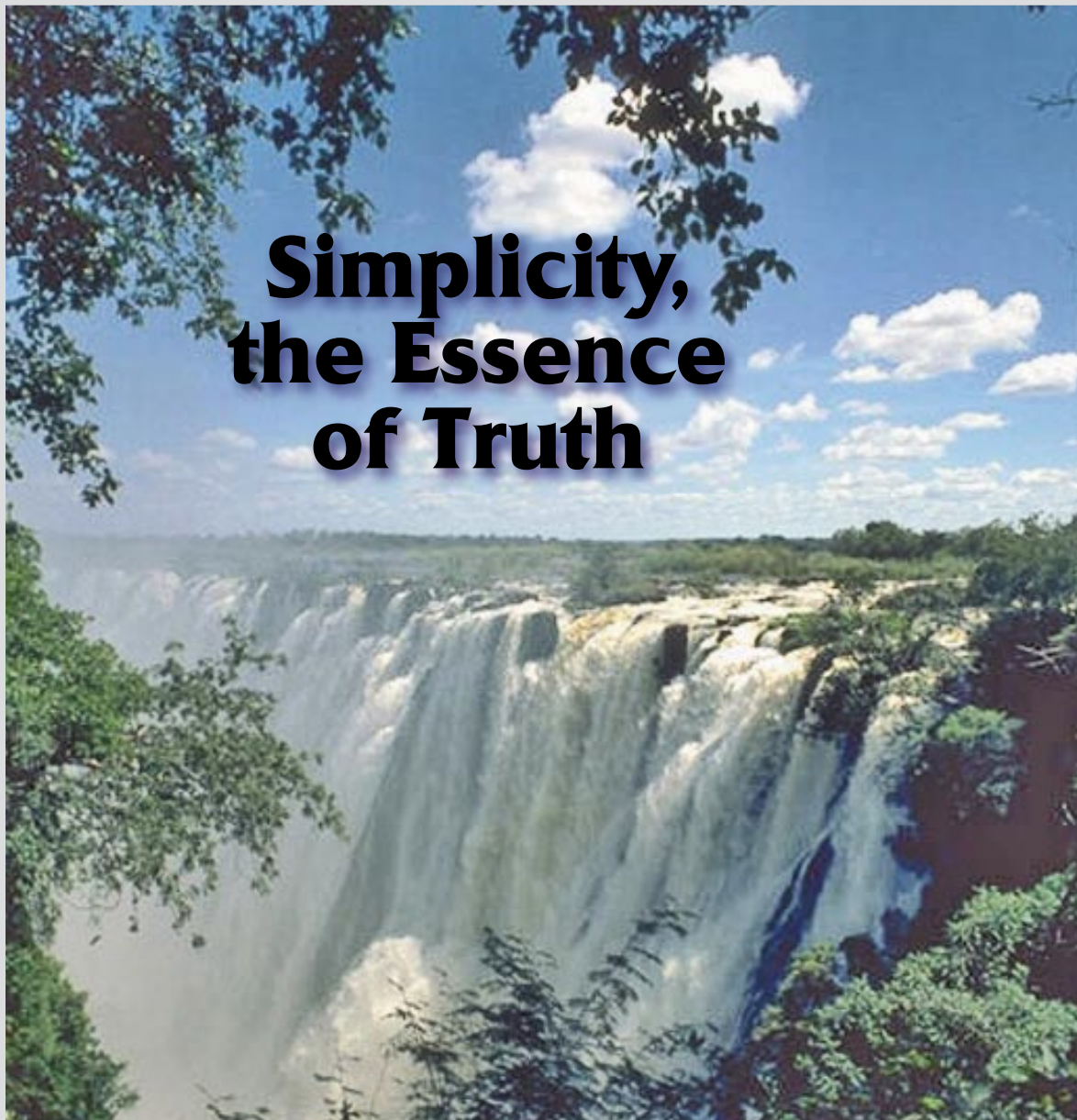


SHIELD OF FAITH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

SFMI

**Prayer/News
UPDATE**

Fulfilling the Great Commission Through Establishing New Testament Churches



**Simplicity,
the Essence
of Truth**

July-August 2009

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From the President's Desk

Set Your Affections, Not Affectation

Though the details of history are incomplete and sketchy, what we see makes us think he looked pretty good:

- He professed Christ at an early age.
- He appears to have been from a wealthy family, yet he put that aside to give himself to Bible study and teaching.
- His austerity brought him to the attention of church leaders, and he was given responsibilities among the churches.
- His teaching was much sought after, and, as time passed, he became well-known as a Bible expositor.

As good as these things looked, he is known to us today quite differently: We know him as one of the greatest heretics in church history. He denied the authority of the Old Testament and much of the New, taught that the God of the Old Testament was a different Being than He of the New, rejected the Trinity, and fomented a brand of religious anti-Semitism.

His name is Marcion.

What happened to what looked like a promising young man to take him so far away from the truth?

What happened to Jim Bakker? Ted Haggard? Jimmy Swaggart?

Some may wince when they hear me use these names, but I am not making a straight comparison of these men to an unrepentant heretic. There is, however, something they have in common: They appeared to start well, but then fell into sin.

In the lead article, Dick York talks to us in this edition about the simplicity that is in Christ. Marcion was seduced by his intellectual prowess to believe that he was smarter than all of the believers around him, smarter than the men who had taught him, and finally, smarter than God. He was pulled away by a complex theology that he himself invented and then squandered his life defending.

Although true spirituality is not anti-intellectual, intellectualism is not a synonym for nor a road to spirituality.

Jim Lucas, in his column, writes about *The Sheep and the Goats*. In that column, he points toward another seducer: hungering for the esteem of men. Was it the attraction of a reputation, fame, and the deceitful enticement of wealth that drew some of the above-mentioned men away from the simplicity

of Christ? Did these men learn to make themselves look good by dressing up Jesus in a sequin suit?

