Questions and Answers:

Presented by
The Christian Church of God
Grand Junction, Colorado
as part of our *Outreach Ministry*

We encourage each believer to thoroughly review each of the following scriptures. If you have questions regarding any of these references, you may email us at: staff@ccofgod.org or write: P. O. Box 2111, Grand junction, Co 81502

Also check out these informative web-site sources:

www.ccofgod.org  www.cbcg.org
www.faith-oncedelivered.org  www.pacificog.org
www.goldensheaves.org  www.cogwriter.com

Listen to “*Born to Win*”, with Ronald L. Dart each Sunday morning at 10:00 am, on KNZZ radio, 1100 on your AM dial (Grand Junction), each Sunday morning.
We Hold These Evident Biblical Truths…  
(“Examining Significant Unconventional Teachings”)  

A Study Course for those seeking to understand God’s Great Plan for Humanity.

1. The world isn’t going to end (as is claimed) anytime soon:
   
   What humanity is facing instead is a transition into a new era,
   There is to be yet another 1000 years of human civilization on Earth and an indeterminate period beyond that,
   We must transition into a whole new era through a greatly troubled period,
   A whole new world government on Earth under Christ will be established,
   God will establish a whole new religious system involving all of humanity,
   (Revelation 14:6-12, Rev. 15:3-5, Rev. 19:1-2, Rev. 20:1-3, 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-10; Hebrews 8:8-10)
   Christ and His Saints are to co-rule on Earth during the 7th millennium.
   (Revelation 20:4 & 6, Revelation 1:6, Revelation 3:21, Revelation 5:8-10)

2. The ‘Rapture’ (as it’s often called) will occur AFTER the Tribulation:
   
   It will NOT be a “SECRET” event, as some claim!
   (Revelation 1:7; Luke 17:24 & 37; 1st Thess. 4:16; Matt. 24:26-28)
   Significant and clear scriptures allow us to precisely identify the relative timing,
   (Mark 13:26-27; Matthew 24:9, 22, Revelation 11:15-19)
   There is to be ONE ‘Second Coming’ event, not two, one ‘Last Trump’, not two,
   (Matthew 24:29-31; 1st Corinthians 15:50-54)
   The common pre-tribulation rapture scenario disregards several key scriptures,
   (Mark 13:14-27; Matthew 24:9, Revelation 11:18; Matthew 24:31)
   The (first) resurrection of the dead accompanies the ‘second coming’.
   (1st Corinthians 15:50-53; 1st Thessalonians 4:13-17, Revelation 11:15-18 & 20:5-6)

3. Heaven is not where God’s Called and Chosen are to spend all eternity:
   
   Death does not begin a conscious eternal ‘retirement period’ with nothing to do,
   (Matt 24:45; Matt 25:21; Luke 16:10; Rev 2:26; 1st Cor. 6:2; Luke 22:30 / Matt 19:28; In.3:13; Ac.2:29-34)
   God’s True Saints will be resurrected from the dead at Christ’s Second Coming,
   (Revelation 20:4 & 6, 1st Thessalonians 3:13 & 4:14-17, Isaiah 65:17-25, 2nd Cor. 4:14)
   True Saints are the Saints of the Most High God, not those canonized by men,
   (Daniel 7:18; Revelation 22:12-14 & 14:12; Romans 8:9)
   The Saints of the Most High God will co-rule in the Millennial Kingdom,
   (Revelation 20:4 & 6, Revelation 2:26, Daniel 7:18)
   After the Millennium, even God the Father will descend to the Earth,
   (Revelation 21:1-7; Revelation 21:3 & 10 & 22-23, Revelation 22:3-5, 1st Cor. 15:24-28)
   Once death is conquered, Christ will present His Kingdom to the Father!
   (1st Corinthians 15: 24-28)
4. Those people not called during their lifetimes are not all ‘lost’ forever:

There is a resurrection after the 1000 years that will remedy opportunity denied,
(Revelation 20:5; Revelation 20:12; Ezekiel 37 (Request the 96-page Resurrections booklet))

Some were even purposefully deferred in having opportunity in this age,
(Romans 9:15-18; Romans 11:7-12; 2nd Corinthians 3:14 & 4:3-6; John 6:44; 1st Cor. 15:23; Rom. 11:25-26)

That later resurrection will restore certain people to a physical existence,
(Ezek. 37:1-14; Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:11-12; Matt. 11:23-24; Lk. 10:14 & 11:29-32; Matt. 12:41-42; 1st Thess. 4:13)

The ‘books’ will then be opened to their understanding,
(Revelation 20:12; Romans 11:25-26, Isaiah 66:, 2nd Corinthians 3:14-16, Daniel 7:9-10)

Satan will be restrained during the 1000 year Millennial Age:
(Revelation 20:1-3 & 7-10)

‘Final Judgment’ is deferred until well after the Millennium for a specific reason,
(Revelation 20:5; Romans 11:25-32; Revelation 14:14-20)

The Apostle Paul and the NT explains what ‘Predestination’ really is.
(Romans 11:12-26; John 6:44; Romans 8:27-30)

ALL are destined to be called. In which harvest it will be is the question.
(2nd Peter 3:9; John 7:37; Revelation 22:17; Rom. 11:26; Matt. 11:21; Psalm 69:27; Luke 10:13)

5. The Resurrections of the Dead (more than one) are an essential Biblical Doctrine.

All of humanity will stand alive before the Judgment Seat of Christ at the end,
(Romans 14:10; Hebrews 9:27 & 10:26-31; Revelation 20:12)

All of the dead are in a sleep-like state, unconscious, as Scripture indicates,
(Ecclesiastes 9:5-10; Ezekiel 18:4 & 20; 1st Cor. 11:30 & 15:51; 1st Thess. 4:14 & 5:10; John 11:11)

All of the dead will be restored to a conscious state to give account before God,
(Revelation 14:14-20; Ezekiel 37:12-14)

A Resurrection occurs at the Second Coming, with another after the Millennium,
(Revelation 20:5-6 & 20:11-13; Ezekiel 37:1-14 & 37:21-28)

There are TWO great Harvests of humanity, the early and late harvests,
(James 5:7; 1st Corinthians 15:49-54; 1st Thess. 4:15-17; Revelation 14:1-5 & 14:14-16)

Multiple thousands of Spirit-born Saints will participate in the judgment processes
of humanity at the Final Judgment after the Millennium and Last Great Day!
(Jude 14-15; Revelation 20:6 and Revelation 5:9-10 (This is the evaluative phase of Judgment))

Final Judgment of the wicked will involve their extinction in the Lake of Fire.
which is the second death!
(Revelation 20:15; Malachi 4:1; Revelation 21:8 (This is the sentencing phase of Judgment))

6. The Seventh Day Sabbath has Past, Present and Future Significance:

It was established as a memorial to Creation, honoring the Creator,
(Genesis 2:1-3; Hebrews 4:4 & 10; Revelation 14:6-7)

The Early New Testament KEPT the seventh day Sabbath until the 4th Century,
( research the Council of Nicaea; the Quarto Deciman Controversy.)

True Christians uphold its observance, in anticipation of ‘entering into His Rest’,
(Hebrews 4: all; Colossians 2:17)

When Christ returns, all humanity will be required to keep His Sabbaths,
(Isaiah 66:22-23, etc; Revelation 14:6-7; Zechariah 14:16-21)

The Annual Feast of Tabernacles pictures that seventh Millennial “Day”,
(Zechariah 14: 16-21; Revelation 20: all.)
7. The Moral Law is a vital component of the New Covenant:

The Law is to be fully implanted in the hearts and minds of believers, (Hebrews 8:8-10, Jeremiah 31:31-34, 2nd Corinthians 3:3)

Only the Ceremonial Law is suspended in this age, the Moral Law is not! (Romans 7:6-12, Hebrews 7:11-19, Revelation 22:14 & 3:10 & 14:12; Matt. 5:17-18)

Sin is the transgression of the Law, and all have sinned, (1st John 3:4, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Psalm 14:3)

GRACE obligates us to CEASE from sin using the Holy Spirit’s help, (Romans 6:1 & 15; 1st John 3:4)

No amount of perfect Law-keeping can achieve remission of sins, (Romans 3:19-20, 2nd Corinthians 3:3-8, Hebrews 9:22)


8. The Identity of the End-Time BEAST Power: (A Civil & Religious collaboration)

Daniel 2 presents four successive world empires from ancient times, (Daniel 2:28-45 [ They are: Babylon / Medo-Persia / Greco-Macedonia / Rome ])

Those four empires extend in succession from Daniel’s day to the Second Coming, (Daniel 2:34-35 & 44-45) Daniel 2:44 announces the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom of God on Earth. The prophecy begins with Nebuchadnezzar and ends with Christ’s Second Coming.

The Fourth Empire (Rome) is to have undergone seven restorative periods, (Seven heads: the Holy Roman Empire: (Come to a head seven times.) Revelation 13:1; Revelation 17:10)

[“Holy Roman Empire”: Justinian / Carolingians / Otto the Great / Hapsburgs / Napoleon / Hitler-Mussolini / BEAST]

Daniel 7 presents a detailed picture of the final (seventh) H.R.E. restoration, (Daniel 7:2-8 Three end-time Empires merge to become the Fourth. The seventh head involves ten collaborating monarchies. Ten Kings are to be restored to (crowned with) power to facilitate the rise of the BEAST. Revelation 17:12. These ten are to give their power into the BEAST system. Revelation 17:13 & 17.)

A great Religious Beast, on behalf of the Dragon, empowers the Civil BEAST, (Daniel 7:8&11; Revelation 13:2, etc.)

The whole world will (effectively) worship the blaspheming BEAST, (Revelation 13:4 & 8; Daniel 7:25-26; Revelation 17:8.)

The Civil / Religious BEAST will briefly dominate the entire earth, (Daniel 7:23-24; Revelation 13:5-18.)

The Ten Kings will come to despise the religious entity that created the BEAST, (Daniel 7:11-12; Revelation 17:16)

That domination will fully end shortly after Christ’s Return in Power, (Daniel 7:25-27; Revelation 14:6-8)

The Civil / Religious BEAST is, in another prophecy, the “King of the North”, (Daniel 11:5-45 Somewhere around v. 27 (or v. 29) the modern day prophetic repeat overlay comes into play. Christ affirmed this second prophetic re-application phenomenon in what He said in Matthew 24:15 & Mark 13:14.)

9. The God who dealt with Ancient Israel was not who WE know as “the Father”:

The Father was unseen and unknown to the religious public prior to Christ’s day, (John 1:18, John 16:3, John 17:25, John 5:37, Isaiah 9:6, 1st Corinthians 10:4, John 15:21)

It was the Son’s prerogative and mission to ‘reveal’ His Father to humanity, (Matthew 11:27, John 14:6-8, Luke 10:22)

There always were Two Divine Beings from the Beginning, (John 1:1-2, Genesis 1:26, Genesis 3:22, Exodus 34:5&6, Psalm 110:1)
The Son was co-involved in a significant way in the Creation,
(John 1:1-3, Genesis 1:27, Revelation 4:11, Colossians 1:16, Ephesians 3:9)
The ‘Son’ was very much involved in the decision to leave His Glorified state,
(Philippians 2:6-11, John 17:5)
The Son was able to be manifested in both a ‘glorified’ and a ‘normal’ appearance,

10. The Jews are not the only descendants of the Ancient Nation of Israel:
The nation split just after the reign of King Solomon,
(1st Kings 12:16-24, the books of Kings present the separate dynasties of the two houses of Israel)
The 10 Tribed northern House of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians first,
(2nd Kings 17:18-24 & 30-31, 2nd Kings 18:9-13, 1st Chronicles 5:26, etc.)
The southern House of Judah (the Jews) was taken captive by the Babylonians,
(2nd Kings 25:1-11, Daniel 1:1-2, 2nd Kings 16:1-6 first occasion of the word “Jews”, at war against Israel)
The southern kingdom was allowed to return, the northern kingdom was not,
(Ezra 1-2, 2nd Kings 17:23, Isaiah 49:12)
The northern Kingdom, the House of Israel ‘lost’ their identities over time,
(Forsaking the Commandments (Sabbathkeeping particularly) obscured their national heritage)
Modern historians have identified the ‘Lost Ten Tribes’ modern descendants,
(Steven Collins www.israelite.info Yair Davidy books: “The Tribes: Ephraim, Joseph” and “Lost Israelite Identity”)
There is reason why religion doesn’t want to know Israel’s true and full identity,
(It is admitted that “the Jews” are obligated to keep the Law. If true, then so would Israel be similarly obligated!)
The two houses of Israel will finally be re-united after Christ’s return,
(Ezekiel 37:15-28; Acts 1:6; Romans 10:21 & 11:6-27)

11. HOW do you know IF this isn’t your ONLY opportunity for Salvation?
Those TRULY being called at this time are a Select body: the ELECT,
(John 6:44; Romans 11:5-7 & 28, 1st Thess. 1:4; 2nd Pet. 1:10)
God calls, based on His foreknowledge of our ability to ‘make it’ in THIS age,
(Rom. 8:29 & 11:2; 2nd Tim. 2:15.)
The ability to truly repent is not entirely a matter of our own decision,
(Romans 2:4; Acts 5:31)
The ability to understand the Truth and to develop the prerequisite Faith is not entirely “of ourselves” either,
(Ephesians 2:8-9; 1st Cor. 2:11; 1st John 5:20; Col. 1:9-13; 2nd Tim. 2:7.)
The Process of conversion involves:
Faith, Repentance, Baptism and the Receipt of God’s Holy Spirit unto Perfection,
(Hebrews 6:1-6; Acts 20:21; (2nd Cor. 7:10-11 describes the emotional stages of the conversion process.))
God will not give His Spirit to a person unwilling to obey Him:
(Acts 5:32; Revelation 17:14; Hebrews 5:9.)
Without having the Spirit of God indwelling, a person is “not one of His”!
(2nd Cor. 5:5; 1st. John 4:13; 2nd Tim. 1:7; 1st. Pet. 1:2; Romans 8:9)
The Faithful ELECT will be found keeping the Commandments:
(Matthew 19:17; Revelation 12:17; Revelation 22:14.)
There is NO SECOND CHANCE for those who spurned Salvation!
(Hebrews 10:26-39; Heb. 12:25-29; Heb. 6:4-6; Matthew 10:28.)

=================================== Edited 6/28/14 =================================
Questions Received from our Website Visitors:

From an elder in East Africa, Received 12/21/12

"Here are some questions I received from my congregation leaders and I present them below:"

Foreword: These questions reflect the core beliefs of modern Christianity. By way of introductory comments, it’s important that we understand the correctness of or error of certain basic premises.

1) The Being who gave the Law on Mt. Sinai was one-and-the-same Being who led Israel thru the wilderness. Paul says that was Christ. (1st Cor. 10:4) It was not the Father! There is a general sense among evangelicals who allege that it was the Father who imposed the Law, but the Son came along later and suspended (abrogated) “did-away-with” His Father’s harsh old Law. (Misconception 1.) No, the lawgiver was the Being who became Christ. So, the Law was Christ-given. That awareness will prove significant later.

2) That the Law and the Covenant are one-and-the-same thing is another common teaching. They are not! Some allege that since the Old Covenant is ‘done away’ the Law is done away with it! No. The Law is the legal code which defines righteousness and the way to live. There is nothing evil, unnecessary or burdensome about God’s Laws. A Law is a law, whether anyone keeps it or not. A Covenant is an agreement between two parties. A Covenant can come or go, depending on the disposition of the individuals making that Covenant. The Law is not abolished IF the Covenant is reneged upon. This was the premise put forth by the WCG after 1990, borrowed from the Protestants, which led it into rank apostasy. The Law was the basis of the Covenant Israel of old made with God in the wilderness. The Law of God remains whether anyone agrees to keep it or not. As an example, if I agree (Covenant) to keep God’s Laws today, but then later change my mind, the Covenant falls apart, but the Law upon which it was originally based does not! In the case of the Laws of God, His Commandments, they tell us HOW to Love God and to Love man. (Matt. 11:30; 1st Jn. 5:3)

Sin is the transgression of the Law, whether a person is under the Covenant or not. We don’t acquire the ability to sin by making a Covenant. We accrue sin by breaking the Law of God, irrespective of where we stand with respect to having made any Covenant with God. (Misconception 2.) Remember, sin did not originate at Mt. Sinai. It was possible to sin clear back to Adam and Eve and Cain’s time. (Rom. 5:14) Sin, which is the breaking of God’s Laws (1st John 3:4) did not come upon man only with the giving of the Ten Commandments, nor did the breaking of the Covenant by Israel end or in any way diminish the Law. The Law is an eternal standard! (And this is referring to the Moral Code which we know as the Ten Commandments.)

