

## As Britain Celebrates a Royal Wedding Another Royal Marriage Awaits Christians

*Weddings are usually times for rejoicing, but marriages, even royal ones, often end in sadness and recriminations. However, the Bible reveals that there will be a future marriage lasting through all eternity. Christians preparing for that glorious marriage renew their commitment to the Bridegroom at the annual Passover service.*

Joy and celebration have greeted numerous royal weddings in Britain in the 64 years since the present Queen (then Princess Elizabeth) was married to Philip Mountbatten, who took the title Duke of Edinburgh. Some were high profile, such as that of Lady Diana Spencer and HRH Prince Charles, others of lesser-known members of the extended royal family were less so.

While the marriage of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip has stood the test of time, sadly others starting out with high hopes of a 'happily ever after' marriage, have ended in divorce – including the late Princess Margaret and three of the Queen's own children. Perhaps this is a reflection of the deteriorating state of matrimony in the country as a whole. Pomp and ceremony cannot counter failing human relationships.

Naturally, there is an air of public excitement in anticipation of William and Kate's marriage. We all hope that

the future King William V and his Queen Catherine (or perhaps always Kate in the minds of the populace) will have a happy marriage, and may that prove to be the case.



Official portrait photograph for the engagement of Prince William and Miss Catherine Middleton by Mario Testino. (Copyright 2010 Mario Testino).

For all the antipathy from some quarters against traditional matrimonial standards, not to mention the spiralling costs of weddings in general, stable family units, based on durable marriage ties and commitments, remain the bedrock of a strong and healthy society.

### Christ and the Church

Notwithstanding the vagaries and uncertainties of human nuptials, where too often God is left out of the picture altogether, marriage is of great importance to our Heavenly Father. This greatest of human relationships, instituted by God himself at Creation (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6), is intended to reflect the love, joy and commitment to be experienced for all eternity between Christ and his Church. In one of his epistles, the apostle Paul, when discussing marriage explains, 'This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church' (Ephesians 5:32).

In the book of Revelation this future

union is described in terms of a ‘marriage supper’, where ‘the bride has made herself ready’ (Revelation 19:7) and is dressed in white representing the righteous acts of the saints.

Similar terminology is used in Matthew 25:1-13, where Christ likens himself to the bridegroom and explains that only those spiritually prepared will go in to the marriage banquet.

Christ is even more specific in Matthew 9:15, when speaking of His disciples. He said, ‘Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.’

### **Espoused to Christ**

Continuing his theme this time in his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul speaks in terms of the Church being a chaste virgin, betrothed to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2). At first

### *The marriage between Christ and His Church will be on a spiritual plane.*

sight, this may seem to us to be a strange way to refer to a relationship that can never be a marriage in the physical sense. However, there is a similar metaphor of God’s relationship with the nation of Israel used in the Old Testament which can shed some light on what these Scriptures mean.

In Isaiah 54:5, the prophet writes to the Israelites, ‘For your Maker is your husband.’ Similar imagery is used in Jeremiah 31:32. Other Old Testament scriptures indicate a parallel between the covenant made between God and Israel and a marriage agreement. When Israel consistently went astray after other gods, God divorced her (Isaiah 50:1).

In the marriage of His Son, there will be no repetition of the sadness and disappointment which God experienced

in His relationship with Israel. The marriage between Christ and His Church will be on a spiritual plane, where those constituting the Bride will have proved themselves faithful while still human, through surmounting testing and trials with Christ’s help. No longer mortal, they will have been resurrected, or changed to spirit-plane beings, at the return of Jesus Christ to this earth (1 Corinthians 15:49-56; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

### **Many spirit-plane children**

The aim of this royal marriage will be to bring as many children as possible into a family relationship with God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ. In essence, these will become the spiritual offspring of that marriage.

