

Servants' NEWS

Vol. 5, No. 6

A newsletter for servants of the Almighty Eternal Creator, wherever they may be

Nov/Dec 1999

Eternal Judgment Paper Included!

For those who have been waiting for this issue and this paper, "Thanks for waiting!" The *Eternal Judgment* paper has already been pushed back a couple of issues, and I did not want to delay it again. On the other hand, I did not want to send it out without taking time to read all the relevant Scriptures that I could find and include them in the paper. I hope this paper will help many people for years to come, and I think it is better that it be correct than "on time". I know that writing it has helped me greatly.

What have I learned?

I have learned that the Bible has a whole lot more to say about eternal judgment than I ever imagined! The paper is 40 pages—about half Bible quotations with very little duplication. The appendices will come with the next issue—probably about 30 more pages. The Bible contains more about eternal judgment than church government and tithing combined.

Each one of us is being judged—both now and in a resurrection. Eternal judgment will not be a doctrinal, prophetic or organizational quiz. It will be an account of what we have done with our lives—even secret things that we have successfully hidden from our friends, spouses and ministers. Who we help, who we teach, how we spend our "free time" and "extra money" are all important. If we do not judge ourselves now, we will be judged later (1Cor 11:31). No organization or belief system can guarantee us a place in the first resurrection.

I realize the paper is long, but I think it is worth the time it takes to read, even if it takes several different times. As always, I would be interested in constructive comments and criticisms.

—Norman Edwards

Seeking Local Group & Evangelism Editor

Many times, people have asked us:

"Why don't you have more stories about what is working among local congregations?"

"Why don't you have more stories about local evangelism that is working?"

"Why do you seem to have so much news of church problems?"

When we talk to people who appear to have successful home fellowships or evangelism projects, we encourage them to write a story for us about them. With a few notable exceptions such as the Trucker's Bible Study, we seldom receive any stories. The reasons are reasonable:

1. Humble people frequently do not think that their humble efforts are worth writing about.

2. People are frequently so busy making their congregation or evangelism work that they do not have time to write about it.

3. Making local efforts work, and writing about them so others can learn about them, are often separate gifts—one person may not do both well.

Serving and teaching others is important to how God judges us. We would like to make *Servants' News* more of a vehicle for teaching others to work effectively at a local level.

What is needed is a writer to interview those who are working locally and write their story for them. We would like to hear from anyone interested in doing this. They would need writing and computer skills (not necessarily professional), and Internet access. We can provide numerous contacts with people working locally. If interested, use our contact information on page 2.

—NSE

Judge Nothing Before the Appointed Time

by Tommy Willis

We have seen such an increase in the scattering of God's people in the last five years. In all this scattering, a most dangerous pattern has developed: some brethren are judging the brethren in the other groups from which they came out.

Certainly we need to

judge the right and wrong of the matters with which we are involved—how else will we know what is right for us to do? But we need to be extremely cautious not to judge the spiritual destiny of our brethren. Human nature loves to find some-

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Feast 2000: Michigan or Rocky Mtns?

Servants' News is planning to help sponsor a Feast site in the year 2000. Brethren are interested in working together with us in two different areas. One group is considering a site in West Branch, Michigan.

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After 16: *Shelter in the Word* included!

After *Shelter in the Word*: What Does the Bible Say About Eternal Judgment?

Trucker's Bible Study

Oak Grove, Mo., #33-35



Servants' NEWS

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Nov/Dec 1999

The Trucker's Bible Study is conducted weekly at the Texaco truck stop on I-70, Oak Grove, Missouri by Arlo Gieselman, often assisted by Lenny Cacchio, the writer of this series.

December 12, 1999: For the first time we had all women and no men as guests at a Trucker's Bible Study.

Both Arlo and I were there this morning, and we have begun to do things a little differently when we are both present. Arlo is very good at walking up to total strangers and starting conversations, so I generally stay and conduct the Bible Study while he walks around the truck stop to talk. He'll offer them some literature (like a pocket "Gospel of John"), discuss with them anything they like, and point them upstairs if they are so inclined. Personally, I couldn't do it this way, but we all have our unique gifts, and besides, he enjoys it.

I talked today about what the real historical Jesus was like, which I believe went all right, but somehow I think it would have been more effective in a men's Bible study. The point, however, is a pertinent one—our assumptions about what Jesus was like and more generally what the Bible says are often wrong.

They made several comments that are worth sharing:

1. One lady mentioned how many people her age (I would say she is in her mid to late fifties) don't go to church because in their younger years the churches seemed to be more interested in do's and don't's as opposed to what we might term the weightier matters of the law. In her younger years the church she went to (Methodist) wouldn't let women wear slacks—and not just to church. Her point was that many view churches as "out of touch". It emphasized to me that much of what we view as legalism from our past was as much a result of the culture in general as something unique to us. Perhaps we took longer to outgrow it.

2. In an ongoing project, I am trying to get a bead on interest in religion in society at large. They all said that there seems to be more interest now among their peers on the road than there was 10 years ago, and some of this is reflected in the CB rap. The language used on the CBs is becoming less coarse and truckers seem to be self-policing it more. (Keep in mind that the women were saying this, so the men might be policing themselves in deference to knowing that women are listening in). Having said that, discussions about religion are becoming more common on the road.

3. A church that one of the ladies attends recently split, but it's the good kind of split. They perceived that church attendance was getting too high, so they voluntarily divided into two congregations so that the people could be served better. How I wish the Church of God had such problems! Imagine a Sabbath keeping church in every neighborhood!

4. Music is a great source for division. In one church the younger folks wanted more contemporary, lively music, whereas the older folks wanted the more traditional music. Who was right and who was wrong, and what could the church do to keep everyone happy? The church in question hasn't figured it out yet, and neither have I.

The more I talk to people, the more I realize how blessed we are to understand what we understand. I also appreciate more and more the sincerity of people who are truly seeking God and how much of an opportunity we have all around us to share the Light with them. At the same time, we can learn so much from their experiences and foibles, for many of the difficult questions we face are common to churches everywhere and are not unique to the Church of God tradition.

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Servants' News is one of many ministries of the spiritual Church of God. We believe that the Bible contains the foundation of knowledge about our Creator and that He is actively working through people today. Our focus is to help and teach Sabbath-keeping brethren who believe Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah, but we realize that the Eternal works with many groups and individuals.

We believe the gospel should be given freely—you may copy this newsletter and give it to others. Servants' News has nothing to sell and has no financial ties with other groups, but is supported by those who personally decide to help this ministry. We do not have IRS tax exempt status, but church groups are exempt without this status (see IRS Publ. 557, p. 16, col. 1).

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Notice: The people listed above do not necessarily endorse every article in this newsletter.

Servants' News accepts articles for publication. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for items that you want returned. We are happy to print corrections for any significant errors. Address articles, letters, and subscription, literature or change of address requests to:

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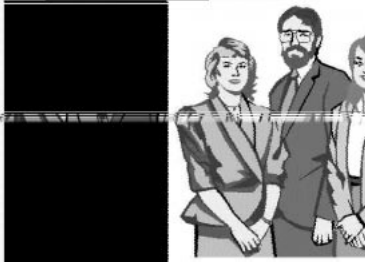
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Local Congregations



This column includes information sent to us from a variety of groups. *Servants' News* does not necessarily agree with the teachings or practices of these groups. Please ask about them before attending their functions.

Edwards to Speak in Milwaukee

The Church of God—Berean Fellowship has invited Norman Edwards to speak on the Sabbath in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area. On **March 25, 2000** there will be a Friday night interactive Bible Study at the John Merritt home in Oconomowoc. (For directions, call 414-567-6488). The study will be preceded by a potluck meal at 6:00 PM.

On the Sabbath, **March 26**, at 1:00 PM, there will be services, with meal and fellowship following at the Wellington Center, 18650 Corporate Drive in Brookfield, Wisconsin. You may e-mail the fellowship at cog/bereanfellowship@USA.com or call 877-444-4252 for more information. The web-site also has directions at www.geocities.com/berean_fellowship

Collins, Antion Speaking in Texas

The Houston Church of God Fellowship and the South Texas Church of God will sponsor **Steven Collins** to speak in Houston and San Antonio, Texas, on **February 26**. Mr. Collins has written extensively on the modern identity of Israel and other Bible topics. For more information, contact George Crow, 281-391-4207.

The same groups will also sponsor David Antion to speak in the same cities on **April 8**. Mr. Antion is a career minister once associated with the WCG and CGI groups, but now independent. For more information, contact Terry Post, 210-649-1013; Peter Huizar, 210-434-2662 or email hancock@the-cia.net.

Phoenix Conference and Social

Everyone is invited to the Christian Renewal Conference, March 4-5 at the Embassy Suites Hotel; 1515 North 44th St; Phoenix, Arizona 85008. Guest

speakers include David Antion, Ron Dart and Wayne Cole. A social is planned for Saturday night. Contact Marv and Millie Davis, 480-949-0645, e-mail: marvdavis@micworld.com.

Women's Conference 2000 Update

The **March 10-12, 2000** Women's Conference 2000 in the Dallas area has been moved to another hotel. It will now be held at the Wyndham Garden Hotel, 110 West Carpenter Freeway (Hwy 114) at O'Connor Road in Las Colinas, near the DFW Airport. Anyone with reservations who is **interested in singing in the choir should contact Joyce Green at 409-983-5721**

Registration has been closed as available space has now been filled. However, IBLC will make tapes of the seminars available for purchase later this spring. Those interested in future International Bible Learning Center women's conferences may call Linda Hardy White at (972) 492-3305, or e-mail at info@iblc.org.