3) It’s taught that the Law was harsh and burdensome, but Jesus replaced that outdated code with Love: That His Laws were different than His Fathers’. No, actually the Law itself provided a practical expression of love. It’s just that the legalist Jews of His day were blind to that aspect, and focused their zeal to ‘keep their own traditional interpretations’ of what they thought the Law to be. Love was imbedded in the Law from the beginning, but it wasn’t necessarily within the people. (Misconception 3.) (See 1st John 2:3-7 & 5:3)

4) The BIG one that people miss is the relationship between law-keeping and justification. In every place where you find Paul speaking in what appears to be a negative tone toward law-
keeping, it is always in the context of ‘justification’. Paul is very positive toward the Law except as it relates to the IDEA that people can EARN salvation on their own by their perfect law-keeping. His point is that no amount of perfect law-keeping can pay the penalty for sins once committed. We can do nothing by way of ‘good works’ or law-keeping after the fact to reverse accumulation of guilt and cause remission of our sins. Sin incurs the death penalty. (Rom. 6:23) It takes a blood sacrifice to achieve forgiveness! The idea that such statements by Paul relegate the Law of God to irrelevance is a perceptual mistake that we’ll address below. This is the common belief system in the main-stream religious world. (Misconception area 4.)

5) Intertwined with this perceptual area is the confusion between the basic Moral Law as defined in the Ten Commandments, and the Ceremonial Laws, (which included Temple Ceremonies and Sacrificing), which were ADDED because of the peoples’ unbelieving disobedience. (Gal. 3:19) Seeing that the people didn’t have the ability to keep the Covenant that they had made, He saw need to ADD another educational component to their belief system to keep them ever-mindful of their sins and what is needed for remission of them. Their deeds could never DO that. Once broken, the law demands shedding of blood to achieve remission. (Heb. 9:22) No sin is forgiven without a blood-penalty being paid, either the substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ OR payment by the shedding of ones’ own blood to pay for our own sins. If we refuse to accept His substitutionary sacrifice, we must pay for our sins ourselves, with death in the Lake of Fire. (The second death.) When would that self-payment-option occur, you ask? There is a clear and graphic picture of that event plainly stated in the final chapters of the New Testament. While the Ceremonial Law is suspended, (Not Done Away), THAT is no longer required of us, but the remaining Moral Code is everlasting in its applicability to all who have ever lived! (Misconception area 5.)

**Now to these elders’ questions:**

1. Paul’s emphasis was on justification "by faith apart from observing the law" (Rom 3:28), "because by observing the law no one will be justified " (Gal 2:16). Why then, should a Christian feel obliged to observe the law of the O.T.? Is not the guidance of the spirit sufficient? Reply: Paul’s statement is completely correct. We cannot attain forgiveness of sin BY ‘observing the law’. Item 4 above addresses this point. Where people today mis-understand is in thinking that there is now a different way to live, one which effectively authorizes disregard of God’s Laws. Paul is here making it clear that our Law-keeping, our ‘righteous deeds’, are ineffective as means of achieving the remission of sins. Though called-upon to live righteous lives, we cannot ever earn forgiveness. It is a GIFT with absolute prerequisites: belief, repentance, obedience, baptism and the receipt of God’s Spirit. (See Hebrews 6:1-2) God states clearly that He cannot give His Spirit to anyone who does not obey Him. (Heb. 5:9; Acts 5:32) He also requires that we overcome our sinful natures to the end. Salvation is dependent upon ‘holding fast’ to our Covenant thru to the end’ of our lives. (Hebrews 8:8-10) (“But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22))

2. I thought the Old Covenant had been abolished and that therefore we are no longer under an obligation to obey those laws? Reply: This is explained in Item 2 above. The Covenant was the AGREEMENT that Israel originally made at Mt. Sinai. That Covenant was ‘done-away’, (God is no longer working with the nation en-masse.) but not including the premise upon which it was based. When we examine the terms of the NEW Covenant, we see that OUR AGREEMENT is established upon the same code: The same LAW that the first Covenant was based upon. Hebrews 8:8-10 reiterates the Promise as first stated in the Old Testament in Jeremiah 31:31-33. “For finding fault with them, (the people) he
saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.” What Laws? Some NEW set, or the same Laws upon which the Old Covenant was based? This is where the perception of WHO was the Law-giver becomes important. The same Law-giver functioned in the New Testament as did in the Old! Christ did NOT “do-away” with His Father’s Law. HE was the One who gave them on Mt. Sinai. It was the pre-incarnate Christ who dealt with Moses face-to-face, whom Moses saw in semi-glorified form, whom he, Aaron and the seventy elders saw and ate with on the mount! (Ex. 33:11; Ex. 33:18 thru 34:6; Ex. 24:9-11.) This Being whom they saw was NOT the Father! (We know that from other scriptures, John 5:37 and 1st Tim. 6:16.) So the idea that the Son did away with the harsh old laws of His Father and substituted another set, requiring love only, is incorrect. The difference between the New Covenant and the Old is where the Laws are placed. With carnal unconverted (un-forgiven) Israel, the Law was imposed from without. With Christians, the Law is internalized, being set IN their hearts and minds! It would be important to read my article “We are NOT Under the Law”.

3. Jesus came to bring us a new commandment to love anew another (John 13:34). Paul said that if we love we fulfill the law (Rom 13:8,10). If we are loving others, then we are fulfilling the law. We are dwelling in Christ's love and He is living within us. Therefore, since we are in His rest, we do not need to keep the fourth commandment as it was given to Israel. Don’t you agree? Reply: There is a fallacy in this thinking also. Anyone who keeps God’s Laws will as a result express love toward God and toward neighbor. (See Matt. 22:36-40) The Love component is not a new idea. It was present in the Law of God from the beginning, long before Moses’ time. Overzealous Law-keeping Jews didn’t get it. The Ten Commandments are ‘hung upon’ (are framed upon) the practical expression of love. The ‘fulfillment’ of the Law requires the component of love. Love does not abolish the Law which defines it. That would be counter-productive. In loving God, we are called-upon to love our neighbor also. Because He loves them, we should love whom He loves. (1st John 2:8-11) Law kept without love is law not fully kept. (fulfilled) Is that a better way of stating it? Religion is always looking for a way and an excuse to discard God’s laws, and there is no more effective way than to reason that ‘fulfillment’ accomplishes the cancelling-out of our obligation to live righteously as His Law defines.

Consider this: I put up a STOP sign on a new street that I made. After I put it up, in driving by, I stopped at the sign that I put up. I fulfilled what that sign required. Since I fulfilled what that sign requires, no person after me needs to stop at that sign, because I fulfilled it perfectly. Now, religious people reason like that. It makes perfect sense to people who want to suspend our obligation to obey God and keep His Commandments.

4. What did Paul mean by, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes“? (Rom 10:4). Reply: “You are doing that to what end?” This is an expression we use. What we mean by that is to ask what objective we are intending to achieve by something that we’re doing. What objective does the Law bring us toward? This is the real question, and its answer is that it brings us to a Christ-likeness. HE kept the Law did He not? Evangelicals will insist that He did, doing so perfectly (otherwise He would’ve sinned) so that he could ‘do away’ with it, as they reason. The fault in that reasoning should be obvious, but religiously, it is the base upon which they build their law-rejecting theology.
If the Law is ‘ended’, then on what is the New Covenant based? And, why would Christ ‘take away’ (end) the Law which He created and Himself gave to mankind, His model nation first, then to all who will enter into His Covenant?

When we read this scripture with an anti-law bias, it says one thing to us. When we read it with a different regard, we can see that it describes what a person becomes when imitating Christ: Accepting Christ, allowing Him to create in us His own character. If we are to live exactly as He did, keeping the Law as He did, then the Law serves to remake us in the character image of Christ. This is the ‘end’ that is intended by the creation of the Law. But anyone seeking to set aside the Law of God will never admit to such an explanation.

The verse prior helps explain Paul’s point. “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” There is a self-created standard that men set up in their own minds. (and Paul was speaking to religious people of his day). As Paul explains, their standard is a standard that is different from what Christ did. The righteousness of God is what? Law-breaking? These Jews thought that their self-effort, attempting to keep the law as they thought it should be kept, was adequate to reverse their guilt. When, in fact, it was just religion, their version of it, not unlike the unbelief that their ancestors in the ancient nation exhibited. This again speaks to that motive of attaining justification by self-effort that we discussed above in Item 4. It is only thru our identifying with Christ that we can hope to exhibit the pure righteousness that He did. He intends to create Himself in us, if we allow, and if we have His Spirit, which is the all-important condition. Ancient Israel did not have the benefit of having His Spirit!

5. Can a person be saved, even if they don't keep one of the commandments, such as, for example, that of the Sabbath? Those questions raised by my congregations’ leaders and the need more explanations about it. Reply: Reading James 2:10, one would conclude that this question is answered in the negative. Matthew 5:19 is a little softer on that point, but the gist is that we cannot be selective, keeping those points of Law that we like and dismissing those that we deem unnecessary. God’s Law is a full set of instructions as to how to live.

What is notable is that this entire argument revolves around one point. The Seventh Day Sabbath. No one is advocating for murder, adultery, theft, idolatry or any other of its points being abolished. It’s just this one that fires the “law is all done away” premise! And, why would anyone want to reject God’s Sabbath in favor of a day of worship that is no-where authorized in scripture?

The Sabbath was kept in the early New Testament Church. This is an undisputable fact of history. It would have been unthinkable to them to change to another day of the week. Hebrews 4 states that ‘...Sabbath-keeping remains to the people of God’. When Christ returns, all people will be restored to keeping His Sabbath. (Isa. 66:23)

Your Brother,

Before concluding, let’s consider some relevant scriptures:

Matt. 5:17-18 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” As a fundamental premise, we are TOLD to not think that Jesus’ mission was to ‘do away with’ the Law! So many do the very thing that He said not to do! It is the underlying base of their theology and a very misleading premise.
Rom. 3:20-31 “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: (lawkeeping does not accomplish justification) for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (The Law tells us what sin is) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (so this is not a new teaching, it is in fact an Old Testament idea. That’s what the law and prophets means) Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Sin involves all peoples, not just those who made a covenant. This shows that the Law did not come in with the Covenant, and isn’t ‘cancelled out’ with its discontinuance.) Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, (explaining the blood sacrifice, necessary even in the New Covenant era.) through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” (Evangelicals attempt to explain that faith negates the Law, the opposite of Paul’s conclusion, that faith incorporates the Law with a proper motivation: not trying to earn, but in grateful reflection of the grace extended to us. True Christians are not law-breakers. That’s the point of Rom. 6:14. “Under” means still under penalty for having broken the Law. A person forgiven comes out from being ‘under’ its penalty. Evangelicals distort the meaning, attempting to explain that ‘not under’ means no longer obligated to keep it, that it no longer ‘applies’ to us, where it more correctly means no longer subject to its lethal penalty.)

1st Pet. 2:21-22 “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:” Doing no sin means that He kept the Law (not FOR us, but as an example to follow.) If we ‘follow in His steps’, yet fail to keep the Law as He did, we put forth a statement, by example, that He was (or IS in us) an author of a lawless way of life. If we are claiming to ‘follow Him’ but refuse to do what He did, how is that true? Christ asked, “Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, when you do not the things which I say?” (Lk. 6:46)

Gal. 2:17 “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Lawkeeping doesn’t absorb past sin.) But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, (Lawbreakers) is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.” (Here’s the point: We understand that Jesus KEPT the Law perfectly. Now, if we ‘accept Him into our hearts’, then claim that He is living in us, yet we disobey the Law, we allege that He is the author of that!) “For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” (The previous comment would allege that Jesus is the REASON why we disregard keeping His Law. A very strange thought process, though commonly accepted.)

1st John 5:3 “The love of God is the keeping of the Commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” 1st John 2:3-7 “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepest his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.” How much clearer can it be stated?! Law keeping is not a means of earning salvation, but obedience is a clear expression of Love toward God. Anyone not keeping His Commandments is a liar. Strong words! But the insidious consideration is that the person deceives himself on the matter. And, those who teach such things set themselves up for
condemnation. John (the last writer of the NT – the Apostle of love) had no illusions regarding the supposed abrogation of the Law, those (old) Ten Commandments.

The above addresses the general sense of the matters regarding the place for God’s Law in our lives. It is not a new issue with believers. The WCG of about 25+ years ago became embroiled in these same issues when the administration of the time ran to our denominational adversaries and sought to learn from them how to ‘put it over’ on our members. The administration at the time wasn’t sufficiently expert to do it well themselves, but main-stream teachers have a long history of proclaiming Satan’s lies in a most convincing manner.

Always keep in mind that these matters are not a new thing. I knew of them from childhood, having grown up in an evangelical conservative Baptist Church for my first 26 years prior to 1971. Many of our WCG people were not sufficiently grounded in the Truth to know the difference.

Satan is subtle. He uses scripture also. What is particularly unsettling is that he has duped so many sincere Christians into expressing an effective hatred for God while thinking it is Love! (“If you love me, keep my commandments”. They reason that somehow it would be an offense to Him that we do so! )

The mental posture within main-stream Christianity is generally framed around a certain contempt for God in a number of ways.

First, there is a subtle resentment toward God the Father. He is generally regarded as being that HARSH unloving tyrant, as opposed to His KIND gentle Son who removed the burden of all those old laws.

Secondly, there is a discernible resentment toward the Holy and Righteous Laws of God, largely due to their association with that harsh old Father God that they’ve embraced from their religious teachers. They allege that those laws were imposed by the Father, when in fact, it was the Son who was the Lawgiver on Mt. Sinai, though on behalf of His Father. Many have been led to believe that the Son came to ‘do away with’ the Law as being applicable to us under the New Covenant, despite the obvious re-inclusion of them under the New Covenant, with them being written in our hearts, as both Old and New Testaments clearly state. This subtle resentment of God’s Laws is not of God. They further their lie with the suggestion that the Son replaced those Old Testament Laws with a whole NEW set of commandments.

Thirdly, main-stream religion has convinced the sincere worshippers that simple belief is all that is needed now. “Only believe”, they say. Obedience is deemed irrelevant. Some evangelicals even go so far as to condemn anyone who might attempt to keep God’s Laws as an offense against the auspices of Grace. They do so using the excuse that such a person is attempting to EARN their salvation by their works, not realizing that law-keeping is the appropriate response to having received grace. There is more than one reason to keep God’s Laws than just attempting to earn something. Law-keeping is the result of salvation, not the means of it. Why is that not obvious?

Such a mis-conceived belief system effectively blocks people from salvation. They may be deeply religious, expressing a profuse emotional love toward Jesus, but lack the essential prerequisite for real salvation: Repentance! The first step toward salvation, after that first faith (which to start is of ourselves), is repentance. We must repent of Sin! Sin is the transgression of the Law (1st. John 3:4) If a
person hasn’t repented of sin, he is nowhere near being ready for baptism, and cannot receive God’s Spirit and thus is not yet really ‘one of His!’ God’s Spirit is essential in developing that Faith which is not of ourselves. Satan has sold people on the idea that they can love Jesus emotionally, and that is all sufficient. They overlook the plain and clear statement of Christ, that we must demonstrate our love for Him by keeping His Commandments. “The love of God is the keeping of the Commandments.” “Anyone who says he loves God but who doesn’t keep His commandments is a liar.” The emotional expression of love is thought to be all that is necessary, where Christ repeatedly required that our love be exhibited not by profuse emotion only, but by our obedience.

Lastly, the evangelical community has sold the idea that love replaces the Law, where in fact it supplements it. They say, there is no love in the law, where it is in fact built upon it. Consider Matt. 9:13 & 12:7, which repeats Hos. 6:6. Twice Jesus reminds them that He preferred mercy to sacrifice. Mercy is an act of love. The Ten Commandments are framed upon principles of Love, as He said so plainly in Matthew 22:36-40. But those who despise the Laws of God don’t see that.

Unconverted people generally disregard God’s Laws. That is the cause of their condition, living lives of sin! What is profound is the fact that main-stream religion actively campaigns to persuade the sincere worshipper to continue disregarding God’s Laws. In other words, they reinforce law-breaking, they actively work to solidify it, by convincing people to pointedly disregard it. So people go from disinterested in keeping God’s Commandments when unconverted to being purposely contemptuous of them after conversion! Judge for yourself if such a message is of God or not.

