

Caterpillar to Butterfly The Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit

Like the astonishing metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly, we need to be changed from the inside out. But how?

Do you want to stop saying hurtful things, giving in to peer pressure, or give up a bad habit that you know is hurting yourself and others? Enough is enough! There is a way your life can be transformed if you really want to change. Look back in time 2000 years. Here's an example of dramatic improvement in behaviour through a power source available to each of us.

What a remarkable event! Hundreds of people were gathered outside a house where the disciples of Jesus Christ were meeting together. It was the day of Pentecost and a large contingent of devout observers from foreign lands had travelled to Jerusalem to celebrate this biblical Feast.

Word had spread quickly that the sound of a strong wind heard by neighbours was followed by an amazing display – these Galileans were speaking in many languages! No matter where the listener was from he heard these disciples speaking his own tongue (Acts 2:7-12).

The risen Christ

This inexplicable miracle seemed to confirm that there was more to the

events surrounding the death of their leader, Jesus Christ, than the authorities would have people believe. Had the officials, after all, fabricated lies about what had happened to the body of Jesus?

It had been seven weeks to the day since the tomb where Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus had laid Jesus' dead body was found empty. Wild rumours circulated that the followers of Jesus Christ stole His body and then 'faked' His resurrection, claiming to have seen Him alive again. It was now

obvious that the authorities were desperate to cover up the most astounding miracle of all, the resurrection to eternal life of the Son of God (Matthew 28:11-15).

From the disciples' point of view, it was confirmation of what the risen Christ had told them. If they remained in Jerusalem, as He instructed them to do, they would receive 'power from on high' to proclaim Jesus' message (Acts 1:4-5).

Luke records Jesus' words at one of the meals He had with them after His resurrection: "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

"Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but



A butterfly emerges from its chrysalis.

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tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:44-49).

The awesome power of the Holy Spirit

This ‘power from on high’, the Spirit of God, transformed the disciples – they became confident and assured of the presence of the risen Christ working with them. Gone was the Peter who had lied to a young girl to save face (Matthew 26:69-70).

He now stood up to the authorities who attempted to cut off his contact with potential converts (Acts 5:17-32). The apostle Paul, previously a persecutor of those who followed ‘the Way’, also made a 180-degree turn in his life (Acts 9:1-22).

Perhaps you too have come to a point in your life where you realise that you do not have the strength to fight against ‘the system’ of this world by your own efforts. The Bible clearly shows that this society is geared towards turning people away from the truth of God.

Yet the Bible tells us, ‘Do not love

the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever’ (1 John 2:15-17).

Obviously this does not mean we

Many people are imprisoned by the values and standards of society. Yet help is available.

should despise or hate people who are caught up in society and its values. We wish they were not held captive by the one who has ‘deceived the whole world’ (Revelation 12:9).

In due time, God will give that spark of understanding so that all humanity can understand. Today only a few listen to Him, and fewer still actually follow Christ as He leads them through the Holy Spirit dwelling within them (Romans 8:9-11).

Transforming your thinking

Paul described our natural mind as being hostile to God’s law (Romans 8:7). So we are normally incapable of grasping spiritual concepts unless God’s Spirit is also working within our mind (1 Corinthians 2:9-12).

Perhaps you have seen that you are captured by the standards and values of this society. Do you buckle under the pressure of what others think, as Peter did before the young girl? Or are you unreservedly opposed to a way that teaches different beliefs and doctrines than your traditional religion, as Paul had been?

If you are willing, you can learn more about an astounding transformation that can take place in your life. Our publication *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion* will point you to the Scriptural evidence of how the lives of others have been changed, and give you a pattern to follow for your own personal transformation. Request this booklet today. There is no charge.

Peter Hawkins

THE BUTTERFLY LIFE CYCLE

How Like Our Christian Growth!

Butterflies have a fascinating, four-stage life cycle. In many ways the development from a rather unimpressive multi-legged caterpillar to a magnificent butterfly parallels our spiritual development.