Churches of God Conference 2000

Since we are to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" and to "proclaim the gospel to all nations", we can accomplish more of God's will by working together where we can. We need a major, massive effort to proclaim God's message, the true gospel, to the world!

We don't know how short the time is. But with a focused, collective and powerful effort, we can do a lot more through cooperation than through strife or competition.

As a servant and leader of God's people, should you be willing to attend a conference to discuss specifically how we could work cooperatively toward the Biblical injunction to preach the gospel to all nations? This confer-

ence will **not** be about local church programs or discussing doctrinal difference. It will **not** be about how we can join member lists or give up any sovereignty or corporate structures. **But it will be about discussing a major project of taking the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations!**

We are **not** talking about rebuilding a giant corporately structured church organization of power and control by a few at the top. Rather, we seek the respectful cooperation evidenced in the New Testament by Paul, Peter and Apollos. It is possible for God's servants to cooperate with one another in the spirit of humility. Paul said, "...with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love" (Eph 4:2, NKJV). We believe God's true servant-leaders have enough humility to be willing to at least discuss these vital issues.

Apology to Arlen Berkey

We would like to correct an error on page 4 of the May/June 1999 *Servants' News* (first column, last paragraph). We said that we had received a number of abuse complaints against three ministers in the *Restored Church of God* (Dave Pack, Ron Laughland and Arlen Berkey). Mr. Burkey was kind enough to call us and after discussion, we found that two complaints were false and the other was a case of mistaken identity. (We do not have any correction to make regarding the other men.) **We would like to apologize to Arlen Berkey for our incorrect, negative remarks and ask our readers who may have passed on the May/June 1999 issue to pass on this correction as well.**

Arlen Berkey left Mr. Pack's organization shortly after our article was written. He now serves as the minister for an independent congregation. He sends his sermon tapes, as well as Herbert Armstrong tapes to a mailing list of about 100. His address is PO Box 1545; McMinnville, OR 97128-1545; 503-472-2277. —Norman Edwards

The Tulsa Church of God congregation is willing to coordinate the time and place for this type of round table discussion. Tulsa is the center of the USA and easily accessible from everywhere. There are many suitable accommodations at reasonable prices. We offer our service and support in this venture.

The Churches of God Conference 2000 will be held in **Tulsa, Oklahoma, July 28, 29 and 30** at the Sheraton Tulsa Hotel; 10918 E 41st Street; Tulsa, OK 74146; 918-627-5000. We have arranged for a special lower rate of \$69 + tax for one to four persons per room. The more who stay at the hotel will help lower the cost of our meeting room. Please refer to the **Churches of God Conference 2000** when making your reservation.

The Tulsa congregation will pay for the conference room, fellowship hour beverages and the Sabbath day lunch. There will not be any other fees except your own personal travel, room and meal expense.

I know it will be an extra expense and perhaps an inconvenient time for those who are attending, but we believe it will be worth it, as there can only be a positive benefit resulting when Godly individuals agree to work together to advance the True Kingdom message to this desperate world.

Thank you for your interest, participation and prayers for the success of this

venture. Another way you can help is to encourage your friends who are also servant-leaders in the various Churches of God organizations to attend. The number of early responses so far has been very encouraging.

This conference has the potential to be significantly important in the development of the Church of God, as separated individuals with slighted, hurt feelings lay them aside, and come together to discuss a co-operative and focused outreach effort to "proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom of God as a witness to all nations before the end comes."

May God's kindness and favor through our Lord Jesus Christ be on each of us as we come together to serve Him in Truth and Love.

If you would like to attend the conference or would like to present an idea on Friday evening for later discussion, please request the appropriate forms from the Tulsa Church of God; PO Box 54621; Tulsa, Oklahoma 74155-0621; 918-622-3448.

—Lawrence Gregory

[This is so much better than the many groups that actually discourage their members from working with other groups. Working together, whether in a small or a large way, sounds like a wonderful idea. Of course, it will be

important to seek the Eternal's will—not to simply try to do "something big". "Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain" (Pslm 127:1). If I can arrange the time, I hope to attend this conference. —Norman Edwards]

"Songs for the Family of God" CD

I am happy to announce that piano accompaniments for the hymnal "Songs For The Family Of God" have been recorded and will be available as a 3-CD set by Feb. 15th or possibly even earlier. The cost is a bit high, \$50 plus \$5 shipping (plus 7% tax for Ohio residents), but it is a one-time investment. I think you will be happy with the sound; the hymns were recorded digitally using a 9-foot Steinway grand in a large auditorium. I tried to record good, singable tempos. I only have 100 sets at this point, I will have more made if needed. I hope the recordings will make the hymnal even more usable for you.

Make checks payable in U.S. funds to: Mark Graham; P.O.Box 770261; Lakewood, OH 44107-0019; 216 529-1380.

—Mark Graham

CEM Feast Synergism Team

As part of the Festival Association that Christian Educational Ministries has formed, I am working on a **synergism team**. The purpose is quite general and is (as God wills) to network together to share ideas for the Feast, looking beyond just what we have always done in our tradition. Of course I don't mean change just for the sake of change, but real growth and deeper joy in the celebration of this appointed time.

For now, this is open to anyone, regardless of other doctrines they may teach. (If someone wants to work with us, but doctrinal issues become a problem, we will deal with it then.)

To those who have celebrated the Feast at various locations and noticed something that really worked or you would like to see implemented, please share it with me. If anyone has a contact that I could communicate with, please forward it to myself or pass my info on to that person so they can contact me at their convenience.

I believe this could be a catalyst to

Comments on Independent Congregations

After being part of the "Community Church", or "Independent Movement" of the "Churches of God" for the last 2 years now, I have been able to experience the "triumphs and tragedies" of this type of fellowship.

I feel that the number one situation that will destroy a home fellowship faster than anything is attempting to use the Sabbath service as a place to decide doctrine, create "Systematic Theologies", debate doctrine or attempt to resolve diverse positions amongst attendees by trying to forge a "consensus". It is my experience that such efforts are absolutely fruitless, lead to friction, camp spirits and hard feelings amongst home fellowshippers.

Best strategy is to remember that services are a place to **worship** the Eternal, to praise him and to honor him. Doctrinal debate (which I have noticed seldom involves "Salvation Issues" and can be amazingly trivial) should be pursued (if ever) Off Premises or at least privately only between those that such minutia is important to.

We have discovered here at the Temecula Valley Fellowship that rotating location amongst the various attendees is a good idea. Whoever's home we are meeting at is responsible for leading the service, providing the topic and to moderate any discussion. The head of household is in effect the "leader for the week", and we honor the position that "it is his house, and he can make the rules". Strong moderation seems to be the key amongst us in the COG, whether it is a local fellowship or even Internet forums.

In my opinion, our social interaction skills seem to be improving somewhat in the CoG general arena, but we are still a **long** way from full maturity in this area. Best thing about the post 1994 era in the CoG is the opportunity and exercise of the development of our communication and interaction skills. Much work is needed here, but how else can future Judges and Kings learn how to communicate with and deal with people?

—Bill Lussenheide, Menifee, CA USA

God doing some great healing amongst us. I know that sounds like quite a cliché', and I have quite a distaste for religious sounding clichés'. This is a humble vehicle, but if this opens some folks to talking and agreeing to share what has worked or has not worked in worshipping at a holy time such as the FOT, then with openness God can walk amongst us uninhibited.

—Kaleta Johnson

WilliJohnson@email.msn.com

Dave Havir Visits Bloomington

On the Sabbath of December 18, 1999, Dave Havir, pastor of the non-aligned UCG-Big Sandy, TX, was the featured speaker at the UCG-Bloomington, IL (also a non-aligned congregation). About sixty people were present. Guests came from the Chicago area, northern and eastern Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana. Mr. Havir gave a sermon, "The Book of Job—5 Stages." Following an intermission for fellowship and refreshments, an interactive Bible study addressed the question, "What is the trunk of the tree?"

At the conclusion of the Bible study, most of those present adjourned to the home of Merv and Wilma Borkholder for a potluck meal. Prior to the meal, however, a baptismal service was held in the Borkholders' garage. Added to the body of Christ were Thomas Borkholder and Adam Wesley, as their proud parents, the Borkholders and John and Barbara Wesley, looked on.

Participating in the baptism were elders Dave Havir, Ken Svehla, and Mike Linacre. We then partook of an abundance of food, and some of us even spent our final minutes around a bonfire in spite of chilly temperatures.

—Larry Evans

Web Literature Outreach At Work

We have been quite busy with booklet requests. We are currently receiving from 20 to 25 a day. These range from 1 to 16 booklets per request. Glenn did a little investigating and found out that one of the articles on the web site, which is on the birth of Christ, comes up #1 on AOL's search engine. We think this is accounting for all the requests. The good thing is that a lot of people are going on to see a lot more of God's truth. We feel so blessed that

God has found a use for us.

—Glenn & Cathy Williams

[Glenn & Cathy have an Internet web site called Cornerstone (www.cornerstone1.org) where they make available generic COG booklets produced by Tom Justus, and other articles which help preach the gospel and reach out to their fellow man with the good news of the Kingdom of God. They have been inundated with requests for their booklets and articles about the birth of Christ. This is another example in recent times which just goes to show that God can and does work powerfully through His people (even just 1 or 2) who wish to be tools in His hands. And that He does not need a multi-million dollar corporation to get His message out to the world! —Rick Beltz]

Put Your Group in BSA Directory

The Bible Sabbath Association is in the process of revising the Directory of Sabbath Observing Groups. The Directory is circulated to Sabbath keepers all over the world. This is a directory of Sabbath observing groups and support organizations.