Jesus described a condition in His day where religious zealots would work diligently, effectively sealing their converts ‘out’ while ostensibly ‘bringing them in’. “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” (Mt. 23:13-15) What IS a ‘child of hell’, let alone one doubly so? We need to picture that. Here deeply religious people went to great lengths to gain a convert, but then would teach them their ways, which were NOT God’s ways at all, and would make it harder for that convert than if they’d not pursued him! It isn’t all that different today. We have religious teachers who teach against God’s Commandments and way of Life, though under a different religious banner. These also have found a way to turn people against God in a subtle way, and they’re not the least suspecting. We do have tares among us!

Everybody loves love. It’s just that what most want it to remain purely emotional. We don’t want it to intrude into the way we live our lives forcing us to change. That’s why the ‘love only’ message gets such good reception. “Love is all you need!” Well, no. Jesus put a condition on that. “If you love me, keep my commandments”. (Jn. 14:15) Not just as outward actions, but as a reflection of His very Nature living on in us, by His Spirit. He is reproducing Himself in us, if we let Him. That’s how the anti-law zealots effectively bar the way for converts to ‘enter the Kingdom’.

If you are a student of the Way, and even more, if you are a leader of people, be very careful what lines of reasoning you ascribe to. I hope this will give you the reader the basis with which to be convinced of the place that ‘the Law’ plays and of the importance of God’s Laws as an appropriate framework around which to build a Christ-likeness within. Much is at stake at this point. Christ is forming His Bride. As the Ten Virgins parable shows us, there is a cut-off date to that activity.
Questions from another source:

Dear Brothers in Grand Junction,

I am answering your question about what our new converts ask the most.

1. One question is about Gods Holy Days which so different to what they were taught. This is a question here in this country as well. Most religions are clueless as to God's full Plan for redemption of all of humanity. Did I send you my booklet, "Feasts of the LORD"? The Early Church was aware of God’s appointed Feasts, but by the fourth century, they had been pointedly suppressed by apostate church leaders, to make way for the introduction of “Christianized” customs drawn from pagan sources.

2. In regard to the millennium: How is it that there will be mortal people on earth for Christ to rule and evangelize then, yet the Gospel is high gear now? Today's evangelistic effort is very small compared to the time when all will be fully aware of Christ's existence. He and His Saints will be the government of the world after His return. There will be no lack of awareness of God's Truth at that time, but the people will still have to make the decision to commit to the conversion process. See Habakkuk 2:14. And, even yet, the vast majority today have never heard the full truth.

3. Should they tell others who don’t keep the 7th Day Sabbath that they will be lost at the end? I would approach that issue differently. Be aware that there are TWO Days of Salvation: Those God the Father is calling NOW, and the rest who will be allowed free access to the path toward salvation after the second coming. That is strange to most Christians in this age, but there are two days of Salvation. See that in the contrast between John 6:44 and John 7:37. Chapter 6 is in a spring Feasts time-setting / Chapter 7 is uttered in the fall Holy Day season. (Compare 6:4 with 7:2.) In this age, ones' calling is limited, but in the millennial age, it will be unlimited, as Rev. 22:17 states. I would take the approach that WE are to identify whom God is calling at this time and train them with everything we know. Unfamiliar people need to be advised that IF they wish to respond to God's Call, and draw close to Him, they must keep the Commandments, (Matt. 19:17) as that's the true expression of Love toward God. He gives His Spirit to those who obey Him. (I expect you know where all of these scriptures which say these things are.) There is no merit in God's sight for disregarding His Sabbath Day, and observing a day set aside by reprobates of the third century. The Bible, of course, no-where advocates Sunday worship.

4. Three resurrections is a very puzzling matter to them. That is to be expected. Most Protestants can't explain why THREE! Some will acknowledge TWO, based on Rev. 20:5, so I would take a new person there first. Seeing the need and purpose for three resurrections comes with an understanding of the Holy Day pattern. The first resurrection is for the Saints being raised to Life at the Last Trump (the Second Coming). The second is for opportunity for those who never had opportunity in this lifetime. The third is the Final Sentencing event at the very end of time. I believe you have my Resurrections booklet which covers these matters very thoroughly.

Readers may request: “Understanding the Resurrections from the Dead and Eternal Judgment”.

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Questions from a new contact in Kenya:  6/11/14

Dear Kenneth,  We discussed each of these at our 6/10/14 Bible Study.

1. What actually happens when we die?  I have and will send you an article that well explains the entire situation regarding the state of the dead.  Though ancient ideas have been brought in from pagan sources, the Bible is extremely clear as to the state of the dead, particularly with regard to consciousness.  The best comparison is a sleep-like state.  (Daniel 12:2)  We are body / soul / spirit.  (1st Thess. 5:23)  The body is our physical flesh, the soul is that spark of energy that gives us physical life (as all air-breathing life forms have), and the spirit is that God-given component which gives us intellect and consciousness, from which we derive and develop our unique character.  The ‘spirit in man’ is what gives us our intelligence, (the counterpart in animals is what we call instinct, not a conscious thought process at all).  Our spirit is also able to receive thoughts of outside spirit influences, both evil and righteous.  When we die, we lose all consciousness, our physical form dissolves back to its elemental state, those earthly elements of which we are formed.  Our soul (life) ends, but our spirit is placed in God’s hands for future restoration to our future bodies, whether physical or spirit bodies, when we are resurrected.  (Luke 23:46;  Psalm 31:5 & Acts 7:59)  But the major point is that we are not conscious in death.  We remain unconscious until the resurrection.  Those who died centuries ago will not be aware of any longer wait than those who died recently.  The dead are not aware even of the passage of time.  This Biblical fact is sufficient to expose the false teachings of ‘going to heaven or going to hell.’  (Psalm 146:4;  Acts 2: 29 & 34;  Genesis 3:19;  Psalm 104:29)

2. Why is there more than one resurrection of the dead mentioned in the Bible?  It is because God has a PLAN for providing the opportunity for salvation to all who have ever lived.  The Saints only will rise first at the Second Coming.  The rest of the dead will wait until after the end of the millennium (1000 years) to be raised.  (Rev. 20:5)  Those who HAD opportunity and who failed to avail themselves, will NOT rise in the second resurrection.  (There is no second chance.)  They will sleep on through until Final Sentencing.  The final resurrection (called by many as the third), will see the raising up of all who have ever lived (excluding the Saints raised in the first resurrection).  This final resurrection is NOT for further opportunity or for repentance.  That is merely for the Final Sentencing of all the rest of humanity of all ages.  God’s Plan for humanity will not work IF there are no resurrections.  It is this area of Biblical understanding that the world’s religions just don’t understand, and that mostly in order to preserve their false teachings of what happens at the moment of death, the idea of going to heaven (or hell)!  Revelation 14:14-20 explains the third resurrection scene, as does Matthew 25:31-46.  No one will be condemned to the Biblical Lake of Fire without having earned condemnation by rejecting their opportunity for salvation.

3. When sinners die, do they cease to exist, go to a place of eternal punishment, or is there something else that happens to them?  This is addressed to some extent above.  At death, we enter an unconscious state.  Physically, we cease to exist, but for a time may leave bones to witness our former existence.  No one goes to any place (other than the grave) from which they await their appropriate resurrection.  Keep in mind the unconscious sleep-like state that the Bible describes death as being.  Let’s not forget that we all are sinners.  It’s a matter of whether or not we repented, were forgiven, received God’s Spirit and are assigned (sealed) to the first resurrection.  No-one will receive punishment before the Final sentencing event which occurs at the gathering of all nations together (the sheep-from-the-goats event), and no-one will be sentenced in a state of unconscious death.  All will arise in their physical state first, and from there, be separated out to their just assignment, spirit-form life or death in the Lake of Fire, which is the second death.  (Rev. 20:13-14)  From the second death, there is extinction with NO possibility of being resurrected.  That is FINAL!  The Lake of Fire is not hell, but an all-consuming fire that will in the end consume even the institutions of death and the grave.
4. When the righteous die, do they immediately go to heaven to claim their reward or is there something else that happens before this event? No, they wait in their graves unconscious, the same as the wicked. Before going further, we should define terms. Reward suggests something earned. We can not earn remission of sins, salvation or eternal life. Those are gifts of God. But there IS a reward, which results from merit, something we’ve earned, on top of salvation. That reward will be in accordance with our works, that which we DO (with the help of the power of God’s Spirit). That reward will be brought and presented to us in the first resurrection, at the second coming. The fact that no-one receives their reward before the second coming also confirms the falsehood of heaven being the reward of the saved. (Revelation 11:18 & 22:12) And as to the idea of people spending eternity in heaven, there will come a point in time when God will dwell with men on earth, the Father and the Son will both live with His (Their) saints on the Earth. Enclosures will discuss that further. (Request the article: “Grace, Works and Reward”)

5. When infants and young children die are they immediately granted eternal life? This question has long been a dilemma for christians. They recognize the problem, but have no way of explaining it with any Biblical support. That is the case because they don’t understand God’s Plan as revealed thru His sayings, particularly through the resurrections. Religion largely rejects the resurrections teachings. Infants are like all others. They die and remain unconscious, awaiting their resurrection Back to a physical life. We may correctly presume infants and small children never had time to become truly converted. In the second resurrection (they are properly assigned to that one in that they never had time to reject salvation either) they will arise and resume their lives, from the point in time (the age they attained at death) being given time to grow up and experience the full lifetime that circumstance s denied them. That is the blessing the second (after the 1000 years) resurrection provides them. The world’s religions recognize the problem. Some have invented an unbiblical “age of accountability” to address the problem, others like Catholics invented the idea of Limbo Infantium or Purgatory to provide some form of opportunity beyond this lifetime. Give them credit for recognizing the problem, but they missed the mark in providing a true Biblical answer to it. Again, death is a sleep-like state, where there is no conscious thought. (Proverbs 11:7; Ecclesiastes 9:1-6 & Psalm 146:4.) Think about this also. Will these infants remain infants forever in heaven? At what age will their “eternal life” be spent, should that be the case? God’s Plan works and provides a full life (with opportunity) to ALL to experience a full lifetime as well as develop righteous character.

[II] More Questions from Kenneth, 6/16/14

6. What happens as the righteous of all ages rise to meet Christ in the clouds above the earth? As we see from Zechariah 14:4, they will then descend with Him to the Mount of Olives. Main stream religion has them, with Him, ascending up to Heaven, but then, consider, these same people believe the dead in Christ are already with Him up in Heaven! In THAT day, His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives, and the subordination of all nations will begin. Initially, there will be a gathering of nations to fight Him, assembling on the Plains of Megiddo (aka the battle of Armageddon) and their complete defeat will facilitate the take-over process. These righteous people (mostly resurrected, with a percentage of alive-and-remaining Saints) will have been made immortal, given their spirit-form bodies, and will soon after be installed in positions of authority, some in the civil branch of government (kings) and some in the ecclesiastical branch (priests). (Rev. 1:5-7 & 5:9-10) We have a specific assignment for each of the twelve Apostles, they being installed as heads of each of the twelve tribes, which are prominent nations today, and will be the leading nations of the World to Come. (Matt. 19:28) Relating to this, notice the statement made by Paul in 1st Thess. 4:15, that we which are alive and remain will not
precede (prevent in old English) the dead into the presence of the Lord. IF the dead were already ascended to Heaven to be with the Lord, as religion claims, WHY would Paul see need to make this statement. Paul obviously realized that those he was writing to did not believe the dead were conscious with the Lord in heaven!

7. After all of the righteous have been taken from the earth and only the righteous remain, what will stop God from destroying the earth and the rest of humanity? I presume you meant “only the unrighteous remain”. This question reflects all-the-righteous-being-removed-from-the-earth idea. That is understandable as a question, based on common religious perceptions, but the truth is, NO, there will be no time when there will not be righteous on the earth. The question is, in what form? What WILL happen is the dead in the Lord will be restored to conscious life as Spirit Beings, the living righteous will join them moments later. (1st Thess. 4:17) The righteous of all ages will then be immortal and will become the governing (controlling) force on earth, with and under Christ. So, the earth will not be abandoned to the unconverted / wicked. As a peripheral perspective, it is NOT God’s intention to destroy the earth, only to destroy those who destroy the earth. (Rev. 11:17-18) In His first actions, after his descent to the Jerusalem area, He will work to overcome all opposition. We can read of those first steps in doing so in Rev. 11:17-18. Those are the very steps, which will be the agenda of the Second Coming at the seventh (last) Trump. He justifiably will express His Wrath upon those who resent His coming and who oppose Him in anger. That opposition will be stopped in short order. It will then be appropriate to impose His Wrath upon His opponents, not necessarily all of physical humanity still living. Many religious people THINK they worship Christ, not realizing that they have been spoon fed false teachings by their apostate teachers. These will no doubt come over and embrace the Truth quickly, once they realize their errors. Just because many do not know the truth (they think they do) it does not translate into having His Wrath poured upon them, unless they exhibit rebellion and anger against Him, as we read.

8. Those who hear Christ's words (i.e., his word) and believe what he says will have eternal life. What about those who have never heard his words? This is where the Plan of God becomes most wondrous and encouraging. There are uncountable billions who fit into this category. Life did not allow them a time or an opportunity to hear the Truth. There are others who may have heard, but didn’t have time to carry thru with their quest toward conversion. Many simply were not called in this age, or the age in which they lived. They are NOT lost, but are assigned to a later age. This matter is illustrated in the two harvests concept, pictured by the early and late harvests. The early Church understood the concept: that there will be an early harvest, pictured by the Day of Pentecost / Day of Trumpets, and a later harvest, pictured in the Feast of Tabernacles / Last Great Day. James 5:7-8 speaks to this. God is that farmer type being spoken of there, raising His harvests, the smaller early one, and the late summer greater one later. Those who have never heard will, in the late era resurrection, spoken of in Revelation 20:5, be raised back to physical life, and given a generation to come to know and to obey the Truth as those in this present calling have been given opportunity to do. (But they will not have to deal with Satan, as he will be restrained during that era. (Rev. 20:)) Some few are called now, but that calling is limited, as we read in John 6:44. (This was uttered in the early harvest season (see v. 4)). But, in John 7:37, it appears there is a different situation, which there is. At this later time, “Whosoever wills” may come. It is no longer a calling-of-the -Father-only situation. This was uttered in a later Holy Day season, (see v. 7:2) that season of the year which represents the salvation of the entire world, or at least the opportunity for it. Salvation will THEN be opened to all, whereas it is limited to the Father’s specific calling in this present age, His Early Harvest. The point is,
all will hear and have opportunity to respond to the opportunity for salvation, either in this age, or in or after the millennium, when the current dead (who have not spurned their opportunity already) will be restored to physical life to pursue the opportunity that they never had.

9. Is today the only day of salvation? Have God the father and Jesus Christ been trying to save all of humanity from the time of Adam to this present day? No. This is “a” day, not the only day. Religion does not understand this one simple consideration, so they can’t deal with, or explain, all those unconverted peoples’ true destiny. Particularly enigmatic are those who died too young to ever be realistically considered as having achieved salvation. If the Father was intent upon calling all now, why do we see so few being specifically called of the Father? Why would John have even made such a statement as in 6:44, IF he believed all were afforded their calling in this age, in this lifetime?

10. There is no doubt that each person will have an opportunity to obey God's code of righteous conduct. The only question is when each person will be given this opportunity? Correct. It’s a matter of when. But, all will have that opportunity. “God is not willing that any should perish”, and those who do, will have themselves to blame, not their lack of opportunity.

11. One of the terms of the agreement at Mount Sinai was that the people would obey the creator’s words, and, if they did obey, they would receive a tremendous blessing. However, if all things were predetermined, why would God make an agreement which had terms and conditions attached to it? Those promises for material blessing were conditional. Their blessings were physical (at first). The idea of spiritual blessings were hidden in the meanings of the things they were given to do, but prior to the open giving of the Holy Spirit, (only after Christ’s ascension) spiritual salvation was only alluded to as a future condition. In the early covenant era, their blessings were primarily national, and to some degree personal, but they were limited to the physical realm. The personal responses of the nation, and the individuals, were not predetermined, only the outcome was predetermined should the people nationally or individually fail to keep their word to faithfully obey. We, of course, know the record of history on their part. Israel, the whole of both houses (Ezek. 37:) waits for that day when the blinders that were placed over their perceptions, on account of their disbelief / disobedience, will be removed. That will be during the millennial age and the Great White Throne (Last Great Day) judgment periods.

Thank you for such excellent questions.