The starting point for those physical human beings called to salvation in a future general resurrection (Revelation 20:5,11-13) will be the same as for the firstfruits called now to become

part of the Bride – repentance, faith in Christ and His sacrifice, baptism and the laying-on-of-hands for the receipt of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-39). This must be followed by living a life committed to over-

coming the self, learning the ways of God and Jesus Christ and putting them into practice (2 Peter 3:18).

Every Passover is an annual reminder of what God the Father and Jesus Christ have already done for us and their sure promise of a glorious future. As we take the symbols specified in the New Testament, following Christ’s example, we renew our commitment to God, looking forward to the Passover’s ultimate fulfilment in the Kingdom of God at the marriage supper (Luke 22:15-18; Revelation 19:5-9).

While we are sure everyone will wish the future king and queen of this nation every happiness in their marriage, such events can also help remind Christians of greater things up ahead in the spirit realm.

*Barbara Fenney*

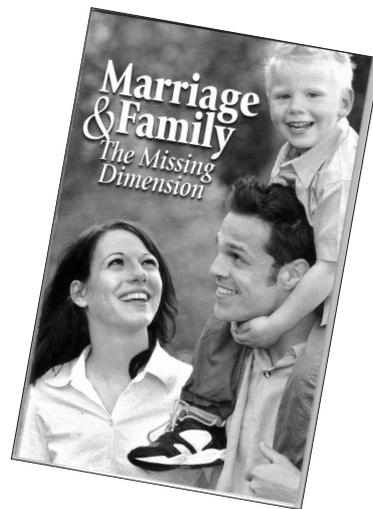
## **The Tragedy of Neglected Children**

The Bible says that ‘children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is his reward’ (Psalm 127:3, NASB).

Sadly the blessing of offspring sometimes seems not to be appreciated in British society. In a recent debate over the proposed closure of Sure Start Children’s Centres, which support parents and carers, Frank Field, MP, the government’s poverty adviser, outlined some of the issues that had come to his attention during research for Prime Minister David Cameron. Mr Field reported that ‘Children are regularly starting school without knowing their name or how to open a book,’ (MailOnline, 5 March 2011).

The Bible explains that children require nurture, training and instruction from their parents. But above all they require love, or they could grow up as innocent victims of neglect.

For more information and advice on this important subject, please request our booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*.



# Christ's Spiritual Journey to Jerusalem

*How well do we understand the meaning behind Jesus Christ's sufferings?  
Do we truly appreciate His sacrifice for our sins?*

Jesus entered our world for more than one reason, but perhaps His chief purpose was to save us from our sins, reconciling us to God the Father.

Most believers comprehend something of Christ's sacrifice. But often real depth of understanding is missing. We can be thankful that the biblical writers can help us fill this gap.

How well do we grasp the nature of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins? Do we deeply comprehend the suffering and the agony He endured for our sake? Christ wants every Christian to fully appreciate what He went through for our sins to be forgiven. To help us grasp the supreme importance of His sacrifice, let us accompany Jesus on His journey to Jerusalem – not in a geographical or chronological sense, but mentally and emotionally, as He approached the time when He would complete the fulfillment of the basic purpose of His humanity.

## **A strong sense of mission**

From early in His ministry Jesus had a strong sense of mission (Luke 2:49-52). By age 12 He was speaking of God as His Father and showing a strong conviction to occupy Himself with His Father's will. He knew He had a great purpose. Nearly 20 years later, when He was with His 12 disciples, Mark recorded that 'He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again' (Mark 8:31).

Christ soon discovered that the 12 were not fully able to grasp this knowledge. They were not yet converted. They apparently still looked to Him as one who, as the Messiah, would immediately deliver the nation from Roman rule. In any event, Jesus had to rebuke Peter for letting himself be used by Satan to try to divert the true Anointed One from His ultimate purpose (verses 32-33).

Jesus faced near-total rejection from

## *Do we deeply comprehend the suffering and the agony Christ endured for our sake?*

the religious establishment. 'He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him' (John 1:11). Humanly, He would undoubtedly have liked to receive some empathetic encouragement from those closest to Him. Jesus repeated the prophecy of His approaching death in Mark 9:31, 'but they [the disciples] did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him' (verse 32).

