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Beliefs of our Fathers: Jesus Christ

Chapter 2

This continues a study on the beliefs of our forefathers, based largely on the Dordrecht Confession of Faith from 1632. This section tells about Christology, or the study of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 16:15–17)

Introduction

The study of the person and nature of Jesus Christ is called Christology. Christology answers the question: Who is Jesus Christ? It is not sufficient just to know about Jesus. James 2:19 tells us that *the devils also believe, and tremble.*

Of all the religions throughout the world, Christianity stands out as the only one whose God is a living God. All other religions worship or lift up men who have died, or they worship an idol who has never lived. Even though Jesus Christ had died, death was unable to hold Him

in the grave. No other religious leader in this world possessed the power to rise from the dead or the power to forgive sin and erase guilt. Personally knowing Jesus Christ is essential to your relationship with God the Father. It will also influence your understanding of the Holy Scriptures, of salvation, of the world around us, and of yourself.

What the Anabaptists Teach

On April 21, 1632, in Dordrecht, Holland, leaders at a Dutch Mennonite conference adopted the Dordrecht Confession of Faith. It contains eighteen articles of faith stating what the Anabaptists believe about major doctrines of the Bible. Following are a few excerpts that speak about the person of Jesus Christ.

Article 1

There is “one eternal, almighty, and incomprehensible [too wonderful to understand] God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in none more, nor in any other; before whom no God was made or existed, nor shall there be any after Him. . . . He is the Creator of all things visible and invisible.”

Article 3

The belief that with God “there was yet a means for their reconciliation [making peace], namely, the immaculate [unblemished] Lamb, the Son of God, who had been foreordained [planned before] thereto before the foundation of the world . . . that He by His coming, would redeem [buy back], liberate, and raise the fallen race of man from their sin, guilt, and unrighteousness.”

Article 4

Regarding the coming of Christ into this world and His purpose we find that “the Word Himself became flesh and man; that He was conceived in the virgin Mary, who was espoused [engaged] to a man named Joseph, of the house of David; and that she brought Him forth as her firstborn son, at Bethlehem, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.”

He is “God’s only, first and own Son; who was before John the Baptist, before Abraham, before the world; yea, who was David’s Lord, and God of the whole world, the first-born of every creature; who was brought into the world, and to whom a body was prepared, which He yielded up as a sacrifice and offering, for

a sweet savor unto God, yea, for the consolation, redemption, and salvation of all mankind. . . . He is the Son of the living God, in whom alone consist all our hope, consolation, redemption, and salvation, which we neither may nor must seek in any other. . . . [Jesus] was crucified, dead, was buried, and, on the third day, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven; and that He sits on the right hand of God the Majesty on high, whence He will come again to judge the quick [living] and the dead.”

Martyrs Mirror First Confession

Another Anabaptist writing held in very high regard is the *Martyrs Mirror*. This book contains many stories and incidents regarding persecution from the time of Jesus until 1660. Also in this book are some of the Anabaptist confessions of faith including the Dordrecht Confession. A few other confessions of faith are listed that were prior to the one at Dordrecht. The First Confession was “drawn up at Amsterdam” on September 27, 1627, and is called “Scriptural Instruction.” The Second Confession, called “Confession of Faith, and the principal articles of the Christian doctrine,” is from October 7, 1630. Consider this excerpt taken from the First Confession:

“For although the blessed Lord Jesus Christ is the only meritorious [deserving] cause of the justification of man, their adoption by God as His children, and the foundation of their eternal salvation, God, the heavenly Father, of whom all things are, and who is the true Father of the whole family in heaven and earth, has nevertheless been pleased to impute [credit] the merits of His Son Jesus Christ

to man, and make him partaker of the same, through the means of faith in His beloved, only, and only-begotten Son; whereby He owns them as children, and adopts them as heirs of everlasting life, according to the testimony of John, who says: ‘He’ (that is, Christ) ‘came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God’ (John 1:11–13).”

In both the Dordrecht Confession of Faith and *Martyrs Mirror*, the statements regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ are accurate. The problem arises not so much in what is written, but in our understanding of what is written. It is important that our relationship with Him becomes much more than a distant association with a figure from the Bible who was written about by others.

The above statements tell us that our eternal destiny, heaven or hell, rests solely in and on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Do we really believe what we say we believe?

Some important points to notice:

First, according to the articles of faith, Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, in whom alone rests all our hope of salvation. We must know Jesus.

The second point is taken from the First Confession. Jesus Christ is the only deserving cause of justification. It is His righteousness that is imputed to us, but it comes only by knowing and accepting Him and the finished work on the cross. It is the free gift of grace.