12. The bible states that the only way to receive salvation is through the Messiah and his sacrifice. However, how will people - past, present and future - who have never heard of Christ or his sacrifice obtain salvation? Those who lived in pre-Christian times, or who died too young to understand, or who were not afforded any opportunity to hear the Truth, and those who of no choice of their own died without being called of the Father, will in their time have that opportunity which they never had. It involves understanding the purpose and timing of the resurrections. As we read in Hebrews 6, the resurrections are one of the six fundamental doctrines of God’s Church. (Most religions only partly understand them.) We understand that in this present age, some have heard, but most haven’t. In the age to come, the millennial age, when Christ and His Saints rule all nations on earth, the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. (Hab. 2:14) At that time, the "whosoever wills" opportunity period will be in place. (Jn. 7:37 & Rev. 22:17) Presently, it is necessary to be called
of the Father, and no man can come, except called of the Father. (Jn. 6:44) After that, beginning after Christ's return, all will be called. That does not say that all will repent, accept Christ's Sacrifice, receive God’s Spirit and become converted. But, they will have opportunity. BUT, after the millennium (the 1000 years), the rest of the dead will arise, being restored back to a physical existence, to be allowed the opportunity that they never had in their first life. They too will live in a "whosoever wills" situation (Re. 22:17). Both the millennium and the second resurrection era will be without Satan's influence. As Revelation 20 explains, Satan will be removed from society, being totally restrained, as will his demons. Those ages will afford the easiest time for people to become converted, though the Saints raised in the first resurrection, at Christ's Second Coming, will have an extra 1000 years of life for their successful early calling and carry-thru. This is the extra benefit of an early calling and a successful race toward the goal of His High Calling. (No-one should choose to be 'called later', as that shows they know too much to really have that option!)

It might also be good to point out that those working toward salvation, whose life is cut short, will have the opportunity to complete their quest in the later resurrection to which they are assigned. Those who in this life reject their opportunity, or who disqualify themselves for salvation by extinguishing the gift of God's Spirit, will not rise with the rest, but will sleep on in death until their resurrection (the last / the third) for Final Sentencing.

It might also be important to realize that God purposely left some (even the Jews) unable to understand, until their resurrection period, as we read of in Ezekiel 37. They can hear words, but not fully realize what they just heard! God chooses to call whom He will call now, many of them Gentiles, to provoke the others to jealousy, once they realize what they, as a called nationality, failed to follow thru on. They chose to invent their own version of religion, rejecting God's revealed Truth. Some of their adamant positions made it very difficult for them to accept the Truth, so God deferred their calling (except for a very few). (Jn. 12:37-41 / Rom. 11:1-10)

13. God says that we must understand his way of life and obey his instructions in order to live forever (Matt 19:16-17; 28:20). But how can people understand or obey if they never heard the word of God? It is obvious that they cannot understand unless they are taught (ROM 10:13-15). Therefore, it is logical to ask whether or not God is fair and just in his dealings with humanity? It may not appear fair to us, but considering that those not given opportunity are not lost forever, the picture changes. But when we understand the overall Plan, and realize that ALL will have that opportunity to become converted, the whole scene changes. It's a matter of timing. Granted, the rewards of an early calling are greater (being part of the Bride), those who are assigned to a later calling will have it much easier than we who suffer the persecutions, Satanic pulls and severe opposition (death even) in our present calling. (Though having it easier, they will not have access to the same reward level as the firstfruits.) The thing is, God knows WHO CAN come and carry thru successfully to full conversion, and He knows who is likely to fail, should He call them NOW and award them His Spirit. Those who wouldn't make it, He defers to that later age when their chances for success are the best. Would we rate that as unfair, or extremely considerate? In overview, it is a very loving approach and affords the greater number of people to be successful in their calling in the fullness of time.

14. Bible history shows that God has predicated the outcome of many individual's lives and world events and he has caused these predictions to be fulfilled. There are many scriptures which speak of God's great knowledge, understanding and wisdom. But, does God know everything in advance?
Does God know exactly what humans will do from one moment to the next? God knows our personal weaknesses and our natures. I don't believe He seeks to predict our individual decisions. We are allowed free moral agency. Those areas where He predicts future events are those developments which are in His control and which He chooses to influence. Thus, our failures are our fault, not His. We are not being predestined to failure or success without any real choice on our part. God is not willing that any should perish, so we can discern from that that it is not in His Mind that any would be set up to fail, without their choices being the determining factor.

Questions from a Reader: The Destiny of the Deceased  

Hi Brother Rick,

I have some questions. (Replies are in lighter type.)

**Question:** Where are the spirits of those who did not have a chance to accept Jesus? For instance, all of the good Old Testament people and those who died after His resurrection? For instance, since Queen of Sheba will rise in judgment after the Millennium but where is her spirit now? I always thought that the OT people went to Abraham's bosom (i.e. Lazarus). Are they still there? **Answer:** Why would we consider any change? And, where would those not of Abrahamic descent go? (The Arabs are also descendants of Abraham!) Let's realize that the peoples of the pre-Christian world believed that the dead are unconscious, based on scriptures such as Psalm 146:4. Job also understood, that he would 'wait' in his grave until being made conscious again in the resurrection. (Job 14:14) Your use of the word 'spirits' tells me you are aware of the 'immortal soul' heresy. The human spirit (the element from God that gives us intellect and consciousness) loses consciousness and is placed back in God's safekeeping until the resurrection. The Queen of Sheba will arise in the second resurrection and denigrate her counterparts for their failure to take advantage of the potential opportunity they likely had previously. They had so much more awareness than her and her contemporaries.

Now the New Testament in many places likens death to sleep. So there is no substantial difference there either. As to the 'where' part of your question, I would suspect that all spirits are held together. One possible group that may be separate are the martyred. They are shown to be re-awakened briefly (Rev. 6:9-11) to plead for revenge on their persecutors. They're awarded white robes, but then told to return to sleep until the appropriate time. They have brethren who will experience similar lethal persecutions as they had.

**Now, after His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father, we know to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.** This does not represent any change when understood correctly. **But I understand that is only for those in Christ and unaccountable children.** Not correct. **What about those who did not hear the Gospel and died? Where are their spirits?** Like all, they are in God's care awaiting their appropriate restoration to life and consciousness resurrection. Our minister is working on a booklet that addresses the state of the dead.

I have an article on the "Absent from the body - Present with the Lord" subject. I'll attach it. This is an old favorite among fundamentalists. They need something to support their idea that the dead go immediately to Heaven at death, and this one serves their purposes. EXCEPT: they overlook one obvious fact! Paul didn't say "is", he said "and". Paul described three states of being, not just two. He clearly made reference to that 'intermediate' state, being 'unclothed', that is so conveniently overlooked. Unclothed is that intermediate state between being in this present body and being in that spirit body which we will receive when He comes. It is in that body which we must first receive that we CAN come into His presence. Like Paul, we all would prefer to be in THAT body and thus be able to be in His presence, but simply dying does not achieve that situation. There is a state of 'unclothedness' which we must wait thru until that day. **Hope this makes sense.**
Subject: RE: Another Question
Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2013

Reader questions, continuing in response to his first round.  (Further comments in light type.)

Q: You said: Your use of the word 'spirits' tells me you are aware of the 'immortal soul' heresy. I believe there is a misunderstanding as I have no clue what 'immortal soul' heresy is. When I said spirits, I meant the Human Spirit and I said it in plural because I was referring to two groups of people. Are we not a three part being? Spirit, Soul and Body? I understand that we do not become immortal until after the resurrection.

A: (Your understanding is above the average believer.) Yes. Body, soul and spirit. This is commonly understood, but not necessarily applied with full understanding in mainstream religion. Most regard the conscious component of human beings as the 'soul'. The common teaching is that the soul is immortal and remains conscious after death. Not only conscious, but capable of feeling pain or pleasure. (If not, then what would be the point of going to hell (or heaven)? More correctly defined, the body is our fleshly composition, the soul is the physical life that we (and animals) have. Soul in biblical usage describes an air-breathing creature, and is used more often in Genesis, for example, to describe animals than mankind. (the Hebrew word nephesh). It's the spirit that sets us apart from animals. Your use of spirit where you might've said soul suggested to me that you are aware of the distinction. The spirit is that component, that is non-material and thus is appropriately described, that is placed in each individual by God, irrespective of our degree of righteousness (or wickedness). That spirit (apart from the Holy Spirit) is what gives us consciousness and intellect. (Similarly, the spirit type that God places in animals is what gives them instinct, not intellect necessarily.) Now, our spirit carries the capability of interacting with God's Holy Spirit, should He begin working with us, and we respond appropriately. So, the converted person takes-in a measure of God's Spirit, changing our nature.

The immortal soul idea is an old error, borrowed largely from ancient pagan religions. We are not immortal. Our 'soul' does not go to hell or heaven. Our soul is our physical life. This mortal must put on immortality (1st Cor. 15:53) We in this present life do not possess a quality that is immortal or conscious beyond death. Our spirit returns to God at death. ("Into thy hands I commend my spirit": quoting Christ and Stephen.) He preserves it until our resurrection. Our spirit is the 'zip-drive' (analogy) that preserves our character for restoration into our resurrected bodies, whether good or bad.

"The human spirit (the element from God that gives us intellect and consciousness) loses consciousness and is placed back in God's safekeeping until the resurrection." I don't understand why a wicked person would be placed in safekeeping instead of going straight to hell/hades. I will read the PDF you attached and perhaps it will explain this comment. This is insightful to a point. Yes, a wicked person is reserved to punishment. But, they must be resurrected to life and consciousness in order to face their appropriate end. When we conceive of things under the immortal soul concept, we must have a place for that immortal soul to go immediately at death. But, according to scripture, we are not conscious after death. We must be resurrected to re-attain consciousness. We must be conscious in order to face our just reward. "It is appointed to man once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27)

The New Testament in many places likens death to a state of 'sleep'. We're fully unconscious in death.

Now the unconverted, which some might see as 'wicked', are another category. Not converted, not worthy of life either. This is one important area that religion hasn't come to correctly understand. Many haven't had opportunity, while many others were blinded in their lifetimes (some even by God). Uncountable numbers have died too young to have had any chance of repenting and becoming converted. The vast majority of humanity is reserved to be called in the millennial age and the second resurrection period beyond that. (What is called the second resurrection era.) These are more fully explained in my "Resurrections" booklet. "Beyond Armageddon" also addresses it to some degree. That one is now downloadable on the website.

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But the 'immortal soul' idea causes all kinds of misconceptions about God's Plan to eventually work with all of humanity. The 'firstfruits' are being selected now, to become Christ's Bride (Jn. 6:44) and the rest of humanity will have the door of opportunity opened to them as the second harvest gets underway. (Jn. 7:37) There are two harvest periods (Jas. 5:7) The ancients and the NT generation understood this. Annual physical harvests illustrate that truth. Those two passages in John seem to be contradictory, but when understood in their proper time contexts (the spring holydays / the fall holydays) it makes sense. Being called is limited (on purpose today) but will be unlimited as the millennial kingdom and the second resurrection era gets underway. The 'rest of the dead' (those not provided opportunity for conversion) (Re. 20:5) will arise to the opportunity that they never had. Ezekiel 37 describes the second resurrection (of the two houses of Israel) in very graphic detail. There is no mistaking the fact that these will be raised back to physical life, just as Lazarus was and as were the 'saints which slept' that we read of in Matthew 27:52.

Breaking free of the 'immortal soul' idea opens up major areas of understanding of God's Plan.

Thank you.

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Questions Regarding the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ:

July 5, 2012

Dear Mr. S,

The questions presented in your letter of July 2\textsuperscript{nd} were these:

\textit{Matt 27:62} Was the watch set on the First Day of Unleavened Bread?

\textit{How are we to understand Matt. 27:66 and Matt. 28:1?}

\textit{Verse 1 of Matthew 28 does not read right.}

\textit{Please translate these three verses so they will read right for me.}

\textit{Luke 23:55 Matt 27:55 tells us that the women were looking from a distance, how could they see inside the tomb and see how Jesus’ body was laid.}

\textit{When did the women come to the tomb? At sunrise or before dawn?}

\textit{John 21:1 and Mark 16:2. At sunrise? Explain.}

To set the stage, Let me first pose the scenario of events (days beginning at sunset):

Passover service (a supper observance at the time) was the evening beginning the 14\textsuperscript{th} of Abib (a Wednesday)

The Garden prayer and arrest was later that same evening (John 17)

Christ’s trial was during the night, ending close to dawn – still a Wednesday

His condemnation occurred early Wednesday morning, as dawn approached.

Later, the Jews would not enter the Praetorium on account of their Passover approaching, (John 18:28) (this to avoid ‘defilement’ in their opinions – this detail is important later)

He was crucified about the time of the morning sacrifice, and died about the time of the evening sacrifice,
There was darkness for three hours, ending mid-afternoon,

This period of unusual darkness stopped the evening sacrifice (which had to be completed before the Passover Lambs traditionally could begin being slain.

BUT, the earthquake stopped all activity at the Temple, tearing the veil, exposing the Holy of Holies to view,

This damage to the Temple prevented the (late) Jewish Passover from being conducted that year!

The “Jewish Passover” was approaching that evening (the NTBMO actually) (Exodus 12:42)

This was what we refer to as beginning the “First day of Unleavened Bread” (Exodus 12)

The “Jewish Passover” was slain late in the afternoon of the 14th but roasted and eaten after sunset in the 15th (what is more correctly identified as the First Day of Unleavened Bread)

Christ died late in the afternoon (before the other two men) late on the 14th

Joseph of Arimathea intervened with Pilate to obtain the body (Jn. 19:38) (Relatives could do that.)

Joseph (with Nicodemus) hastily placed the body in Joseph’s new tomb, (Matt. 27:57-60)

The burial process was barely completed as the sun was setting, (Luke 23:54)

The women kept their distance as burial was a men’s job, (Matt. 27:55)

The women looked into the tomb just before it was closed (the stone was rolled – was very heavy – this too was important) (Luke 23:55)

The First day of Unleavened Bread occupied the next day (the 15th)

All the disciples rested and observed the annual Holyday (Luke 23:56)

Disciples re-opened the tomb on Friday – with intent to complete the burial (they saw what was needed to complete the burial (lack of ‘spices’))

The Pharisees saw this activity at the tomb on Friday – it’s how they learned where it was, (Matt. 27:62)

Being worried, they approached Pilate about ‘sealing’ the tomb on Friday, the preparation day, (Matt. 27:62)

Pilate authorized it being sealed, authorized a military ‘watch’, but .... (Matt. 27:65-66)

The Jews had to do the sealing first. This had to be on Friday, as the day before and after were Sabbaths,

The Jews wouldn’t have entered the Praetorium on a Sabbath (either one), (John 18:28)

The Jews wouldn’t have done the physical work of sealing the tomb on a Sabbath,

The women went and bought spices after the Sabbath (annual) ended (during the day Friday),

The women prepared the spices on Friday then rested on the weekly Sabbath, (Luke 23:56)

The Roman soldiers began their ‘watch’ on Friday mid-day,

There was no activity at the tomb during the weekly Sabbath (Saturday),

Christ rose as the Sabbath was ending, (was gone from the site before dawn),

As soon as possible, (early Sunday morning) the women came intending to apply the spices, (Mk. 16:1; Jn. 20:1)

They approached the tomb not knowing of the seal having been made or the watch set, (Mark 16:3)
(No one had been there to know that it’d been sealed, as they kept the weekly Sabbath at their home areas)

During the night, angels struck the guards senseless and opened the stone, (as the Sabbath was ending),

There was also a second earthquake, (Compare Matt 28:1 with Matt. 27:51-53.)

A quake accompanied His death and again His resurrection,

The guards were gone by the time the women began arriving as sunrise approached,

There was more than one group of women who came to the tomb,

Angels remained to speak with Mary and left a message for the Disciples. (Matt. 28:1-6)

Now to Address the Questions:

Matt 27:62  Was the watch set on the First Day of Unleavened Bread?  That’s unlikely. The Jews wouldn’t enter the Praetorium on Wednesday the 14th (at the sentencing before Pilate – that audience had to be held outdoors) to not be ‘defiled’ so that they could keep their Passover. (Jn.18:28) (The True Passover was the evening before) So, it is unlikely they would’ve done so on a Sabbath either, so that leaves Friday as the day when they could’ve done it with clear conscience. ALSO, the Jews wouldn’t have known where the tomb was. As Joseph of Arimathea was a Sanhedrin member, (though a family member) his life would’ve been at risk for what he’d done, so there would be no reason to tell them anything. (John 19:38) It was the activity at the tomb that gave it away. Seeing activity at the tomb, they feared the disciples might create a hoax. Thereafter, the Jews went in and saw Pilate for permission to have a guard placed. Now, Pilate OK’d the guard, but made these Jews do the work of sealing it. (Matt.27:65) That also proves that it was not a Sabbath, either annual or weekly. Being that the sealing was complete late on Friday, the disciples were no longer around the tomb, and thus weren’t aware that the watch had been set. The women still weren’t aware of it when they came early on Sunday. Their question, “Who will roll the stone for us?” was moot and shows that, as the answer was, “No one will, there’s an official Government seal placed”! (Jn. 16:3) Had the seal been placed on Thursday, they all would’ve had time to learn of it. (Write for Pastor Leger’s “Slide Device” that examines and correlates all Scriptures on the Crucifixion and establishes Biblically how long Christ remained in the Tomb.)

