

## How the Church Fosters Greater Spiritual Growth

*Just exactly what is the Church? What is its purpose and why do you need it? The Church that Jesus Christ founded and directs can be a priceless tool for aiding personal growth.*

Jesus Christ loves His Bride – the Church. He ‘nourishes and cherishes it.’ Jesus has a close relationship with the members of His Church, describing them as ‘members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones’ (Ephesians 5:25-30). Christ is Head of the Church, providing loving care and leadership (verse 23).

The members of His Church, because they are still human, are far from sinless. But for those who are submitting and committing themselves to the Master’s rule over their lives, Jesus is very busy spiritually transforming them into ‘a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle . . . that [it] should be holy and without blemish’ (verses 26-27). How miraculous and awe-inspiring!

### What and why a Church?

The Bible describes the Church as a loving and zealous community of believers – those who communicate well with each other. God wants cooperative co-workers who work together in the gargantuan task He has given His Church.

Consider the circumstances of the early New Testament Church: ‘*Now all who believed were together*’ (Acts 2:44, emphasis added throughout). In the King James Version, the English word *together* appears 484 times. God likes togetherness!

What did Jesus say would be a primary identifying sign of His followers? ‘By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another’ (John 13:35). In the Bible, love includes unselfish actions of service. How can Christ’s disciples serve one another if they don’t know each other and aren’t together? Hebrews 10:25 emphasises the need of, *wherever possible geographically*, ‘assembling of ourselves together’

The preceding verse, Hebrews 10:24, stresses the need to ‘stir up love and good works’ among one another. Through Christian fellowship with other believers we encourage, strengthen, comfort and help one another. God knows that it’s difficult to survive spiritually on our own – that we need the support and encouragement of fellow brethren.

The focus of Church services or Bible Studies should be about worshipping God and learning more about His Word and way of life. Paul describes the Church as the ‘pillar and foundation of the truth’ (1 Timothy 3:15, New International Version). The Church is the primary source through which God’s biblical truth is taught.

But another focus of the Church is on giving of ourselves to one another. ‘We know that we have passed from [spiritual] death to life, because we love the brethren . . . By this we know love, because He [Jesus] laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren’ (1 John 3:14, 16). The most common fulfillment of ‘laying down our lives’ is that we give of our time to the brethren.

Members of God’s Church should be striving to become like Jesus Christ. Each member is a ‘work in progress,’ endeavouring to be ‘transformed’ by God and gradually conforming to the image of His Son (Romans 12:2; 8:29).

God expects those He has called to His Church to love, forgive and encourage other brethren.

## Becoming a member of God's Church

Surprisingly, an individual cannot 'join' the Church on his or her own. First, God must call or draw you to Christ (John 6:44-45). You become a member of God's Church when 'the Spirit of God dwells in you,' as Paul put it. He explains that: 'If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His' (Romans 8:9). 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God' (verse 14). Paul also wrote: 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised [immersed, inserted] into one body' (1 Corinthians 12:13). That one body is the body of Christ' (verse 27; Colossians 1:24).

But how does one receive the Holy Spirit? As is explained in the free booklet *The Road to Eternal Life*, once a person has repented of his or her sins and has been baptised 'for the remission [forgiveness] of sins,' he or she will 'receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:38) through the laying on of hands of God's ministry. The Holy Spirit sets apart or sanctifies the convert as a new child of God. That is why the Bible frequently refers to members of God's Church as saints (1 Corinthians 1:2, etc).

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, 'For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ' (2 Corinthians 11:2). God's forgiveness cleanses us of sin, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit leads us into God's righteousness.

At the return of Jesus Christ, the saints will be raised in a resurrection to eternal life and glory (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54). The 'marriage of the Lamb' to His betrothed Bride will then take place (Revelation 19:7). The Church of God then becomes the Kingdom of God. In this present age it is the Kingdom in embryo.