Often what we say we believe is not demonstrated by the way we live. This is the difference between knowing about Jesus and entering into a personal relationship with the living Savior. Knowing about Jesus amounts to facts we learn about a historical figure. This type of knowledge doesn’t always change our lives. Knowing Jesus moves Him from our head to our hearts and dramatically impacts our lives.

The holy Word of God is very clear regarding the full identity of Jesus Christ and the importance of knowing Him. While articles of faith and other religious documents offer much good information, God’s Word is the only truth that has not been distorted by the corruption of the fallen man as recorded in Genesis 3.

What the Scriptures Teach

Jesus Christ as the second Person of the Trinity—the Son of God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1–2)

God the Son, as part of the Trinity, has always existed, just as the Father and the Holy Spirit have. As part of the Godhead (the Trinity), Jesus is the eternal Son of God. He always was and always will be. *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* (Colossians 2:9). He is the revelation of God. No one has seen God at any time and lived (John 1:18; Exodus 33:20). God has never shown Himself without being veiled. In Christ, God was veiled in human flesh.

While on earth, Jesus spoke often about His preexistence, saying things like,

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Before Abraham was, I am (John 8:58). On His last evening with His disciples before going to the cross, He said, *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was* (John 17:5). Even John the Baptist bore witness of him, saying, *This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me* (John 1:15). John wrote, *And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God* (John 1:34).

Even before His human birth, Jesus enjoyed a father/son relationship with God the Father. John emphasized the importance of this relationship between God and His Son by restating that the Word was with God. God and Jesus, along with the Holy Spirit, are perfectly one in purpose, in power, and in character.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works (John 14:7–10).

This is similar to what a perfect marriage should look like, that while the husband and wife are separate human beings, they are so aligned and in communion that they are one unit. Take a look John 17, and you will see a beautiful, intimate prayer that the Son prayed to His Father, revealing their perfect relationship.

Jesus Christ Is Creator of the Universe

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was

made (John 1:3). *For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him* (Colossians 1:16).

The truth of God's Word leaves no question that the Father created all things through His Son. Not only was Jesus allowed to create all things, but the Father also gave Him authority over all things. Hebrews 1:1–3 says it this way: *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

The resurrected Jesus confirmed this fact before He ascended to heaven, saying, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth* (Matthew 28:18). He demonstrated this power over creation with His signs and miracles while on earth. He calmed a great wind storm, and *the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!* (Matthew 8:27). Jesus even proved His authority over the spiritual world when He entered the country of the Gergesenes, where He cast demons out of a man. These demons recognized Jesus as the Son of God and knew He had authority over them. The demons cried out, saying, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* (Matthew 8:29).

Jesus Was Born of God and Born of a Woman

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The “incarnation” is the word we use to describe the Son of

God being made flesh in the body of Jesus. *He is the [visible] image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature* (Colossians 1:15). Each born-again person becomes a son or daughter of God (John 1:12), but Jesus is the first Son, the only begotten of God, and has privileges over us. He is higher in rank. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name* (Philippians 2:9).

Jesus' mysterious and miraculous birth, which is humanly impossible to explain, was foretold from Genesis to the Gospels. *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us* (Matthew 1:23). Every prophecy of His birth came to pass exactly as the Father said it would. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ is not to be treated lightly. It proves His deity (that He is one with God) and His humanity (that He came as a man). This is yet another mystery we do not need to fully understand in order to believe.

The incarnation made it possible for man to see, touch, and experience God up close—at least for those who lived during His lifetime on earth. Jesus said in John 8:18–19, *I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me . . . if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.* We don't need to see and touch Him to experience and know Him. Many who saw Jesus in that day still did not believe He was the Son of God (John 6:36), but *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed* (John 20:29). He is God's Word, and we can know Him personally by asking the Spirit to reveal Him to us as we read the Holy Scriptures.

Even though Jesus is one with God, He willingly submitted to the will and authority of His Father to function as the Son, saying, *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me* (John

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6:38). His earthly parents had a hard time dealing with the fact that He was under the authority of His heavenly Father when, at a young age, He said, *I must work the works of him that sent me* (John 9:4). As a child, He submitted to the fifth commandment by obeying His parents (Luke 2:51), experiencing humanity in its fullest, with all its limitations. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* (Philippians 2:6–8).

Can you imagine Jesus holding back His godly powers in order to identify with our humanity? Spiritually, He voluntarily became poor so that we could become rich with eternal life. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Jesus became a man and walked among us as a man. He experienced all the trials, temptations, and tribulations we experience in our daily lives. He overcame all of them without ever giving in to sin, and He was crucified on the cross as a sinful man. He obeyed every command laid out in the Old Testament law. He was the only perfect man to walk among us, but He died as one who had broken the law. He was a man who could be *touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin* (Hebrews 4:15). He knows and understands our pain and helplessness. He suffered humanity in order to make us free from it.