If your group wishes to be included in the new edition, please let us have your information as soon as possible. Please send to the BSA at 3316 Alberta Dr, Gillette, WY 82718, or email us at giveshare@vcn.com general information about your group or organization. We will then send you a form to fill out to return to us. All groups Must:

1. Show a complete physical address for their meeting place with detailed driving directions.
2. All groups must have a contact person with a complete mailing address & residence phone number.
3. Agree that any and all listing information submitted will only be included at the discretion of BSA.

If you are listed in the 1996 edition and wish to leave it the same, please call our toll free number at 1-888-687-5191 and speak to Richard or Shirley. If you don't know what the 1996 edition contains about your organization, you may call the toll free number and we will send you a copy of your information.

The first 1/2 of a page will be free. Additional costs will be \$50 for an additional 1/4 of a page, or \$150 for a full page ad. Photos, (black & white are better than color), can be inserted in your extra page

for \$30 each. Please submit in typing if at all possible. If emailing an attachment, please note that it is a directory ad, and use 12 point, Times Roman if possible.

The Directory of Sabbath Observing Groups is a very helpful directory and can be useful to everyone if the information is current. Please help us keep the information up to date. Remember this directory goes out to thousands of Sabbath keepers around the world. We will include information on Sabbath keeping organizations from every nation in the world. If you know of other groups, which have not been included in past Directories, please let us know. Please, send us your information as soon as possible so we can get the new directory printed. Please watch for a deadline date in a future Sabbath Sentinel.

We still have copies of the 1996 edition available for \$10 each or free with a \$20 order.

—Dr. Sidney L. Davis, Jr., President

The Bible Sabbath Association
"Proclaiming The Sabbath More Fully"
Send e-mail to: Bill & Jo Kuhlmeier
Billnjok@mail.com ICQ#5404252

Hanna Elizabeth Lara

Hannah Elizabeth Lara was born to Jim and Missi Lara (who help with *Servants' News*) on December 19, 1999 at 4:41 AM. She weighed 7 pounds, 1 ounce, and was 19 inches long. Everyone is doing fine. We all got a couple of hours' sleep that morning.

—Missi Lara

Useful WCG History Research

In previous *Servants' News* issues (see Nov. 1998, page 1) we have encouraged people to obtain the CD rom set of WCG and Herbert Armstrong archives. Many of the older Plain Truth and Good News magazines were stored as a separate file for each page—they were hard to work with and read. These individual files have been merged into larger, easier-to-read PDF files and posted on this web-site:

<http://www.crosswinds.net/~gwmatteson/index.htm>

Akron, Ohio Independent Group

If anyone is looking to a fellowship in the Akron-Cleveland-Canton-

Youngstown, area they are welcomed to be a part of our fellowship group. Most will find it stimulating and exhilarating and some may need the old hierarchy structure. Whatever your preference you are welcomed, no one is turned away. We meet at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron on the corner of Main St. and Olive St.. The Parking is free off of Olive St. and we meet in class room #2. For more information you can e-mail Ed Schneider at ets124@hotmail.com or myself at will_blair@excite.com.

—Will Blair
2607 Chamberlain Rd.; Akron, Ohio 44333

Last Ambassador Auditorium Service

The Worldwide Church of God headquarters congregation will have the last official church service in Ambassador Auditorium on the 26th of February. The formal dedication of Ambassador Auditorium took place on May 6, 1974. The Los Angeles congregation will return to the LA area for local services, and the remaining approximately 300 members in Pasadena will meet in Fellowship Hall (formerly called the Ambassador College Student Center). This is a great contrast to the four Pasadena congregations with four thousand members that existed during the latter 1980's. Ambassador Auditorium will still be used for combined area services and special events occasionally.

Legacy Corporation is still intending to purchase the property and Escrow may close at the end of October 2000. Once they buy the property they will be free to alter whatever they want to—including removing the dedication to "The Great God". However, they have already made a public commitment to keep the Ambassador Auditorium name, and have stated that they wish to start concerts and events again. After Legacy Corporation takes over the student center, the Pasadena congregation will need to rent a hall—they may need to go outside of Pasadena to find one.

—[compiled from several sources]

Lon Lacey Awaits Resurrection

Lon Lacey, Founder of A Church of God Ministry, was found dead by his wife in his home in Carmel, California, early in the morning on January 12, 2000. The cause of death was not immediately

known, though a heart problem of some kind was suspected. He helped provide a place for services and Feasts, and a publication for spiritual edification throughout the break up of the various Church of God congregations. He formed the New Mexico Region Church of God in 1995, but recently moved to California. He published *The Logos Journal* and *Understanding Our Times*. Hundreds of people whom he served offered their sympathy and help to his wife Carol and family.

Mr. Lacey's publications dealt with what many would call "conspiracy theory". He researched and exposed corruption at the highest levels of this world's religions and governments. This writer has little doubt that some of what Mr. Lacey was writing was absolutely true and has been intentionally ignored by our mass media. On the other hand, I did not always agree with Mr. Lacey's conclusions. In December of 1999, I had a near-hour conversation with him about his insistence that **the Bible prophesied** a Y2K disaster. He insisted that a 1960's government document mandating 2-digit years in certain computer interfaces was evidence of a plot to set up many government and industry computers to fail so that a one-world-government computer system could be used to replace them. I offered him many reasons why this could not be so and asked him if he would stop claiming to prophecy from the Bible if his prophecy did not come to pass. He told me, "I don't have to answer that because it is going to happen the way I say".

Mr. Lacey's untimely death brings home a very real lesson about eternal judgment. We **do not know** if Mr. Lacey's death was caused by 1) an assassination ordered by some of the people he was exposing, 2) the Eternal, to stop him from "leading people astray", 3) the Eternal, because Lon had successfully finished the work He had given him to do, or 4) some other reason.

Everyone seemed to characterize Lon Lacey as **a man who worked diligently and sincerely for things in which he really believed**. All of us need to ask God to show us what we are to do, and then to proceed ahead with that same kind of diligence. Then Christ can say to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (Matt 25:21).

—Norman Edwards ☞

"Feast 2000" from page 1

The other group is considering a site in the Rocky Mountain area—possibly Thermopolis, Wyoming or Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The proposed facility near West Branch is the Lost Arrow Resort. It has boating, shooting, hunting, volleyball, a nice dining room, hiking, etc. Rough cabins cost about \$250 for a week; houses on the river \$900. The hall would hold 150 people. Other motels are available 10 minutes away.

Thermopolis, Wyoming, has the world's largest area of natural hot springs. Bill Buckman has made the initial arrangements. Rooms at the Motel would cost about \$40-50 dollars per night. The meeting hall would hold about 100 people. Yellowstone National Park is about two hours away. One difficulty with this site is that the population of Thermopolis is only about 6000 people and the nearest town over 10,000 people is over 2 hours away. Thermopolis has only the one major motel and few other restaurants.

We are looking at Colorado Springs, Colorado, as another possible site. We are considering a resort/campground with plenty of outdoor family activities, but still an easy driving distance away from the city.

We would be glad to hear from anyone interested in attending any of these sites. We realize that many factors enter into the decision of where we will keep the Feast each year. We pray and ask the Eternal to show us. Sometimes He makes His will clear, and other times He lets us make the decision.

Deciding where to hold a site is a lot like planning where to attend with a large family. Each member has needs, desires and wants—which sometimes get confused. Older children sometime attend with their family and sometimes with other families—for good reasons.

If you are interested in attending or helping at one of these sites, please let us know—use the contact information on pages 2 or 16. If you know of other sites that welcome non-aligned believers, please send information about them to us as we will be printing it in future issues. —NSE ☞

Barnabas Ministries—1999 Year in Review

What a year Barnabas Ministries, a Christian service organization dedicated to preaching the Good News of God to the world, had in 1999! Our primary outreach of service, the Bible Study Web site at www.biblestudy.org, has had tremendous growth this past year. I know you will rejoice with us knowing that the truth and love of God is being distributed increasingly to the whole world.

The Bible Study site in 1999 had retrieved from it the equivalent of **720,000** 35-page booklets worth of materials (63 **billion** bytes)! Countless tens of thousands of visitors accessed some of the **best** Bible study materials to be found on the Internet—24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for **free!**

And with the **new** sections and additions planned for this year (see below), we hope to achieve our goal of **one million** booklets worth of the Gospel going out to the entire planet!! If our just-in January, 2000 figures (an incredible 85,000 booklets worth of God's truth—13% **above** our best month last year) are any indication, we have a good shot at meeting this goal!

God has opened a door of communicating His word to the world that has been **unavailable** for the last 6,000 years. While the Internet will never replace one-to-one spreading of the gospel, it is an opportunity of immense potential. And the beauty of this open door is that it can be done less expensively than other well-known tools used to preach God's word such as magazines, printed materials, television, radio or print ads! Calculations done earlier this year found that it cost us only **one penny** (U.S.) to have a person retrieve God's truth from the Web site **anywhere** in the world! Amazing! Let's take a look at the major accomplishments of the www.biblestudy.org Web site:

- We've added a section called Bible Maps, where people can view detailed, quickly downloadable maps. We have maps of historic Israel, maps delineating the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul (with comments from the well-known book on Paul called *The Life & Epistles of St. Paul* by Conybeare/Howson) and a map of where the seven churches of Revelation existed in the Apostle John's day. We also added a map of the countries that will be heavily

involved with the Beast/False Prophet at the end time.