## Defining the Church and its mission

Jesus Christ said that part of His

earthly mission was to 'build My church.' He began by training 12 disciples and other followers (Matthew 16:18). The Greek word here translated 'church' is *ekklesia*, or 'those called out as an assembly.' So someone has the authority to summon them to an assembly. Church services are called holy convocations in the Bible, referring to the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days (Leviticus 23:2-4). The word convocations means commanded or appointed assemblies. They are 'holy' because God has so designated them. God expects His people, whenever possible, to attend.

Illness and economic or geographical circumstances can be legitimate inhibiting factors. However, spiritual lethargy is not an acceptable excuse to God. Christ commanded us to seek God's Kingdom as a basic priority in our lives (Matthew 6:33). This is for our spiritual well-being. This is part of

### *Much of today's Christianity consists of syncretism, a blend of ideas from many ancient religions.*

the abundant life that Christ promised His people (John 10:10). The Bible tells us to attend whenever possible. We need the encouragement of others (Hebrews 10:24-25, emphasis added).

Jesus established the precedent to His disciples (and all future disciples) regarding their basic mission: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you*' (Matthew 28:19-20).

Christ told Peter three times to 'feed My sheep' (John 21:15-17). Later, Paul reminded the elders to 'shepherd the Church of God' (Acts 20:28). This primarily means to teach and preach the Word of God, stressing its practical application in our daily lives (2 Timothy 3:14-17; 4:2).

The United Church of God, publisher of *The Good News*, remains deeply dedicated to fulfilling this twofold commission – to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God in all the world and to shepherd and nurture the members of God's Church.

## Preaching and practising biblical teaching

We in United Church of God fully believe that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God' (2 Timothy 3:16). Christ's followers must be 'doers of the word, and not hearers only' (James 1:22; Revelation 14:12).

The Bible is full of warnings to beware of deceitful teachers who don't teach Christ's gospel message (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15; Matthew 24:4-5). Much of today's Christianity consists of syncretism, a blend of ideas from many ancient religions. Jesus expects His Church today to follow the same principles it did in the first century (Hebrews 13:8).

The Church described in the Bible obeys every one of the Ten Commandments (James 2:10-11; Revelation 12:17). This includes the Fourth Commandment to observe and remember the day that God made holy at creation (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11).

All places in the Bible that mention the weekly Sabbath mean the seventh day of the week, Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Weekly worship services should be on the seventh day, the day God made holy. (Our free booklet *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest* gives abundant biblical proof).

We warmly invite all who are interested to speak with one of our elders. Please ask us for the contact number of the nearest pastor of a congregation. (Church office telephone: 01494 875003; email: [info@ucg.org.uk](mailto:info@ucg.org.uk))

*Don Hooser, elder*  
*Article adapted from*  
*The Good News, 2007*

# The Sacrifice of Christ

## *How Important Is It?*

*Many ask why God doesn't do something about the tragic events that constantly plague this present evil world. The simple answer is that God the Father has already done something: He sent His Son into the world to suffer and die for the sins of all men and women (John 3:16).*

The Father sent Jesus Christ into this world for one overriding purpose. Jesus accomplished many other important goals – such as building His Church (Matthew 16:18). But His sacrifice for our sins remains of capital importance. Without Christ's sacrificial death, our salvation simply would not be possible. It is the first and foundational step in God's great plan for humanity!

All true Christians owe their righteous standing before God to Christ's supreme sacrifice – the shedding of His blood so that men and women could be forgiven of their sins, and be reconciled to God the Father.

### **An important biblical teaching**

But surprisingly, Christ's sacrificial death is not the simplest biblical teaching to truly understand and comprehend. Otherwise why is more space devoted to this subject than any other event or doctrine in the New Testament?

Many aspects of this biblical doctrine are not only carefully explained by the apostles Paul and Peter – and also by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These men were first-century witnesses to the all-important events that played out in the Holy Land.

Every Christian (and every prospective Christian) needs to understand the massive significance of the sacrifice of

Christ – comprehending it in great detail. The other vital steps to salvation, that naturally follow in God's overall plan are all firmly based on Christ's death in order that our sins could be forgiven.

Sin is serious (both intrinsically in itself and in its horrendous consequences). Yet Christ's sacrificial death can completely conquer, neutralise and blot out sin.