Because of His acute understanding of the purpose of His last visit to Jerusalem, He had to make that final journey to His beloved city virtually without any empathy and understanding.

## **His last journey to Jerusalem**

'Now it came to pass that when the [general] time had come for Him to be received up [crucified], that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem'

(Luke 9:51). Jesus was determined to carry out His mission. Nothing and no one would deflect Him from His purpose. Satan had already tried and failed (Matthew 4:7-11), but now the pressure would increase and intensify. It would be in this city that Christ would allow Himself to be put to death for our many sins, making it possible for us to be reconciled to God the Father.

Jesus' final date with destiny as a human being had been much on His mind throughout His ministry.

Yet even His own brothers could not grasp His dilemma. When He was in mortal danger from the religious authorities, His brothers foolishly advised Him to show Himself 'openly . . . to the world' (John 7:4). Then John noted that 'even His brothers did not believe in Him' (verse 5). Jesus' reply to them is instructive. 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil' (verses 6-7). This world, He said, breaks God's holy law with impunity and does not like to be reminded of its sins.

Yet this Gospel account tells us that no one up to that time had been successful in arresting or harming Him 'for His hour had not yet come' (John 8:20). But Jesus knew full well that when the appointed time did arrive He would experience a violent, premature death – yet a death that was profoundly significant for the future of all mankind.

## A fate foretold

Humanly, Jesus was no different from the rest of us. He didn't want to die (Matthew 26:39). But, unlike most of us, He knew well in advance the time and circumstances that would surround His death. He knew the exact mode of execution – one of the most cruel and painful methods ever devised by men, the Roman crucifixion (John 12:32-33). In His travels He had no doubt seen the gruesome spectacle of men dying by crucifixion. Such executions were intended to be a public deterrent to challenging Roman authority.

Psychologically, this advance knowledge was no comfort to Jesus. Rather, it had the opposite effect. As His fate drew near He lamented: 'Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say, "Father, save Me from this hour?" But for this purpose I came to this hour' (verse 27).

Do we, 2,000 years later, truly grasp the depth of Christ's sufferings for our sake? Do we realise what our sins, collectively and individually, did to this sinless and vibrant young man, our Saviour, in the prime of His human life? Not only the humiliation, the terrible beatings and the crucifixion itself, but the mental anguish He suffered was agonising.

This was to be no ordinary death. Jesus knew He had to take the sins of the whole world – past, present and future – on Himself. He did for us what we could never do for ourselves.

## Christ's agony at Gethsemane

Arriving at the Garden of Gethsemane and taking Peter, James and John with Him, Jesus asked the other disciples to wait while He prayed. 'Then He said to them: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch." He went a little farther, and fell on the

ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will"' (Mark 14:34-36).

At the time of His greatest agony up to that time, His most trusted friends could not even stay awake. They were not much help, but the Father strengthened Him by sending an angel (Luke 22:43). Then, with fixed determination and renewed resolve, He said to the disciples, 'Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer [Judas Iscariot] is at hand' (Mark 14:42). His suffering continued with the humiliation and scourging that soon followed.

Later, in the last few moments of His human life, 'Jesus cried out with a loud voice . . . "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"' (Matthew 27:46). Though sinless, Jesus at His

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death took on Himself all the sin of all humanity for all time. The awful penalty had to be paid. In the end of this great trial, Christ had to bear the weight of our sins absolutely alone. Christ's sacrifice was an act of supreme selflessness under the most difficult of circumstances. He willingly chose to give His life for us. This was heroism in the highest degree possible.

That is why Christians must never take His sacrifice for granted. We must not forget the ultimate price Jesus paid to blot out our sins. Our appreciation for His sacrifice must endure forever.