Jesus Is Our Example

When the Bible says that Jesus is *the firstborn of every creature* (Colossians 1:15), it also means that He is the first man born who is the example of God's

purpose for man. Jesus showed us what a real man is—what Adam was created to be. Jesus was the only righteous person to ever walk this earth—the only human being able to keep the whole law. He was a leader, a guide to others, and a counselor. He had more wisdom than Solomon and He always told the truth, yet He made himself a servant of all. He showed us what could be done when we under the control of the Holy Spirit.

It is impossible to cover all the wonderful truths of Jesus Christ in this one chapter, yet as a man, Jesus demonstrated all the beauty and perfection of the Godhead, as listed in Galatians 5:22–23: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*. This can be summed up into one word: love. God's love is so powerful that it is considered the one quality Jesus said would prove to the world who His true disciples are. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another* (John 13:35). His incarnation showed the image of God to mankind—what we were created to be but could not be without His Spirit within us.

Jesus Is the Redeemer of Mankind

His earthly name “Jesus” was a common name. It is the same as the Hebrew name “Joshua,” and its meaning, “God saves,” is very fitting. The word “redeem” means to buy back. By offering His own body on the cross, Jesus paid the sin debt of death for all mankind. That is why we can give thanks unto the Father, *who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins* (Colossians 1:12–14).

Jesus could never have accomplished man's redemption if He had not been born into the human race. God's law demanded a blood sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind. Only as a perfect law keeper could He have satisfied God's

demand for redemption. As God, He is eternal and could not have been killed on the cross without a body of flesh and blood.

Jesus' role as Redeemer was proved by His resurrection from the dead. The Father accepted Jesus' death in our place. To the Jewish leaders, Peter said, *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel [and to us], and forgiveness of sins* (Acts 5:30–31). The story of Ruth in the Bible is a beautiful picture of our redemption through Christ.

Jesus Is High Priest

Under the Old Testament law, God could only be approached by man through an animal sacrifice. The high priest's job was to make atonement for the nation of Israel—first for themselves, then for the people. This atonement was good for only one year at a time. It had to be repeated year after year until the Son of God arrived. *But this man [Jesus], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood . . . seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. . . . Who needeth not daily . . . to offer up sacrifice, . . . for this he did once, when he offered up himself* (Hebrews 7:24–25, 27).

Jesus did not need to atone for His own sin, and as the perfect Lamb of God, His sacrifice endures forever, leaving no further need for animal atonements. Under the New Testament, we are free to approach God without an animal sacrifice, because God the Father was satisfied with the atoning power of Christ's sacrifice.

As High Priest, Jesus Christ is our mediator. He is a go-between to bring peace between two parties, as stated in 1 Timothy 2:5: *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*. As mediator, He is also our advocate. An advocate speaks on behalf of the people he represents. When Satan goes before God to condemn

believers, as he did with Job, Jesus reminds him that He has atoned for their sin and has clothed them in His own righteousness, making them acceptable before God. He freed them from Satan's power. *And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous* (1 John 2:1).

Jesus Is Head of the Church

As head of the Church, Jesus is its authority. God *hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church* (Ephesians 1:22). Believers must follow His instructions for the purpose of the church and for Christian living, putting Jesus first in everything they do. *For he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence* [first place] (Colossians 1:18). Through Christ, God is glorified by the church. *Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.* (Ephesians 3:21). He is the living Savior and the object of the church's worship. He loves the church as a man should love his wife. He gave His eternal life to the church. His desire is to find the church loyal to Him at His coming, as a chaste virgin.

Jesus Is King and Judge

The Bible talks about many kingdoms, such as God's rule over all the earth, which Satan disrupted; His rule over the Jewish nation, which He had to set aside for the time being; His rule over the church; and His future earthly and heavenly rule: *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end* (Luke 1:32–33).

Jesus spoke of this kingship before Pilate. *Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world* (John 18:37). Romans 8:34 says that after Christ rose from the dead,

He went to sit at His kingly seat at the right hand of God, showing that Satan's reign was overthrown—another purpose of the incarnation. Even his title, Messiah or Christ, is translated as “the anointed one,” referring to His kingship.

Christ's restored kingdom over the earth will begin upon His return to earth. He will come again as a man in His glorified body. *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven* (Acts 1:11). It will be fulfilled as it says in Revelation: *I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. . . . And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God* (Revelation 19:11, 13).