1. The first stage begins when an adult female butterfly lays an egg. Our spiritual life begins when we become a ‘new creature’ in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

2. The caterpillar, which hatches from the egg, is the main growth stage. It has stout jaws for chewing leaves and feeds voraciously, shedding its skin several times to allow for expansion. We grow spiritually as we feed on spiritual food, such as the bread of life Jesus Christ, through personal Bible study, and the teaching of the Word by Christ’s ministry (John 6:25-40; 1 Peter 5:2; Revelation 7:17).

3. When fully grown, the caterpillar attaches itself to a stem or similar support and sheds its skin to reveal

the pupa or chrysalis. In this immobile stage, a remarkable transformation takes place. The caterpillar’s body breaks down within the pupal shell and is reconstituted as the adult butterfly. This is called *metamorphosis*.

Likewise God finishes our spiritual training during our physical lives. The dead in Christ are immobile and await transformation to spirit when He returns. Those still alive are also transformed at His return (Job 14:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:41-44, 50).

4. When the transformation is complete, the adult butterfly breaks out from the pupa, expands and dries its wings. It will then fly off to mate and lay eggs. Equally, for us the glory of a new existence is different from our physical form. It is humanly impossible to realistically compare it to our present physical state. We will see Jesus Christ as He is now and will be like Him (1 John 3:1-3; Philippians 3:20-21).

Learning to Respect the Sabbath

Tinenenji Banda's prize-winning essay on Sabbath keeping addresses how attending university affected her ability and desire to keep the Sabbath, and why she believes Sunday isn't the biblical day of rest and worship.

Personally, going to university posed a plethora of interesting challenges for my Sabbath observance. Away from the protective confines of home and the watchful eyes of parental authority, Sabbath observance for me necessitated a paradigm shift, one that involved moving away from Sabbath keeping because my parents 'commanded it', to keeping the Sabbath out of my own will, volition and desire to please God.

Challenges at university

Two specific challenges come to mind. The first of course was (and is) the incredible workload that inevitably comes with doing a law degree: Abstaining from schoolwork for the 24-hour period while fellow students were making headway, and not being able to attend tutorials and seminars scheduled for Saturday proved to be a test.

Secondly, on the social front, being a fresher I was keen to forge friendships and 'fit in' during the first year of my university experience and, on the whole, most socialising activities would happen on Friday night or Saturdays.

Respectful but assertive

The goals I set for myself were as follows: from the onset I resolved to tell any potential friends or associates of my convictions so that they would respect my Sabbath observance and not pressure me to break the Holy Day. I also resolved to work efficiently during the

week so I could afford to take out the 24 hours of commanded Sabbath rest. I resolved to get in touch with a local Sabbath-keeping church to ensure that I keep the Hebrews 10:25 exhortation not to forsake meeting together with brethren of like minds.

Most importantly I set the goal that I would be respectful but assertive with the university authorities concerning my beliefs well in advance. That way, if I had to write any tests on the Sabbath or attend any tutorials or teaching sessions, an alternative arrangement could be made.

Beyond university, my goals to ensure that I continue to keep the Sabbath are similar. When I enter the working sphere I plan to inform my employer that I can diligently work six

It soon became clear that if I was to hold fast to my faith and convictions, I would have to set clear goals and standards.

days of the week but the seventh day belongs to my Lord. I have also set the goal to continue regularly attending Sabbath services with my local congregation.

I have set the all-important goal not to be 'unequally yoked' with an unbeliever as this may weaken my resolve to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. I am praying that God will provide a marriage partner in due season who will of his own accord respect and observe the



Tinenenji Banda

Claire Gordon

Sabbath which I am convinced is an immutable and sacrosanct commandment of the living God.

Is the Sabbath obsolete?

To debunk Sunday keeping I am going to confront the argument often used in mainstream Christianity circles, namely that the Sabbath is of the Old Covenant, of the Jews and therefore obsolete and irrelevant for the modern-day Christian.