### **Others don't understand**

Most Christians would generally accept this truth. But what about the unchurched? Did you ever consider Christ's sacrifice from his or her point of view? How puzzling and even naïve it might seem to those unfamiliar with the basic teachings of the New Testament.

### *'Christendom has hidden the face of Christ from us.'*

Nearly 2000 years ago a Jewish man was crucified with two other men condemned to die – and yet His death achieved something of such potency that its effects stretch as far backwards in human history as it is possible to go – and as far forward as the last man on earth – and on into eternity. He stated: 'If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to Myself' (John 12:32,

KJV). To the outsider this claim might seem preposterous – particularly if one is brought up in another of this world's religions.

Strictly from a secular standpoint, He lived His life in a relatively unimportant corner of the Roman Empire ruled by a cruel provincial governor. Except for a few very helpful accounts, Christ's presence was virtually ignored by secular historians of His own time. How could this Person possibly be said to occupy the very centre of history?

In brief this is one task faced by the Christian Church: To warn and convict a sceptical world that the risen Christ of the Bible is the only solution to all the problems of the world – personally, nationally and globally. This message is not only to outsiders, but those lukewarm within the Church who have

forgotten that their old sins were purged and behave very much like their secular contemporaries. Their behaviour has been no commendation for Christ's gospel. As an outsider once observed, *'Christendom has hidden the face of Christ from us'* (emphasis added throughout).

The apostle Paul lamented: 'For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ . . . who set their minds on earthly things' (Philippians 3:18). Christ plainly said: 'You cannot serve God and mammon' (Matthew 6:24).

These scriptures clearly show that a lukewarm, selectively obedient believer stands as an enemy of the cross of Christ and His atonement for our sins.

## Opposition from several sources

True Christians are sometimes called on to defend the gospel message. Opposition to the truth of God comes from many sources – religious, ethnic, cultural and political. Both Paul and Peter defended the truth and expected others to follow their example (Philippians 1:16; 1 Peter 3:15).

The proclamation of Christ's gospel and His sacrifice was a scandal to many in the Jewish community, and sheer foolishness to considerable numbers of so-called sensible Gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:18-25). The story of the first-century Church was one of defending and explaining God's truth to the religious establishment, the secular world and Roman civilisation. There were many hostile detractors.

In principle we face the same realities in today's modern world. Problems that confronted the early Christians have continued to raise their heads, sometimes in new guises. We can learn a lot from the sensitive manner in which the apostles dealt with the difficulties of their day.

Outsiders will often find the true gospel almost incomprehensible. That is why the apostle Paul, in his approach and presentation to preaching the truth, sought to become all things to all men (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). He confronted pagan worshippers at Lystra and the Greek philosophers in Athens differently from those who were already very familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures.

One person asked: 'How can a meal shared with His disciples be linked to His execution? Can it save? Is it correct to view that execution like

the sacrifice of an animal, that in some ways excuses the sins of entire generations?'

This is an example of how an uninformed 21st century person may view the sacrifice of Christ. Many today simply do not understand how the grace of God applies to sinners.

## The manifold grace of God

An often-unrecognised key to understanding the sacrifice of Christ and the grace of God is given in 1 Peter 4:10. Peter wrote: 'As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.' This passage tells us that God's grace has many aspects. The Greek word for 'manifold' is *poikolos*. Among its meanings are all the colours of the rainbow, divers, different, various, and many-faceted. God has many ways in helping us with our

## *Many today simply do not understand how the grace of God applies to sinners.*

multi-faceted human problems.

Although only Christ can cause our sins to be forgiven – *He and He alone* (Hebrews 1:3) – Christians can use their varying spiritual gifts to help administer the grace of God to one another – and to some extent to unbelieving outsiders. Christians become 'ambassadors for Christ' and have an integral part in the 'ministry' or 'word of reconciliation' *even though only Christ Himself can reconcile us to the Father* (see 2 Corinthians 5:17-20).