As king, Jesus will destroy His enemies and this earth with wars and judgments. As judge, He will judge whether the souls of men are loyal to Him by faith in the gospel, divide the tares from the wheat, and declare who will spend eternity in heaven and who in hell. *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man* [Jesus] *whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead* (Acts 17:31). The resurrection of Jesus proves that the redemption of man was completed—the atonement was accepted—and that is what gives assurance to all believers that they will be raised to meet the Lord and received by God in the end. Hallelujah!

Conclusion

Without the virgin birth, Jesus would be just another man. Without His shed blood, we would still be separated forever from God the Father. Without the resurrection, Jesus would be dead, and His death would be useless to give us grace. Never

before nor since in the history of our world has one man been able to cause such transformation in the lives of mankind. Of course, this is no earthly transformation. This is a supernatural change in the heart of each one who places his trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. Jesus is the only one able to give us real life, because He is the giver of life. Oh, may we have the same goal that the apostle Paul had in Philippians 3:10: *that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.*

Prayer

Father, we come before you with thankful hearts. Thank you for the amazing gift of eternal life through your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for opening the way to come before you in prayer through the body and blood of Jesus. As we read and study your Word, open our hearts to know Jesus in a personal way. Write your truths and the depth of your riches deep in our hearts. Help us in our unbelief. Father, grant us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in our knowledge of you and your Son, Jesus Christ. Open the eyes of our hearts so that we might know the hope of your calling and the glorious riches of our inheritance through your Son. Give us eyes to see the exceeding greatness of your power toward us and the working of your mighty power when you raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at your right hand forever. Amen.

Do your beliefs line up with our Anabaptist forefathers?

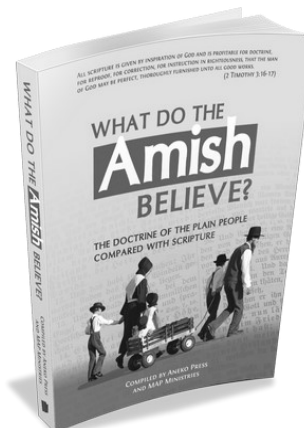
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How Much?

—By Ann Detweiler



*This poem was written for all the little children and women who were not believed when they disclosed their abuse experience to someone who could have taken the steps to stop it from happening again. My heart bleeds for you. I am so sorry. I pray that God would bring someone into your life to walk beside you and show you who Jesus really is.

How much is a little girl worth?
The question hangs in the air.
I cannot help but wonder
How Christians can't more care –

About the stories of abuse
We hear many a time.
I cannot stay in silence,
For doing so is a crime.

She tried to tell adults
But no one did believe,
That the man she said had hurt her
Could such evilness conceive.

The evil kept on happening,
And each time it got worse.
Till she didn't know the difference
Between good and perverse.

She did her best to protect herself,
Though her efforts were in vain.
Because no adults choose to see
And protect her from more pain.

But one day, she found Jesus.
It was hard to comprehend
What Jesus thinks about abuse
When abusers they did defend.

“How much am I worth?”
She sobbed into His shoulder.
He gently lifted her face to Him,

And this is what He told her:
“I am not like the people,
Who turned away their face
From the open wound in your soul –
Your innocence erased.”

“I do not blame or shame you,
It was not your fault.
There was nothing you could have done,
To stop the evil assault.”

“Rest here, my child, on My lap,
And let me fight for you.
I promise to bring healing,
And in my time, justice too.”

And so I ask, again, my friend:
How much is a little girl worth?
Will you be like my Jesus,
Or will more evil birth?

—Ann Detweiler Peachey

Healing Process

As we enter adulthood, we might be excited or a bit nervous. Heading into the unknown can create excitement and nervous anticipation. This is how it was for me when I was to take a job as a live-in nanny. The folks came to interview me. That's when I backed out. It was far from home, and I did not know them at all. Dad gave me a scolding after they left. I rarely received such a tongue-lashing from my dad, so the wound went deep for me.

I'm realizing that there are hidden bones in the closet that need healing, although I received a lot of healing from my abusers. I thank God for that. Also, I forgave my tormentors. My husband would say that I am healed, but I know that we are in the healing process as long as we live.

—Grace

My Safe Place

—By Norma Miller

All I ever wanted . . . just four little words, but those words are packed to the gills with meaning. When they dare to be uttered, their source is daring to bare their heart and soul to give you insight into their deepest desires. And usually following those words comes a story—a story of crushed hopes and dreams.

What was that? What did I want? All I ever wanted was to be safe—safe and secure and protected (Well, I might have wanted a bit more than that). Oh, the topsy-turvy rides I have gone on with the Lord on this topic.