Both Dick York and Jim Lucas warn us of the eternal consequences of leaving the simplicity of Christ for intellectual esteem or personal profit. My article, "A Celestial Psalm," can be tied to these by reminding us: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:2-3). Our life—our *true* life - is a Person, and our affections should be settled on Him and what He has for us. here and forever.

And what better way to set priority on the eternal than to hear about and join in the advance of the message and truth of the Lord Jesus here and in many places? Enjoy the missionary reports. and lift up their requests, works. and families.

And, once again, thank you for taking time out to fellowship with us via this Prayer and News Update.

Steve Montgomery

Laptops For Africa

Dear Ones,


As many of you already know, a very dear friend of ours has been in the U.S. from Nigeria—Moses Osho. If you attended the Shield of Faith Memorial Day Conference in Oregon, you would have heard him speak. He is a faithful man of God and the director of Ethnos Christian Mission—one of the first indigenous African missions.

We have an opportunity to help some of our missionary brethren, since Moses was here and flew back to Nigeria from here (Dallas) on June 29.

There is a need for laptop computers in good condition. If you have recently upgraded, or know a business that has, and there are computers available—please consider donating one or more to our missionary brethren on the frontiers of Africa. We would also need to acquire at least two extra batteries for each computer as they are completely unavailable in Nigeria. As always, donations can be sent for this purpose to Household of Faith church here in Texas if tax deductible receipts are needed. Any mailings can be sent to me at this address:

Jack Ring, 529 Ridgegate, Garland, TX 75040

Thanks, and may the Lord bless you,

Jack Ring 

Simplicity, the Essence of Truth

By Dick York



One of Paul's fears for the church was that they would be deceived by complicated theology, thus his warning to the saints at Corinth: "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."¹

Paul's fear was well founded, inasmuch as the devil has employed this as one of his methods to bring confusion, division, and disobedience into the church. Intellectualism, from early on, has spawned doubt, pride, and competition among men who apply human reasoning rather than simple faith to their determination of what is true.

Subtlety is ascribed to the serpent, with intent to beguile. His beguiling of Eve resulted in unbelief, disobedience, and death. *Simplicity* is ascribed to Christ and is the essence of sound doctrine and clarity. Many schools of theological thought have been generated by high-sounding intellectual gymnastics.

Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He also said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Peter, quoting Isaiah, declared, "The word of God abideth forever." We can be sure, therefore, that the things that Jesus taught His disciples were true and applicable when He said them and will continue to be, long after the present heaven and earth have passed away. Those, then, who tell us that what Jesus commanded His disciples is not applicable in our day—and there are some who teach that—justify their deception with beguiling and complex doctrinal manipulations that seem to sound good but would never be concluded from the simple reading of Scripture.

One of these schools of thought postulates that the only scripture relevant to our present dispensation of time are the Apostle Paul's four prison epistles. Other scriptures are historically true, they claim, but they have no pertinence to the present-day church. To support such a theory requires some creative interpretation of God's Word. Such doctrine is, however, prevalent, popular, and...poisonous.

One reason for its *prevalence* is that it is

intellectual: it is a product of the mind. One reason for its *popularity* is that it requires nothing of its subscribers. And one reason it is *poisonous* is because it *promotes disobedience* to many clear commandments given by the Lord Jesus, relegating their relevance to a bygone age and another people.

It is possible that many readers of this article have not encountered the doctrines mentioned herein. However, if you haven't by now, I feel certain that you will. They are often associated with the misuse of the term "grace." In reality, grace is the power of God working in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is that which has made us accepted in Christ, which redeems us, sanctifies us, and sets us apart from the world. It frees one from sin and empowers him to "purify himself even as he [Christ] is pure."²

Grace misused purports to excuse us from keeping Jesus' commands and releases us from that which is expected of true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Four of the things that are commonly dismissed as belonging to some former dispensation are: water baptism, breaking of bread (the Lord's Table), commitment to a local assembly of believers, and the Great Commission.

Regarding these things, people often say, "That is not required to be saved." Of course, that is true. No one has ever been saved by doing any of those things. In fact, none of them were commanded to save anyone. They were given to those who have been saved or who profess to be saved.

If you told your child, "Eat your veggies," and he responded, "I don't have to eat veggies to be born;" or you said, "Pick up your room," and he replied, "I don't have to do that to be born," you would probably say, "Of course not, but that's what born people do!"

There are things that Jesus commanded and things the apostles prescribed that constitute obedience and demonstrate our "sonship" and our relationship to the body of Christ.

The first is *water baptism*. There is no salvation testimony in the New Testament that is not immediately followed by water baptism. When I was first saved and began to read my

Bible, beginning in the New Testament I was immediately confronted with baptism—it seemed to be everywhere. John baptized Jesus; Jesus baptized His disciples; His disciples baptized others. Jesus commanded His disciples to make other disciples and baptize them. In the book of Acts, Peter commanded those who were converted to be baptized. Paul, when he was saved, was baptized. Cornelius, the Roman Gentile, was baptized. Paul baptized Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus. Later, writing in one of his prison epistles, he instructed the Philippians, “The things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me do.”³

The first thing Paul was commanded to do after his conversion was to be baptized. He was immediately thereafter made aware that he was called to preach to the Gentile nations as well as to Israel and to kings. In Acts 13, he was attached to a local congregation in the city of Antioch, from which he was sent to the work to which God had called him.

All of his epistles were written during the execution of that ministry. There were two periods during which he was imprisoned. Some of his letters were written during the first period, some during the second, and the rest were written in between, but all thirteen of his epistles were written during the same dispensation of time. Paul’s instruction and his example before all the churches is for us today, as is that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second thing that has been excised from God’s instruction to the churches by the aforementioned doctrinal error is the symbolic *feast of remembrance* that the Lord Jesus instituted on the last day before His crucifixion. He broke bread and shared the wine, telling them that it represented His body that was broken for them and His blood poured out; and then He told them to do that in remembrance of Him. The disciples understood that to be ongoing. Thirty years later, Paul gave instruction to the Corinthian church about how to practice this. Although he did not spell out details of *how* we should administer that “feast,” he made it very clear *why* we should do it: it is obviously a very significant part of worship. It is a remembrance of His death and is to be practiced periodically until He comes.