- We've added a large section called *God's Rest*, which promotes His special weekly day of refreshing, renewal, rejoicing and a relationship with Him. It's just the kind of section our hurried, hectic world needs!
- We now have a special section for the articles found in *Your Choice* magazine. This quarterly publication teaches practical applications of Biblical concepts and gives insight into some of our most pressing emotional and spiritual problems.
- We introduced a new audio study series called *Teaching the Law* by Mordakhai Joseph. This excellent series explores in detail the scriptures from Genesis to Deuteronomy, using verses from the entire Bible to explain the pivotal topics of these books. We have the first 71 lessons on the site, with the rest of the series to be added in 2000.
- We've also added a section called *Barnabas Laughs!*, which has daily and weekly updated cartoons and jokes to help us not take ourselves **too** seriously!
- We've continued to deepen our offering of basic and mature Bible articles and audio messages. We now have about 110 articles on a wealth of Bible topics and more than 125 total audio messages on an expanding variety of Bible subjects.

The year 2000 will be keeping us busy expanding and enhancing our offerings to help serve those looking for a deeper meaning to life and to get in touch with God and their Savior Jesus Christ.

We have hired two people on a project-basis to begin doing research for our upcoming section tackling the **Creation Vs. Evolution** argument. We are also beginning to collect materials and hire people to do research for our three other planned brand **new** sections called *God's Comfort*, *Home Schooling* and *Teaching Children the Bible*.

The *God's Comfort* section will contain uplifting, inspiring, encouraging articles and messages that lead toward a greater faith, hope and love in God. The *Home Schooling* section will provide basic materials and references to aid those seeking to give their children an education at home. *Teaching Children the Bible* will be a section of tools that can be used to convey God's wonderful truth to children. If that weren't enough, we may even squeeze in a section called *The Virtuous Woman*. This section will be specially dedicated to helping women grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. And, of course, we will continue to beef up and redesign existing sections of the Web site as well!

If anyone would like to help with this ministry in some way, please use the contact information below. Nearly all of this ministry has been accomplished by the donated efforts of a very few people. May God bless each of us to comprehend the infinite riches of His love and the awesome inheritance in eternity He has for those who love Him. Thank you.

—Alan Ruth, Barnabas Ministries
PO Box 3393
Farmington Hills, MI. 48333, USA
Email: Webmaster@biblestudy.org
www.biblestudy.org

You have Questions. The Bible has Answers.

Comments on Gospel Preaching & Websites

We need to be careful when reading statistics on web-sites. The number of "downloaded files" does not really tell us how many people are benefitting from the information. With the right software, a person could download an entire web site with a few mouse clicks, and then never read any of it. On the other hand, the same problem can exist with magazines or other gospel preaching methods—millions of free magazines can be mailed and many of them may never be read. In years gone by, people who received *The Plain Truth* at their post office box would occasionally look in the post office trash can and find numerous Plain Truth magazines there—magazines that were never read!

In the *Parable of the Sower*, Christ explained that some seed would **not** fall on good ground. But if we see our seed falling on bad ground, we should ask the Eternal to show us what to do. It is He who causes people to listen to our Gospel preaching efforts. We should **never** assume that "more dollars" or "more career ministers" means "more people reached". The Barnabas Ministries website provides far more information than any corporate "Church of God" site that I know of. If you can, please take a look. —NSE



We print a representative sampling of our mail—both positive and negative. We do not include names unless we are fairly sure that the writer would not object. To avoid any difficulty, writers should specify how much of their name and address they would like us to print.

Encouragement from “Scattered Brethren Contact”

January 9, 2000

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Edwards,

I want to thank you for the publications you recently sent me. They are helpful. I read them on the Sabbath. Just this morning, I received a call from [name withheld] in response to one of my cards to the scattered brethren. We spoke quite a long time and we are trying to make plans to meet either here at my home or in [city withheld].

A [name withheld] also responded from [city withheld]. He gave me the number of a Seventh Day Baptist Church. This church observes the Sabbath, but not the Holy Days. They also observe December 25. We plan to visit sometime in the spring, with a friend from here also.

I do appreciate any help in locating brethren with whom we can meet and fellowship with on the Sabbath. Presently we observe the Sabbath quietly at home. Your publications are very helpful.

[Paragraphs of requested literature and personal information are deleted].

—MM, Wisconsin

RESPONSE: I am glad that you found the Scattered Brethren Contact List helpful. Many people have met many friends and found places to fellowship through it. [Anyone interested may contact *Servants' News* for a copy]. I am glad that you are not afraid to attend a group that observes Christmas, even though you do not. The gospel spread during the first century because the apostles were not afraid to attend synagogue services where the leaders might have been anti-Jesus. They went through the worship service with everyone else, where anti-Christ comments may well have been made. But they went on to preach Christ afterward, sometimes making converts and sometimes being beaten and thrown out of the city.

Today, people in many churches (both Sabbath- and Sunday-keeping) really think they are following the Bible because they talk to people mostly from their own congregation and think that no serious Bible student believes anything else. If people would visit different groups regularly, everyone would realize that there is a lot that they might not know. When a visitor who is genuine and sincere about worshipping the Eternal arrives at a service, shares many common beliefs, but has one different belief (like not keeping Christmas), it will make some people stop and think. If a dozen nice, sincere people were to visit that congregation, all with this one different belief, many in that congregation might really study that belief.

Thank you for setting a good example. Keep visiting.

—NSE

Tree of Life vs Good & Evil

LETTER: January 30, 2000

Dear Norm,

Cindy and I hope everything is going well with you and your family. We appreciate what you're doing with the *Servants' News*. But you know me, I tend to see things from a different angle, so here goes:

I found your “Spiritual Food... or Slow Poison?” article in the “Sept/Oct 1999 *Servants' News*” very interesting.

You had many good points, but I believe you blurred the difference between what is good and what is salvation.

As an example, Dobson has many good points on Christian Living, but he does not teach how to make it into God's Kingdom.

I think the two trees explain it all. Most people subconsciously think there is a tree of good and a tree of evil. That is not the case. Both good and evil are on the same tree. The other tree is the tree of life.

That means, no matter how good you are, you are concentrating on the wrong tree as far as God is concerned. This also means, following a good person, or reading good material is not enough.

Many have set themselves up to teach us how to be good. Being good can be a trap for Christians. We may settle for just being good and not move on to life. By doing so, we will fall short of the glory of God.

Too many “religious” leaders want us to be good by their definition. That is to send them money so they can do “good” things.

Our goal should be to seek life. Good fruits will come along the way, but they are

not the objective or the end goal.

To be a successful human, it is fine and advisable to use and study any good resource for instruction. But when it comes to salvation, only those who help us make it down the path of life are advisable.

—Harry Curley, Altadena, California

RESPONSE: I agree with your comments, but possibly in an even broader sense than you stated. Christ is the tree of life. Only He can give eternal life. All organizations are trees mixed with good and evil. The Worldwide Church of God, and all other church groups fall into that category. The WCG disfellowshipped people—told them they were no longer part of the spiritual Church of God—for failing to recognize Herbert Armstrong as “second in command” under Christ. Herbert Armstrong taught a lot of Bible truth, but he was not “the way” to salvation either.

No person should trust a human organization as “the group that is going to bring them to salvation”. Organizations can help people along the way—because of their leaders or in spite of their leaders. We do not know what percentage of the leaders of various organizations will be in which resurrection. The point of the *Servants' News* article was that some organizations try to help people in one specific area, whereas others try to get people to come to them for all spiritual needs. Once the people are committed, then these organizations bring out their “poisonous” doctrines.

James Dobson and similar ministries are useful when they teach how to apply the Bible to modern day life. When a teenager secretly listens to some bizarre music group for six months, dyes his or her hair green and announces that they are thinking about moving out, parents may be totally shocked and have no idea what to do. A strict church group might say, “That kid can't come to services looking like that”. But a Christian family ministry might be familiar with these problems and able to show the parent the passages and principles in the Bible that will help them help their teen.

Are these family ministries right in every case? No. There may be times when a “Church of God” minister has a better answer than they do. Each person must decide to whom he or she will go for help when he or she realizes that their own understanding of a problem is not enough. Then, each person has to judge the effectiveness of the help. We have to be reading Scripture so we know what the Eternal says is “good” and what He says is “bad”. It is part of becoming a King and a Priest.

—NSE

SN a False Prophet on Y2K?

LETTER:

January 10, 2000

Norm,

How does it feel to be a false prophet? Hope you have another job opportunity, because history has not been kind to people who predict things that don't happen.

[This letter came in a box along with a little creature type of Y2K-doll that makes a crashing sound when you drop it.]

—Marty Schimmel, AZ

RESPONSE: I am not a false prophet because I didn't *prophesy* anything. There is nothing in *Servants' News* or *Shelter in the Word* that claims to have the authority of the Eternal that Y2K would be a disaster. I never claimed to have a revelation or that the Eternal was "guiding my mind" or that the Bible predicted Y2K would be a disaster. I never added up any years from Bible prophecies and made them come out to the Year 2000. The only scriptures I cited were general ones that when people sin, God punishes them. I never said that Y2K fulfilled any specific prophecy.

I did make *predictions* based upon my technical knowledge and the information available to me. Some of those predictions were wrong, for which I apologized in this issue of *Shelter in the Word*. Some were right. Is history unkind to people who are wrong in their predictions? Sometimes. But the important part is whether or not people learn from their mistakes. In 1981, Bill Gates said: "640K ought to be enough memory for anybody." Today, the wimpiest home computer will have 10 to 20 times that much memory. But that didn't stop Bill Gates from becoming one of the wealthiest men in the world.

—NSE

No Neckties At Truckers Study

LETTER:

December 29, 1999

Dear Norm:

In the September/October issue of the *Servants' News*, I read with interest the letter under the heading "Trucker's Study—How to Dress" from Myra McQueen and your response (page 15).

I want to agree with you that how one dresses for services has been made into a bigger deal than it truly warrants. However, I think your readers might get the wrong impression regarding the context of Myra's comments.