How are we to understand Matt. 27:66 explained above. and Matt. 28:1 This one breaks ahead to the beginning of daylight of the morning after the weekly Sabbath had passed. This narrative would begin as the very first light of dawn was breaking.

Matthew 28:62 is interesting. When you place the comma properly, it reads, “On the next day which followed, the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate.” (NKJ) This shows that this request took place on the preparation day, a Friday. The translators injected their own bias by placing the comma where they did. It also shows that they went in to see Pilate, which would’ve been a problem for the chief priests to do if it was a Sabbath (so not either Thursday, the annual Sabbath, or Saturday).

Verse 1 of Matthew 28 does not read right. It may be clumsy, but it makes the point clearly that it was after the Sabbath Day had passed, and dawn was approaching, dawn of the first day of the week. Mark 16:1-2 confirms the same.

Please translate these three verses so they will read right for me. I’m not sure translation will make a lot of difference. This was an event that took some time, from leaving their houses, meeting up together, and arriving at the tomb. Did they meet up somewhere in the city, or at the tomb?
Luke 23:55 Matt 27:55 tells us that the women were looking from a distance, how could they see inside the tomb and see how Jesus’ body was laid. They stayed out of the men’s way, sitting across from the tomb, but apparently with a line of sight where they could see into it. Either that, or they looked in just before the men were done for the day, as the sun was setting and the annual holyday was beginning. (Thursday, the First Day of Unleavened Bread, which Jews erroneously call Passover. They even call the whole week Passover!)

When did the women come to the tomb? At sunrise or before dawn? From the texts, I would place it at the earliest light of dawn, setting off while still mostly dark, but with just enough daylight to be able to see. Also, being mid-month, it would’ve been with a full moon, but the moon would be setting as sunrise approached.

John 20:1 and Mark 16:2. At sunrise? Explain. What we don’t know is how long it took for these women to all gather together and make the trip from where they lived to where the tomb was. We know the crucifixion site was outside the city, and the tomb was near the site, not inside the city. (Jn.19:41) From first light to sunrise takes about 45 minutes. (Similar to dusk after sunset.) Now, also, the women might’ve lingered at the scene for several minutes, so their stay might’ve lasted there until after sunrise had actually happened.

So, while the accounts seem to be somewhat contradictory, they may just be relating a broader scenario. Not just when the women left their houses and gathered together, which apparently was at the crack of dawn, as soon as it had become light enough to do so, but the walk to the tomb area, which may have consumed much of a half hour. Then staying at the tomb area for a few minutes more, trying to figure what had happened, likely extended to sunrise. The scriptures present a broader explanation of what happened, doing so in a manner that leaves no question. Their trip to the tomb area fell between the crack of dawn and sunrise. This makes it even clearer that the resurrection did not occur at or after sunrise, which is perhaps the greater consideration, as so many wrongly teach that His resurrection was at sunrise. The Easter tradition makes much of that misconception.

His resurrection occurred 72 hours after being placed in the tomb (the heart of the earth) in keeping with the prophecy. That would be as the weekly Sabbath was just ending. In other words, His resurrection was not on Sunday morning, as is commonly taught! I hope this helps.

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NOTE: These questions above are presented to address the many allegations that the timing of Christ’s Resurrection has a perceived relevance to observing Sunday as “the Lord’s Day” as opposed to the seventh day Sabbath. It also has issues with the positions many take regarding the timing of the Passover Service in the present era.

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Questions from East Africa Submitted on 4/28/14

1. A member asked: Rev. 15:1-4. It seems all happened in heaven. My problem is will those who will be victorious over the Beast and its elements hold such a ceremony in heaven? I can see only God Almighty being praised and all the harps are his! John Okelo Reply: Yes, this event appears to take place in heaven. The sea of glass is a clue, as it compares to the description we see of the Throne of God in Rev. 4:6. Exactly what this ceremony represents is a question, but where it is placed in the narrative, we are drawn to see it as occurring just at the end of the period known as the Great
Tribulation and just before the time of Christ’s intervention with humanity in that period we refer to as the Day of the Lord. The DOTL is when the seven last plagues (which are contained within the Seventh Trump) are poured out upon unrepentant humanity – those still living. Within the Seventh Trump is the take-over of the kingdoms of earth by Christ, but beginning that take-over, there will be an outpouring of wrath against the adamantely unrepentant. The series of events that comprise the Day of the Lord can be seen in Rev. 11:17-18. That will include the resurrection of the Saints, which we know will include those which are remaining alive. (1st Cor. 15) So, these must be those who overcame the Beast, but which are not alive in the flesh, to be seen there before the First Resurrection. This may correspond to the event where the spirits of the martyrs (the sixth seal – Rev. 6:9-11) are brought to a state of consciousness momentarily, to make their appeal for revenge on their persecutors, but who are instructed to resume their sleep state UNTIL such time as the end-time martyrdom of saints is accomplished! These with harps may be the conscious spirits of deceased saints, just prior to the first resurrection, when they will be invested with their spirit bodies at (within) the Last Trump.

2. In 1 Cor 3:10-9 I see all the explanations are very clear but my question is who are those to be saved without rewards and when? Milka  
Reply: Salvation is one thing, It is a gift of Grace, but there is a reward level associated with conversion. Different people will warrant different rewards based on their life accomplishments. This is over and above the basic GIFT of Grace. There is an article on that, available on request. It very much matters what a person does once converted. It is conceivable that some will enter the Kingdom with basically no merited reward, in that they did nothing of value to God in their lifetimes, beyond working for their own preservation interests, nothing over and above. The definition of an “unprofitable servant” in other words. That would be those who failed to “occupy”, gainfully using the Talents God gave them, as we read in Matt. 25. Backing up to verse 8, we can better understand what’s being asked.

3. In the CoG’s or any church. A man can pretend to be faithful till he becomes ordained a minister. The church can do much and invest a lot in land he provided. Then later he finds another church which promised him to do a lot, then he dumps the former ministry and its leader. Though he is retained as a minister in a new church ministry? And if he refuse to relinquish all to the investor then can he repent and become a true Christian after all? Samson Muga  
Reply: This is an interesting question, considering that we have seen so much division in the Church in the modern era. Basically, we are first considering if a servant’s credentials carry over when he changes affiliations. This is a “NO” with many organizations. The question we need to consider is, is whether the ordination was accepted in Heaven? Men ordain other men all the time. Was the ordainer justified in doing the ordination, or was he or the other a true servant of God in the first place? Many seek prominence without having the right motivation OR the Spirit of God in reality. It is that consideration which we must factor-in. That we determine by examining the man’s fruits. We are told to do that, to know them by their fruits, not assume they are genuine simply on which organization endorses them. The early Church examined their apostles, (Rev. 2:2) finding some to be false. It is not wrong to evaluate, but that needs to be done with great caution and involving a consensus of others, where a man’s shortcomings are not obvious. We must also be aware of the “hireling” concern, where men move to the support network that pays better. That should not be the prime motivation, but it often is. As to who owns the facility, in all honesty, some adjustment should be made with the original sponsor for their investment, should that be an issue. Wouldn’t NOT doing so represent theft?
4a. Will there be baptisms in the millennial reign of Christ?  Reply: Absolutely! The Kingdom Era will see people living out their lives normally, as we see now. There will be families, homes built, a general society, but with the primary difference being the Rule of Christ and His spirit-born Saints. No longer will governments or society be under the control of corrupt men. Righteousness will prevail in the Administration. People will live and die, will bring forth children, and go to their graves after a full life, even up to 100 years of age. (See Isa. 65:20-23) This passage describes the millennial age, as can be seen by the fact of them having children. The second resurrection era after the millennium will not see children being born. This passage has been mis-assigned by some in the past to the second resurrection era. Those raised from the dead will not have their reproductive capabilities restored. They will be genderless, like the angels. (Matt. 22:30) Nor will there be a need for marriage. We tend to think of the resurrection as being to a spirit-born life, but Christ’s uninformed questioners were thinking of those restored to a physical life, thus the intent of their question. The second resurrection will restore people who never had an opportunity for salvation to a physical state, for them to have that which they never had. Either thru ignorance, or life cut too short, such as infant death.

Now, we also need to understand that baptism and conversion in the millennium will not be taken casually, as people do today. This will be their ONLY opportunity, and to fake a conversion experience will have serious consequences. Not only that, but the angels, as well as the ruling spirit-born Saints will have sharp powers of discernment that men do not possess today. This also helps explain why there will be an Old Testament-like religious system in operation for those BEING converted, and a New Testament-like religious system in place for those who are ready for, and who have truly repented and have become converted. My booklet on the Millennial Kingdom explains all of that.

4b. what about marriage?  Reply: Very definitely. See the comment on bringing forth children above. Now, in the second resurrection era, after the millennium, there will be no childbearing.

The following is from a very aware Foreign Student attending college in the US, from southern Africa: Rather than a Q&A format, this section carries on in a more conversational exchange. The student’s comments are in bold, the responses are in lighter type. Share with us the profound understanding this young man exhibits!

Subject: Fwd: Question
From: kobi
Date: Thu, 15 May 2014

The new contact says: Here’s some correspondence I had with the United Church of God a few years ago regarding the Millennial Kingdom and the Second resurrection shortly thereafter. Was curious as to your thoughts. Thoughts on the UCG or on your question? Further, would those raised to physical life become young again, thus leading them to remarry, reproduce or would the population at the outset of the second resurrection be the same from beginning to end? Thanks again, and I look forward to having some of my study questions and thoughts explained in the coming months and years. Bring them on. If I can’t explain something, we have bi-weekly Bible Studies here at the Christian CoG, and we love to get into such things.

On those second resurrected, I hadn't come to any specific conclusion as to a person's age at their rising, but I suspect the following:
1) Those resurrected after the 1000 years are raised at that point in time when their life ended. They are raised in perfect health, with all of their life-ending diseases and impairments gone, and they are in such good health that they physically can live out a full generation. These do not return to the grave.

2) I expect the second resurrection era is a full generation long. Now we know that the millennial peoples will live for a full or near a full century before succumbing to their end-of-life event, as we read in Isaiah 65:20. People will live and die during the millennium, have and raise children, just as peoples do today. The second resurrectees will live long enough for an infant to attain a full age, if some are raised at the age at which their brief lives ended.

3) Those in the millennial age marry and bring forth children, as Isaiah 65 also shows us, but those raised after the 1000 years will not have their reproductive capability restored. (Mt. 22:30) They had that in their first lifetimes. Their main task in the resurrection is to work thru the conversion process, without the influences of Satan, sexual distractions or contrary mates. This time period is that important to them!

4) Those raised in the second resurrection will not die the physical death again, not that they're immortal, but that they are afforded enough years sufficient for them to complete their salvation experience (or not)!

5) Those raised in the third resurrection will include all the wicked from whatever age, AND all those converted from the second coming to the end of the millennium. ALL will stand alive (in the flesh), together with those resurrected in the second resurrection, for Final Judgment. The sheep-from-the-goats event, or the white cloud / grapes of wrath scene we read of in Matthew 25 and Revelation 14, which I see as complementing each other informationally.

Does this make sense?

You will find my materials are largely based on these views. The Churches of God for the most part never fully understood how the second and especially the third resurrections work. They didn't (and don't yet) get the comprehensiveness of meaning of Revelation 14. They self-distracted, as do most commentaries, thinking Revelation 14:20 refers to the Battle of Armageddon, though the place is 55 miles from Jerusalem. NO! Revelation 14:20 is where the unconverted pay the penalty for their own sins with their own blood, in that they effectively rejected Christ's shed-blood sacrifice on their behalf.

I will say I submitted the Resurrections booklet for formal Doctrinal Review to the UCG. It got mixed responses. There are such hard set opinions based on their AC educations, that they are reluctant to consider anything else. Several reasons: There are intellectually dishonest types, there are intellectually lazy types, and there are plain cowards, too under-informed, and IF they do get something, too afraid to ever pose anything different than what HWA taught and the way he explained it. Even though they might understand some things slightly differently, they are loathe to admit it, for fear of opposition and peer repudiation by the “afraid-to-change anything” crowd.

Is this sufficiently clear?

I should mention that my wife and I were WCG members from the early '70's, and charter members of the UCG when it formed here in Grand Junction, CO in mid-1995. Most of the articles listed (that I'm sending you) began life as UCG sermonettes. My experience with WCG (and later UCG ministers) is that there are some really good ones, but those types rarely rise to the upper ranks in the ministry. This is typical of most WCG spin-off groups. There are also wolves in sheep's clothing in many of the self-acclaimed ministries.

We need to remain close to the Bible, which I suspect you're doing. If so, I commend your faith and faithfulness to the Word. A package of booklets is on its way.

Below, we begin the forwarded message and reply from the UCG as referenced above: 27
Dear Friend,

Thank you for your questions! Those are both very interesting questions. Although the Bible is clear in regards to a second resurrection back to physical life, during which time all will then be given access to God’s Holy Spirit and will have an opportunity for salvation, it is not clear at what age they will be raised as or specifically how long they will live. Technically safe, but we do know that it will be sufficiently long to provide a full opportunity for them to grow through the salvation process. Salvation is NOT a momentary event, just accepting Jesus. A person must go on to develop His character likeness, which is never an instantaneous attainment, simply by "dedicating ones' self", as protestant types teach.

It would seem logical that babies and/or children would be resurrected to the age they were when they died. This is logical, and I generally agree. It wouldn’t seem to make sense for them to suddenly be resurrected as adults and miss out on their childhood years. Also, parents of those children would want to have a part in their upbringing and have an opportunity to share those years with their children. Childhood is an extremely important period in the life of a child. It is the time when values can be instilled in them and during which they grow to maturity. Thus, it wouldn’t make sense for them to be resurrected as adults and miss out on that very important part of their life. Good.

You also asked how long they will live and will they live until they die? We have looked to one scripture in regards to how long they will have to repent and build godly character in the second resurrection. That particular scripture is Isaiah 65:20, which says: “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.” I had this discussion with the chairman of the Doctrinal Committee. He took serious exception with the idea that those raised in the second resurrection die again. I agreed with him and altered my booklet (adding 3 chapters) to correct this position. Those second resurrected peoples will remain alive, and those in the third will rise to stand with them for Final Sentencing. This resolves the obvious question of them being raised in the second, then dying again, then being raised once again (shortly thereafter) to stand alive for Sentencing. This is the conundrum that applying Isa. 65:20 to the second resurrection era creates. See the problem? (However, this reflects the long-held beliefs of the WCG, the centenarians dying again.) Isaiah 65: more correctly applies to the millennial age.

Since it says “the sinner being one hundred years old will be accursed,” we have taken that to possibly indicate that those in the second resurrection will have one hundred years to repent and develop Godly character. That would then indicate that if they haven’t repented after that period of time, they would be “accursed” by experiencing the second death by being cast into a lake of fire (Revelation 20:14-15). I take issue with this in part, and agree in part. Isaiah 65:20 has been mis-applied to the second resurrection era, where it more correctly applies to the millennial age. See a few verses later where they are "bringing forth children" (not all translations have "children" there). The resurrected people will not be having children. Just by the nature of their generation, there wouldn’t be TIME for them to raise all those children. What would be the state of those born late in the second
resurrection era, who don't have time to grow up before the "harvest is fully ripe" (no further ripening could reasonably be expected)? See the problem? In the second resurrection era, there will be many, many infants raised back to life. There will be also many successful parents who raised children in their first lifetimes who can and would be willing to ‘adopt’ them as needed. This is my suspicion as to how that will work out.

However this will be fulfilled, God will give everyone in the second resurrection ample time to repent. Although details are not given, it is logical to assume that those who grow and overcome and develop godly character will at some point be changed to spirit and then attain eternal life, while those who don’t will then experience the second death from which there is no resurrection. It's the "at some point" matter that seems to elude the ex-WCG (AC grads). They don't understand what Jesus said in Matthew 25 (when all nations will stand before Him for SEPARATION! That tells us they are co-mingled when they all rise to stand before God's Throne for Final Sentencing. Their view effectively exempts those converted during the millennial age from experiencing a first death. They have them being ‘changed’ from flesh to spirit at some indefinite moment, where there is no scripture to suggest such a thing. This would also leave no-one converted to stand in the Final Sentencing event, which is the basis for the second oversight, claiming that the Third Resurrection involves the wicked only! Both Matthew 25 and Revelation 14 present a very different picture. Righteous and wicked individuals will be raised-up together, needing to be separated, with the then separated groups being assigned separate destinies at the same point in time!

