfect, but it was enough to keep them going.

Jesus predicted that a disciple would betray him, but the disciples did not understand this seemingly plain statement. They just stared at one another (John 13:21-22). He predicted his death, and they did not understand (verses 36-37). They were filled with grief, but did not ask him what he meant (John 16:5-6). They asked each other, but none of them knew what he was talking about (verses 17-18).

They expressed their faith, but Jesus predicted that they would forsake him (verses 30-32). Peter boldly proclaimed his allegiance, and the other disciples, equally ignorant, said the same (Mark 14:31). But when left to their own strength, they fell asleep, and they did not know what to say (verse 40). They all deserted him (verse 50). Even when eyewitnesses told them that Jesus had been resurrected, still they did not believe (Mark 16:13; John 20:9).

The disciples didn't understand. They argued. They did things they shouldn't have. They didn't ask questions they should have. They were ordinary people. God uses people like that. He can use people like us, too, if our hearts and attitudes are right.

Even after Jesus' resurrection, he chided his disciples for being foolish and slow of heart to believe (Luke 24:25). "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?" (verse 38). They were full of joy and amazement, but still did not believe (verse 41). They even worshiped him, but some still doubted (Matthew 28:17).

The Gospel of John gives a summary of many such situations: "At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him" (John 12:16).

The pillars of the Church had some shaky beginnings. Things improved after Pentecost, of course, but still they weren't perfect. There were administrative problems in the Jerusalem church. There were differences of opinion about gentiles and laws. There were controversies about the missionary work of Paul. There were problems in his churches and tension among the Christians in Rome.

God's Church has never had complete doctrinal perfection. Throughout history, Christians have wrestled with different doctrines and practices. Doctrinal errors are nothing new. That's why it's important that we always remain willing to re-examine the issues, admit our fallibility and be willing to change and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior.

It may be difficult at times to change our ways, but that's what we have been called to do. We are disciples, and thankfully, we are learning.

With confidence in Christ Jesus,  
Joseph Tkach Jr.

# Announcements

BIRTHS, ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS, ANNIVERSARIES AND OBITUARIES

Timothy Hedley Gordon, May 11, first child.

MITCHELL, Glenn and Connie (O'Bryan) of Stanford, California, girl, Taylor Lindsey, July 1, now 2 girls.

PETERS, Blair and Marika (Schnell) of Birmingham, Alabama, boy, Garrett Michael, March 23, now 2 boys.

PIKE, Ian and Anna (Prior) of Wellington, New Zealand, boy, Elliot Isaac, May 29, now 2 boys.

REDDINGTON, Edward and Sonya (Bruner) of Rochester, New York, boy, Michael Anthony, Feb. 3, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

REED, Thomas and Marlene (Smalling) of Manhattan, New York, girl, Mona Flor, Feb. 21, first child.

REMPEL, Daniel and Barbara (Swanson) of Edmonton, Alberta, girl, Katrina Marie, May 30, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

SIMPSON, Euan and Veronica (Allen) of Johannesburg, South Africa, girl, Kendra Leigh, July 4, now 2 girls.

STAPLETON, Mark and Anne (Cady) of Pasadena, girl, Megan Marie Narissa Jean, June 10, first child.

## Engagements

Angelique Ruth Summerset, daughter of Robert and Erna Summerset of Charleston, South Carolina, and Bob Shannon, son of Elizabeth Shannon of Tampa, Florida, are pleased to announce their engagement. A January wedding in Tampa is planned.

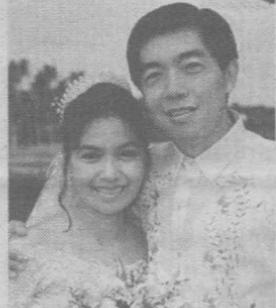
Along with their family and friends, Helen Lobpreis of Southern California, and Libor Koudelka, of Prague, Czech Republic, are happy to announce their engagement. A Sept. 22 wedding at Krivoklat Castle in the Czech Republic is planned.