The third thing is *commitment to and participation in the fellowship* of a local assembly

of believers. We are distinct from the world. After all, we are a new creation. “[We] are crucified with Christ, nevertheless [we] live; yet not [we] but Christ liveth in [us]. And the life that [we] now live in the flesh, [we] live by the faith of the Son of God who loved [us] and gave himself for [us].”⁴

Christ is our life. We are *in* the world, but we are not *of* the world. The world, therefore, will not encourage us in our faith; it will not build us up. So, then, where does our encouragement—our edification—come from? From the members of the body of Christ.⁵ Therefore, we are instructed to “not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.”⁶ We do not meet with other believers merely to *be fed*, or to *receive* edification,

or to *be encouraged*, but also to feed others, to provide edification, and to encourage our brothers and sisters who are also living *in* this world as “lambs among wolves.” We are to do this on an increasing level as we see the [final]

day approaching. We are to be consistent in our fellowship with the saints that make up the church in which God has placed us, recognizing the authority of those elders who “watch for our souls.”⁷

The fourth thing that suffers at the hands of those “editors” of God’s whole counsel is *The Great Commission*. In spite of the fact that Jesus said, “My words will not pass away,”⁸ and disregarding His statement that “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nation; and then shall the end come,”⁹ they would relegate that command to the Jews and its relevance only to Israel. The fact is that Jesus came into the world to save sinners. God so loved *the world* that he gave his only begotten son, that *whosoever* believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. The gospel is not dispensational; it’s everlasting. The life He gives is not dispensational; it, too, is everlasting.

It is, no doubt, legitimate to recognize certain historical dispensations of time, e.g., from the creation to the fall, the period from the fall to the flood, the dispensation of law (Old Testament), the New Testament, etc. Those divisions are clear; but the gospel is not dispensational. The Great Commission is not dispensational. Jesus said, “Go ye therefore, and teach *all* nations (that has to include Israel and every Gentile nation as well), baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching

Christ is our life. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. The world, therefore, will not encourage us in our faith; it will not build us up.

them (the disciples in every nation) to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you (What could *all* possibly not include?). Israel and *all* the Gentile nations were to observe *all* (including the commission, obviously) that the Lord Jesus had commanded. How long was this to continue? “Lo, I am with you *always*,” Jesus said, “even unto the end of the world.”¹⁰ That defines the duration of the authority of this command and would certainly include our generation. Furthermore, as has been noted already, Jesus prophesied [promised] that when this gospel has been preached for a witness to all nations [*ethnos*], then the end will come. It seems evident, then, that the commission will be in force until the end.

Whether the proponents of the dispensationally edited version of God’s truth would acknowledge it or not, the result is disobedience to that which is the very heart of God’s purpose for the church’s continuing presence in the world.

In response to an earlier article, someone wrote accusing me of being a hater of the “grace” message. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have already noted that the message of God’s grace is the heart of the Bible’s message. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, saying, “[God] has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus

Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” By grace we are saved, by that same grace we have been called according to His purpose. His stated purpose for His church at this time is to fulfill the commission with which He clearly entrusted it, and He is working in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The few things He has commanded us to do that identify us with Him we must not neglect or rebel against. As Paul said, “The things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.” Paul was our example—and even more so was the Lord Jesus. “Whatever he saith unto you, do it.”



(Endnotes)

1 2 Corinthians 11:3

2 1 John 3:3

3 Philippians 4:9

4 Galatians 2:20

5 Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19

6 Hebrews 10:24,25

7 Hebrews 13:17

8 Luke 21:33

9 Matthew 24:14

10 Matthew 28:19,20

Meet the Board:

I Needed to Decide Whether I Believed the Bible

The Testimony of Dave Kercher

I was born in Michigan, year 1951, into a staunch Roman Catholic family. I was sent to a Catholic school through the eighth grade, and we faithfully attended Mass every Sunday morning. I remember, as a young boy, being very awestruck by the Liturgical ceremony and the very idea of God. I took very seriously my “First Holy Communion” and my “Confirmation” ceremonies and had a significant fear of God at an early age, considering that it was established entirely upon ignorance. I thought it a great honor to be selected for training as an Altar Boy and served for some time in this position with great reverence and respect. The Masses were all conducted primarily in Latin, which of course, I did not understand. The Scripture reading and the “homily” (sermon), which were given in English, may as well have been done in Latin, as the priest was

from Yugoslavia; and I was unable to understand his English. Needless to say, there was little to no light. I remember remarking to myself in later years (after becoming a believer) that even through all those years of Catholic school, and after many Masses, I did not understand the gospel; nor do I recall ever hearing the gospel clearly spoken or taught.

As I moved into the high school years, I became disillusioned by all of this and drifted away from attending Mass and, with the allurements of the flesh, drifted into the typical careless, sinful life of an unbeliever. Having had some exposure to the idea of God, however, and being convinced that there *was* a God and some kind of holy standard, I knew that what I was seeing in myself and in those around me did not measure up. I became very cynical, and after

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The Sheep and the Goats

By Jim Lucas

Jesus said “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think you have eternal life and they are which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life” (John 5:39, 40). Today we have a lot of people carrying the Bible here and there who profess to have found salvation. Some of them have indeed found salvation and have been delivered from their sins; but like Jesus told the people of His day, “...I know you that you have not the love of God in you” (John 5:42). This is true for so many of the professing believers in this generation as well.

He went on to say, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? (John 5:43, 44). Jesus warned us that in the last days, many false prophets would come in His name and thereby deceive many. The false prophets only *profess* to come in His name. If we come in His name, we must display in our lives the character of the One who sent us. Jesus truly came in the name of His Father. He told Philip, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15).