If we can be of any further assistance, please feel free to write again. Keep after them Kobi!

Sincerely,

Steve Shafer
Personal Correspondence, UCGIA

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From: webmaster@ucg.org    On Behalf Of Kobi
Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2011 3:07 PM
To: info@ucg.org
Subject: Question

User's Name: Kobi

User's Comment: Hi Mr. McNeely. I look forward with great anticipation to the day when the trump sounds, the clouds are pulled back, and our Lord and saviour descends, signaling the instant resurrection of all the saints of the 6,000 year period of human history, from the time of Adam, all the way up to the present evil age. I also look forward to the time shortly thereafter, when those who never had a chance to accept salvation through Jesus Christ (of Sodom, Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon, etc.) will once again be raised to physical life to have an opportunity to accept or reject him. But, my question is, since they are being raised to physical life, (in the flesh, not glorified bodies like the saints that will rule with Christ during the millennium) what age will they be raised as, and how long will they live? Will they live until they die a second physical death? Will they be raised as children (babies) or adults? Thank you so much for your patience and for the work you do for the heavenly kingdom. I look forward to seeing you face to face on that glorious day. If we're going to teach three resurrections, shouldn't we have good answers by now? This doesn't really answer the matter.
Thanks so much. That makes much more sense. I suppose by thoughts I meant on both the UCG and the question. I find it fascinating how my journey for truth has been so enlightening. If you (rightly) have qualms with the UCG, I can imagine how much greater your (and my) grievances would be with the mainstream Protestant Christian church, and more so the Catholic church, and even more so other "Christian" churches, and still more with world religion/secular thought at large. Throughout my young life, my scope of truth is slowly becoming more and more focused, more clear. It's amazing how even those in the faith can be so close, and yet so far away, you know? That's why it's important to identify first and foremost with the Word, before any pastor, preacher, teacher, church, denomination, or religion. My issues with the UCG are more with some of their "old school" type ministers. There are some really good ones, and there are some that just don't get their calling. There are some that think their job description includes stifling spiritual growth, so as to maintain their control and personal prestige. I refer to the Diotrephes types mentioned in the Epistle of 3rd John. The Church has been hurt by that, and it isn't limited to just our genre. We were charter members of the UCG when it first came into being here after the apostasy that came to infect the WCG in the early 1990's. By that, I refer to the wholesale embrace of protestant views by the WCG, leaving aside the hard won truths, (which you are coming to understand), and reverting to common main stream teachings. There are several split-off groups that emerged from this doctrinal overthrow. For a time the UCG was the largest. There are others which I would not recommend, particularly those which exhibit rank Nicolaianism, which Jesus said twice that He hates!

In regards to the questions at hand, it makes sense to assume that those raised in the second resurrection will be raised to whatever age they were when they breathed their last, but with no physical impairments to hinder the salvation process. This is very logical. And, there will be many adults, with exemplary parenting experience, to willingly raise them to adulthood, if their real parents aren't included in the 2nd Resurrection, for whatever reason. When you say that the second resurrectees will not return to the grave, I trust that you mean they will not die before the final judgement sentencing/separation of sheep from goats as Jesus mentioned, while still leaving the possibility of eternal damnation (destruction in the lake of fire) open as a possibility. Correct. They will not experience the first death a second time, but will remain candidates for the second death (complete and cognitive extinction) in a consuming Lake of Fire (not an ever burning hell as religianity teaches). Also I am not entirely familiar with your abbreviations. (AC, Ambassador College, the flagship minister training institution of the WCG. WCG, The Worldwide Church of God, raised up in this generation, restoring many abandoned Biblical Truths by HWA. HWA Herbert W Armstrong, who died at 93 in 1986.) I was reading one of the articles that made mention of the end time (or better yet, the end of man's allotted time to rule the planet under Satan's influence) and you said that the 7th millennium would be one of "rest" and healing, similar to the Sabbath. Yes, a time of spiritual rest from constant battles with Satan, the seventh millennium of a week of millennia. Not that there will be nothing to do! The job then will be the re-education of the world (none excluded) in the true ways of God, bringing them to conversion, with Satan under restraint. (Revelation 20). The implication here would be that there are 6 millennia preceding it. So from when to when does one start counting, and where are we now on that calendar. Time is just about up! What exactly has to happen before the 6th millennium ends and the Ancient of day sets up his Kingdom without end? The Great Tribulation, which my booklets "APOCALYPSE" and "Beyond Armageddon" will help explain. (They're in the mail.) [Copies available on request.]
Lastly, it became evident to me through study that the God of the Old Testament is not who most people think it is. The Father has not been known or seen by any being, save the Word and the Heavenly host (correct?). That IS what Jesus said specifically! (Jn. 5:37 & 8:55) This leads me to my point. You note that no man will ever lay eyes upon this brilliant Being of great light and heat, a Consuming Fire, as it were, wrapped in glory and light, until He descends after the elimination of death and the human race, (let's understand that "the elimination of the human race" is conditioned on understanding that all the righteous will have been made immortal spirit beings by this point in time, and all the wicked of all time will have been rendered extinct in the Lake of Fire.) mainly because we cannot tolerate his presence or essence without being destroyed, and nor can He tolerate ours. The Righteous Father cannot abide sin or sin capable individuals. He cannot admit such into His presence. He even had to turn away from His Son when He had the sins of humanity transferred upon Him. (Mk. 15:34) In fact, we would not even know him or that he existed if not for the Word who reveals him. Correct. Basically, throughout human history, no man of flesh and blood has or will ever talk to or see the Father in his glory, directly. MINDBLOWING! I can't help but feel that this is overly impersonal and somewhat demeaning (I know, I know, how dare I?) but not in a prideful, fleshly sense, but from a logical, practical perspective. Yet, we are made sons of the Father once we become Christ's Seed (Gal. 3:29). Why even create to begin with if the Creator's very essence is too brilliant for the created? I think you'll enjoy my chapter on "Spirit and the Universe". Did not Adam walk with God, or was that the Word and LORD? It was the pre-incarnate Christ! I also seem to recall both members of the God family descending upon the tower of babel, and yet the Earth was not consumed, nor its inhabitants. I presume you're referring to Gen. 11:7. If they (Us) did so, they may have collaborated to confuse the language, but that doesn't say the Father (or either of them) uttered His voice or was represented visibly to them. Such a deduction would suggest the Father at some point had divested Himself of His full Glory, which is a rare, if ever, situation. Am I missing something? It just seems like the Father is not really involved, except through the Son. Correct. It is incredible, however, to think that this unseeable, unknowable (except through the LORD) being will basically destroy/melt every physical material by the brightness of his coming and the intensity of his brilliant essence. I never realized that the earth burning with "fervent heat" and the melting of the elements was directly because of his arrival on Earth after the third resurrection and final sentencing. (sorry for the length, lots on my mind) Your level of understanding astounds me! There is a glorious world to come AFTER the Final Sentencing of all of humanity is completed. That will be further explained in the booklets “APOCALYPSE” and “Beyond Armageddon”. I personally allow the possibility that the earth will become the center of the Universe, glowing brilliantly, filled with the Glory of the Father, Son and glorified beings, the greater Family of God. Earth may become the jewel in the Universe, the base of operations for the creation of other worlds. Is this too bizarre? "Of the increase of His government there will be no end". How so? Some believers would choke on the idea, but I'm not the first to suggest it.

I have shared your replies with a friend. I don't know if he will contact you. Most attendees here are getting on in years, and we are excited that someone of your age understands so much!

Date: Sat, 17 May 2014
Subject: Re: Question
From: kobi

Yes, thank you. All glory and thanks belong to God. I am on a quest for truth, REAL biblical truth that actually makes sense, and NOTHING, not mainstream Christianity, not secular learned men walking according to their lust, not church loyalty/devotion, heck not even denominations is going to get in my way in that regard. There are slivers of truth here and there among "believers". It is our job to filter out
the error and build on the Truths. I still have some more to churn over, however. Does it in no way unsettle you slightly that the Father shrouds himself so completely, to the extent that no man would even know him if not for the LORD and Word that was with the Father? Perhaps our previous conversation was too definitive. It may not be fully correct to say that no man knew OF the Father. Just for an example, David (in the famous Psalm 110) referred to THE LORD as opposed to his Lord. There was some awareness of a two-Person Godhead in ancient times. It was after the exile period that Judaic religion (predecessor to modern Judaism) took on a strict definition of monotheism that allowed but One Person God! There are passages in the Old Testament, both the Psalms and the Pentateuch, which refer to two Beings, but Judaic religion, later than the return to the land by the House of Judah, took a different position. They, of course, were identifying with the pre-incarnate Christ, not realizing it. Consider Jesus' statement to the Jews, "Moses wrote of ME!" Does it also not unsettle you that basically less than 1% (it would appear anyway) of humanity know the truth about the Father, and that most are mistaken about who the God of old really is, an identification crisis as it were? Yes. This is profound! The Jews did a real job on Judaeo-Christian religion, even confounding the Catholics in how to define the Godhead without appearing to be what they call 'polytheism'. Their response was to articulate a Trinitarian explanation that makes no real sense. Also, in regards to your comment regarding God the righteous Father's inability to abide with sin or sin capable individuals. Perhaps that statement of mine is a step too far. Humans reek of sin. SOME angels apparently sinned, showing their capability to. (Though 2/3rds remain righteous.) We don't know why the angels (or more specifically) the sinned Satan to appear before Him, by invitation apparently. (But, then, Satan is not flesh.) There was a purpose. But then again, did he appear before the Father or the pre-incarnate Christ? How then could he allow Lucifer into his presence, who is very much a sin-capable and sinful individual. How could he also allow angels, who we have seen are capable of sin, to worship before him day and night (24 elders, etc.)? These would be His righteous angels and hosts. I suppose it is quite humbling to understand that the Father cannot even dwell with us or be in our presence, nor we in His, because of our very nature. Matter, of which we are made, melts in the presence of the Father’s infinite potency. No amount of good deeds or righteous living will ever change that fact in our current flesh and blood form. Also, couldn't the Father just divest Himself of his glory in order to reveal Himself? I have yet to find a clear example where the Father ever divested Himself of full Glory. Give me your thoughts on that. How is it that the Word who was with the Father, can interact with sinful flesh, but the Father cannot. Is this not demeaning to the Word? I wouldn’t say that. It is a provision agreed upon between two co-equal Beings. One of the two opted to leave the glorified state in order to be able to interact with humanity. (Phil. 2:6) This is an honor attributable to both. There is no competition between the two, but a collaboration which makes our approach to God possible. Otherwise, there would not be that possibility, their power being so unfathomable. Think what it takes to create and SUSTAIN the Universe. Or are they in such harmony that the Word’s subservience and servitude to the greater Father is not a point of contention (hmmm, perhaps mirrored in human marriage?) I would identify the Two as being in full UNITY, which I believe is the real intent of the Shema! (Deut. 6:4) It is truly heartening to hear that time is about up on the 6 days of man and the 7th is coming. To be honest, it amazes me how the Godhead has been able to wait so long. I found out these truths a few years ago and haven't been able to wait until the end of man's age ever since, and yet the God head has tarried for centuries, millennia, through wars and blood shed, countless genocides and homicides and every manner of wickedness under the sun. Their pre-existence is as infinite as their future. That is profound! Do you truly believe that we are the generation that will "not precede those in the grave" and will be translated immediately to immortality and spirit life? Yes. What a way to go out, huh? Another qualm I have is this, it seems like great men and women far older and more experienced in the faith than I, are missing these basic truths, and yet what they do bring to the table is of great inspiration to me. People can become content, to where they leave off pursuing further Truth. We must continually grow in grace and
knowledge. My confusion is, how can they be so far off on something so fundamental, and yet be so right about other Christian matters? Should I discard everything else they say as a direct result of what is being discussed now? This is a matter that calls for further discussion. People have varying levels of understanding. Just where that bottom line is that may prevent a person from full conversion at this time is something only God knows. The old Biblical principle of "iron sharpening iron" illustrates why we need to "speak often to one another" (Mal. 3:16) We each can increase the understanding level of others, and they often can sharpen our awarenesses. I will say this of full life people who just haven't passed the threshold for being assigned to the first resurrection, they WILL BE on the forefront when they are raised in the second. It's just such a paradox. It's almost as if knowing too much taints everything, because those that are wrong in these matters, are really, really wrong, as genuine and as nice as they are. How can men of God so old in the faith all over the country and world not understand these crucial, fundamental truths, and as a corollary, can the Spirit really be said to be poured out or in an individual without such basic understanding? God's Spirit, like water, seeks its own level, based on the individual's abilities to understand as in the Talents and the Pounds parables: Some have unique individual abilities / some have motivational limits. Their rewards of placement in the Kingdom will be in proportion to their personal responses. 

(I apologize for the length again, I will try to streamline my future messages.) No problem!