In one of the Trucker's Studies, one of the men mentioned an incident where he attended a church service dressed in jeans. In this congregation's culture, it is customary to wear a coat and tie, and he

was made to feel uncomfortable. I suggested to the truck driver that he had three possible choices:

1. Don't attend church anywhere (which I emphasized was not an acceptable solution).
2. Find a church to attend that does not require a coat and tie (there are many).
3. Go to that church and wear a coat and tie.

In other words, respect the culture of the church you are attending. This after all is the principle Paul espouses in Romans 14. If all it takes to keep from offending my brother is to wrap a piece of colorful cloth around my collar, then I'll wrap the piece of cloth around my collar. That was the point I was trying to make.

I am concerned that some readers might think that we require truck drivers to wear a coat and tie to our studies, and that we give them a hard time if they don't. For the record, I personally avoid neckties as much as I can (they are an abomination and it wouldn't surprise me if they are of pagan origin) and I go to the truck stop without one.

—Lenny Cacchio, Missouri

RESPONSE: Since I attended one of your studies and saw how it worked, I never thought that you expected anyone to wear a tie there. However, I can see how my writing might be confusing to others.

Your point about not offending others is well-made. When I visit other groups, I try to dress like they expect people to dress—unless it is some clear violation of Scripture.

However, it seems that many in the Church of God groups still tend to think that a person really is not right before God unless they are wearing a coat and tie. They may claim that they just expect people to wear "the best they have" to come before God, but that is not in the Bible and in reality, is not what is typically done in the Church of God groups. If a person regularly attends who does not own a suit and tie, he will probably be encouraged to get one. But are those who wear suits encouraged to "upgrade" to a tuxedo or other formal wear? No. Even people who own them are *discouraged* from wearing them to services.

In other words, the "best you have" principle is not really accurate, but it is the "best suit you have" principle that is used. It is not a sin for all of the men to wear suits to a service as long as they realize that "uniformity" is not righteousness and they do not offend people who may come to visit wearing something different.

—NSE

Shelter in the Word Separate

LETTER:

January 17, 1999

I just wanted to send a brief note of thanks for the many uplifting articles in the *Shelter*. I think you have a very balanced approach and am grateful that you have found a way to communicate the word without being condemning or critical.

I have a friend in another state whom I think would enjoy the *Shelter* very much. Could you please send her a subscription without the *Servants' News* attached? She is of a Baptist background and would not understand what the *SN* is all about.

Her name and address are: [removed].

Thank you so much and keep up the great work!

—Martine Mancini, Minnesota

RESPONSE: We are always glad to send a separate subscription to *Shelter in the Word*. That magazine was created specifically to help people without (or with) a Church of God background. We encourage people to show it to others and offer them a free subscription. Thanks.

—NSE

If Christ Were to Be Here Today

LETTER:

December 30, 1999

Thanks for the website, and your patience this year. I want to, also, thank you for your newsletter the past few years. I am an old lady that has weathered many a storm as a mother and then a nurse. But none can compare to the "wars" that exist within the scattered churches. It is the leadership that fulfill Micah 4:11, (the word "nations" is a symbol for churches-other than the "Israel of God"-Gal.6:16). The false prophets tend to play on the fears of those that they lead. HWA & EGW did this when they threatened others with the Lake of Fire if they did not support them in their doctrinal concepts.

Jewish and Protestant, (as well as Catholic), leaderships do the same thing when they accuse others of heresy for not living within the traditions of the founders of their particular religions. Television evangelists do this when they claim to be led by God and then spend His money to maintain posh lifestyles of the rich and famous—all the while leading away the people who seek God into a religion that is of their own making.

Those who don't follow traditional beliefs are at risk of being called "cultist" and/or "legalistic". But as you have said [*Servants' News*, Sept/Oct 1999, p.15], when you think about it, if Christ were to visit any of these organizations during one of their gatherings, would they let a man in

the door who claimed to heal people out in the parking lot before He came in?—Who claimed to be the Messiah?—Who claimed to live by every Word of God? (Matt.4:4)—Who may not be dressed in the acceptable fashion?—Who is willing to spend more time in the company of non-members with criminal records and “sinners”? (Matt.9:10)—and to listen to a woman? (John 4:27). Would He not be called “cultist” and “legalistic?”

Shalom friends

—Myra McQueen

RESPONSE: Thanks. I enjoy these short e-mail letters.

—NSE

Dealing With Sunday Keepers

LETTER:

December 3, 1999

Norman,

Do you remember I wrote you for names of home groups? [Scattered Brethren Contact Listing] You sent my information to several in my area and they contacted me. I visited Jane's [name changed to protect privacy] group and liked it. Only problem was a conflict of meeting time. I've met with friends on Saturday for several years. I really wanted to try Jane's group again but didn't feel free to leave my friends [which meet at the same time]. When they were out of town a couple times, my attempts to attend there were unsuccessful.

I won't contact her now. Here's why. The real last “conversation” we had was in depth. I have come to see the Sabbath as still valid. But, I fellowship with people who disagree. Jane doesn't agree with that. She indicated to me that she didn't believe in fellowshiping with Sunday worshippers.

I explained that these people love the Lord with all their hearts—that so did I when I believed Sunday is the “Christian Sabbath” and that it is through their association with us that their hearts can become open to His truth. Most have never heard anything else but Sunday.

Jane seemed alarmed and I truly believe this view of mine is the reason I'm no longer invited to the group. However, my Saturday meeting friends have now come to believe whole-heartedly in Sabbath worship and reject Sunday meetings as pagan. But we all still accept and love our Sunday Christian mutual friends. I have made up a sheet of verses I researched in my own study that convinced me personally (no human convinced me—I saw it all for myself) to give them and no one is challenging us any more—even though they haven't changed yet. **We are dealing here with a lifetime of**

imprinting. You can't expect people to change just because “we” see it. It took me literally a couple years. In fact, it was during that research time I found you while searching “Sabbath-keeping” on the Internet. But I had a very real relationship with Jesus as a Sunday worshipper for many years. Perhaps Jane or others can't believe He would honor my faith in Him while I was not in line regarding the Sabbath. I see this as arrogance and “cultish” in itself.

I feel we are carrying the “cultish” behavior on when we reject sincere believers as unsaved because they have not yet seen through a lifetime of false teaching. How can they ever see it if we shun them instead of accepting them where they are and gently showing them (humbly, not arrogantly) the other side?

Please don't misunderstand. I don't accept Sunday as the Christian Sabbath any more than I'd accept Halloween as a Christian observance, and I'm serious. But neither do I expect people to follow me in things that have not been shown to them yet by the Eternal. He understood what I was taught from childhood and He was so patient with me. **I try to be patient with other believers.**

It's easy to discern others whose desire is truly to please and obey Him. I accept and love them all and leave them free to follow Him, not demanding that they dot my “I”s and cross my “T”s. Now, I'm not talking here of people who know they are in violation of the Word. It's easy to think: “They can read the Bible.” But they have carefully been taught verses to explain and “verify” changing the Sabbath as the “new covenant” all their lives!

For my part, I personally saw hypocrisy in other teachings in my church then and made the decision to lay down everything I'd been taught and try to approach the Bible free of “baggage”. That's when I started seeing so **much** of what you write in *Servants' News*—and why I love *SN*. It confirms for me what I've found on my own. That confirmation really is important. It is so rewarding to read it in *SN*.

—[Name Withheld]

RESPONSE: Thank you for the encouragement. What you say is amazing. I know many people who have spoken loudly against the evils of Sunday-keeping, but cannot name one person who switched to the Sabbath as a result of their efforts. Yet you have helped several begin to keep the Sabbath by your patience and understanding. Church of God people seem to rejoice greatly at the scriptures where Christ promises death and destruction to those who disobey him. That is fine—when Christ

does that it will be the only solution. But where do they stand in this scripture?

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, “This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner” (Luke 7:36-39).

Christ accepted the woman's acts of kindness without her first confessing all her sins and without him condemning her for her sins. (If either of these things had occurred, the Pharisee would not had made the statement in verse 39.) Does the Old Testament command a person to anoint a respected man's feet with perfume, kiss them, wash them with tears, or dry them with hair? Or do the Pagans do these things? There is no doubt that the woman needs to stop sinning. But Christ saw her true desire to change. Did He go on to spell out her evil to her? Here is the end of the story:

Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (Luke 7:47-50).

Could this woman represent some church groups? I have met some Sunday-keeping Christians whom I believe, upon understanding the Sabbath day from Christ in the resurrection, will almost immediately say “we are so sorry for not understanding the true Sabbath—we will begin keeping it right away.” I also know diligent Sabbath-keepers who believe they understand the true calendar, the true Names of the Eternal and a host of other doctrines. They have said that people who do not believe those doctrines the way they do **will not** be in the Kingdom of God. If it turns out that their understanding is wrong, they will probably try to argue those doctrines with Christ in the resurrection. If you were Christ, who would you want to live with forever with you?

We will be judged with the judgment

that we judge others (Matt 7:2). Some Sabbath-keepers dogmatically state that no Sunday-keeper will be in the first resurrection even if they are keeping the wrong day in ignorance. But what would happen if Christ sees some habitual idolatry or bearing of false witness in those Sabbath-keepers? Would he judge them by their own judgment, and say that this commandment breaking in ignorance must keep them out of the first resurrection?

Please keep serving wherever Christ leads you.

—NSE

Church of God Groups Uniting?

LETTER:

December 30, 1999

Hello Norm,

I recently read your essay (from *The Journal*, November 30, 1999) titled, "To Protect Your Crown, Hold Fast! But Hold Fast To What?" and noted that you wrote the following:

"... The growth pattern of nearly all Church of God groups has been the same: They start by growing rapidly, almost exclusively from members of a single previous group. The first couple years are often marked by much honesty, understanding and enthusiasm, and a significant number of other members may join from a variety of sources.