Today, the image that is being displayed by most of the religious leaders is far from the image of Jesus. It is an image very similar to the image manifested by the Scribes and the Pharisees, which Jesus spoke against vehemently. It was these same Pharisees who, because of their jealousy, paid Judas thirty pieces of silver to betray Christ.

Many of the “men of God” today come not in Jesus’ name only but in their own names as well. They are not satisfied, however, to simply give their names—they want to add many flattering titles to their name, such as Reverend, Bishop, Father, Pastor, Apostle, Doctor, his Highness, Most Excellent, etc.

The man of God who simply comes in Jesus’ name is not well received; therefore, they come in their own names and with many flattering titles. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, He would not receive such titles.

There was one who came and said unto him; Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Matthew 19:16,17).

Jesus was humble and would do nothing to bring honor to Himself because His mission was to bring glory

and honor to His Father. One of the most common titles taken is “Reverend.” Who is reverend? The Word of God declares: “Holy and reverend is his name [God]” (Psalm 111:9). As His name is, so is He. The word “reverend” (*yare* in Hebrew) means to “fear, revere, cause to frighten, or dread.” God is the only one who should be revered.

The word “reverenced” (*shachah* in Hebrew) means to depress, prostrate in homage (worship or honor) to royalty or God, to bow down, crouch, fall down flat, make to stoop, worship. God-fearing people will not give such honor to men. The three Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace because they refused to bow down to the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Our Heavenly Father, of course, saved them from harm.

We also have the example of Mordecai. We read in Esther 3:2, “And all the king’s servants, that were in the king’s gate, bowed, and revered Haman for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.”

Haman purposed to destroy Mordecai and all the Jews. Again our Heavenly Father protected the one who truly honored God, and it was the wicked Haman who was hung on the gallows. Mordecai was then put second in command to the king. Why should men who claim to be “men of God” want to take high titles for themselves when Jesus, the Son of God, never acted in such a way? The Word of God teaches us that it is dangerous to do so: “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away” (Job 32:21,22).

The conduct that was displayed by the Scribes and the Pharisees is the same as that of the religious leaders of our time. They do their works to be seen of men, and they like to dress with the very best suits; they love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the churches, and they love to be greeted in the markets with high titles. They forget that Jesus said that we are all brethren, not to call any man “Father” upon earth, nor Master, for one is your Master, even Christ, and he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted (See Matthew 23:5-12). Obviously, Jesus wasn’t pleased with this attitude in His day. Do you think he is pleased with it today?

Beware! We are living in the last days, and the deception is great. Jesus told us that we would have many false prophets, and we see them everywhere. Thanks be to God, He also told us how to know them:

He said you shall know them by their fruits. Are pride, arrogance, and the love of the praises of men the fruit of the Spirit? Is having great riches the fruit of the Spirit?

Most of these who come in their own names insist that the proof of God's blessing is in having a great amount of material things. Many religious leaders today have a lot of money. Yet they continue to beg, week after week. King David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25). It seems they do not read the Word of God or respect the teaching of our wonderful Lord Jesus. Do you remember what Jesus said to the rich ruler? "Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. How about the rich man and the poor man that laid at his gate; they both died, which one of them opened his eyes in hell? (See Luke 16:19-31).

It is amazing that so many people are being deceived by material wealth. Let us take a good look at Jesus: we know that He was the perfect example of a true man of God: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus Christ, the Creator of heaven and earth, held all things in his possession, but He chose to become poor that we might be made rich in Christ. The riches that we have in Jesus are greater than all the riches of the world. The ones who love the riches of the world have not the love of the Father in them (See 1 John 2:15). Look where Jesus was born—in a smelly barn where they kept animals, because there was no place for Joseph and Mary in the inn! If Jesus' parents were of high social status, I am sure there would have been a room for them. We know that they were poor because when Jesus was eight days old, they took Him to Jerusalem to have Him circumcised, and they offered a sacrifice of two turtle-doves (birds) or two young pigeons, for the purification of Mary (See Luke 2:24). Most people would bring a lamb, but there was a consideration in the law for those who could not afford a lamb: "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean" (Leviticus 12:8).

After Jesus was raised from the dead and the gospel was going out, many were saved and set free from the law of Moses. The law was now written in their hearts (see Hebrews 8:10), and they didn't need any man to tell them about giving (See Acts 4:31-37). They gave freely,

with a willing heart. We do not see any of the apostles of our Lord Jesus begging for money. They followed the same humble example that their Master had given.

When the ministers of the gospel are good shepherds (John 10:11-13) and not hirelings (those who work for money), they are willing to lay down their lives for the sheep, and believers will insist that they receive their love offerings. Paul writes about the saints from Macedonia, how though they were suffering they had such joy of salvation that even in their poverty they were giving unto him:

Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much in treaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. (2 Corinthians 8:1-4)

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory And before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink I was a stranger, and ye took me in Naked, and ye clothed me I was sick, and ye visited me I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink I was a stranger, and ye took me not in naked, and ye clothed me not sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25:31-46)

Are you a goat or a sheep? Have you been giving in order to bring honor and glory unto the Lord Jesus or unto men? The poor are always before us, and if we cannot love our neighbor, whom we can see, how can

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Scattered Thoughts on a Celestial Psalm

Steve Montgomery



I have been studying recently about Heaven and the New Earth. At the same time, in my quiet time I have been reading Psalm 145. This psalm presents a glimpse of our heavenly hope—both our time in heaven and that future, post-resurrection eternity on the New Earth—which is so encouraging and enlightening that I want to share some thoughts with you.

The Structure

Verses 1 and 2 set the theme: “forever and ever.” Verse 21 ends the psalm, bringing us back to that phrase: “...let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.”