Safety and security always seem to elude me for some reason. I still flounder around at times with this whole protection thing. I just wanted life to behave, to be predictable. I figured an orderly God would plan everything neatly ahead so I would know what was coming next and could map out the next five years in advance. Right? I mean, doesn't that sound like God to you? Wrong! A song I know says, “Come away with Me, come away with Me....I have a plan for you, I

have a plan for you—it's gonna be wild, it's gonna be great, it's gonna be full of Me.” Jesus is a bit on the unpredictable side, I have found.

I have also found He is not overly concerned about how comfortable I feel. He is more concerned that I find Him as my Security, my Protector, my Shelter, my Rock, my Safe Place. My Safe Place (said with a satisfied sigh).—yes, I run to HIM now when life is determined to run me through a torrent of rapids, or something unpredictable happens yet again, or when it feels like all is a big pile of shambles.

He truly is my Protector, and He is so good at what He does! Surprise! He never lets me down. I often let Him down by not trusting Him right away, but He just gives me another shot at it later!

Yes, He has taken me on quite the wild goose chase through the years. My life has been a crazy dance of running around trying to find safety, or creating it—and

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cleaning my house was one way I tried to fix everything. That way I had at least one safe, predictable place to hide.

I did all I could to fix everything in my life and to make it look good so I could feel like all was well. But if anything messes with my little plans, it felt as if the world was caving in. Jesus Himself pulled a couple of those landslides off just to see what I would do. His watchful eyes followed as I scurried around, all in a tizzy, trying once again to fix it all and

make it all behave. Then He chuckled and pulled the next little string. He knew how I was wearing myself out. He knew how tiring that was, and He wanted to show me a better way.

This is how I became intimately acquainted with the scripture in Matthew where it says, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light* (Matthew 11:28-30).

His yoke is not us trying to scurry around doing it all in our own strength, wearing ourselves out in the process. His yoke is sweet—when we submit the problem to Him and then submit ourselves to Him and walk alongside him. It’s not burdensome this way. His yoke truly is easy and His burden is light.

All I ever wanted was to feel safe—and oh, the journey I have been on and the bunny trails I went on as I was looking for it! I have found it in His sweet embrace as I learned that He truly is so very safe and trustworthy. —Norma

Legalism—Worse Than Adultery

—By John Weaver

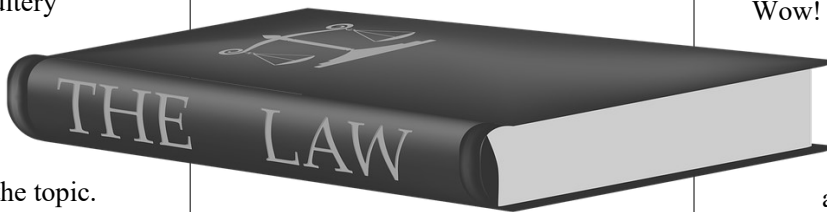
The word “Legalism” is defined as, “Excessive adherence to a law or formula.”

Stressing obedience apart from faith produces legalism. In John 8, we read about how a group of Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus with a plan to trap Him. They told him they caught the woman in the act of committing adultery and that, according to Moses’ commandments, she should be stoned. Then, they asked Jesus what He would say about the topic.

The first thing I would like to point out about Jesus’ response is that he did not condone adultery; He told the woman to not do it anymore. It is important to notice, however, that he focused on what he considered to be the greater sin of the situation: the legalistic, accusing attitude that the Pharisees had. Jesus knew first hand where that sin of accusation came from. He knew Satan, and He knew that he was the one behind the accusations.

Jesus was faced with two sins: one was adultery, and the other was religious figures accusing a brother, or in this case, a sister.

To the one, Jesus clearly said that he didn’t condemn her. To the other, Jesus clearly said that He held them accountable. There is no doubt that Jesus considered the Pharisees’ judgment to be the greater sin; He put them on the spot and revealed their own wicked hearts to them.



Legalism puts all kinds of demands on people. Demands that they themselves don’t keep, yet expect others to toe the line. Legalism will always judge others. And expect more, always more law. Can you imagine how it feels to a kind, loving, merciful Jesus to be so misrepresented to the people. No wonder he was so harsh with the Pharisees. They taught the people law and Jesus was grace.

I along with many of you grew up in a legalistic culture. Hearing and seeing condemnation all the time.. The slightest deviation from the rule, or law brought instant disapproval, yet we heard very little about Jesus who came to.. as we

read in Romans ; Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe.

Christ is our righteousness. He took away our sins, he gives up power to become sons of God, he gives us the power to live above sin, and then he clothed us with his righteousness .

Wow! What a package! Let us lay down our stones. Stones are best used to build bridges. Not to throw at each other. Stones will never take away sin. Only believing in Jesus can accomplish that miracle. When he cried out from the cross, IT IS FINISHED.. it really was finished.