As a point of departure, the words of Jesus Christ Himself [the Mediator of the New Covenant] recorded in Matthew 5:18 are opposite. There, He unequivocally asserts that He did not come to destroy the law or the prophets (as He probably foresaw that some would in future contend that He did) but that '*one jot or one tittle [would] by no means pass from the law until all was fulfilled*' (Matthew 5:17-19, emphasis added throughout).

Indeed Jesus Christ went on to say that whatever man would break the least of the commandments and teach others to do so, would be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven. This passage

unambiguously states that the Sabbath (it is one of the commandments and part of the law) was not done away with. It is part and parcel of the New Covenant, and needs to be kept and observed as scrupulously as the other commands of God.

Understanding Romans 14:1-6

To justify Sunday keeping and dismiss the seventh-day Sabbath, the writings of the apostle Paul in Romans 14:5-6 are often used, where he states that 'One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike . . . He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it.' To some this passage suggests that Paul was insinuating that any day of worship is acceptable as long as the worship is 'to the Lord'.

I submit that this a gross misunderstanding of Paul's writings. The apostle Peter stated in his epistle that the writings of Paul are hard to understand and some men twist them to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). Nowhere in

this passage does Paul indicate that the reference to days is to the seventh-day Sabbath. Indeed it is Paul himself who stated that 'The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good' (Romans 7:12).

The Sabbath is not only for the Jews. As Jesus said, 'The Sabbath was made for man' (all men). Indeed, in Acts it is clearly recorded that the gen-

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tiles, the so-called 'New Testament Christians', were keeping the Sabbath. Acts 13:42 says: 'The Gentiles begged that these words be preached to them next Sabbath.'

If the Sabbath were an Old Covenant requirement, irrelevant to the New Covenant gentiles, then they would not

have been keeping the Sabbath. They would not have waited for the words to be preached next Sabbath, but would have advocated for any other day . . . perhaps a sooner day!

A Sabbath rest

If there is any doubt as to whether the Sabbath is relevant, it is my belief that the book of Hebrews should lay all such doubt to rest. The author of Hebrews emphatically states that '*there remains then a Sabbath rest for the people of God*' (Hebrews 4:3-11). Sunday keeping is not biblical and is a tradition of man, not God.

The Sabbath day is as relevant today as it was at creation, at Sinai, in Jesus' time and in the time of the apostles. We must all aim to keep it vigilantly as the Bible states: '*Blessed are*

those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city' (Revelation 22:14).

Let us therefore, as the book of Hebrews exhorts us, '*Make every effort to enter that rest.*'

Tine Banda, Cape Town, South Africa

2005 Scholarship Essay Contest

The Bible Sabbath Association has sponsored a Sabbatarian youth essay scholarship program for the last several years. In this year's contest, there were 29 entries representing seven countries.

The first-place winner was 23-year-old Tinenenji Banda, daughter of elder Kambani Banda and his wife, Shirley, of Zambia. At the time of writing the essay, Tinenenji ('Tine' for short) was a student in the University of Cape Town Law School. She is a member of the United Church of God.

Tinenenji keeps a very active schedule. She represented her school in the Model United Nations compe-

tion in Kenya and was a representative of her university in the All Africa Annual Moot Court competition in Tanzania. She has worked as a *pro bono* legal aid advisor in the university legal-aid clinic assisting indigent refugees, and has served as an aide at the Italian Orthopaedic Hospital in her native Zambia.

After being employed part time as a writing consultant in the Law Faculties Writing Centre in the Cape Town Law School, Tine is now doing an internship.

She is at present residing in London for three months and attending Sabbath services there.

Who Are the Living Stones?

*This is part 2 of our short series about the Church.
What does the expression 'living stones' mean in the Bible.
How can a stone be 'living'?*

Christ is working to produce tried and tested people to work with and under Him – to be living stones in His Temple, His spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).

In the New Testament the English word *living* comes from the Greek word *zoa*, which means 'to live or to be alive'. The same Greek word is used throughout the New Testament Scriptures when it talks about the 'living' God. He is certainly alive!