## Weddings



**ALFRED & MARSHA ROBICHEAU**

Marsha Ann Dixon, daughter of Donna and Clark Dixon of Woods Harbour, Nova Scotia, and Alfred Louis Robicheau, son of Emile and the late Agnus Robicheau of St. Bernard, Nova Scotia, were united in marriage Aug. 28. The ceremony was performed by Steven Gore, associate pastor of the Digby and Halifax, Nova Scotia, churches. Jennifer Rose was maid of honor, and Stuart Melarson was best man. The couple live in New Edinburgh, Nova Scotia.



**VICENTE & CORAZON CO**

Corazon Espagadera, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Juan Espagadera of Bonifacio, Misamis Occidental, Philippines, and Vicente Co, son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Kue Co of Bacolod City, Philippines, were united in marriage May 28. The ceremony was performed by George Escara, pastor of the Iloilo City, Philippines, church. Alma Espagadera was maid of honor, and Godfrey Serfino was best man. The couple live in Bacolod City.



**STEPHEN & CATHERINE POPE**

Catherine Maree Womersley, daughter of Norm and Norma Womersley of Warrnambool, Australia, and Stephen Robert Pope, son of Howard and Jan Pope of Melton, Australia, were united in marriage May 6. The ceremony was performed by Orest Solyma, pastor of the Melbourne West church. Jeanette Womersley, sister of the bride, was maid of honor, and Philip Hocking was best man.

McLAUGHLIN, Gordon and Michele (Flack) of Bendigo, Australia, boy,



**RICHARD & LISA LARRABEE**

Lisa Jane Koutsoufis and Richard James Larrabee were united in marriage Dec. 24 in Waltham, Massachusetts. The ceremony was performed by William Ford, pastor of the Worcester and Springfield, Massachusetts, churches. The matron of honor was Anne Morraele, and the best man was Gary Wilson. The couple live in Chelmsford, Massachusetts.



**ROBERT & FRIEDA ROULDS**

Robert E. Roulds of Peoria, Illinois, and Frieda J. Young-Hodge of Chicago, Illinois, were united in marriage Aug. 26. The ceremony was performed by Jeff McGowan, pastor of the Peoria and McComb, Illinois, churches. The matron of honor was Yvonne Tripp, and the best man was John Knuckle. The couple live in Peoria.



**GILBERT & MARY JACKSON**

Gilbert Lynn Jackson and Mary Etta Williams were united in marriage Oct. 28 in Richmond, Virginia. The ceremony was performed by Fred Bailey, pastor of the Richmond church.



**DANIEL & TARA MILLER**

Tara Edmonston, daughter of George and Wanda Edmonston of West Plains, Missouri, and Daniel Miller, son of Clark and Linda Miller of Pasadena, were united in marriage May 16. The ceremony was performed by Arthur Suckling, a faculty member at Ambassador University. Laura Moody was matron of honor, and Kevin Burchett was best man. The couple live in Big Sandy.

## Anniversaries



**BOB & BILLIE WAKEMAN**

Bob and Billie Wakeman of Roseland, Nebraska, celebrated their 30th anniversary July 24. They have three children, Rhonda McCall, Jennifer Baldrey and Matthew; a son-in-law, Michael; a daughter-in-law, Veronica; and a granddaughter, Jordan.



**GARVIN & SANDEE GREENE**

Garvin and Sandee Greene of Knoxville, Tennessee, celebrated their 25th anniversary June 20. They have three children, Michelle, Meredith and Andrew; and a granddaughter, Katherine. Mr. Greene pastors the Knoxville, Morristown and Harrogate, Tennessee, churches.



**MIKE & PAM FLICINSKI**

Mike and Pam Flicinski of Round Rock, Texas, celebrated their 30th anniversary June 21. They have two daughters and sons-in-law, Marcy and Al Schoepko, and Michelle and Joel Vice; and two grandchildren, Stacy Schoepko and Meghan Vice.



**AL & VIRGINIA LIBURD**

Al and Virginia Liburd of San Diego, California, celebrated their 25th anniversary April 29. They have two daughters, Tasha Satterwhite and Chinita; a son, Alfredo; a son-in-law, Randell Satterwhite; and four grandchildren, Dujaun, Rahmand, Dominique and Aaliya.