I do not condemn those that condemned me for leaving after being enlightened to Gods mercy and grace. (always grace to live above, not indulge in.sin) I have a burden on my heart that my people everywhere can see, understand, and accept the gift of salvation that Jesus suffered to give to all who believe in him.

As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

—John Weaver

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January

Unshakeable Faith, Parts 1 and 2

Have you ever faced an angry boss, a financial problem, or a physical illness? In this sermon, Dr. Charles Stanley teaches you how to stand strong in spite of overwhelming adversity.

Better Ways to Communicate with Your Children, Parts 1 and 2

Michael Anderson and Dr. Timothy Johanson join Focus on the Family to encourage parents to stop trying so hard to raise "perfect" children by lecturing, reminding, and warning them, which are often ineffective anyway.

February

Finding Clear Guidance, Part 1

How do you feel when you have to make major life decisions? You don't have to make these decisions alone—God wants to give you clear direction. Learn the principles necessary to making right decisions in this message from Charles Stanley.

Truths Your Daughter Needs to Know

Veteran high school teacher Daniel Anderson and his daughter, Jacquelyn, join Dennis Rainey and reminisce about Jacquelyn's high school years and the "no dating" policy that ruled their household.

The Four Seasons of Marriage, Parts 1, 2, and 3

Why is marital paradise lost? Why do couples feel they have left Eden and live in a jungle of sorts? Join Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs Since Scripture indicates couples will have trouble in this life why are husbands and wives unprepared? The answer is simple.

March

Finding Clear Guidance, Part 2

How do you feel when you have to make major life decisions? You don't have to make these decisions alone—God wants to give you clear direction. Learn the principles necessary to making right decisions in this message from Charles Stanley.

What Fathers Need to Do

How will my son learn to be a man? Dr. Meg Meeker joins Dennis Rainey and tells parents why it's important to teach their sons about the power of virtues like self-control.

Why Are Believers Mad at God? Parts 1 and 2

Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs ask: Does the Bible teach that people who claim to believe in God can hate God? Jesus said, "He who hates Me hates My Father also" (John 15:23). So according to Jesus, yes, people can hate God the Father.

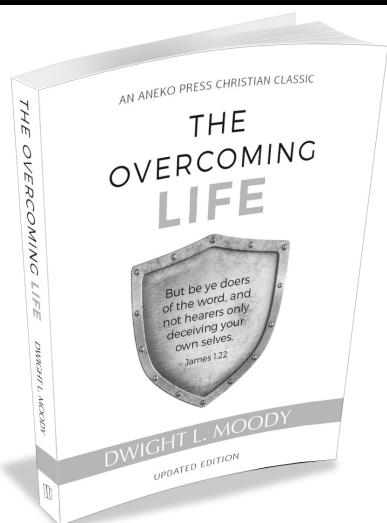
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Continued from the last issue.

Lessons From Noah and the Ark

A Solemn Message

When God speaks, you and I can afford to listen.

It's not man speaking now, but it is God. *The Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark* (Genesis 7:1).

Perhaps some skeptic is reading this and says, "I hope Mr. Moody isn't going to teach about the ark. I thought that was given up by all intelligent people."

I haven't given it up. When I do, I am going to give up the whole Bible. There is hardly any portion of the Old Testament Scripture that the Son of God didn't set His seal on when He was here in the world.

Some say, "I don't believe in the story of the flood."

Christ connected His own return to this world with that flood. *But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away;*

so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (Matthew 24:37-39).

I believe the account of the flood just as much as I do the third chapter of John. I pity anyone who picks the Word of God to pieces. The moment we give up any one of these things, we give up a piece of the deity of the Son of God. I noticed that when a man begins to pick the Bible to pieces, it doesn't take him long to tear it all to pieces. What's the use of taking five years to do what you can do in five minutes?

One hundred and twenty years before God spoke the words in Genesis 7:1, Noah received the most awful communication that ever came from heaven to earth. No man up to that time, and I think no man since, has ever received such a communication. God said that because of the wickedness of the world He was going to destroy the world by water. We can have no idea of the extent and character of that pre-flood wickedness.

The Bible piles one expression on another in its effort to emphasize it. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart* (Genesis 6:5-6). *God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth* (Genesis 6:12-13). Men lived five hundred years and more then, and they had time to mature in their sins.

How the Message Was Received

For one hundred and twenty years, God strove with the pre-flood civilization. He never destroys without warning, and they

had their warning. Every time Noah drove a nail into the ark, it was a warning to them. Every sound of the hammer echoed, "I believe in God." If they had repented and cried as they did at Nineveh, I believe God would have heard their cry and spared them. But there was no cry for mercy. I have no doubt that they ridiculed the idea that God was going to destroy the world. I have no doubt that there were atheists who said there wasn't any God anyway.