In reality, is it possible to have live stones and dead stones?

Stones are inanimate objects.

In that sense, they do *not* have life. But, in the profession of stonemasonry, those who work with stones consider certain ones to be live stones and others to be dead.

Living stones are those that can be used and worked with for building purposes. Others which cannot be profitably used for this purpose are labelled dead stones. Stonemasons can recognise the difference between a live stone and a dead stone. They have different characteristics.

A living stone is durable, has lasting qualities, and can support tremendous weight in a building. A living stone resists deformation from the weather, and other forms of exposure from the elements, and it is clearly suitable material for building construction. But a dead stone is usually decomposed, weathered and easily crushed. It is simply not suitable for building purposes as it cannot support much weight.

Living stones in the New Testament

If we figuratively transfer those qualities to human beings, how does the analogy apply?

God is working with His people, training them and developing those qualities of character that can bear the weight of responsibility in His coming Kingdom. The Church is a practical, on-the-job training ground, a place of learning and experience. God has the ultimate goal of preparing Christians for service in the coming Kingdom of God.

'You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 2:5).

With God's help true Christians are to be striving to learn and incorporate into their lives the same character and leadership qualities that Christ has. He is the Chief Cornerstone. So the other living stones in His temple should be aligning themselves with Christ and learning to conduct themselves just like He did and does.

Let's develop the analogy just a little further. When a stone has been selected to be used in a particular building, it is normally in a rough raw condition and must be tooled or cut to fit into the foundation or into the wall of the building. The stonemason does a lot of preliminary work before stones are really ready for fitting into the building.

In like manner, when God chooses to call people into His Church, to begin with they are rough stones that need a

considerable amount of work before they will fit smoothly into the place selected by the builder.

The Bible says: 'We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God' (Acts 14:22). A living stone in the Church will face trials and tests before entering the Kingdom of God and becoming part of the temple.

Notice Romans 5:3-4: 'We also glory in tribulations, knowing that *tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character, and character, hope*' (emphasis added throughout).

Here in these two Scriptures we see the moulding, the shaping and the preparation of the living stones taking place. In other words, through trial, through test, and Christian experience, our character is being developed to be like and aligned to the

Chief Cornerstone, Jesus Christ.

The work of the Master Builder

The apostle James tells us: 'My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that *the testing of your faith produces patience*. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing' (James 1:2-4).

Jesus Christ as a Master Builder is preparing us over time so that we may be perfected and complete – lacking nothing – a living stone fitting perfectly into the spiritual temple that Christ is building.

If I am one of these living stones (and I believe that I am), then I want to be a part of the Church that Christ is

building. I want to be part of this house that will last forever.

I want to be part of the greatest project that has ever been undertaken in the history of the universe. The universe is awesome. The earth is a creation of enormous magnitude. Mortal men have built great buildings, but God the Father and Jesus Christ are the Master Builders of a great plan that staggers the imagination.

They are taking fragile, limited mortal human beings, made of the dust of the ground, and changing them into immortal beings who will live forever as members of God's divine family.

And it is within the Church that true Christians as living stones can be moulded and shaped by Jesus Christ – turning each rough raw living stone into a beautifully crafted jewel (Malachi 3:17) – fit and ready for service when Jesus Christ returns to this earth.

Attending Sabbath services where possible

Now that we better understand the purpose of the Church, ideally what should be our approach to it? Our Creator gave a clear instruction in Leviticus 23:2-3: 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the

LORD, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *these are My feasts*. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, *a holy convocation*.'

Part of being fully involved with the Church that Jesus is building is to attend Sabbath services regularly whenever possible, within geographical and other limits.

***'You are a chosen generation,
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation . . . that you may
proclaim the praises of Him
who called you out of darkness
into His marvelous light;
who once were not a people,
but are now the people of God,
who had not obtained mercy,
but now have obtained mercy'
(1 Peter 2:9-10).***

A holy convocation is a religious assembly – a gathering of people coming together to worship God. Christ never did away with the command to observe the Sabbath day. When He was on this earth, He Himself followed His own instruction, originally given as the LORD of the Old Testament. (If you do not understand about Christ's pre-existence, please write for our free

booklet *Who Is God?*)

Luke 4:16 tells us: 'He [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, *as His custom was*, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.'

Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone and Head of the Church, setting the example for all to follow.

In the times in which we live, as the Master Builder of His Church Christ encourages us with these words: 'And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching' (Hebrews 10:24-25).

(To understand much more about seventh-day Sabbath observance, please write for our free booklet *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest*.)

Christ said He would build His Church. True Christians have been given the priceless opportunity to be part of His spiritual house, His spiritual home, that will last forever.

This is a major reason why I do my best to attend Church regularly on the Sabbath day.

*Reg Wright, elder
United Church of God, Australia*

Attending Saturday Sabbath Services

If you are interested in attending services of the United Church of God, held on the seventh-day Sabbath, you can write to us for a list of the locations and general details of our meetings. You can then ask for the time, date, and venue by telephoning the listed contact person, as the halls we use for our services are not always available. The dress code is smart, and we recommend bringing a Bible and notebook.

Meetings usually last about 1½ hours, and consist of two or three hymns, an opening prayer, a short message (10 minutes), announcements, a sermon (¾ hour) and a closing prayer. We enjoy fellowship afterwards, often with refresh-

ments provided by members of the congregation.

For those too far away to attend, sermons are available on audiocassette or DVD by request from our UK office. For those with broadband Internet connection, live services from the US as well as recorded sermons may be viewed or downloaded at www.ucg.org/multimedia. Messages from UK meetings are available in audio format at www.ucg.org.uk/multimedia.

As interest develops we plan to add more meeting times and places. If you are interested, please don't forget to write or telephone for details of services near you. We look forward to meeting you.

Questions & Answers

Q I enjoy *The Good News* as it makes me think about where I am headed. But my faith is up and down, depending on how life is treating me. I wish I were more patient and would let the Lord come into my life more. Yet the doubts don't stop. I sometimes believe that there is more to this life, but at other times I just hope that there isn't anything else. You never see or hear of any proof of life after death. I've lost friends who have promised faithfully to get in touch with some sign or message, but to no avail. I read in the Bible that the dead know nothing, so what is it all for? Do I have to die before I know the answer?

Mrs V K, Southampton

A Many of us have gone through experiences like yours. The first thing to consider is the trustworthiness of the Bible itself. You should request and read our free booklet *Is the Bible True?* as it gives many additional proofs of the inspiration and reliability of God's Word.

Addressing other concerns in your letter: Indeed the Bible does say that the dead know not anything (Ecclesiastes 9:5). Figuratively, death is likened to a sleep from which we awake at the resurrection. No wonder your deceased friends cannot contact you. They are asleep. Only God can awaken them, and

He will! The Bible assures us in many places that the dead will be resurrected (Daniel 12:2; John 5:25; 1 Corinthians 15, etc.).

You mentioned sometimes believing that there is more to this life. You are right! God has a great plan and purpose for the human family. This life with all of its experiences is but a preparation for the wondrous life to come. Much more about the purpose of humanity can be found in our free booklet *What Is Your Destiny?*

Finally we consider faith. It is a quality that you can only obtain from the living God. To see how, please telephone or write for our free booklet *You Can Have Living Faith*.

The United Church of God has published a substantial number of free booklets designed to answer questions and concerns like yours. If after requesting and reading these free publications, you have further questions, please let us know and we will be glad to reply.

Q How will everyone live in the world when all the dead rise? Will there be enough room on earth [for the second resurrection]?

Mrs A M, Kilmarnock, Scotland

A Seeing that the world's population presently numbers several billion, we sometimes forget that it has greatly expanded only during

the last century or so. To give you an example, when the Romans became masters of Britain in A.D. 43, historians estimate that there were only 100,000 indigenous people living on this island. When William the Conqueror took possession of England in 1066, the population had only risen to an estimated one million. Many other areas of the world have been relatively uninhabited.