Between these two “bookends,” we are taken back and forth, from information about God’s Kingdom (that glorious Now and Future Kingdom) and declarations about God’s character. The psalm is broken down as follows:

Verses 1 and 2: Introduction: I will exalt the Lord forever
Verse 3: The Greatness of God
Verses 4-7: Declaring God’s Greatness
Verses 8-9: The Goodness of God
Verses 10-13: Declaring God’s Kingdom
Verses 14-20: The Graciousness of God
Verse 21: Conclusion: May everyone exalt the Lord forever

The Substance

In this article, I want to look principally at what David says about our eternal state.

After introducing the theme “forever and ever” in verses one and two, David tells us something about God Himself: “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.”

God is great, and the praise we give Him should be analogous. Though we are with Him for all eternity, we will never plumb the depths of His measureless wisdom, power, mercy, and love.

David now shifts the theme, looking at *our* response to *His* greatness in verses 4 to 7. Note the verbs here are in future tense: “shall,” “will.” David is going to tell us things that are true *now*, will be true throughout this life, and will remain true through all eternity. He tells us that the greatness, the majesty, the wisdom, and the might of God will be our theme forever:

One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness. (Psalm 145:4-7)

All of the things that David says here are true, or should be true, in our lives today; but they are also true for our eternal future on the New Earth. Picture these things in eternity. Imagine having unlimited time to hear others tell of God’s dealings in their lives, even to the smallest details, and then seeing how their actions impacted the lives of others: a gospel tract shared, a word spoken, an unseen obedience that redounded to God’s glory, a secret sacrifice that worked eternal blessing. Imagine sitting with Isaiah or Habakkuk or the sons of Moses or the first convert among the Nambicuaras and hearing of God’s dealing! We will sit for hours, ages, and be spellbound by the glorious wisdom of God’s dealing. And it will never run out because His greatness is past finding out!

We, too, will have a story to tell, the story of God’s wondrous work to save us! As we learn of His great works, we will come to enjoy and appreciate more the beauty of the glory of His majesty and the perfect harmony of His wonder-filled works. We’ll hear fearful, staggering stories that will make the idea of a mountain cast into the sea seem like nothing as we hear how God judged nations, brought the mighty to repentance, worked justice from injustice, and answered prayers by moving the very heavens. There will be abundant memories to hear, to relate, to revel in.

And oh! the songs we will hear, from a thousand different cultures! The songs we will write, breaking out even spontaneously in songs of praise as we sit with eternal friends and declare the stories of His great works in our lives and those of myriad others!

As though carried by the very thought of that eternity, David shifts again from what *we* will *do* to who *He is*:

The Lord is gracious,
and full of compassion;

Continued on page 13

Missionary Reports

A report from Tarkwa, Ghana!

Jim and Fran Lucas

Many changes are taking place in Tarkwa. The Voetburgs have been gone for several months now. Tim Spurling is temporarily in Washington—he plans on returning in July; Janelle Nye is now in Oregon; Francille and James will fly to Oregon in a few days.

Two days ago, Brother Sena and his wife, Mawuce, gave us a surprise visit from Togo. Even though I had just visited them a few weeks ago, it was good to see them again. Sena asked me a question: he asked, “What is the ministry of a missionary (apostle)?” In order to answer his question, I reminded him of the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus (See Hebrews 3:1). Just prior to our Lord’s departure, He prayed this wonderful prayer, recorded in John 17. He said to the Father, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” (v. 4) Then he explained what the work was that He had finished (v. 6): “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.”

In verses 25 and 26, we learn the wisdom of manifesting His name. “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” Jesus, in Matthew 16:15-18 explains this is the way He is building his church:

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?
And Simon Peter answered and said; Thou art
the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus
answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou,
Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not
revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in
heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art
Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

The main mission in Jesus’ life was to impart unto us the love of the Father. This can only be accomplished by the manifestation of the Father. When revelation is given, love is imparted. Those who know God love him.

An apostle is sent to be a bright light in a dark world. Paul said, “For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men” (1 Corinthians 4:9).

Surprisingly, Ghana is a very dark nation. It has proven to be a good place to train missionaries. It has the appearance of a righteous nation, but Jesus said;

SFMI Update

“If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” Light has turned to darkness here, for they do not have eyes for Jesus only but have a love for money. “If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:23,24). Jesus spoke with confidence that He had accomplished the work that He was sent to do. He had manifested the name of the Father. Paul also spoke with similar confidence. I, too, make report that the Father’s name has been manifested through the missionaries who have come to minister here: The Voetbergs, Timothy, Janelle, Austin, John, Francille, and myself. I can say this with confidence because the love of the Father is now seen in many of the Ghanaian Christians: Clement, Hessian, the two Samuels, Fii, John Kuami, Matthias, two Isaacs, Charles, Godfry and more. It is manifested in their conduct and in their demeanor. Most of them are quite active in the ministry of the Word and are gifted in preaching and teaching. The living stones are being shaped, and the Lord Jesus is building His church. The believers have been baptized, and we celebrate communion weekly.

We have been preaching the gospel and teaching the Word in about five different areas around the city. One of those areas is called Componasi. We have been going there for about nine months. There are about 15 believers who are coming regularly. I was blessed when they, on their own, saw themselves as a new church. We confirmed that to them and assured them that Clement, Austin, John, and Tim would continue to teach them.

Let us keep all the believers here in prayer, and please pray for Austin, John, and Tim, that our Father will give them wisdom and courage. Also please be praying for Mike and Faith Ball and family and their journey to Ghana in August.

Francille and I would appreciate your prayers for us as well.

In Jesus

James and Francille 

Ghana Austin Ball

Hello everybody,

It’s been awhile, and a lot has happened thanks to your prayers. Last letter, I wrote about my roommate and student here in the program, Kumar. I am now

happy to report that he has been able to avoid legal problems for now and is really growing in the faith. He already shows a passion for souls and has helped lead someone to Christ. Right now, He is in the eastern part of Ghana near the border. He is helping to minister to the saints there and evangelizing in the nearby villages.