I asked an atheist once, "How do you account for the formation of the world?"

"Oh! Force and matter worked together and the world was created by chance."

I said, "It's a remarkable thing that your tongue isn't on the top of your head if force and matter just threw it together in that manner."

If I took out my watch and told you that force and matter worked together and out came the watch, you would say I was a lunatic of the first order, wouldn't you? Yet they say that this old world was made by chance, and it just threw itself together.

I met a man in Scotland who took the position that there is no God. I asked him, "How do you account for the creation of all these rocks?" (They have many rocks in Scotland.)

He said "Why, any school boy could account for that."

"Well, how was the first rock made?"

"Out of sand."

"How was the first sand made?"

"Out of rock."

He had it all arranged so nicely. Sand and rock, rock and sand. I have no doubt that Noah had these same type of men to contend with.

Then there are agnostics. They believe there is a

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God and that the world didn't happen by chance, but they believe God is too merciful and full of compassion to punish sin. As they see it, the drunkard, the prostitute, the gambler, the murderer, the thief, and the man who chases worldly pleasure will all be in heaven with the saints at the end.

Suppose the governor of your state was so tenderhearted that he couldn't bear to have anyone suffer, couldn't bear to see a man put in jail, and believed all prisoners should be set free. How long would he be governor? You would have him out of office before the sunset. These very men who talk about God's mercy would be the first to rise up in protest if a governor refused to put a criminal in prison.

Others believe that God couldn't destroy the world even if He wanted to. If a great flood occurred, they would simply retreat to the hills and mountains to escape it. That would be a hundred times better than Noah's ark. Or, if it should come to that, they could build rafts, which would be a good deal better than that ark. They had never seen such an ugly looking thing. It was about five hundred feet long, about eighty feet wide, and fifty feet high. It had three stories and only one small window.

Finally, some believed that Noah must be wrong because he was in such a minority. That is a popular argument now, you know. Noah was greatly in the minority; but he went on working.

If they had saloons then, they probably sang vulgar songs about Noah and his ark. I don't doubt that they did, because we read that there was violence in the land, and wherever you have alcohol you have violence. We read also that Noah planted a vineyard and fell into the sin of drunkenness. He was a righteous man. If he did that, what must the others have done? And if they had theaters, they

likely acted it out to entertain whole families.

If they had the press in those days, reporters would have come to interview him, and the Associated Press would have printed daily updates on how the work on the ark progressed.

Perhaps they had tours where people visited the ark as a spectacle. If Noah happened to be around, they would nudge each other and say, "That's Noah. Don't you think there is a strange look in his eye?"

As a Scotsman would say, they thought him a little foolish. Thank God, a man can afford to be a little insane. An insane man thinks everyone else is crazy. A drunkard doesn't call himself insane when he drinks up all his financial resources, but a man is called insane when he gets into the ark and is saved for time and eternity.

All manner of sport was made of Noah and his ark. Businessmen went on buying and selling, and Noah went on preaching and toiling.

They perhaps had some astronomers who gazed up at the stars and said, "Don't be concerned. There's no sign of a coming storm in the heavens. We are very wise men. If there was a storm coming, we could read it in the heavens."

Geologists would continue to dig away and say, "There is no sign in the earth."

Even the carpenters who helped build the ark might have made fun of him. But they were probably like lots of people today who will help build a church and perhaps will give money for its support, but never enter it themselves.

Things went on as usual. Little lambs skipped on the hillsides each spring. Men sought after wealth. If they had leases, I expect they ran for longer periods than ours do. We think ninety-nine years is a long time, but theirs probably ran for nine hundred and ninety-nine years. And

when they came to sign a lease, they would say, "Old Noah says the world is coming to an end in one hundred and twenty years, and it's been twenty years, but I guess I'll sign the lease and risk it."

Someone said that Noah must have been deaf or he could not have stood the mocking and condescending looks from his countrymen. But even if he was deaf to the voice of men, he heard the voice of God clearly when God told him to build the ark.

I can imagine after one hundred years rolled away and the work on the ark ceased, that men said, "Why has he stopped work?"

He went on a preaching tour to tell the people of the coming storm. He warned the people that God was going to sweep everyone from the face of the earth unless they took refuge in the ark. But he couldn't get a single person to believe him except his own family.

Some of the old men had passed away. They died saying, "Noah is wrong."

Poor Noah. He must have had a hard time of it. I don't think I would have had the grace to work for one hundred and twenty years without a convert, but he just toiled on and believed the Word of God.