## Annual reminder of Christ's sacrifice

How important does God the Father consider Jesus' sacrifice? The Scriptures

tell us that He has worked out a marvelous plan to remind us year by year of this most important act in all history. The explicit instructions Jesus Himself gave, along with those of the apostle Paul, show that the annual Passover should be the most significant date on the calendar of every Christian. When we observe it, as Paul wrote, we 'proclaim the Lord's death till He comes' (1 Corinthians 11:26).

In a figurative and spiritual sense and to a small degree, Christians have to walk the path to Jerusalem with Jesus every year. We are reminded of the part our own sins played in His death by crucifixion.

Paul tells us that *before* we participate in this annual reminder we must examine ourselves (1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5), knowing we must struggle with 'the sin which so easily ensnares us' (Hebrews 12:1).

Following Christ's example and instructions, Christians partake of a small piece of unleavened bread followed by a sip of wine, the symbols Christ gave to remind us of His sacrificed body and shed blood (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

The annual Passover observance is also a reminder of our sacred covenant with God – that, as He willingly gave His only begotten Son as a sacrifice for our sins (John 3:16-17), so we have willingly surrendered our lives to Him to obey His will (Romans 6:6-13).

The Bible provides basic instruction on other very important observances rehearsing the essential steps that follow in God's plan. (Request or download our free booklet *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*). But the reminder of and acceptance of Christ's sacrifice, marked by the annual Passover, will always be the crucial first step.

*John Ross Schroeder*

# Why the Bible Is the Word of God

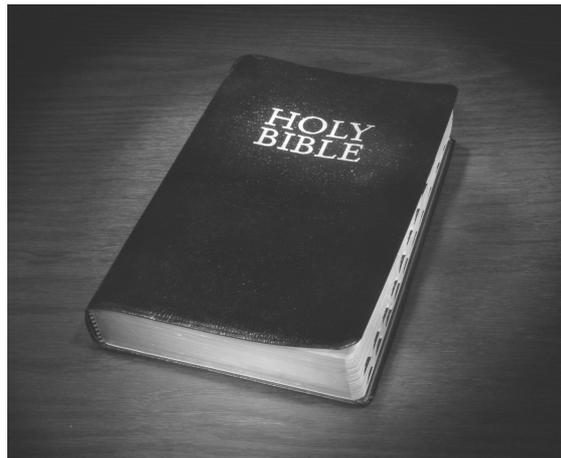
*The 400th anniversary of the King James Bible reminds us of a time when the people of these islands regarded the Bible as God's inspired Word. Perceived then as the only authority on doctrine and morality, does the Bible still contain a vital message for readers today?*

The Authorised Version of 1611 remains the most printed and influential of all English translations of the Bible. Encouraged by some Puritan theologians of the day and commissioned by King James I of England, the new Bible was to be read in all Church of England congregations.

The Protestant Reformation was in full swing leading up to this time, and church authorities encouraged reading of the inspired Scriptures. Chained Bibles were attached outside churches and key public buildings. Literate citizens would read passages of the Bible to the majority of people who were unable to read. God's Word was made accessible to the general public. Although the reading of the Bible in any translation was very dangerous in pre-Protestant England, it was now officially sanctioned by the authorities.

But it wasn't long before disagreements arose among Protestants on how far to go down the road of restoring 'the faith that was once delivered' (Jude 3). There were disputes about the question of whether the introduction of Sunday as the weekly rest day introduced by the Roman Catholic Church earlier in its history should be retained, or whether the seventh-day biblical Sabbath should be restored and kept as Jesus Christ and the New Testament Church kept it (Luke 4:16; 23:56; Hebrews 4:4-9). Then there was the issue of law or grace, leading many

reformers to the wrong conclusion that the Ten Commandments weren't required to be kept. The Roman Catholic doctrine of heaven and hell came under scrutiny as well as the doctrine of the Trinity, a word nowhere found in Scripture. (For further information about these doctrines, request our free booklets about *Heaven and Hell*, *The Ten Commandments* and *Who Is God?*)