But then, usually for many varied reasons, the number of people leaving the group begins to exceed the number of people joining it.

Almost all of the major WCG split-offs are smaller than they were a year ago. No humanly foreseeable event could cause any of them to grow suddenly or cause several of them to join together.

This writer has not heard of any hard evidence that God is miraculously working to unite the Church of God groups behind one leader (but would be interested in hearing about any; please see the contact information at the end of the article)..."

Since you said you would be "interested in hearing," I would like to comment with the following:

This year I had the privilege to get away from the cares of this world and attend a refreshing, exhilarating, uplifting, delightful, spiritually rewarding, Feast of Tabernacles and Great Last Day in Clearwater, Florida with brethren of God's Church, known more by its publishing name—the Church Outreach Program (COP) with an address of P.O. Box 6111, Elgin, IL 60121. COP is responsible for

publishing such articles as: Is It Man or Is It Angel, The Beast with 7 Heads, The Mystery of 666, The Beginning and a three tape cassette Album titled The Light, as well as distributing numerous other sermon tapes all free upon request. This year, without getting into numbers, twice as many brethren attended as were present in 1998, which in turn was twice as many as attended in 1997, which in turn was more than double its previous year. Most of the brethren attending came out of the various xCoG groups but some baptized never attended any CoG group in their lives, or even ever heard of Herbert W. Armstrong..

The commanded holy convocations, or public meetings, for the First and Eighth Day both took place in Clearwater Beach at the Harborview Center and Adam's Mark Hotel, respectively. The featured speaker was COP's General Pastor Robert Roenspies who answered the traditional question of: "Why Are We Here?" This and one other question, "Why does God say 'rejoice' so many times?" were answered as God's Word was expounded to explain how the Feast of Tabernacles pictured the celebration, in advance, of the marriage of God's Church/Bride/Firstfruits/ "temples," "tabernacles," if you will, to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. It was recommended we think of the Feast as though we were millions of years into the future and, from that point in time, looking back at the Feast of Tabernacles as a "memorial" of the Lamb's marriage to His Bride (Firstfruits) as a predestined "done deal" in God's eyes. God does call "... those things which be not as though they were." (Rom 4:17) Throughout the Feast excited brethren from around the Country, learning and growing together in unity, were found fellowshiping and talking about this Feast knowledge and God's wonderful true plan of salvation. It is already evident that many more will be attending God's Feasts with us in 2000.

The above, with some background information, is mentioned to let you know that the "day of small things" isn't over. We'll see what our Father has in store. You may publish the above within *Servants' News* if you wish. Also, would you please send me an electronic copy (or mail if impossible to send) of your latest paper titled "What Does the Bible Say about Eternal Judgment?" Thank you.

—John Gordon; 119 Pine Street; Nashua, NH
e-mail: branch00@aol.com

RESPONSE: The article you mentioned appeared in the November 30, 1999 issue of *The Journal* (PO Box 1020, Big Sandy, TX 75755; \$22 for 12 monthly issues). I was asking for evidence that the Eternal

was joining a large group of former WCG members back together. The fact that one small group has doubled in size for four years in a row means that there are now at least 32 people in the group if it started off with 2. I do not know the exact number of people in the *Church Outreach Program*, but even if it is a few hundred, it is just one of dozens of groups its size. You will notice that I said the growth path of "nearly all" groups, **not all**, was a big start in the first years, then a gradual dwindling.

Your group appears to publish booklets, hold Feasts, and teach some doctrines in a slightly different way that the WCG previously taught. All of this is good if it is Christ that is doing the work through you. But are other Church of God groups abandoning their own "works" to join your group? Do they recognize Robert Roenspies as the "General Pastor" of God's One True Church? I do not think so.

There are several groups such as yours that seem to be "fired up"—actively teaching from the Bible and reaching "new people" with important truth—not afraid to make changes when they see something new in the scriptures. That is good. If they could all see themselves as servants of the Eternal and not try to think they are the "only" or "main" group, they could accomplish much. But I have read some of Mr. Roenspies writings, and he seems to be making the same mistake that so many of the other groups are making: He claims to be the "one servant" that God is using and that all other CoG leaders are "self-appointed". But nearly every CoG leader has a story as to why they think their position came about by the direct influence of God—yet I have not heard one that an unbiased outsider would consider "miraculous". What real proof is there that Mr. Roenspies is "appointed by God"?

Elijah was definitely a servant of the Eternal, but he did not know about 7000 others who followed Him also (1Kngs 19:14, 18). There is no mention of Elijah ever meeting all these people or asserting his "spiritual authority" over them. It is hard for me to imagine someone in the resurrection rising up and saying: "Where is Christ? Tell Him that the leader of His Work on Earth for the years of ____ to ____ is here and ready for his new position." How could anyone make such a claim to Christ? And if they can't make it to Him, why are they making it to other people today—deceiving "little ones" in the faith?

I sometimes think that Christ might say: "Take a seat in the room over there with the hundreds of other guys who claimed to be the one human head of My Work during the same time that you did. Talk to them about

their groups. Find out about the millions of people that I was working with whom you refused to acknowledge. After you have done that, then you need to learn from the human leaders who acknowledged Me as the head and did a work for Me without making great claims for themselves—claims I never told them to make.”

The Eternal Judgement paper will be included in this issue. I hope it will be helpful.

—NSE

True Statements of Christ: John 2:19, Matthew 12:40, Mark 8:31

LETTER:

December 12, 1999

The Worldwide Church of God and United Church of God, IA and others have taught that the resurrection of Christ took place at or about sunset on the weekly Sabbath. This is based on the statement of Christ in answering “certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees” when they asked for a sign to prove that He was the Messiah. The statement is found in Matthew 12:40:

Read this verse. It is not complicated. [It says] “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

It does **not** say that Christ would be resurrected at sunset on the Sabbath three days and three nights after His body was placed in the tomb by Joseph. It does **not** say that Christ would be dead for three days and three nights. It does **not** say that Christ would be dead for three days and three nights and three more hours. It says that He would remain in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

John 2:19 is a statement by Christ. “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again.” John explains in verse 21 that Christ spoke of the temple of His body. Did Christ mean three days or did He mean three days and then maybe three more hours? Which do you think that meant to say?

Mark 8:31 Jesus taught His disciples “that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” Did Christ say three days? Did He mean to say three days and maybe three more hours?

Christ made these statements about His crucifixion and resurrection. There is no conflict. He said what He meant. Three days are equal to seventy-two hours in the statements of Christ.

In the account of His crucifixion, Christ died about three o’clock in the afternoon.

Three days or seventy-two hours would be complete at the same hour, three o’clock in the afternoon three days later. The account tells us that Joseph asked for and received the body of Christ and prepared and placed it in the tomb about sunset. Three days or seventy-two hours would be complete at the same hour three days later, about sunset.

How do we reconcile these statements?

1) He died at 3PM and 72 hours later He was resurrected (restored to life) by God our Father, exactly as Christ said in John 2:19 and Mark 8:31.

2) His body was placed in the tomb about sunset Luke 23:54. He emerged from the tomb about sunset 72 hours later Matthew 12:40.

3) Christ remained in the tomb during the 3 hours between 3PM and sunset on the day He was resurrected.

That was very simple. This does not change any “doctrine.” This explains that Christ statements are true about His death, burial, and resurrection. We can believe Christ.

What happened during these 3 hours, the day of the resurrection? It was a Sabbath day. The women were resting Luke 23:56. Who wrapped (folded) and moved the napkin that had been “about His head” John 20:7? What were the chief priests shown or told by the Roman soldiers watching the tomb? Matthew 28:11-15 tells us what they may have seen happen during these three hours. They saw the stone rolled away from the tomb and the earthquake and the angel of the Lord Matthew 28:2. They witnessed enough that they were bribed to lie about all they had seen Matthew 28: 12-13.

—Neal Brantley, North Carolina

RESPONSE: If this study helps someone who is skeptical about the truth of the Gospel accounts, then it is a good thing. The Gospel accounts are difficult to reconcile in some places—just as the courtroom testimony of several honest witnesses is sometimes difficult to reconcile because they saw the same event from different perspectives. Many people have tried to explain the statements surrounding Christ’s death in many different ways. Some try to force the Bible to explain their existing church practices and ignore scriptures that do not fit. Others, like yourself, appear to simply figure out what the Bible says and then believe that.

But please be aware that others may take a different view of the available evidence. Most people will try to explain “unclear” scriptures from “clear” scriptures. But the scriptures that one person decides are clear to him may not be clear to another.

What did Christ mean when he said, “in

the heart of the earth”? The expression is not used anywhere else in the New Testament. Did he mean in the grave or just dead? The Greek word for heart here, *kardia*, means the blood pumping organ. We can say what we think it means, but do we know well enough to fight over it?

How can we say that Christ had to mean exactly 72 hours when he said “three days”. If a relative dropped their child off for you to keep at 1:00 PM, and they said they would be back in three days, would you put the child out on the street at 1:01 PM? At 4:00 PM? Hopefully not. In the English language, if a person specified a time like “three days”, it can certainly mean a few hours longer or shorter. If a person wanted to say that they would return at exactly the same time three days later, they would either say that, give the time, or say 72 hours.

Since most people consider punctuality and precision virtues, it sounds like we are honoring God when we say, “if God says three days, then He must mean exactly 72 hours”. Why not carry it further? We could say that He means exactly 4320 minutes or exactly 259,200 seconds. We could even debate whether those seconds began when Christ said “it is finished”, or when he breathed last, or when his heart stopped beating or when his brain-waves stopped. I hope we can all see that this is ridiculous.