## Christianity a partnership

True Christianity plays out as a religion of partnership. God the Father and Jesus Christ do something for us that we cannot do for ourselves in order to get us started on the road to eternal life. But from then on we all

have our own part to play in the redemptive process. To those already converted, the apostle Paul wrote, '*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*' That's our obedient part. But then he immediately adds, 'For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure' (Philippians 2:12-13). Paul's emphasis on human responsibility goes hand in glove with our fundamental dependence on God's grace and favour.

God's grace takes many forms, and our Creator has numerous ways of dealing with our sometimes seemingly unresolvable problems. He is the master tactician. God is your loyal, very supportive partner in the salvation process.

But it starts with something that we cannot do for ourselves as helpless sinners. We cannot redeem ourselves from the deadly effects of sin – the transgression of God's law (see 1 John 3:4, KJV).

Like the grace of God, the effects of the sacrifice of Christ have many aspects. One particularly important facet of His sacrificial death is redemption from sin. A future article will explain this subject thoroughly.

While Christ's sacrifice as an atonement for sins remains the first and most basic step in our salvation, *it is not the only one*. Most people do not understand the importance of God's annual Holy Days and festivals. Yet, they explain the inescapable unity of God's master plan.

To understand much more about the magnificent future fulfillment of our Creator's purpose for humankind, ask for or download our free booklet about *God's Holy Day Plan*. An early chapter explains Christ's Passover sacrifice, including partaking of the bread and wine. Later chapters show how we must do our part and how peace will finally come to our troubled and chaotic planet.

*John Ross Schroeder  
(to be continued in an upcoming issue)*

# Is Meat Only a Matter of Diet?

*Media in the British Isles have generally focused on the fraud aspect of the horsemeat controversy. But the biblical issues were largely ignored.*

Most people have a view as to what they will or will not eat. Too many do not eat sufficient fruit and vegetables. Strict vegetarians choose to abstain totally from meat and meat products. Others refuse to eat certain kinds of animals for reasons of sentiment, personal preference or religious belief.

## The horsemeat scandal

The ongoing scandal in the European Union concerning horsemeat passed off as beef has highlighted the cavalier attitude of some in the meat trade towards the sensibilities of their customers. Britain, in particular, has no tradition of eating horses, or many other creatures for that matter.

An article in the Mail Online suggested this was due to the introduction of Christianity into Anglo-Saxon England, when horsemeat was apparently declared to be pagan (February 20, 2013). However, this would seem to be at variance with other Christian countries such as France, where horsemeat is traditionally eaten. Some churches have been much closer to that found in Scripture. There is evidence that indicates the aversion to horsemeat in Britain came in through Celtic Christianity rather than Roman Catholicism. Certainly it seems Scotland and Wales, where Celtic Christianity thrived until the eleventh century, retained an abhorrence for pork until comparatively recently.

As various authorities proceed with their investigations into the current crisis, it appears to be primarily processed meat products that have been found to be adulterated. Perhaps these failures in

the food network were due to a combination of deliberate fraud, incompetent paper trails, and/or a naïve belief on behalf of retailers that if the EU paperwork says it is beef, then it must be beef and there was no need to test it for any other products. Apparently some companies haven't tested for horse DNA for ten years (*The Sunday Times*, 10 February).

Environment Secretary Owen Paterson claims there is no health risk to eating any of the other meats con-

*If all creatures were created to be eaten, why did God go to great lengths to distinguish between clean and unclean animals in the time of Noah?*

tained in the contaminated products. However traces of the drug known as 'bute' (phenylbutazone – an equine anti-inflammatory painkiller) have been found in the human food chain. The Food Standards Agency is calling for more testing on products found to contain horsemeat since, 'The drug is banned from the food chain, because it can cause blood disorders in humans' (*The Daily Telegraph*, 12 February).

## Did God create all animal flesh for food?

Is it correct that all flesh is fit for human consumption? Were all creatures created to be eaten? If this were the case, why did God go to great lengths to distinguish between clean and unclean animals in the time of Noah, just before the Flood? He required that seven pairs of clean animals were taken into the ark as opposed to only one pair of those ani-

mals designated as unclean (Genesis 7:2, 8).