Date: Mon, 19 May 2014
Subject: Re: Question
From: kobi

All very, very interesting, and relevant. As crystal clear as it is, it is still a lot to digest after a lifetime of false doctrine, as I'm sure you understand. This next bit is going to be quite long, so apologies in advance. Firstly, you mention that the vast majority of higher education is patently anti-God, and rightly so. Why then, does it seem as though more educated countries do better overall in the grand scheme of things. Not sure which countries you're referring to. There are cultural factors in some that come into play in those countries that can engage in 'higher education'. Not all countries have the economic means to pursue it. Not all have the intellectual resources. Why are some countries locked in poverty? It isn't due entirely to imperial exploitation, as some elitists would suggest. It seems like even though a lack of spiritual knowledge and an abundance of physical, earthly knowledge does not profit much, it still separates the haves from the have-nots so to speak. There's another component also. The descendants of Abraham, who possess the physical blessings of the Promise, have been blessed materially. It is important to know who these peoples are. There are two houses (separate to this day) which carry that heritage. (Read of them in Ezekiel 37.) The House of Israel which are the "lost" Ten Tribes, and the House of Judah, which are known as the Jews. (Not all of Israel are Jews!) The ethnic nation will be brought back together and given God's Spirit after the second coming. One would think that God would make more drawbacks to such secular pursuits. Secular education (the academic elite, as they see themselves) is largely God-rejecting, given over to reprobate mentalities. Romans 1:18-32 explains the phenomenon quite explicitly. You mention that there is a plan of salvation for all who have lived. Though it is not for us as mortals to discern who these peoples are. There are two houses (separate to this day) which carry that heritage. (Read of them in Ezekiel 37.) The House of Israel which are the "lost" Ten Tribes, and the House of Judah, which are known as the Jews. (Not all of Israel are Jews!) The ethnic nation will be brought back together and given God's Spirit after the second coming. One would think that God would make more drawbacks to such secular pursuits. Secular education (the academic elite, as they see themselves) is largely God-rejecting, given over to reprobate mentalities. Romans 1:18-32 explains the phenomenon quite explicitly. You mention that there is a plan of salvation for all who have lived. Though it is not for us as mortals to discern who will be raised in the first, second or third resurrection, some educated guesses can be made, no? Yes. For instance, can we really expect someone like Hitler or Stalin to take part in any resurrection other than the 3rd one, where he will be separated as a "goat"? More specifically, more like the Beast and False prophet. Also, is it safe to assume that Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel will join the Saints in the first resurrection to glory with the WORD that abided from the foundation, even though they sinned against God and man (not unlike any human to ever walk the face of the Earth). I am more inclined to place all of
the Adamic generation into the second resurrection era, with possible exceptions being Abel and his righteous peers. Those converted from the Adamic age (Creation to the Flood) are extremely few. (See 1st Cor. 15:22) Those converted prior to the first century are also astoundingly few. If so, then Adam and Eve are the first to be promised resurrection at the Trump, and once the last saint to rule and reign has made a commitment to Christ, would it be fair to assume that Christ's Kingdom of "rock" will touch down and "smash" man's kingdom once and for all, signaling the beginning of his reign? Not sure the point here. I expect you're saying that once the last Christian destined to be called in the age of man comes on board, then that will trigger the event of the second coming? Furthermore, our discussion of no man seeing the Father brought to mind Paul and Stephen and John. I am having trouble reconciling this with both Paul and Stephen seeing the Father and not being disintegrated (or were these simply visions). These saw the glorified Christ. Daniel also saw the "Ancient of Days" (which we know is a reference to both the Father and the everlasting Word. Yes. This clearly was a vision. Also, how can people be so blind as to not realize that trinity appears.....wait for it....zero times in scripture? Also, until your booklets arrive in the mail, I am anxious to know exactly what makes you think we are so different that our generation (40 years or less) will see Christ coming in his kingdom, and that we will undergo the Great Tribulation foretold by Jesus and the prophets. Again not sure of your point. I expect most of us alive in the end time will experience the Great Tribulation, some protected, some not. I pose at least 40 years as a generation for the second resurrection era. That to allow any raised as infants to have time to come to spiritual maturity as well as physical. It could be longer, possibly the same century mark as the millennials had. Would the last saint (to rule with Christ in the millennial/2nd resurrection kingdom) being ushered into relationship with the God family mark the beginning of the Tribulation or the end of the same? I haven't considered that timing-relationship. Saints will be in the process of being perfected thru trials and martyrdom right up to the last moment. (Dan. 11:32-35 and Rev. 6:9-11) Also, what is your group's take on faith healings? I'm not going to lie, but as the son of doctors, it seems like human medicine is more effective and reliable than relying on someone to pray away a sickness, even though Jesus said we would do greater miracles than even he. It just seems so difficult sometimes to reconcile the spirit world with the flesh world at times. We are to do what we can to effect recovery: dietary adjustment, cleanliness, surgery if effective, but there is a healing process that is beyond what medical science can effect. This too should factor into our approach. The ultimate key is where we place our faith? In the medical profession, or in God? Or was Jesus' statement in reference to a different dispensation? In that age, there were many not healed. Certain healings were relatively spectacular, for demonstration purposes, but in time all were eventually left to die of something. God determines the span of ones' lifetime. Even the Apostle Paul had to suffer with his particular affliction to the end of his life. Also, isn't it ironic that Satan's lie (living forever after death) has unwittingly been translated into popular Christian doctrine in that most would profess that our soul (which isn't what most people think it is) and/or our spirit will live on forever, even though God (the Word and LORD) specifically told Adam that we would "surely die" and not live forever? God preserves our spirit (intellect / character) for recreating our personality and character in us when resurrected, and I suppose our physical appearance, but in an unconscious (sleep-like) state until the time. The idea of salvation is salvation from death in sheol. You ask whether our dead bodies are left in a heap or transformed, and I have always been of the understanding that we are transformed, that is our old bodies our transformed into incorruptible, immortal spirit essence free of physical constraints and problems of flesh. This would be consistent with Christ's resurrection and pre-demonstrated glorification (transfiguration). He didn't leave behind his physical body. Paul also describes the event in us as a transformation. (1st Cor. 15:51-54) How this comes to be, only the LORD himself knows. I was also of the impression that even in our glorified, spirit forms we would still have perfect recollection of our past, physical life because of the "spirit in man" Yes. (see Job 38, Pauline epistles) which would allow our personalities (what makes me me, and what makes you you) to remain intact. Yes. Is this what you have
come to understand or am I missing something? The idea that our judgment process/evaluative phase is this life is quite fear inspiring but motivating, as it warns against time-wasting or slacking. Yes. This is our development / evaluation phase. WE are to accomplish conversion NOW. The rest will process thru later. We have been called in this day of salvation, and must ensure that we remain candidates for rulership with Christ in glory. Yes. I suppose it combats against any feelings of relaxation or laziness that might come from knowledge of God's predestination / preordainment of some and not others, if you catch my drift. I must ask, as a person of ethnic background, in our glorified bodies, seeing as we are not flesh, would we still be of certain physical hues, or would we be translucent/transparent and simple light-bearing beings/radiant with no real tone or shading. I expect we would retain our physical appearance and personality quirks that make us what we are (were), but in appropriate situations, also have the ability to exhibit a glorified form, which would be something we might not be able to describe quite yet. Probably something like what the disciples saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. Hair? Form? Appearance in general (anything in this department, though not crucial, would be enlightening nevertheless). What exactly do you mean by pure language? I don't know what that language would be, but I expect it would reverse what happened at Babel. One uniform language for all peoples, with nuances in expression that would allow greater understanding than many present languages do. The Bible speaks of one pure language. Would there even be a need for words, for moving of mouths to emit sound, or would we just think a thing and it be so, or communicate through thoughts? I see a need for articulation even then, particularly when dealing with our physical under-charges. (We are to rule cities, keep in mind.) In another area, when "in the Spirit", we who are in the spirit would communicate on a God-plane, understanding all things the same, and in full harmony with one another in judgment and policy. That may not always require articulation as you suggest. (again, though bordering on speculation, very useful/enlightening to me). Might it be possible in the Kingdom to come that some of us would be rulers of countries, towns, and localities where we once lived or stayed for a while? Yes. That's logical. Also, will the advent of human technology continue alongside Christ's kingdom, or will everything be Christ-centered? As we're seeing, advances in modern scientific understandings (not God-opposing, but unlocking deep secrets of His Creation) will continue to a level we haven't begun to conceive of. The World to Come will be technologically advanced beyond anything we know of today. We today see only a glimpse with the discoveries being made. What would education, innovation, information, business, commerce even be like? Without a God-rejecting approach like now, and with all Truth on the table, all things should move swiftly with little controversy. With knowledge of God the Father's impending touch down with a New Jerusalem straight from Heaven (is this Eden by the way), would human constructs even matter? The description in 2nd Peter 3:10-13 and Revelation 21 & 22 suggests a very different world scene than this material world. Anything you could offer would be greatly beneficial.

Date: Wed, 21 May 2014
Subject: Re: Question
From: kobi

By countries I meant empires. Namely, the "Western Empire". I can't imagine that you would dispute the clear superiority of the "West" in terms of technology, innovation, education, infrastructure, and more. It would be fascinating to see an analysis of the part freedom played in the differences between cultures. You rightly mention the idea of the House of Israel (the ten northern tribes, headed by Ephraim) splitting from the two Kingdoms of Judah prior to Judah's exile into Babylon in 400 BC (I think) and Israel's migration to the Caucasus mountains (correct?) Yes. It would make sense to assert that the physical blessings of Abraham are upon the whole house of Israel, which include the 10 tribes that mingled with
Caucasians and became what we refer to as the West. However, I can't help but feel this isn't the entire story. Remember when Ham uncovered Noah's nakedness? Noah cursed Ham and Cain, (Canaan actually) but made a telling prophecy in regards to both Shem (ancestor of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), Japheth (I theorize this to be the real "West"). Noah prophesied that (paraphrase) "the house of Japheth will be enlarged, along with the house of Shem". In other words, Japheth and Shem would become a great and mighty people, prosperous, advanced, and the like. Agreed, but with a belief that Japheth is the ancestor of the far east. Equally telling, Noah prophesied that Ham's descendants, (Cain and onward) would "serve in the house of Shem and Japheth". A premise certainly NOT politically correct (tho' true). Surely one has to account for this, as this predated any of the prophecies God (the WORD as we now know!) gave to Abraham and his offspring. Also, with all due respect, I find it hard to envision Adam and Eve not a part of the first resurrection. They walked with and talked to God!!!!! Surely this accounts for something? It may, but exactly what, we don't yet know. The angelic world did also at set times, apparently. The difference would be the receipt of God's Spirit. Were A&E called? Do we have any suggestion of repentance on their part? It just doesn't say, while they remain the poster children for the physical unregenerate kind. I would think the 2nd resurrection is for those who really didn't have encounters with God, nor were they given the opportunity to do so. We have a huge contingent of people who are devoutly religious, but who were not called in this age. They likely had more of a religious 'experience', with a greater (tho' incomplete) awareness of the PLAN, with God, but remain uncalled until the GWT Judgment era. Further, they had no understanding or concept of a Being existing outside of their physical awareness. By the time of Job, some awareness had developed. Job understood the sleep state and the later day resurrection. (14:14) Job likely was a contemporary of Abraham. I understand that they sinned, but frankly, who doesn't? Yes, all do, but attaining forgiveness and receiving God's Spirit (which is by individual calling) is the key. Also, wouldn't the physical sacrifices they gave cover this? Not really. Those served as a reminder that sin needs remedy, and the shedding of blood is required. Those sacrifices served as a constant reminder for their constant indiscretions, and the exercise left them with access to God, but they didn't actually forgive anything. (Heb. 9:12-14 & 10:1-4) I am of the understanding (and please contribute/correct as they see fit, because I want complete understanding) that basically any human individual that had express contact with God and used this contact to some benefit, whether audibly or visually, they will be rewarded with a place in the 1st resurrection as Christ's elect (obviously this excludes instances like the Philistine army, or Achan, or rebellious Israelites, but instances such as Sampson, Samuel, etc.) I don't think I was very clear, so let me put it bluntly: The last person of the predestined/preordained/elect group (first resurrectees) being converted will usher in the coming Kingdom, yes or no? It will be those converted, regenerated thru' the indwelling of God's Spirit. Examples of OT personalities who meet this requirement are rare, such as Abraham, David and Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Elijah / Jeremiah / Daniel / Ezekiel, etc. As to the general populations, that remains doubtful except for a select few. (I supposed this conversion would coincide with the end of the tribulation.) Correct! The open opportunity period for salvation in this age remains open thru to the end of the Tribulation. It effectively comes to an end with the second coming. The opportunity period for becoming a part of Christ's Bride has a cutoff time limit. When He partakes of that cup, in the Kingdom, that He deferred partaking of at the Passover supper, then any converted thereafter will not be a part of the Bride, but will be entered as children of the Union. See my article on Passover and the Bride. Is this statement correct or incorrect? Are you sure that Stephen saw the glorified Christ? Was not the Word sitting at the right hand of the Father? The one Stephen saw sitting at His right hand (referring to Psalm 110:1) would have to have been the glorified Christ. (This statement outraged the Jews greatly.) Again, I don't think I properly conveyed my point, so let me be more forward. What is it that leads you to
believe that you and I will not enter our graves before the Word and LORD comes and assumes control of the Earth, or better yet, what leads you to believe that you and I (personally) will enter the tribulation (without necessarily exiting it, so to speak)? We can only guess at this point. Being older, I may not live thru the Tribulation. But health or age issues aside, there will be some who will be martyred in the end times, just as were martyred in the first century. Not as punishment for inferiority, as some allege, but to perfect and purify them further for High Office in the Kingdom. Daniel 11:32-35 explains this a bit. Also Revelation 6:9 - 6:15. Also, was the Word’s glorification after his death, burial, and resurrection the same glorification that we as Saint's will have? Largely similar. (1st Cor. 15:49 & 1st Jn. 3:2) If so, I would assume it is a glory that is of a lesser degree than the glorification he currently shares with the Father, and also lesser than the glorification He shared with the Father before the World was, and also lesser than the glory in which he will appear at the last trump. I would expect our glory would be less than His. So then one could say that this is our Great White Throne judgment, so to speak, Yes! with the reward being immortality and rulership for 1000+ years with the WORD and LORD. Responding to God's call in this age allows us an extra 1000 years of Life. Sort of an early sign-in bonus! I trust that we would also have the same power of movement at a moment's thought and through physical material/realms that Christ displayed in the upper room. Yes. Some theorize that the unified language before the Tower of Babel was actually perfect Hebrew. I've heard that also, but there are languages that provide better meanings and a wider range of expression than ancient Hebrew allows. And the lack of consonants is a real difficulty. Worse yet the elimination of the accent marks that 'helped' with pronunciation. No more evident than in the name of YHVH. Be aware that there are some who worship Hebrew and Hebrewness, not necessarily the religion of God. They would want that to be, but who really knows? Did (does) God speak Hebrew? BTW: Babel was generations before there ever was a Hebrew person. What language did the pre-flood peoples speak? No-one knows!

On the Ham story, I have heard it alleged that Ham's son actually genetically mutilated his grandfather. It was believed at the time that Noah was immortal. He lived on another 350 years after the Flood and was the preeminent Patriarch, worshipped as such. In order to disqualify him as such, his being genetically mutilated would have disqualified him and shifted that preeminence over to Noah's firstborn. Just an account, I can't verify it, but it makes some sense. I don't believe it was a homosexual act. It would explain the setting-down into a servant class (and his descendants) of one who sought preeminence and used such low means to attain it.

So Japheth being the Far East would explain the early dominance of Asian dynasties on the world stage? Where would indigenous new world tribes fall under? Japheth? Or Shem? Or even Ham? There are some excellent books on the subject - well beyond my expertise. One good source is Craig White: Origin of Nations. originofnations@iprimus.com.au With all due respect, I'm not really interested in the "political correctness" of a statement, just its biblical and spiritual validity. Same here, I just threw that in to chide the 'politically correctness' crowd. Certain truth isn't utterable for some pretty stupid reasons. Everything else is secondary and peripheral to me. So then we basically have a biblical prophecy regarding race and slavery do we not? Yes. At least on the whole. Yes, upon further study and meditation, your claim seems to be close to the truth regarding the spiritual status of the vast majority of old testament individuals. It
would make sense that Adam and his ilk knew only bits and pieces, though they had access to God directly. It appears the Truth and God's Plan for humanity came into awareness gradually. I'm not sure even the early Church realized the full aspects of the resurrections. I suppose this is the tradeoff. Obviously there are exceptions, as you mentioned (Righteous Abel, Noah, Abraham, David, etc.) but the vast majority of these figures only knew the LORD through direct revelation or cultural practice, not an indwelling of the spirit and a renewal of the inner man, which is what is required for "working out salvation". I suppose then, that by and large, the saints did not begin being ushered into the promise of resurrection into rulership with Christ until Jesus actually began his ministry of converting individuals who had been "drawn by the Father" and foreordained (holy and acceptable year of the LORD). True. Even the Disciples weren't aware at first what their eventual post-resurrection assignments would encompass. (Mt. 19:28 & Ac. 1:6) There are certain things they came to know gradually. It is heartening to hear that the end of Satan's rule is near, and the beginning of a Kingdom ruled by the none other than the Saints and the elect is almost upon us. Is the tribulation necessarily 7 years? The protestant world hangs on a 7-year Tribulation. I don't find their key verse on that to be all that convincing. The Church of God has typically understood it to be intensive over a 3-1/2 year span, with the final year overlapped by what we refer to as "the Day of the Lord", that period when Christ intervenes with His imposed plagues upon those doing the other things, particularly against His Saints. The two-witnesses prophesying all thru that interval of 3-1/2 years. I have read a multitude of studies and notes that say this, but then some say the "cessation of oblation" in the midst of the 7 years is actually in reference to the Christ, not the Antichrist, which would throw the length of the tribulation up in the air. It warrants further study. I'm of the understanding that God speaks any and every language that was, is, or will be, by reason of the Spirit of which he is composed. Yes, He understands on the thought level, irrespective of whatever utterance is used to express that thought among ourselves. It gives him knowledge beyond current understanding, and allows him (and the LORD) to penetrate into our very thoughts and emotions. True. Thus, I am not sure that your question of whether God speaks Hebrew is relevant, as he speaks and understands any and all languages, thoughts, etc. I threw that comment out to chide the Hebrewists. There are people who identify with Hebrewness, as though it gives them a higher status in their righteousness posturing. In regards to Ham, would you then say that the LORD himself cursed Ham/Cain (Canaan) and his descendants, or he honored Noah's curse on Cain. Why did Noah curse Cain if Ham committed this treacherous act on him? I would suggest that the curse extended to the whole family. Perhaps it was this Canaan who was to be the intended beneficiary of the succession as prime Patriarch? Reading it again, could it be that Ham's younger son did the deed, and Ham discovered it first? Why would he go tell his brothers if HE was the actual perp? Also, in regards to the physical blessings of nations and the West, I have heard it said that Japheth's descendants include the Babylonians and Greeks and Persians, while the modern empires (British and American) are mainly Shem's descendants. Is this correct? Could be. I'm not an authority on that. (See above.) Does this not mean that Japheth (Babylon) subjugated Shem (the Israelites)? Where does Ham come in? Actually, the Hamites also subjugated a part of the Shem's descendants. Egypt was "the Black Land", Mizraim. Also, wasn't Israel instructed by the LORD and WORD to utterly destroy Canaan? Who then are the other sons of Ham that would be cursed? I'd have to refer this to others more informed.
Yes, it is quite tough, but as you said, there are definite chinks in the armor. The fact that Jesus made so many references to "resurrections", the day of Judgment, and the coming "Kingdom of God" (which contrary to popular belief is not already here) simply cannot be ignored, and they suggest that current understanding of the "afterlife" in terms of "heaven and hell forever and ever" are ridiculously simplistic, incomplete, and erroneous. Indeed, once one door of understanding has been opened, it leads to other doors being opened as well. Would you agree with me if I said that perhaps, just as their’s is an order to the salvation of mankind (the "early rain" of Saints and the latter "rain") there is also an order to the amount of understanding, in this life for those called and chosen in this age? Yes, but I believe our personal acceptance / rejection reactions can affect the amount of understanding we’re ultimately allowed. **Many who are currently walking with the LORD as the elect of God would lash out against our perceived "universalism". "Universalism" of opportunity, not universality of result! Is this valid (obviously not, but why, is the question). Also, is it possible that Catholicism is the "great harlot" that has mingled with the Kings of the earth, representing "secularized religion" steeped in a political or world order? Absolutely. There can be no other that so well fits the descriptions. **Technically, Christ never expected Christians to be the "ruling class" or royalty, as he warned that many of us would be scourged, mocked, persecuted, scattered, and even killed for his testimony. Right. Kingship and Priesthood is not for this time. That will be later. This is the training period for that eventuality. Shouldn't it then make us raise our eyebrows if we see a religious order with such political and world influence on the global scene. Surely there is a significance to this that the layman would miss? The churchgoing public misses a lot. Their ministry helps them miss a lot.