## Long-established traditions took precedence over God's Word

The Protestant Reformation saw a much-needed reform of what was believed to be a corrupt church that had introduced its own traditions and discarded the doctrines of the Bible. But many reformers were unwilling to go all the way in restoring the true 'faith once delivered' and found it easier to compromise. After many centuries of having embraced false doctrines, forced upon

them by a universal and powerful church, the brightness of the truth revealed in God's Word blinded their eyes. Just like some 1500 years earlier among the Jewish people in the Holy Land, stated so elegantly by a New Testament apostle, 'The light shines in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it' (John 1:5).

Many of the doctrines and beliefs that churches hold are in error, seeing that they did not really allow God's Word to have the last word on the vital questions concerning salvation.

Today, the existence of hundreds of denominations with different doctrines and practices demonstrates that there is disagreement on what the Bible actually teaches. Clear biblical truths are watered down, theologians often rationalising that these truths are no longer applicable in an age of no moral absolutes.

You might ask yourself, how well do you know the Bible? Can you prove that your Christian beliefs are actually found in God's Word? The King James Version of the Bible and the more modern New King James are good translations to use in finding out for yourself whether or not your beliefs are truly biblically based. Perhaps you grew up confused by the differing views on morality, on which day is the Christian Sabbath, on key Bible prophecies and man's obligations before the Almighty. You owe it to yourself to find out what the Bible

actually reveals on these vital topics.

## Henry VIII as Catholic monarch

The 16th century certainly saw a time of religious turmoil. There was a surge in questioning the beliefs and dogmas of the universal Church of Rome. Martin Luther was one of the earliest and most famous among Protestant reformers, at first zealous to cleanse the mother church of false doctrines and corrupt behaviour. After visiting Rome and finding the Church not really interested in any internal reform, he soon broke with Rome, hiding and in fear for his life in Wartburg in eastern Germany.

Luther's break with Rome came to the ears of Henry VIII, king of England. At this time of his life Henry was still a staunch defender of the Roman Catholic faith. Henry addressed a letter to Luther, critical of the German's reformer's fight with Rome. (Luther had been critical of the Roman Church as exemplified by the 95 Theses [short dissertations] directed at the Roman Catholic Church.)

The king of England's intervention made no difference to Luther's continued criticism of the Roman Church. Nonetheless, Henry's zeal for Rome was rewarded by Pope Leo X in 1521 who speedily gave him the title *Fidei Defensor* (Latin for Defender of the Faith), the initials of which (FD) are still found on sterling coins and commemorative medals to this very day. Of course, it wasn't long before Henry VIII himself turned his back on Rome, but for totally different reasons to those of Martin Luther.

It was Luther indeed who stated that he would embrace 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth' of the Bible. Perhaps so, but if Luther's doctrines and concepts were biblically sound, we would find his teachings backed up by the Bible. You would be hard pressed to find Luther and the

Bible in agreement on key doctrines and beliefs. It was a time for reforming what had been regarded as a corrupt church with non-biblical doctrines and practices. It was also a time for compromises, for not 'rocking the boat' too much, with the result that numerous concepts of the Old Church were retained and absorbed by Protestants.

## Deciding which doctrines are biblically sound

In Old Testament times Moses told the Israelites to 'live by every Word of God' (Deuteronomy 8:3), and in the New Testament Jesus Christ referred to that particular biblical passage when stating that it remains the duty of every human being to do just that (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). But if we are to live by the Word of God, we need to understand what it mandates.

Challenge yourself! Open the pages

## *Modern translations like the New King James Version have their proper uses as well.*

of the Bible and see whether the religious views you have grown up with from childhood are actually biblical in origin. If you haven't already enrolled in our 12-lesson *Bible Study Course*, you may wish to do so now. There is no charge.