In His dealings with the Children of Israel, God gave even more detail concerning the differences between creatures that He declared could be eaten and what was to be considered 'unclean' (see Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14).

These laws were still in force when the apostle Peter was shown a vision of a sheet of unclean animals and was told to kill and eat (Acts 10:9-16). Some

misunderstand what the vision meant and conclude that God was telling Peter that all food was now clean. However what God actually said was 'What God has cleansed you

must not call common.' The word 'common' has a completely different meaning from 'unclean,' which is a very much stronger term. 'Common' was used to describe gentiles and implied ordinariness, and a lack of holiness. 'Unclean' meant 'foul.'

The apostle Peter did not immediately assume that the vision meant he could eat any animal flesh (verse 17). In fact he refused to eat these unclean creatures. Following this vision he was called to visit the gentile Cornelius, with whom God was working. It was then that Peter understood that the vision had nothing to do with food-stuffs, but with human beings (Acts 10:28). Peter's previous attitude to gentiles showed that he had considered them not only 'common' but 'unclean' as well. God had spoken of gentiles only as 'common' – and He could cleanse them through conversion.

As an additional proof that God's

laws on clean and unclean meats are extant today, prophecy continues to speak of certain creatures as being 'unclean' right up to the time of Christ's return (Isaiah 66:17-19; Revelation 18:2). These passages would be meaningless if all meat were to be considered fit to eat.

## Overview of biblical distinctions

With reference to land mammals, the distinctive features given by God are that a clean animal has to both chew the cud and have a cloven hoof (Leviticus 11:3-7). This excludes horses, rabbits and pigs, but does

include cattle, sheep, goats, deer and members of the antelope family.

Clean fish have scales and fins. The list does not include seafood like shellfish, as toxins lodge in their flesh. Thus many people become ill after eating such creatures.

Clean birds include traditional farmyard fowl – turkeys, chickens, ducks and geese.

Can we now ignore these laws because we feel we are medically advanced enough to treat any diseases we may catch? Or do improved cooking processes mean that any toxins in the flesh of certain animals will be destroyed? To investigate further,

please request or download our free booklet *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?*

In addition to the plain biblical instruction concerning meats, the basic principle taught by God's Word is that we should mind what we eat in general, as a basic health issue.

To understand more, download or request our free booklet *Making Life Work*. The chapter on 'Keys to a Long, Healthy Life' begins on page 46. This publication will show you how to build and maintain good physical and emotional health.

Barbara Fenney

# Living by Every Word of God

During His temptation by the devil, Jesus Christ enjoined us: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God' (Matthew 4:41). This presents an incredibly difficult task for the most diligent Christian, but even more so for those who are unfamiliar with God's words as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

For many millions, God's Word is unexplored and uncharted territory. Yet the Bible is not only designed to help humans cope in a world caught up in all kinds of crises, it also contains the good news of the Kingdom of God – showing how God will solve the many problems of a world edging ever closer to catastrophe and bring everlasting life to all who seek it and are willing to follow Him.

Only the Bible gives us the answers to life's crucial questions: Why are we here? Where is the world headed? What does the future hold?

Our eye-opening 12-lesson *Bible Study Course* will make the Word of God come alive as it leads you through the biblical answers to these and other questions.

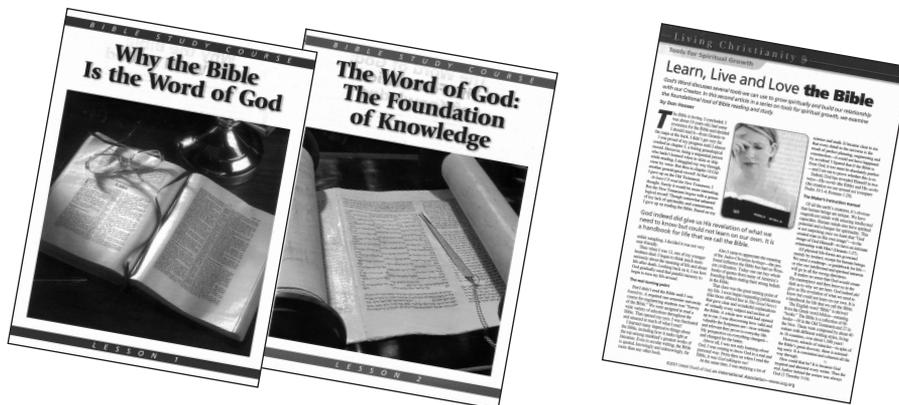
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abroad in our hearts' (Romans 5:5). We also need the faith of Jesus Christ in us (Galatians 2:20). Our own faith is insufficient for the task. The faith of Christ in us is a gift (Ephesians 2:8). Love and faith are also fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Spiritual fruit is something that is produced