Terry and Mary Matie of Buffalo, New York, celebrated their 25th anniversary July 18. They have two daughters, Marla Hadley and Rachael; and a son-in-law, Larry Hadley.



**MR. & MRS. CLYDE MOTTIN**

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Mottin of Ravenna, Nebraska, celebrated their 40th anniversary July 1. They have two sons, Kenneth and Dick; two daughters-in-law, Patty and Kay; and two grandsons, Brandon and Travis. The Mottins serve as deacon and deaconess in the Grand Island, Nebraska, church.



**GEORGE & POPPY EFTHYMIOS**

George and Poppy Efthymiou of Pietersburg, South Africa, celebrated their 40th anniversary July 23. They have two sons, Olly and Nick; two daughters-in-law, Karen and Liz; and five grandchildren, George, Stephen, Charissa, Poppy and Jonathan. Mr. Efthymiou pastors the Pietersburg, South Africa, church.



**BOB & GLADA DEARBORN**

Bob and Glada Dearborn of Delphi, Indiana, celebrated their 25th anniversary Aug. 2. They have one daughter, Carmen Ruth. Bob and Glada serve as deacon and deaconess in the Lafayette, Indiana, church.



**CLINTON & DOROTHY MCCONNELL**

Clinton and Dorothy McConnell of

## Birth Announcement

We'd like to let readers know about your new baby as soon as it arrives. Just fill out this coupon and send it to the address given as soon as possible after the baby is born. Baby announcements should be no more than six months old.



Our coupon baby this issue is Alisha Camen Alexander, daughter of Anton and Dorathi Alexander of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT THE WORLDWIDE NEWS BOX 111 PASADENA, CALIF., 91129, U.S.A.**

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Last name		Father's first name	
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Church area or city of residence/state/country			Baby's sex <input type="checkbox"/> Boy <input type="checkbox"/> Girl
Baby's first and middle names		Date of birth Month:      Day:	
Number of children you have* Boys:      Girls:	<input type="checkbox"/> Check box if first child		

\*Including newborn

8-95

Greenfield, Missouri, celebrated their 62nd anniversary July 20. They have six children, Clitis, Cleo Vaughn, Christine Dickerson, Carolyn Sue, Gertie Lou Miller and Cathy McWilliams; 10 grandchildren; and 15 great-grandchildren.

Herbert and Daisy Green of Iowa City, Iowa, celebrated their 50th anniversary June 25. They have three children, John, Jennifer Villhauer and Susan Barkalow; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

## Obituaries

KNAPP, Joseph Alfred, 93, of Alexandria, Louisiana, died June 13. He is survived by four sisters, Lena Jones, Eunice Burnum, Jewel Burnum and Myrtis Taylor; and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife.

FLOYD, George W., 93, of Hull, Georgia, died April 10. He is survived by his wife, Annie, four daughters, two sons, 17 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren, two sisters and several nieces and nephews.



**EMMA BURGE**

BURGE, Emma L., 89, of Odessa, Missouri, died June 18. She is survived by a daughter, Dorothy Fried, a son, Charles, eight grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and eight great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Olmer.

FINCH, Ellen Lucille, 81, of Pueblo, Colorado, died July 4. She is survived by two daughters, Barbara Shaffer and Luellen Armstrong; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; three brothers; three sisters; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by two husbands and a daughter.

AIRSMAN, Vivian M., 76, of Boswell, Pennsylvania, died June 9 of cancer. She is survived by a son, Dale, his wife, Lynora Jo, and a grandson, August. She was preceded in death by her husband, Carl, and a son, Ken.

WADE, Major H., 75, of Clarksville, Louisiana, died June 12 of multiple

health problems. He is survived by his wife, Mildred; a son, George; a daughter, Marilyn Masters; and two grandchildren.



**BOB ROBINSON**

ROBINSON, Bob W., 69, of Missoula, Montana, died March 23 of cancer. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis; two sons, a daughter, a grandson and his mother.