As far as our fishing holes (the five different places where we minister), I am happy to report that in Camponasi (the Wednesday place we minister) things are going well. We see real growth in the saints there; people are beginning to come faithfully and with a hunger for the Word. The questions they ask show us that they're trying to live out what they're being taught. It is encouraging but just a start. Please pray for this group.

In Teblebe (the Friday one), we are doing a lot of open-air evangelizing, and it's waking up some of the saints who had stopped coming. We're praying that God will raise up brethren who are faithful to come and show an interest, as there is a lack of that right now.

In Akoon (our Saturday and Tuesday meetings), many of the saints who came at first have stopped coming faithfully to meet with us, but God is raising up others, especially in the young people. There are two or three young guys that are starting to come with questions and a hunger for the Word of God.

On Mondays we have just started evangelizing in a new village, Bankyim. James, Clement, and I went last week and met with a family of five young men, who were brothers, and their mom. James taught on sin and got into specifics (lying, drunkenness, fornication), and there was conviction. They seemed surprised at such doctrine and have asked us to come and preach the Bible there every Monday. They agreed to invite family, friends, and neighbors. Praise the Lord! So please pray for this new area.

As far as things here at the compound, Timothy has left the building—actually the country. He is back in the USA for a two-month furlough. James and Francille Lucas plan on leaving next week to the U.S., and then it will just be John and me here alone for a month before Tim comes back at the end of July. My parents are planning on coming over to help with the work in August.

As you can see, some major changes are taking place. Please pray that the Lord will give grace to John and me while we're in charge for awhile. We need wisdom to make decisions, strength for each day, and especially a clear leading from the Holy Spirit every day.

You don't know how much we covet your prayers. I plead once again for them. Prayer is what is tilling the hard ground here in Ghana. Thank you to everyone who does take the time to intercede for us. Thanks for your support and letters. Feel free to write anytime.



*In Christ alone,
Austin Ball* 🌐

Valle De Juarez, Mexico
Ed and Abby Drysdale

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have been floating in the clouds with the blessing of this church building. We have seen at least one person faithfully attending who didn't used to come since we have rented this location. We have been able to bail out a little three-year-old's birthday party from being cancelled (due to a tremendous thunder and hail storm), by inviting them to use the church. At least we thought we could—but the storm followed us right into the church building!

As it stands right now, the leaks in the building have made it impossible to use the sanctuary. The rainy season has just begun. In this area, it rains nearly every day and will continue to do so for the next four months.

We are dampened in spirit by the landlords' lack of fairness. They do not seem to think that they are responsible for any maintenance of the building.

We are asking you to pray with us that we may keep our testimony during these stormy conditions. We do not want to be sent into hiding so soon after having made a visual stand. All who are attending Bible studies at the building are watching our reactions. Please pray that we will show them a godly way to do business.

May the Lord's love shine through,

With Love, the Drysdales

If you want to see more pics, go to Facebook and look us up under Abbydrysdale@yahoo.com
Contact us at (541) 306-3987 we would love to hear from you. 🌐

Atotonilcho, Mexico **Daniel and Mari Fontanez**

“That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all your wondrous works” (Psalms 26:7).

God has been good and faithful to us, and we are well, thanks to Him. The blessings have been many, but I will limit this update to a few.

Jail Ministry:

First of all, I want to thank all of you who helped us in praying for the side of the jail, which was unreached. The Lord has opened the door, and we have about two months of sharing the Word with both men and women on the other side. The Lord sent us Isidro (Chilo) Coronado, one of the youth leaders here in the Atotonilco church, and he has been joining me regularly on Tuesdays to share the Word in the jail. Steve has also been joining me when Chilo cannot. No conversions yet, but we know that the Word of God is not sown in vain. There is much interest from the women (there are about four of them who are part of the Bible study on a regular basis) but only two men who attend regularly. Please continue to pray for the believers there. They have a hard time putting up with each other. Pray that God would help them to overflow with genuine love for one another. Pray, also, that they might grow in the faith and bear fruit to the glory of God.

Evangelistic Bible Study in Maguey

In these past months, there have been new faces in the Bible study in Maguey, but it has been hard to be consistent. For one reason or another, whether it's my truck that's in the shop or whether it's the contacts who can't make it to the study, we've had to cancel some. But we're still "hacking away," as Len Sali would say. One of the couples who joined us a few times had heard something about the gospel in Tijuana but has, for some time, dropped out. I believe they fear the reproach of the Cross. Please pray for them (Fernando and his wife). Pray also for Mario and Chely. Mario took a job away from home. The worst part is that he works away for three months and comes home for a week. Chely continued to go to the studies until he took a new job. On a brighter note, the Lord has sent alongside us a couple from the local church (Joel and Tere Limon). They're with us on Saturday nights and also fill in when we can't make it. Praise the Lord! Pray for Mari and me, as we will be starting to go earlier to Maguey to visit house to house.

Evangelistic Bible Study with Freddy

The gospel is not easy to understand. It's not intuitive. It's contrary to human religion. God has to open our minds and reveal it to us. For this reason, it takes

more than one quick chat to come to the knowledge of the truth. Such has been the case with Freddy. Freddy and I have a Bible study Thursdays after work (we both work in the same mechanic shop). We are past the creation account in our chronological study, and I have given him a few runs through the gospel as best I could. It was only few weeks ago, when talking about the origin of sin, that something clicked, and he understood that salvation is all of God! I felt like saying, "Where have you been these past few months?" But praise the Lord that He was able to use my simple words to bring some light into Freddy's life.

Let me wrap this up by requesting prayer for Mari's ministry with the children in the church and with the kids in the Alameda. Pray for Arandas. Mari and I went to the Evangelistic Campaign there during "holy week." There were many people interested in the gospel. Lastly, pray for the Junior Highers, that the Lord would help us impact them with the Word. Thank you all for your support. God bless you.