The explosive growth of population in countries around the world has only been taking off in relatively recent times. Coupled with this fact we understand from Scripture itself that during the Millennium, 'The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice' (Isaiah 35:1-2) and 'The waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water' (verses 6-7). So we see that much more land will become arable and productive for man.

When we look at countries in the Middle East, Australia, the Americas, Africa, and Asia, we see vast areas of desert and wilderness. Jesus Christ as King of kings has all the divine power required to restore these wildernesses by merely changing the weather patterns where necessary.

(To understand more about the resurrections, please ask for our free booklet *What Happens After Death?*)

How our literature is funded

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Letters From Our Readers

The Good News

Thanks a lot for the biblical truths I learn from every issue of your magazine *The Good News*. Every year the world is becoming more dangerous to live in. World news doesn't lie. It's just like each year is one step closer to the prophesied end of man's age. But we must all look forward with great anticipation to God's government. Please find enclosed my donation for the Church and please continue my subscription to your magazine.

V V E, Jerusalem, Israel

Thank you for your kindness and generosity in so faithfully sending *The Good News* free of charge down through the years. I really enjoy reading it. One item I was especially interested in was 'The Privilege and Power of Prayer' by Don Hooser. I have read it twice and plan to read it again.

P W, Republic of Ireland

Disenchanted reader

Life is getting very problematic with sickness, old age, death and other distressing problems. I wish God had never created human beings in the first place.

D F, Luton

• *On occasion it is very human to become disheartened about life. Supremely desperate conditions before Noah's flood even made God Himself despair of man's behaviour. 'The LORD was grieved that He had made man on the earth and His heart was filled with pain' (Genesis 6:7, NIV). However, God was encouraged*

because 'Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD' (verse 8). Later Moses and Elijah also became discouraged under enormously stressful conditions. Yet the apostle Paul tells us all to 'Lift up the hands that hang down' (Hebrews 12:12). God has a great plan and purpose for all of our lives. Continue to seek God and ask Him to encourage you. He will!

I've been through tough moments at home, but by means of your literature I've been able to comfort my relations and myself.

M M, Zaragoza, Spain

I recently came across *What Is Your Destiny?* which has made my understanding of the Holy Bible much clearer than before. I thank God for showing me this booklet to read. I have read the Holy Bible two times, but my understanding was limited until I read the booklet mentioned above.

Reader from Papua, New Guinea

Help with Bible study

I am interested in doing Bible studies. I kindly wish you could send me information that would help me in regard to my study of the Bible. I am a practicing Christian, but I want to know more information.

Miss S M, Thornton Heath, Surrey

• *We have mailed our free booklet How to Understand the Bible along with lesson one of the Bible Study Course.*

Bible Study Course

I have just completed your *Bible Study Course* and received my final test paper results with my certificate

of completion, for which I thank you. Your course has given me invaluable help in my quest to be nearer to God. Your course is set out in such a way to stimulate active study with a gradual increase in understanding.

Although the test papers accompanying each lesson are entirely optional, I felt that the course would be incomplete if I did not answer and send the test cards to you. They proved to be a good incentive to continue my study. The course has certainly changed my outlook on life, and I feel a much better person now that I am closer to God.

Mr J R, Bude, Cornwall

Glad about baptism

Please find enclosed my return slip for the renewal of *The Good News*. I was christened as a baby and later confirmed in my early 30s, but over the last few years I have drawn closer to our Lord. Your *Bible Study Course*, which I recently completed, helped me on my journey, and realising how much my life has been changed, I wanted to fully commit and give my life to Christ [in baptism]. I did not realise how dying to myself and coming up again in Christ would make me feel. I am on cloud nine at the moment and just had to let you know. Thank you so much for helping me on my journey. I enclose another donation and hope many readers get as much joy and growth from your Church as I have done.

Mrs A P, Deal, Kent

• *Any of our readers who would like to study water baptism may write for our free booklets The Road to Eternal Life and Transforming Your Life.*