Once we study God's Word we will see that much of what is taught in Christendom has much more to do with man's traditions than with the Word of God (see Mark 7:5-13). And a good portion of those traditions are of very questionable origins. For example, Christmas has nothing to do with the 'Mass of Christ,' nor is it the date of Christ's birth. The apostles never once commemorated His birth. Also, instead of celebrating Easter Sunday, the first-century New Testament church observed the New Testament Passover

with the new symbols that Christ commanded His disciples to keep (1 Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:23-29). Only the Passover truly represents that particular period of time when Jesus gave His life for the sins of all mankind.

The word Easter itself, according to a famous early medieval historian, is identified with the Anglo-Saxon spring goddess, Eostre (Bede, *Church History of the English People*). The German word for Easter, *Ostern*, is equally traceable to the same spring goddess, as pointed out in the German Etymological Dictionary, *Der Duden*. 'The name of the festival of the resurrection of Christ was, prior to the conversion of the Germans *the name of [a] spring festival of a pagan spring goddess*' (emphasis added).

This spring festival was so powerfully ingrained in the lives of our non-Christian forefathers among the Angles and Saxons that it was difficult to eradicate it from the religious calendar. So the church officials left it in place, but gave it a Christian window dressing. (This process is called syncretism.)

But the Bible expressly forbids using outright pagan religious festivals in an attempt to honour Christ (Deuteronomy 12:30-32). Further understanding is readily available upon request in our free booklet *Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Observe?*

The King James translation of 1611 is a good and accurate version. Although it is more than sufficient for finding out what the Bible teaches, as well as showing how you can fulfil your obligation to God and receive the gift of everlasting life, modern translations like the New King James Version have their proper uses as well. Over time the language has changed and we often need to read and study the Bible in more modern English.

Gerhard Marx

# Questions & Answers

**Q** Do you believe in justification by faith, being under grace, not law? (Romans 3:19-28).

*J L, Coulsdon, Surrey*

**A** Justification is by faith and we are saved by grace (see Acts 15:11). In Paul's letters the focus of justification is mostly on the acquittal of guilt. But justification – being declared free from guilt – does not instantly make us mature Christians. Both Paul and Peter make it very clear that growth in godly righteousness is a process requiring time and experience (2 Peter 3:18).

That process starts with repentance and baptism, 'For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ' (Galatians 3:27; compare Acts 2:38). But attaining the mature righteousness of Jesus Christ is a goal toward which we must continue to strive throughout our Christian lives. It is not bequeathed to us instantaneously, but comes through a spiritual growth process we learn from the Scriptures.

'He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*' (Ephesians 4:11-13, emphasis added throughout).

When we are forgiven we must strive to behave in a righteous or just manner from that time forward. In other words, the faith required to be justified must be confirmed in our actions. As James explains: 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was

made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. You see then that *a man is justified [made just] by works, and not by faith only*' (James 2:21-24).

However, James' words do *not* in any way imply that forgiveness of sin is earned by one's works, as Romans 3:19-28 clearly shows. James is only confirming that, once forgiven, we must continue in righteous living. Notice how Paul puts it: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; *for it is God who [actively] works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*' (Philippians 2:12-13).

Once forgiven, one's status in God's eyes is that of a 'just' or 'righteous' person. But much character building still lies ahead. A justified person is not to take his or her righteousness for granted. It must be increased according to the example of righteousness set by Jesus Christ. Each child of God is expected to grow toward 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.'

All this does *not* mean that if a Christian sins after real conversion, he or she loses salvation. 'If we [Christians] walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we [Christians] say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. *If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*' (1 John 1:7-9).

Yet spiritual growth and overcoming sin clearly continue to be required of every Christian (Revelation 2:26; 3:21). 'He who says he abides in Him [Christ] ought himself also to walk just as He [Christ] walked' (1 John 2:6).

To understand further, be sure to request our free booklets *The Ten Commandments* and *The New Covenant: Does It Abolish God's Law?*

**Q** What is the United Church of God's view of the Holy Sacrament? Aren't we to receive it regularly in remembrance of Jesus?