**BARBARA ABATIELL**

ABATIELL, Barbara Ann, 57, of Rutland, Vermont, died July 4. She is survived by her husband, James; a daughter, Sara A. Baer; a son, Garth; a brother, Daniel Gaudet; and a granddaughter. She was preceded in death by two sons, Aaron and Eino, and a sister, Pauline Drouin.



**TROY HANKS**

HANKS, Troy David, 14, of Baytown, Texas, died June 24. He is survived by his father and stepmother, Bob and Linda; mother and stepfather, Stella and Celestino Cervantes; and many uncles, aunts and cousins.

## Ottawa to celebrate its 30th

OTTAWA, Ontario—The Ottawa church will celebrate its 30th anniversary Sept. 9, the weekend after Labor Day. Services will be held at 2 p.m. at Sir Robert Borden High School in Nepean. The potluck meal following services will feature an all-chocolate dessert table. The Ottawa church will cap off the evening with a variety show highlighting the congregation's history from the past 30 years. Members who have attended the congregation are invited to attend. For more information, call Edmond Hum at 1-613-738-1440, extension 3182 (day or night), and leave a detailed message.

# update

NEWS OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS

## Master weaver celebrates her centennial

SYRACUSE, New York—**Warena Grime** celebrated her 100th birthday July 4.

Mrs. Grime, born in Cazenovia, New York, has five



Warena Grime

children, 18 grandchildren, 51 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

She taught herself how to weave on a loom, and what began as a hobby became her life work. She has won awards and was listed as a master weaver in *Handwoven* magazine. Mrs. Grime has been a Church member since 1985. *Marilynn A. Denny.*

## International Congress on the Family

DENVER, Colorado—Some 4,000 Christians from many denominations gathered here July 5 to 9 for the first International Congress on the Family.

At the congress, a team of family experts including professional counselors, pastors and educators gave seminars, workshops and planning sessions.

Attending the conference from headquarters were **Sheila Graham**, *Plain Truth* managing editor; **Norman Shoaf**, booklet editor; and **Wade Fransson**, assistant director of Family Ministry. **Jim Kisse**, a faculty member at Ambassador University; and **Ted Johnson**, pastor of the Grand Junction and Craig, Colorado, churches, were also there.

"This was one of the most valuable conferences that I've attended," Mrs. Graham said. "More than 100 topics on the family were presented, addressing issues such as the family as an agent of character development, single parenting and successful step-parenting."

Exhibitors were also at the conference. Christian universities and seminaries were represented, as were Christian book publishers, musicians, singers and artists.

"At the next congress, I

would hope the Church could be represented with a booth for *The Plain Truth*, the *Youth* magazine and Ambassador University," Mrs. Graham added.

"What impressed me," Mr. Shoaf recalled, "was how the many different denominations there came together and stressed points of agreement rather than disagreement. They all agreed that the gospel of Jesus Christ needed to be preached, and that the family needs to be strengthened in whatever way possible."

Mr. Fransson said he was inspired by the millions of people in this nation and around the world who are doing all they can to reverse the trends against the family.

Christians can be fatalistic about what human government can do, "but we can be optimistic about what God and Jesus Christ can do through us," he said.

After the conference, Mrs. Graham and Mr. Shoaf visited the headquarters of Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Focus on the Family was founded by **James Dobson**, who holds a Ph.D. in child development and worked on the staff of Los Angeles Children's Hospital. He was also clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Southern California School of Medicine.

"In the late 1970s," Mr. Shoaf said, "Dr. Dobson saw all the forces working together to tear the family apart and decided to found Focus on the Family."

The organization publishes several magazines for parents, children and youths and provides professional

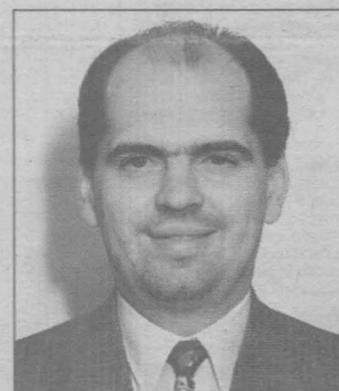
family counseling and family ministries.