**Q** How can someone come out of habitual sin? You know you don't want to do it again, but you find yourself going back to it.

*B M, London*

**A** This problem assails all human beings, even Christians who genuinely want to put sin out of their lives. The apostle Paul struggled with it (Romans 7:14-25), the apostle John said we all sin (1 John 1:8-10), and James explained how we are tempted (James 1:12-15).

But how can we resist temptation and overcome sin? There are a number of steps we need to take.

Firstly we should truly desire to change. If we do not then we will be like the smoker who knows he or she should quit, but doesn't really want to enough to take decisive action. Deep yearning to bring our lives in line with God and Jesus Christ is a vital part of repentance and conversion.

Secondly, while we may be able to make certain changes of our own volition, we need to acknowledge that we are not strong enough by ourselves to overcome sin in all of its forms. For that we need 'the love of God shed

by human effort but also by God's grace and blessing.

We need to take the time to get closer to God. James says: 'Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you' (James 4:7). Submitting and resisting take effort on our part. '*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you*' (verse 8, emphasis added throughout).

The apostle Peter also exhorts Christians to 'resist him [Satan], steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world' (1 Peter 5:9).

We need God's strength to help us in this battle to overcome Satan and sin. Our Creator will help you! Christians and prospective Christians can all get closer to God through meditating on God's Word. Keeping our minds more on the things of God and less on the things of the world can help us avoid many of the ravages of sin (Colossians 3:1-10; Matthew 6:33).

Thirdly, there are other tactics. Becoming aware of the circumstances in which we slip up, means we can become aware of the temptation before it becomes an enticement (see James 1:14). In some cases changes to our lifestyles, routines or habits may help

us to overcome a particular problem.

Deeply rooted sins can creep up on us, so the sooner in the process that we cry out to God for His strength in overcoming the problem the better. He will help us walk away or do whatever is required to defeat it. Then the temptation is less likely to conceive and bring forth sin (James 1:15). The apostle Paul stated: 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, *bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*' (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Keeping close to God through prayer and Bible study can help us avoid many of the sins that so easily ensnare us (Hebrews 12:1). He will answer when we call and provide the help we need. However, we do need to realise that the desire to sin can be almost overwhelming at times. If there were no battle, we would have no need to overcome. And if we make no effort to overcome ourselves, we shall still fail. Spiritual growth remains a partnership with God and Christ. Paul wrote: '*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure' (Philippians 2:12-13).

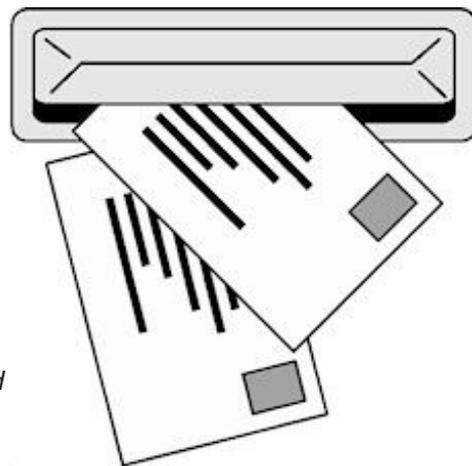
We need to analyse our failures and repent of them, looking to where we need to make changes and then move forward trusting God to help us stumble less and less until the sin is finally defeated.

For information on conversion, ask for our free booklets *The Road to Eternal Life*, *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion* and *You Can Have Living Faith*.