*J M, County Wicklow, Ireland*

**A** A more biblically correct term is the *Passover*. The New Testament reveals Christians continuing to observe all the annual biblical festivals at the times commanded by God. As a youth, Jesus observed the Passover annually on the specified day (Luke 2:41), and He continued the practice with His disciples.

The early Church did not add to or change the dates God ordained for His festivals. 'As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,' simply means, 'every time you eat this bread and drink this cup' (1 Corinthians 11:26, New Living Translation) – that being once per year at the Passover.

The Bible specifies the yearly observance of the Passover as was the practice of the early Church. *Passover is a memorial of Jesus' death*. It is to be observed annually. All of the other biblical festivals are also to be kept once a year.

Following the example of Christ and the apostles, we should observe the Passover at the beginning of the evening of the 14th day of the first month (Abib, or Nisan) of the Hebrew calendar, which is Sunday, 17 April this year.

Keeping the Passover each year reminds us that God forgives our sins and grants us eternal life in His Kingdom through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). For a more complete study, please see pages 9-17 of our booklet about *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*, available free of charge.



# Letters From Our Readers

## **The Good News**

God's timing is perfect! I was about to post the other comment sheet to you, when through the letter box popped the January-February *Good News* with the invitation to request the *Marriage and Family* booklet. As newly-weds it will be of great value to us.

*S M, York*

Thank you very much for the recent copies of *The Good News* and *World News & Prophecy*. I found them enlightening and encouraging. As a recently baptised Adventist, I am still learning about our Heavenly Father and His wonderful plan for us. Reading your magazines has helped me enormously to understand that the Bible remains God's instruction book for man – not just for religious-minded people, but for every human being.

*C M M, London*

Thank you for continuing my subscription to *The Good News*. God blesses my family every day and in these troubled times our faith can sometimes be stretched. But any doubt is soon taken away by reading God's Word and any of the many booklets you have sent me. Please accept the enclosed donation.

*R F, Birmingham*

My husband has found your magazine very interesting and insightful. He

is currently serving a prison sentence in Sheppey for no fault of his own. I am hoping your magazine will give him something to look forward to.

*L C, Sandwich*

## **Bible Study Course**

Thank you so much for this lesson ['What Is Christian Conversion?'] about the simplicity of God's Word, presented so that conversion can be easily understood, as it is sometimes unclear. But this study [Lesson 8] has given me the confidence to explain it to others.

*C R, Bedford*

I cannot express how excited I am with this study course. I do read the Bible, but this study has actually opened my eyes to much of the depths of biblical knowledge I should have as a Christian. Thank you for opening up this great opportunity and privilege.

*S A, London*

## **Bible Reading Programme**

Thank you very much for the *Bible Reading Programme*. The notes are very helpful and lead to a better understanding of the Bible, and add greatly to the interest. An offering is enclosed.

*Mrs H B F, Kettering*

## **World News & Prophecy**

Your magazine is very informative, useful, tells the truth as it is and is passed on to several friends (on loan).

It is greatly appreciated.

*Mr W J M, Isle of Wight*

The plain English of your material makes it very interesting reading. Nowhere else in the United Kingdom is it so clearly and plainly reported.

*Mr D J C, Walsall, West Midlands*

## **United Church of God**

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity in distributing freely your literature about the good news of the Bible. I have spent many enjoyable hours reading this literature about God and I am strengthened and renewed every time. May God always bless your organisation in doing the wonderful work of the Lord. May the light of glory always shine on you as His Church.

*S M, County Longford, Ireland*

## **Prayers for member**

Thanks so much for enabling me to continue studying, even with my health problems and difficulty attending Church. I appreciate the DVDs I have received and the prayers of the brethren. I'm hoping to be able to attend Church again soon if I get the all-clear from the consultant, and that would be so good. I miss everyone so much.

*M R, Manchester*

• *The United Church of God brethren gladly continue to remember you in their prayers.*

## **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.