We should let the Eternal inspire the words He wants, rather than force our idea of precision onto His words. If He wanted to say “72 hours” or “three days later at the exact same time of day”, do not we believe that he could have inspired words with that meaning? Can we accept that the Eternal speaks in less precise terms when He wants to? Notice Luke 2:23: “Now Jesus Himself began *His ministry* at **about** thirty years of age,…” Nearly every Bible chronologist interprets this to mean “exactly thirty”, but the Greek word *hosei* means “approximate”, just like Christ feeding “about 5000” in Luke 9:14.

Please don’t misunderstand. I do not think that your conclusion must be wrong or that you should not study this subject. But I am not convinced that it must be right. I think it is good to study the Bible afresh—not trying to read our previous ideas into it. I believe this is essential to be taught from the Eternal. However, we should never forget why we study the Bible and how we will be judged. If friends and congregations **break up** over technical arguments that do not affect the way we worship the Eternal or love our neighbor, then we might be better off not to make such technical studies.

Thank you for sharing your information.

—NSE

“Judge Nothing...” from page 1 thing wrong with someone else, and we can easily get on the bandwagon when our peers start running someone down.

In Paul’s day much of this was going on. Brethren were choosing sides and forming cliques (1Cor 1:11-12; 3:3), even judging Paul in the process. Paul explained that we are not each other’s judges or servants, but we are all Christ’s servants and He is the judge:

¹ So then, men ought to regard us as **servants of Christ** and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human **court [day]**; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me (1Cor 4:1-4, NIV).

What did Paul mean in the above statement? **Paul knew that the final judgment deciding who makes it into God’s Kingdom can only be made by God.** The word for “court” is not actually in the Greek manuscripts, but as many Bible margins will show, it is the word “day”. **The judgment of people during this “human day” matters very little—it is the judgment during the day of the resurrection that matters.** Paul knew he didn’t have the insight to even judge himself in this matter, but that the “final say” would be by God only.

Paul is trying to tell them that they are making judgments that he himself knew he didn’t have the right to make! The safest thing we can do is what he says in the next verse:

Therefore **judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes.** He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness, and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God (1Cor 4:5, NIV).

This is by far the safest attitude to take, and one that we need to learn if we have not yet learned it.

Judge Only Actions, Not Destiny

You have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them to be liars (Rev 2:2).

Here we have Jesus commending brethren for proving matters out. Not everyone who claims to be teaching for God is teaching for God. We need to always prove matters out this way so we will be able to tell truth from error.

But in the process, we need to be careful not to cross the line and begin to judge people spiritually—to declare their eternal life or death. This is easy to do, how well I know, because I did it for years, and I paid a terrible price. It really affected my growth. Once I stopped judging people this way, my own growth went forward as never before.

Having seen the price that I paid for years because of making these judgments, I now want to run from my own reasoning and judgment. I know that only God can make the spiritual judgment in someone’s life.

Problems With Small Groups

If you are going through problems and conflicts with certain groups, pray for them. Move on if you feel you need to. Never forget that you were once a part of a group that you eventually left. Remember that it took time for you to see the difficulties, then convict yourself of the error. But by all means be careful that you don’t get into making those spiritual judgments that only God can make. You will keep yourself out of a lot of trouble by doing it this way.

Some who left some of the bigger organizations, and are now meeting with the smaller groups, have often made good choices, and I am not suggesting that we go back into the error that we came out of. But what I am submitting, as one who made the mistake of judging for many years, is that we need to be extremely careful not to pass these life and death judgments. Making judgments this way can be as easy as falling off a log.

God is able to work in a person’s life and bring them along wherever they are at the moment. **No man can figure out all that God is doing** and how He is moving in the organizations.

Maintain Devotion to God, Instead of Doctrine

We may once again start to “idolize” our new religious ideas, feeling

that it has to be done a certain way. We do not need to feel that our way is the **only** right way, as if God cannot work with people who are doing it differently than we are. And once again, will we start idolizing the doctrine that we preach? Just because brethren have not yet learned of the precious truths that we may be seeing now, still, God is able to work with them where they are.

We need to keep in mind **the pull that is in human nature** to feel our group is “special” just because we happen to see a certain point of ‘truth’. Some are once again on the roll with this pattern of thinking because of some of the progress they made in leaving the bigger organizations. But it can be just another form of what we came out of, yet with a different twist. Certainly we need to caution those who are caught up in what we came out of. Our Father, upon our request, individually responds to us no matter how right or wrong we are. He will not force progress on anyone, neither should we. And He is able to bring them home through the long slow process that He takes.

Let The Holy Spirit Work in Your Group

It is a time of testing for God’s people. As groups continue to be scattered, brethren have to keep making decisions of where to go and what to do. Go where you have proved that the Spirit of God is working. If you are not sure, then keep praying and studying and seeking. By all means be patient. Do not let impatience lead you into making a bad decision, and then having to live with the consequences of a bad decision. Don’t burn bridges behind you. It may require much prayer before you receive the right insight that you need.

If you are praying and studying as you should, God will guide you. But if you are not putting sufficient effort to stay with God, then you can be easily misled. Through this whole process of the scattering of the groups, and the decisions we make, be sure that you are not judging people spiritually. This alone is enough to keep you out of God’s Kingdom!

Remember what Paul admonished us to do: “Judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes”.

"Truckers Study" from page 2

Because one of the ladies was a bit of a novice, I gave everyone a copy of CEM's article "Would You Join a Cult?" (which is good reading for people just coming to seek God) and audio tapes. We also gave away three or four Bibles today.

[Thanks for sharing these excellent lessons! —NSE]

Special Message

December 27, 1999: This update will be different from previous ones. We have just returned from Big Sandy, Texas, and it was a pleasure to learn about more grassroots efforts going on around the country to spread the gospel. I'll give you more details later in this e-mail.

Most of you might not be aware of the conference held in Big Sandy this past weekend which I had the privilege of attending. It was organized by some friends from Mississippi—Skeets Mez, Anthony Kimmons, and Dana Francis. (I believe there might have been a fourth organizer as well, but his name escapes me just now). The United Church of God Big Sandy, which was not one of the organizers, was kind enough to offer their new building as a meeting place. The conference purpose was to discuss various ways that those of us with no corporate affiliation can begin to network with each other in order to share ideas and projects. Rather than all of us reinventing the wheel every time we come across a problem or want to try something new, it would be nice to have contacts around the country who might have some experience in those areas and thus ease the way.

It remains to be seen what direction this concept will go, as the organizers themselves are not 100% sure either. In my view this will be another group of scattered brethren to network with. I was very glad to hear the organizers say again and again that they do not want to start a new organization, but simply want to build bridges among those of us who have been scattered.

Now how does all this relate to the Trucker's Bible Study? Perhaps for the first time it hit home that our Trucker's Study is quickly becoming just one small ministry among many that have begun to pop up here and there. Not only are we no longer a novelty, we are now no longer unique! I learned of sev-

eral prison ministries sponsored by non-aligned church of God people.

One gentleman from Mississippi mentioned how he was visiting the son of a church member in prison. While conducting a Bible Study, other prisoners joined in and they have asked him to come back.

A mother-daughter team produce a newsletter that they have managed to get into prisons, and they have found that the prisoners are sharing these newsletters, not only among themselves, but are sending them to other prisoner/friends in other prisons.

[There is a desperate need for people to help prisoners. Christ told us to do it (Matt 35:36). The USA has about 1.8 million people behind bars—higher than any other nation of the world, including China. Most Americans think that we have a fair justice system and that nearly all prisoners are "bad people". Most Americans have little real knowledge about how and why people become prisoners. In 1995, two thirds of the people sent to our prisons were sent for non-violent convictions. Huge corporations that make millions in profits from prisons do not see them as a necessary evil, but as a lucrative growth industry. The welfare and rehabilitation of the prisoners is often completely lost in the process. —NSE]

There was a couple there for part of the conference who befriended the owners of a Christian radio network, and they were able to help the owners come to a clearer appreciation of the annual Holy Days. That network no longer allows programs about Christmas and Easter, and in fact the couple I was talking with organized a feast site in Oklahoma, and two-thirds of those attending did not have a church of God background.

The most exciting of all is the Christian Leadership Academy. It was founded by Alfred Harrell and some friends a couple of years ago. Many of you might have read about this project a time or two in the Journal. Alfred mentioned that he sat in Church of God congregations for 40 years and became extremely frustrated that he could never seem to get involved in anything. I should point out here that Alfred has a Phd in Education.

After going through the initial depression that came with the breakup

of Worldwide, he and other "unordained" friends in Arkansas developed a program to work with congregations to reach their communities. They will go into a city, and with the cooperation of the area congregations, they will blanket the city with flyers and advertising about what they call an upcoming campaign. The campaign will be about one point of doctrine, such as Sabbath or Holy Days. Those church members who live there are given training on how to deal with the public and are strongly encouraged to get involved.

Attendees from the public at large are given a list of churches that have sponsored the campaign and an invitation to check them out. New people are attending services from past campaigns, and Alfred's entire demeanor exudes a soft-spoken passion that can only come from having seen the blessings of God on the little project he and his friends conceived.

Campaigns have already been held in a number of cities with some success. Campaigns are planned now for San Antonio, Texas, Springfield, Missouri, and Toronto, Canada. The San Antonio campaign will cover the annual Holy Days and participants will be invited to keep the feast at the Church of God Outreach Ministries site in San Antonio.