Daniel and Mari Fontanez 

Asia **L. and M.**

[Editor's note: L. and M. are in Asia, developing an agricultural project that will bless the country, give them permanent status there, and allow access to their target people, an unreached tribal group identified here simply as the U. people.]

Dear Friends,

We want to bring you up to date on all the goings on here in Asia. I want to make this short and to the point, so I thought that I would first just list the things that we have done since our arrival:

1) L. has made contacts with several companies and individuals who are actively involved here in an agriculture and small bush fruit. He continues to have meetings with these parties, pursuing a viable business structure. In China, you must build relationships, and he has been doing a good job of that.

2) L. has made several trips to farms in the vicinity, viewing current agricultural practices.

3) L. traveled to a nearby city to meet with two people who are seeking a return to work among the U. people. They are working with us in the establishment of an agricultural business.

4) L. traveled to another city with these men to look at the potential for an agricultural project there, where they met with several potential clients.

5) L. also continues to work about half-time in his consulting business.

6) We have language class three mornings a week.

7) We are attending the International Christian

Fellowship and are building friendships with believers who are here from around the globe.

8) We have joined a small group Bible study with other expats. L. will be sharing in the teaching responsibilities.

9) M. has joined an expat women's Bible study and is sharing in leadership and teaching responsibilities.

10) M. has learned how to "keep" a home in this area of the world.

11) Because we do not live in the area of the city where most expats live, we have had opportunities to speak and share with several local friends. We hope to continue to be able to build these relationships.

(Please pray for Ping, Ann, and her family, Sherry and Mr. W., Peter, Coco, and her family)

Our future plans include:

1) Continuing with all of the above.


2) We hope to have located and leased a parcel of land in the northwest of the country by fall.

3) We hope to move to a different apartment when our current lease is up. Our building has more offices in it than apartments, and we would like to live in a more traditional neighborhood, where we would have

more opportunities to meet our neighbors.

4) We will be traveling to the States in June, as L. is needing a second catheter ablation for his heart arrhythmia. We are looking into the possibility of post-procedure follow-up here in Asia. The length of time that we will need to stay in the States will depend on what is available here. We expect we will need to stay between one to three months.

I hope you do not mind that this is just straight to the point. We wanted to make sure that we keep you informed. Thank you for praying.

With grateful hearts,
L. and M. 



Prayer Request


L&M: This couple, serving in Asia, is currently back in the U.S. for a medical intervention. L. will be having heart surgery. Pray that the surgery would go well and that recovery would be quick. They hope to return to the field soon, perhaps taking part of the recovery time overseas.

Meet the Board, continued from page 6


having read some books on homesteading in Alaska, I became convinced that getting away from people would provide a better life, so I took my young bride and only son to Alaska with the intent to homestead. We arrived just after the state of Alaska had placed all lands that were available for homesteading under a "freeze" until the native land claims were settled. (Obviously, the Lord didn't have the same thing in mind for us). We stayed on an abandoned homestead in Alaska for almost a year and then moved back to the "lower 48."

After several more years of frustration, we settled in Bend, Oregon. Shortly after arriving there, my wife, Cindy, began attending a Bible study, heard the gospel, and became a believer. This added a new stress to my life, as I saw in her, over the next several months, a new peace and strength that I did not have. It frightened me! I enjoyed reading books, and I remember, at this time, noting that everything I read seemed to have something about Jesus Christ in it. One day as I was sitting in my living room reading "Robinson Crusoe," I was amazed that I was being confronted again with Jesus. It was then that I came to the very clear conviction that I needed to read the Bible and decide whether I believed it or not! This I did right away, and began by reading through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. As I read through these scriptures, the Lord very powerfully revealed to

me that I was reading the truth, that these scriptures were the Word of God, and that Jesus Christ was who the Scriptures said He was. At that point, I trusted the Word of God and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. I soon began to realize the source of Cindy's new strength and peace as my own.

When I read through the Scriptures as a young believer, the Lord impressed me with this scripture: Isaiah 40:11: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." My God has fulfilled this scripture these many years since that time and has given Cindy and me ten children and ten grandchildren (so far!). I served as an elder with Bend Bible Fellowship for ten years and have been serving as an elder with Bible Family Fellowship in Mollala, Oregon, for the last seven years. 

The Sheep and the Goats, continued from page 7

we say we love God, whom we cannot see? Do you only honor those who come in their own names and do not have a genuine need but you give to them simply because they demand it of you? At the same time are you are denying the ones who are in genuine need? Then you are a goat, and the love of God is not in you. Who is more guilty—the ones who come in their own name, or those who support them. Beloved, they are equally guilty. 

Celestial Psalm, continued from page 8

slow to anger,
and of great mercy.

The Lord is good to all... (vv. 8-9)

Five declarations about God's character, with five distinct attributes: Graciousness, compassion, patience, mercy, and, finally, simply, goodness. David then follows these with a single observation: "His tender mercies are over all His works." This may mean that His acts of tender mercy are above, superior to, all His other works. I think, however, that it means that His tender mercies are *over, upon, a covering to everything* He does. The word "mercy" here, according to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, refers to deep love. It is not the common word for mercy, which emphasizes the graciousness of the act. This word speaks of the depth of compassion that motivates the act. It is sometimes translated "womb," as something deep within. Everywhere we look, we see His deep love, His profound compassion; and the deeper we look, the more His love shows forth. God is good.

But just as declaring God's goodness led David to proclaim God's virtues, so the enumerating of God's virtues urges him to talk again about God's goodness toward us (vv. 10-13). Note, again, the future tense. Note also that he introduces here the theme of God's Kingdom:

All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

The first two phrases affirm that all of God's works and all of God's people will praise Him. When we are together in our resurrected bodies, everything that God has done, even the secret things, in the deepest regions of the heart, will be known. His works, even without the knowledge of men, praise Him today, because they carry His stamp, His imprimatur. Today, we see through a glass, darkly, and we don't see all that He does, but those works we *do* see provoke praise from our lips. Nevertheless, one day, face to face with Him, we shall know even as we are known (1 Corinthians 13:12), and there all His works will praise Him. In that day we will clearly see how even the wrath of man shall praise Him (Psalm 76:10).