### **How our literature is funded**

The United Church of God – British Isles is registered as a charity in England and Wales (number 1079192), and in Ireland (CHY17954). The publication of this Supplement and other literature is funded by the generosity of members of the Church, co-workers and our readers. Following Jesus Christ's instruction (Matthew 10:8), it is supplied free of charge so that His message can be made available to all. We are grateful to those who assist financially in the work done by *The Good News*. Donations may be sent to: United Church of God, PO Box 705, WATFORD WD19 6FZ, United Kingdom, or donated online at [www.ucg.org.uk/donate.html](http://www.ucg.org.uk/donate.html) through Paypal or Charity Choice.

# Letters from our readers



## **‘The Apostle Paul: Commandment Keeper or Commandment Breaker?’**

Thanks for all the lovely articles being sent to me. This has been a great blessing to my Christian growth. This last topic, ‘The Apostle Paul: Commandment Keeper or Commandment Breaker,’ really opened my mind. And your booklets have brought about a special influence over my way of living. I am closer to God on a daily basis.

*J A, London*

Thank you so much for the lovely booklets we ask for. We love to read and study them. In the world today, most people just want for themselves and ignore the needs of others. [Our] church gives very little teaching, but your booklets are wonderful, which give us new hope. You are in our prayers each day.

*Mr & Mrs A D, Bolton*

- *You may wish to request our free booklet The Church Jesus Built. It clarifies much confusion concerning the churchianity of this world.*

## **The Good News**

Thank you for your DVDs and for *The Good News* magazine. I read every article with interest. It tells me things that I would not get elsewhere, even though sometimes it’s not always good news, but it is the truth! I have enclosed a donation.

*C D, Chard, Somerset*

Thanks so much for the teachings that I receive from *The Good News*, which are biblically based. These are helping me to understand the Bible.

*J M, Bradford*

Your magazines are a true blessing

during these times of secular disharmony. Could you please change my address as designated.

*A P, Alexandria, Scotland*

- *We really appreciate it when a reader lets us know of an address change as soon as possible.*

## **Growing and overcoming**

I have been a Christian man more than ten years now, but continue to struggle on how to effectively live out an effective Christian moral life. I trust that God will perfect me if I completely trust in Him. But being a mature adult, I struggle with lust and impure thoughts, making me feel guilty all the time. Having read *The Good News* and especially the topics concerning these aspects, I am now equipped and have gained insight into dealing with these strongholds.

*Reader from Northampton*

- *For further help, please see the Q&A on page 7 of this issue.*

## **Bible Study Course: Lesson One**

Just to thank you for the wonderful opportunity offered to study the Bible course. It is very helpful and inspiring, one of the best studies I have ever had. It really helps me to understand more about God and how to develop a closer relationship with Him.

*G A F, London*

## **Lesson Four**

I was born into a conservative family to ever-loving parents, blessed with other family members and friends. We were faithful Buddhists. As I was growing up, I attended temple eagerly. After my marriage and the end of my work, bad things happened. Then one

day in August 2005 I met a Christian, which was the turning point in my life. God had planned this meeting. My life was changed.

*D S P, Hounslow, Middlesex*

## **God’s Holy Day calendar**

Thank you for the offer of the two booklets, but I already have both. However, I could do with an up-to-date copy of the booklet, *God’s Holy Day Plan*. In the centrepiece of this booklet that I have already received, there is a list of the annual festivals of God beginning in 1999 and ending in the year 2012. I have found this very helpful in planning for the Holy Days. I am hoping that you can supply me with a list for future years.

*J P G M, Thetford, Norfolk*

- *We have posted the current edition of God’s Holy Day Plan to you. The festival dates from the year 2010 to 2023 are listed on pages 28 and 29. Other readers may wish an updated copy as well.*

## **Help with spreading the true gospel**

I enclose a cheque for your ministry. Certainly you did not ask me to give you anything, but out of the abundance of God’s blessings on me through His Word, do I make this donation. Your publications are so revealing and transforming to me. It is therefore a joy and pleasure for me to give this token offering.

*O K A, London*