## Facilities director defends dissertation

**Rick van Pelt**, facilities director, successfully defended his doctoral dissertation May 9, completing the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree in management-administration, with an emphasis in crisis management, from Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The dissertation is titled, *Contingency Planning and Crisis Management: An Evaluation of the Contingency Planning for the 1994 World Cup at Pasadena, California.*

The education has already proven valuable in his duties as the Church's facilities



Rick van Pelt

director, where he oversees the many physical aspects of the headquarters property.

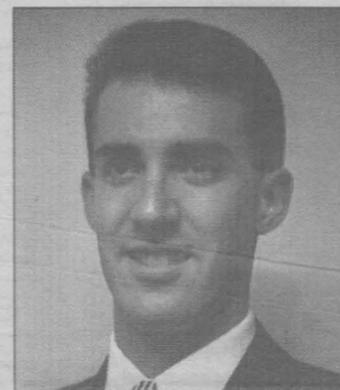
Dr. van Pelt earned his master of science degree in business organizational management in 1988, and his master of business administration in 1990.

Dr. van Pelt and his wife, **Carol**, have one daughter, **Brittany**, 12.

## Youth elected student body president

NORA, Nebraska—**David J. Barga**n was elected president of the student body at the University of Nebraska, Feb. 16. The university has an enrollment of 10,000 students.

As president, David, who is a junior, will serve a one-year term on the University of Nebraska board of re-



David J. Barga

gents. David, the son of **Lyn-dall** and **Bonnie Barga**n, attends the Grand Island, Nebraska, church.

## L.A. church's 35th

LOS ANGELES—The congregation here celebrates its 35th anniversary Aug. 26. Church services will begin at 3 p.m. at the LAX Doubletree Inn near the Los Angeles International Airport.

Cost of the dinner is \$35, and rooms begin at about \$79 a night. Checks for the dinner should be made payable to "Los Angeles Church 036" and mailed to **John Graham**, Box 2791, Gardena, California, 90247-0791.

For more information call **Jack** or **Gail Kessler** at 1-310-474-1709 immediately.

## Thousands order gift subscriptions to *Youth 95* magazine

So far more than 65,000 people have ordered subscriptions to *Youth 95*, and the magazine staff is working to process those requests as quickly as possible.

"We appreciate the patience of those who haven't received their magazine or their bill yet," said Mike Bennett, *Youth 95* editor. He said the remaining magazines and bills should be arriving soon.

Included in that 65,000 are about 2,500 outreach subscriptions donated by Church members and others for those who want the magazine, but can't afford it.

"We are thankful for the members' generosity, because there are hun-

dreds of young readers around the world who just can't afford the subscription price," said Bennett.

A member who donated five subscriptions explained how her son's back issues had helped a woman she worked with. This friend, a single mother who was having a difficult time with her teenaged daughter, left the magazines on her coffee table.

"She was afraid that anything she openly recommended to her daughter would be rejected outright," said the member. The magazines disappeared from the coffee table, and soon the daughter and several of her friends became subscribers.

"My friend began to see a gradual change in her daughter's previous belligerent behavior, and now they are getting along better than they ever did before.... I really would like to see *Youth 95* continue on way past *Youth 2000*. It is a big help for those young people who are looking for answers."

A Canadian member who was initially offended by what she saw as "marketing hype" in the magazine offer, later wrote: "I can appreciate that at times you must find yourself between a rock and a hard place. Enclosed please find a cheque for our subscription and one for someone who can't afford one."

*Youth 95* is being set up as a self-supporting magazine to reduce the Church's budget. As a separate organization, under U.S. tax codes, *Youth 95* subscriptions and subscription donations are not tax deductible. But gift subscriptions are still welcome, and needed.

"As responses come in from international subscribers, the waiting list for outreach subscriptions will grow," said Bennett. "It's not too late to provide an outreach subscription, or to subscribe yourself. Just make a separate check out to *Youth 95* for \$9.95 in the United States, or \$14.75 for an international subscription. Include your name and address for

your subscription, or note that it is for an outreach subscription."

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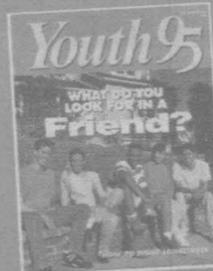
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