He then tells us that God's people will speak of the glory of His Kingdom, the glorious majesty of His Kingdom. We have the privilege today to tell people that there is a glorious Kingdom coming. As Christians, our message is not "Your Best Life Now," but rather "The best is yet ahead!"

When Abraham saw a smoking, fiery furnace, or when the children of Israel were led by a pillar of fire, or when the Lord Jesus was transfigured before the disciples, with face shining as the sun and clothing as white as light itself, they were seeing the glory of God, that brilliant ball of fire and light that filled the Temple. The Bible affirms that one day we will shine with that same Shekinah glory:

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. (Matthew 13:41-43, see also Daniel 12:3, Colossians 3:4)

Not only that! His very Kingdom will shine with His glory! We can speak now of the glory of His Kingdom; but when we are there, seeing the glory of God shining throughout and emanating from the New Jerusalem, and seeing how the New Earth itself takes in and shines back that same brilliant glory, and seeing how all those around us are dressed in light as a garment, then we will praise and worship and exalt and extol the Lord, again and again, and again for the wonder of His grace and the glorious majesty of His Kingdom!

There is much more to this psalm, for here David begins yet again to enumerate God's virtues—but we will stop here. If you've caught a glimpse of what is forever and ever as we've looked at this psalm, I'm certain your eyes have lightened, so that you join David in desiring that "all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever" (v. 21). 🌍



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Labor Day Weekend Conference 2009 Shield of Faith Mission International

Riverview Bible Camp, 408771 SR 20, Cusick, WA 99119

Friday, Sept. 4 – Monday, Sept. 7

Registrars: Brian Martell / Peggy Martell

Mailing address: 2 Baxter Lane, Kettle Falls, WA 99141
Addy, WA. 99101

email: bkmartell@hotmail.com

Phone: 1-509-738-3041
call first before faxing.

Here's how it works: Arrivals begin at 4:00 p.m., Friday, Sept. 4. The first meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. There will be no meal served Friday night. Please feel free to bring snacks. Saturday morning is our first meal, and Monday lunch is our last meal. We have spaces available for RVs. There are family cabins and lodging for others. Bring your own bedding, or bedding can be provided for those in need. Riverview Bible Camp is a non-smoking facility. Pets are not allowed. Copy as many forms as you need. Mail completed forms to the registrar (address above). We look forward to seeing you this year. Register early!

Family Registration

Last Name: _____ First: _____ Home Phone: () _____ - _____
Address _____ Work Phone: () _____ - _____
City: _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____ @ _____

Please include infants

Spouse: _____

Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____
Child: _____	Age: _____	Child: _____	Age: _____

Circle Choices

Nights staying over:	Friday Night	Saturday Night	Sunday Night
Sleeping arrangements needed:	Room	Tent	RV
Meals:	Saturday breakfast	Sunday Breakfast	Monday Breakfast
	Saturday Lunch	Sunday Lunch	Monday Lunch
	Saturday Dinner	Sunday Dinner	

Special needs:

RELEASE AND ARBITRATION AGREEMENT (Must be signed by all attendees)

In consideration of and RIVERVIEW BIBLE CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRIES, I for myself, or the minor child named below, forever waive, release and discharge «Name», RIVERVIEW BIBLE CAMP & RETREAT MINISTRIES (and its parent corporation) from any/all injuries, claims, disputes, liabilities, or actions resulting from «Name» or RIVERVIEW providing services for me and for my benefit regardless of location for the dates identified above. I attest and verify that I have full knowledge of the risks and dangers involved; that I assume such risks, and that I will assume and pay my own medical and emergency expenses, in the event of an accident, illness or other incapacity, regardless of whether I have authorized such expenses.

Any controversy arising out of, connected to, or relating to any matters herein of the transactions between me and the above named parties or on behalf of the minor child named below, of this Release/Waiver, or the breach thereof, including, but not limited to any claims of violations of Federal and/or State Law, as well as any common law claims shall be settled by arbitration through Christian Conciliation Services; and in accordance with this paragraph a judgment based upon the arbitrator's award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof in accordance with the provisions of R.C.W. 7.04. This agreement shall be construed and interpreted under the laws of the State of Washington. **I HAVE READ THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE CAREFULLY, AND UNDERSTAND IT.**

Print Participant's Name Birthdate: MO DAY YEAR

Signature : _____ **Date:** _____

(Must have Parent/Guardian Signature if participant named above is under 18)

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(Must have Parent/Guardian Signature if participant named above is under 18)

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Important 2009 Labor Day Conference Information (Please read.)

Riverview requires that each attendee (or the legal guardian of each minor attendee) sign the accompanying insurance waiver (**previous page**), releasing the campground of legal responsibility in the event of accident or injury. You may make as many copies as you need for your family and send them along with your conference registration form.

Directions to Riverview Bible Camp from Spokane, WA.

- From the North Division Y, take Highway 2 North for 27 miles.
- Turn Left at the Highway 2/Highway 211 junction, travel North on 211 for 15 miles.
- Turn Left at the Highway 211/Highway 20 junction, travel North on 20 for 13 miles. Welcome to Riverview!!!

It is our purpose to make the conference as affordable as possible. Therefore, there is no charge. It works well if everyone does what he is able to do. Although the conference is without charge, there are considerable expenses to be met. For those who are able to give nothing, you are welcome and even encouraged to come. For those who have only the "widow's mite," it is enough, but we expect everyone to contribute what he can. When the children of Israel were provided for with manna from heaven, those who gathered much had nothing left over, and they that gathered little had no lack. Thank you for doing your best. (Proverbs 11:24)