Date: Sat, 31 May 2014 22:04:34
Subject: Re: Question
From: Kobi

I hope to glean what precious information I can from you in the precious time we have left, as I know that neither of us are getting any younger. Fill me in a little more on your background. I pray that the Father (by the power of the Spirit) keeps you in good health to continue our vital discourse for years to come. To the present, I have enjoyed good health (a family characteristic). No one has had cancer in my family except one heavy smoking cousin. I have never had a serious illness. Never took medication for anything, rarely even an aspirin. One "small" blessing. **For one, what is your take on the two witnesses? I have a paper on that. I'll try and find it.** Are they symbolic (two lampstands) for the church, are they representative of two old testament individuals. I expect they're real modern day personalities. What the Church's reaction to them will be remains to be seen. **If so, which ones?** We'll know when it happens, as they will have startling powers (to call down fire from heaven) and will dominate the news media for 3+ years. I don't expect that it will be any of the present wannabe religious leaders of the CoG movement. Some have made ridiculous claims to enhance their followings. **I am of the understanding that the patriarchs Moses (Michael contested Satan for his body, which by the way what was that all about?) and Elijah (who was carried AWAY, not to the third heaven but into the 1st heaven and then to a discrete location) You are well informed. It amazes me!** will be resurrected to bodily existence once more to carry out the LORD's program in the latter day. Is this in errancy? Interesting possibility. I apologize for the mixup between Cain and Canaan. Not sure what I was thinking (I guess I wasn't). Yes, in regards to Ham, Shem, and Japheth, the three fathers of all the nations under the sun today, (since technically Adam's children included nephilim and other humans) I would greatly appreciate if you could, as you said, refer this to someone more informed and send that back my way, as I feel it is unwise to ignore passages of
such portent without fully and thoroughly understanding them. Did you get any reply from Craig White? In light of the past two weeks of discourse, and what I now know regarding God's Holy Plan for salvation, creation, and the "afterlife" as it were, would you agree with me if I said that, in its proper Holy Day Context, every single biblical verse can be explained properly and without confusion as it relates to the overall plan? I would say the whole Plan is understandable. The Holy Day plan is extremely helpful in putting all relevant factors into correct perspective. They help explain the resurrections and the millennial kingdom, as well as illustrating the process of achieving salvation. You might appreciate my 6/7/14 message pre-Pentecost. It should be posted on the Church's website by midweek thereafter. www.ccofgod.org (obviously questions like the one we have been discussing regarding Ham are somewhat up for debate, but I mean obscure and yet explicit verses that many have trouble explaining without hemming and hawing). Main stream religion is so under-informed. I attach a piece we're developing to reply to an ad by a local Church of Christ, who disbelieves the millennial kingdom on earth. This apparently is a denominational flaw. Add your thoughts. Also, where does our newfound knowledge put the prospect of "soul-winning and evangelism" since the Father calls who he will for this current day of salvation (the early rain, as James referred to it). We do not draw individuals to Christ, the Father does, correct? That I expect is answered in the promise that "I will make you fishers of men". True, we can't MAKE the fish bite, but we ought to be baiting and putting our hooks out there in that pursuit. Who knows who will bite? But God knows, and may be putting certain opportunities and certain people in contact with us, who He intends we educate, if not for now, certainly for a later calling. He has called them for such a time as this, so is there really anything to do, or technically since we don't know who is called and who isn't, must we evangelize to everyone? We cast our nets into the whole ocean, tho' not every fish will encounter it. Or what?

Date: Mon, 2 Jun 2014
Subject: Re: Question
From: Kobi

In regards to my background, as I said, I'm a college student here at a medium-sized private university in Columbus, Ohio. I was born in Germany but am of African heritage (parents hail from Ghana, small country in West Africa). What got me into seeking true biblical truth and not surface level teaching in much of main-stream Christianity was, ironically, Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins' Left Behind series. Looking back now, I realize how off-the-mark the biblical doctrine behind those bestsellers is, but those books kindled an eschatological/doctrinal fire in my middle-school self that set me on a path for truth. Off the mark is a good way to put it. There is a great gap in understanding among main stream evangelicals. (I was among them for my first 26 years.) One BIG obvious one: the Rapture is a post-Tribulation event, not pre-Tribulation. Their whole view is anchored in the idea of spending eternity in Heaven, with no awareness of, and only a few accepting any idea of a Kingdom on Earth. Before then, I had been reading the word without even an inkling of knowledge regarding the world to come, judgement, and the WORD's physical reappearance. Of a truth, the bible, though I understood the gist of it (core tenets and underlying truth of God's love, creation, sin, Satan, human waywardness) seemed to be somewhat of a closed book, not because of what I did understand, but what I didn't understand. There just seemed to be too many verses that were either obscure or unintelligible with my base-level mainstream understanding at that point. You will find that accepting one Truth unblocks understanding of others. Rejection of any Truth will block understanding of a series of points of Truth. This is evangelicalism's failure. Even then, I somehow knew intuitively that I was only operating with half truth, that a
bigger, substantial piece was missing from the mainstream Christianity picture, a vital piece (or pieces) that was greatly hindering understanding of so many verses and scriptures that sometimes seemed at odds. I knew that surely God didn't want his children to walk in ignorance and confusion of his words. Surely there had to be a way to more completely understand his Holy, Inspired scriptures. The Left Behind series helped bridge the gap in a small way, as it raised my awareness and brought my attention to topics that I had, up to that point in my young life, never before heard of (or heard of only fleetingly and piecemeal). The Main Stream has its few favorite scriptures, but ignores / rejects others. This included a full explicit description of the second coming, the resurrection, the Millennial Kingdom, actual judgement, tribulation, etc. All horribly warped in the average churches. They pursue only a surface understanding, with many roadblocks to awareness of the important things, as you say. Though many of these topics are mishandled and flat-out misrepresented in the series, the fact that such topics were broached led me on a long journey to deepen my understanding of these things through the word, while still focusing on right-living as commanded by new testament scripture, the Pauline epistles and Christ's exemplary lifestyle. Let's hope this affected others similarly, but I doubt it. On this journey, I have encountered countless scripture, lessons, teachings, notes, concordances, all with bits and pieces of truth (the beginning of the world, the flood before Adam, gap creation, soul vs spirit vs body, etc.) but most with some false teaching that I have been able to pick out through cross checking with the word. That's where God's Spirit factors in. The ability to ask the right questions, to filter out the true from the false. Understanding is a gift. This teaching has resonated with me the most, though I am still working through some of the doctrine and struggling to form defense against mainstream understanding for some aspects. There are always scriptures that, when taken out of context, seem to support understanding of the Word in the traditional but patently false manner. This is the meat of my study as of now. I appreciate your allowing me to weigh in. How did you connect with our website?

Subject: Re: Question
From: Kobi
Date: Tue, 3 Jun 2014

Yes, it's actually amazing how off the mark LaHaye and Jenkins are. They're playing with less than a full deck, theologically. Not to insult their intelligence. I don't think LaHaye is the knowledgeable one in that partnership. But, what they do is take the approach that the Biblical events ARE real. We can give them credit for that much at least. Startlingly so, now that I consider it. But it is this fact precisely that started me on my journey, because they were onto something. To add to it, I have a Dake's Annotated Bible, which although insightful at times, can also be found wanting in its understanding of true biblical doctrine at times. Not familiar with Dake. So I'm constantly on guard and aware, trying to further my understanding of The Holy Book, without trampling its foundation. It is also not easy being under a roof and background that, for the most part, adheres to traditional Christianity. I hear you. With my Baptist background (prior to age 17, and with a foot in both camps for the next 9 years), I've "been there"! I've found that it is more advantageous to hold one's peace and be wise as foxes, yet gentle as doves in disseminating "pearls to pigs, so to speak". Good approach, but there are chinks in their armor, such as getting them to explain the resurrections of saints and 1000 years later, all the 'rest' of humanity. That doesn't square with the idea of 'going to heaven' for all eternity either. Another angle is to get them to explain the second coming to take over all of the world's nations, to rule them with saints collaborating. Where does that leave those who went to heaven? One door opens another. Usually those already in the faith (especially for long periods of time) refuse any base level reconfiguration, as sound as it may be,
and there's not much that can be done about this, unfortunately. Perhaps when they awake from sleep and become Spirit-Born, it will all be made clear. All will be brought to the Truth, in their assigned order.

I actually came to your site through UCG. Someone linked to you through one of their newsletters in the comments section, and I found that your notes and teachings were comparable to the UCG, but without the unnecessary political leanings and vague descriptions that came as a result of trying to be too accessible to everybody. This brings us to another area. I was in the WCG from 1962 thru 1995, with UCG thereafter as a charter member of the local UCG. I presented three or four matters to their Doctrinal Committee for review over time, with either rejection or 'back-burnering'. The last two of their ministers sent here locally, took serious exception to my openness to others with like beliefs but with different affiliations. In particular, my "guest speaking" before another local ex-WCG group, the CCoG here in town, which went on (dual attending and dual speaking) for half a decade - with the knowledge and tacit approval of regional and local pastors. I was sidelined from further service opportunities with the UCG over that matter in late 2007, when a new minister was assigned, (who left the UCG in 2010) and asked to discontinue attending in early 2011 by the replacement minister (new to the trade) who was alarmed at my activities, though he refused to "discuss doctrine" with me. I don't know from anything I see in the man that he could hold up his end in a Biblical discussion, other than to set forth the pabulum he was taught by others. (Not saying any of that was wrong, just not self-sourced in much, if anything. BUT, he and his predecessor was strong on the control issues.) They were also considerably more fundamental and straightforward. Also, the veils of understanding that they seemed to use to cloak truth in some areas became tiresome. I still read their material for "appetizers and dessert", but golden sheaves is now my "meat and drink" as it were. I am humbled. Though I must respectfully warn you, it is only because your teaching is more in line with and revealing of the truth of scripture and Jesus' promises that I use it to supplement my daily studies, not because it is a truth unto itself. It never is. This is a commendable approach. The WORD always comes first, and I always cross check to make sure that everything is as it is written in scripture, and that everything resonates in my spirit, which is enjoined to the Holy Spirit. Here's where you can help. Pose questions and give me feedback wherever you find something unsupported or off base. As I'm sure you know, some things rely on conjecture / deduction, and are hopefully confirmed later as things come to light.

Note: More of my messages to the CCoG are posted on their website than on mine. CCoG is typically kept more up to date, tho' I'm going to see about fixing that.

Have you heard of or do you have Fred Coulter's "Harmony of the Gospels"? I highly recommend it. Contact the author at www.cbcg.org

As to the "political leanings" matter, I find so many of our scattered remnant organizations to want wave the image of a man, or an organization, that I thought a non-political approach would have a better appeal and perhaps circumvent the "off-putting" that so much of that (too much of that in some quarters) produces. There are some that derive their legitimacy from the image of, or the memory of, or the legacy of a God-used individual, while seemingly unable to uphold the Truth on their own. They only bask in the glow of another luminary, as they have little luminescence of their own. This I find sad, at this late date, but there are so many that seek the proverbial "rubber crutch" for their standing, rather than the Rock. Hopefully, with what you’ve seen, you know what I’m referring to.
So then, what does this say of the so called "pope" in biblical terms (who by the way has basically taken the place of Christ in being named "God's representative on Earth" and a forgiver of sins, as well as a holy one). Can a stunning conclusion be drawn about the identity of the pope? Yes one can. This is a representative of a great false church which will ultimately be the support network for the False Prophet who endorses and supports the Beast power, causing the whole world to worship the Beast. **Expound please.**

Also, what exactly differentiates eternity past from eternity future? How can any differentiation be made? God has existed from eternity, past and future. We live in a temporal material world. Can we even comprehend agelessness? **Is the Godhead's endgame the complete and utter banishment of sin?** That appears to be the case. Not by crushing force but by change of will. **What is to prevent a Spirit born being in eternity future from rebelling as Lucifer did before the beginning, thus starting the cycle of redemption again?** That's why our present intensive training program, the plan of redemption. We must build righteous character. That explains why conversion is not just a simple "give your heart to the Lord" experience. **Why was Lucifer not first made flesh and tried in the flesh before being translated to Spirit, to ensure that he had built the necessary character for immortality?** His record proves that righteous character can't be bequeathed, it has to be built thru experience. Now, Satan was obedient for the first interval, until iniquity became apparent in him. **Would not this have prevented sin from entering in and needing to be banished?** Could be. Or was sin already in existence, and Satan was merely a tool used in the greater plan. There was / is no sin until there's a being willing to commit it. **If the WORD was chosen from the foundation to be a sacrificial lamb to be slain, then would this not mean Lucifer was destined to bring sin into the world, sin that was not at that point in time in existence?** We could speculate that this was a plan, that God knew the capability of His created beings. It also shows that He gave them free moral agency, the ability to make choices. **Please expound in great detail.**

This isn't a matter that I've spent a lot of time considering. We could speculate, but I don't feel that the emergence of sin in the angelic realm (one-third of the angels) was a surprise to God, nor a monkey-wrench in His plan to expand His Family, needing a whole change of plans. Actually, their example and perverse influence allows us a situation to work against to build the character that will not revert to rebellion and sin, ever. How better to learn? It's what overcoming is all about. But in this, we are talking about character built within a willing mind by the Spirit of God, which the angelic realm didn't / doesn't have the same access to. It was never God's intent that the spirit world (even the righteous angels) would become spirit-born sons of God. That privilege is reserved to our generation. (Heb. 1:5 & 5:5; Acts 13:33; Rom. 8:29)
From a Regional Elder serving many brethren in East Africa:

Richard,

You have very good comments. You really gave Kenneth good answers. (pages 14-18) These shared answers are not only helping Kenneth only but they are helping many people.

I have only one question which has been a problem to me in the Bible. Revelation 14:14 - is talking about a golden crown, and in Revelation 19:12 is talking about many crowns. So which is which? When Christ will come back He will have one crown as it is indicated in Revelation 14:14 or Many crowns as it is indicated in Revelation 19:12?

Some personal considerations. First, the verses in question:

Re. 14:14 "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."

Re. 19:12-16 "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

In Chapter 14, we are seeing the "harvests of the world". The first harvest (first resurrection) is presented in the first 5 verses. Then there's the instruction to those entering into the millennial age (who physically survived the Great Tribulation) in verses 6 to 14. Verse 15 and on describe the Final Sentencing event that accompanies the third resurrection. There, the sheep are separated from the goats (as in Matthew 25) to either eternal Life or eternal extinction in the Lake of Fire: (the Second Death). In the capacity of SENTENCING JUDGE, in this event, He wears only one crown, but in His capacity as KING of Kings, LORD of Lords, Head over the heads of all nations, He would appropriately be seen with many crowns. So, the difference I would say is the particular capacity of office, or the particular event being presented, that He would be described differently.

In its actual time placement, the latter part of chapter 14 is beyond the millennium and Great White Throne opportunity period, after the nations of man all come to an end and we (spirit-born Saints) are about to enter into that great day beyond the time Final Judgment is accomplished and sentencing of all rendered, and just before the Father comes to earth to enjoin the Family unto Himself, as 1st Corinthians 15:24-28 explains. So, technically, the "ruling over the nations" period will effectively be over by the time of what we see in chapter 14, verses 15-20.

That would be my assessment. I never thought to address this particular question, so thanks for asking. There is a chapter or two in my booklets that addresses the picture presented in Revelation 14.

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