I for one was very impressed with Alfred and his project. He and I spent a great deal of time talking, and it is obvious that his approach to non-Church of God people is the same as mine—to walk along side them and teach them as opposed to a confrontational approach. His ministry, however, is a true work of faith. As I understand it, they have no budget when they go into a city and are committed to only spending what God provides.

It puzzles me why we don't hear more about these positive developments instead of the latest news about church splits and brethren fighting among themselves.

[We are trying to do something about this. See page 1 article. —NSE]

So I come home from Big Sandy encouraged about how the Spirit of God is moving among the grassroots. Little mustard seeds are beginning to sprout here and there. My hope and prayer is to see the Trucker's Bible Study be no big deal in the overall community of the Churches of God, that it will become just one of many such

grassroots ministries conducted by committed people who are not ashamed to share the word with their neighbors.

Check out the Christian Leadership Academy website at <http://www.cl-academy.com/>.

January 2, 2000: After two straight weeks with no truckers (due presumably to the holidays), we were able to meet with three truckers today.

The first trucker was a young man from Jackson, Mississippi, who has had a major turnaround in his life during the past 18 months. He nearly died from an overdose, and prayed during those dark days for guidance. He has spent the last 18 months studying, praying, and trying to learn God's will. We could tell that he has decided to follow God's ways as much as he can. One thing that has given him some difficulty relates to what he calls Sabbath keeping, meaning his desire to rest on Sunday and not feel the pressure to work. From that question we pointed out various scriptures that show that the Sabbath is a delight and should not be considered a burden or a bondage, and in fact it was made for man, and that the Sabbath is a great gift, and to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 5 version of the Ten Commandments) the Sabbath pictured liberation from slavery.

[Ten years ago, I would have said that God probably was not answering this man's prayer because he wasn't obeying enough of God's truth yet. But the Bible talks about a Roman jailer and his family who came to believe in God and be baptized after only one night's learning (Acts 16:30-34). It also speaks of a tax collector who humbly prayed and received forgiveness from God while a well-behaved, educated religious man did not (Luke 18:10-14). The next two Bible verses after this are significant: "Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.'" Even disciples of Christ have a hard time accepting that Christ cares for "infants"—those with almost no spiritual knowledge or capability, but with a desire to seek him! He wants them to grow out of the "infants" stage (2Pet 3:18), but He is ready to work with them

as infants.

—NSEJ

During this discussion we were joined by another gentleman and a few minutes later by his wife. Whenever new participants come, group dynamics change, and this was at a most unfortunate juncture, as the next logical point of discussion was going to be which day is actually the Sabbath. Instead the discussion took a different turn, but Arlo eventually lead the discussion back to the Sabbath, prefacing it by saying that he wasn't sure how much the trucker wanted to know about the Sabbath, but that the Bible indicates that the Sabbath is the seventh day.

[Sometimes I have been in a similar situation—when it seems that I am about ready to make solid progress in an evangelistic endeavor, some outside interruption comes along and apparently stops the progress. We need to realize that God is aware of all of these things and that He presents truth to people as they can bear it (John 16:12). We should certainly do our part—as Arlo did—and get back to the subject that needs to be taught. But we do not have to be dismayed when things do not go as we planned.

—NSEJ

The couple are of the school of thought that the Sabbath was a part of the ceremonial law, and indeed, the law as a whole was nailed to the cross. This led to an interesting discussion of what the law is for. Namely, it is instruction to mankind on how to make life work. It's obvious, however, that the couple do not see a need to keep the Sabbath literally.

As a person new to Christianity, the young man is concerned with doing everything he can to be in tune with God's will, which is laudable. The danger, of course, is becoming overly bound by rules and regulations, so we discussed the role of law, the role of grace, and the letter versus the spirit of the law.

Afterwards we stood around and talked for a while. Arlo chatted with the young man and helped him with questions related to personal matters while I talked with the couple. I was a bit surprised at some of the things she told me about her past, including her pursuit of witchcraft as a teenager. I found most interesting her current spiritual experiences which she attributes to God talking to her, which include visions, dreams that seem to portend future events, and audible voices. All this

leads me to wonder what the true source of her spiritual experiences are. At the same time she wanted to make sure that the young trucker was the first to get our tapes and literature. I must tell you that we meet all kinds, and sometimes it's hard to know how to help some.

[Some people have the ability to communicate with the spirit world. Balaam communicated with God as well as evil spirits (Num 22-24). A witch at Endor appeared to bring Samuel back from the dead and give Saul an accurate message about what the Eternal was going to do to him (1Sam 28). People with these gifts can use them for good or evil, but they know that if the Eternal commands them, they must obey. The WCG did not openly recognize such a gift, so anyone who had it had to "keep it quiet" or face disfel-lowshipment. People with the gift of communication with the spirit world have no easier time overcoming and following the Eternal than other believers do. When they pray, they may sometimes receive an audible answer from the Eternal—maybe through an angel. But they cannot make the Eternal answer. If He chooses not to answer a certain prayer, and the person wants an answer no matter what, a demon may answer and deceive them. Paul clearly stated that "love for others" is better than all spiritual gifts (1Cor 13).

—NSEJ

One of the truckers today asked about making a donation. As most of you know, we have virtually no expenses related to these Bible studies. The Bibles are purchased by Church of God Kansas City in bulk and at wholesale, and those expenses are relatively small. Literature is donated at no charge to us by four different ministries. Several have asked about making a donation to our efforts, and in lieu of that, I would like to point to the following who have been so gracious in helping us:

Shelter in the Word; PO Box 107; Perry, MI 48872-0107

Christian Educational Ministries; PO Box 560; Whitehouse, TX 75791-0560

Church of God Seventh Day Bible Advocate Press; PO Box 33677; Denver, CO 80233

Church of God Sabbath Day; Tom Justus; P.O. Box 1798; Hope, AR 71802

—Lenny Cacchio; 705 Ne Bryant Dr
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Partial Literature List

All items are free upon request. All back issues of *Servants' News* are available as well as a **Complete Literature List**.

Our goal is to bring worthwhile information to as many as want it at the lowest practical cost. The loose-leaf format used by *Servants' News* and most of the literature below is inexpensive and makes copying easy (most literature is public domain). You might wish to hold the pages together with a 3-ring binder, staples, brads or a paper clip.

New Items Available for the First Time:

Basic Literature:

- Barnabas Bookmark Bunch** by Alan Ruth, 3 bookmarks. Three 2-sided bookmarks covering Bible basics, Plan of Salvation & Words of Comfort, and World Wide Web resources. Excellent to keep, carry or give away.
- Easter...Is It Christian?** edited by Tom Justus. What do rabbits laying colored eggs have to do with the Resurrection of Christ?
- What Kind of Faith is Required for Salvation?** edited by Tom Justus, 10 pages. Explains faith vs. works issues of salvation.
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Study Resources and Information:

- Green Pastures Gazette** edited by Phil and Diana Keener, 8 pages. Free monthly newsletter of Sabbatarian news of congregations in the Texas/Arkansas area.
- The Churches of God Newsletter** edited by Rick Beltz, 12 pages. Free Sabbatarian newsletter.

Mature Literature:

- 200 Years of Sabbath-keeping in Australia** by Bruce Dean, 8 pages. Shows many Sabbatarian groups in Australia.
- God vs. Evolution Y2K** by Rabon Vincent Jr., 214 pages. This book contains 21 chapters and 13 appendices on widely varying topics including evolution, Bible chronology, the calendar and British Israelism. Has some unique ideas.

Items Featured This issue (always available):

Study Resources and Information:

- Anchor Magazine** edited by Melvin Rhodes. One free 16 page sample issue. Reaching out to recovering homosexuals.
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- In Him Newsletter.** First issue of free every-other-month newsletter for teens and people working in youth ministries.
- Living Room Church of God (LRCOG) Directory** edited by

Robert Bodkin, 16 pages. Find a place to fellowship!

- Prison to Praise** by Merline Carothers, 118 pages. Book reporting miracles that occurred as a result of praising God. Shows difficulty we can have telling others "they don't know God."
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- Sermon Transcripts for the Deaf Order Form** by Kevin McMillen, 1 page. Free CEM sermon transcripts for the deaf.

Highly Recommended Items Listed Every Issue:

Mature Literature

- Assembling on the Sabbath** by Norman S. Edwards, 16 pages. An exposition of the scriptures regarding our need to fellowship on the Sabbath and how to do it.
- Biblical Calendar Basics** by Norman S. Edwards, 10 pages. Introduction to the issues about the Biblical and Hebrew calendars (beginning of months, years, postponements etc.)
- Did Christ Reorganize the Church?** by Herbert Armstrong in 1939, 8 pages. Very different than his later approach: Christ never set up a hierarchical government.
- How Do We Give to the Eternal?** by Rich-

ard Tafoya & Norman Edwards, 36 pages. Biblical study of giving and tithing.

How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans? by Norman S. Edwards, 34 pages. How the KJV translators altered Scriptures about government to please King James and an analysis of what the Bible says about how we should govern in today's congregations.

The Worldwide Church of God Splits: Their Triumphs and Troubles by Alan Ruth, 56 pages. Facts and analysis of the last 20 years of "Church of God" history.

Study Resources and Information Freedom Biblical Information Center

Catalog by Wayne Schatzle, 12 pages. Free, mostly Sabbatarian literature & tapes sources.

Giving and Sharing Order Form by Richard Nickels, 3 pages. Has many excellent free items, low prices on hard-to-find religious books, and fine literature on floppy disk.

The Journal: News of the Churches of God edited by Dixon Cartwright. One free sample issue. Best single source of news about Sabbath-keeping groups. 16 pages.

Servants' News Statement of Receipts and Expenses, 2 pages.

Servants' News Complete Literature List & Index, 36 pages.

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