Then the hundred and twenty years were up. In the spring of that year, Noah didn't plant anything, because he knew the flood was coming. The people said, "Every other year he has planted. This year he thinks the world is going to be destroyed, so he hasn't planted anything."

Moving In

I can imagine one beautiful morning without a cloud in sight. Noah heard from God. He heard the same voice he heard one hundred and twenty years earlier. Perhaps there had been silence for one hundred and twenty years. But the voice rang through his soul once

again: *Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark* (Genesis 7:1).

The word *come* occurs about nineteen hundred times in the Bible. This is the first time it meant “salvation.” It’s easy to picture Noah and his family moving into the ark as they carry all their household possessions.

Some of his neighbors probably said, “Noah, what’s your hurry? You’ll have plenty of time to get into that old ark. What’s your hurry? There are no windows, and you can’t even look out to see when the storm is coming.”

But he heard the voice and obeyed.

Some of his relatives might have said, “What are you going to do with the old homestead?”

Noah possibly said, “I don’t want it. The storm is coming. Worldly wealth has no value. The ark is the only place of safety.” We must bear in mind that the possessions we think so much of will soon pass away. The heavens will be on fire. Then what will property, honor, and position in society be worth?

The first thing that alarmed them was when they rose one morning and the heavens were filled with the birds of the air. They flew into the ark two-by-two. They came from the desert, the mountains, and all parts of the world. It must have been a strange sight. I can imagine the people cried, “What’s the meaning of this?” And they looked down on the earth and saw little insects creeping up two-by-two from all parts of the world.

Then came cattle and beasts, two-by-two. The neighbors cried out, “What does this mean?”

They ran to their statesmen and wise

men, who told them there was no sign of a coming storm; they asked them why the birds, animals, and creeping things were drawn toward the ark, as if guided by an unseen hand.

The statesmen and wise men said, “Well, we can’t explain it, but don’t worry about it. God isn’t going to destroy the world. Business has never been better. Do you think God would let us be so prosperous if He was going to destroy the world? There’s still no sign of a coming storm. We have no idea what made these insects and wild beasts of the



forest go into the ark. We don’t understand it. It’s very strange. But there’s no sign anything is going to happen. The stars are bright, and the sun shines as bright as it ever did. Everything continues as it always has. You can hear the children playing in the street. Men and women continue to marry.”

I imagine the alarm faded and things returned to normal. Noah came out and said, “The door is going to be shut. Come in. God is going to destroy the world. See how the animals have come? The communication came to them direct from heaven.” But the people only continued to mock him.

Do you know, when the hundred and twenty years were up, God gave the world seven days of grace? Did you ever notice that? If there had been repentance during those seven days, I believe it

would have been heard; but there was none.

The last day, the last hour, the last minute, and the last second arrived. God Almighty came down and shut the door of the ark. No angel or man, but God Himself shut that door. When the master of the house rose and shut the door, the doom of that old world was forever sealed. The sun had gone down upon the glory of that old world for the last time. From the distance came the mutterings of the storm. The thunder rolled and lightning flashed. The old world reeled.

The storm burst upon them. Noah’s old ark would have been worth more than the whole world to them.

Some may scoff at this, laugh at the Bible, make fun of your mother’s God, or laugh at Christians, but the hour is coming when one promise in the Word of God will be worth more to you than ten thousand

worlds like this.

The windows of heaven opened and the fountains of the great deep broke forth. The waters bubbled up and the sea burst its bounds and leaped over its walls. The rivers swelled. The people in the lowlands fled to the mountains and highlands. They fled up the hillsides.

The people wailed, “Noah! Noah! Noah! Let us in!”

They left their homes and came to the ark. They pounded on the ark.

They cried, “Noah! Let us in! Noah! Have mercy on us!” “I’m your nephew!” “I’m your niece!” “I’m your uncle!”

A voice from inside cried, “I would like to let you in, but God has shut the door. I can’t open it!”

God shut that door. When the door was shut, there

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was no hope. Their cry for mercy was too late. Their opportunity for grace was over. Their last hour had come. God had pleaded with them and invited them to come in, but they had mocked the invitation. They had laughed and made fun of the idea of a deluge. Now it was too late.

God didn't permit anyone to survive to tell us how the people perished. When Job lost his family, a messenger came to him. No messenger came from the pre-flood world. Not even Noah himself could see the world perish. If he could have, he would have seen men, women, and children throwing themselves against the ark. The waves rose higher and higher, and those outside perished in their unbelief. Some thought to escape by climbing the trees. They thought the storm would end soon.

It continued to rain day and night, for forty days and forty nights. They were swept away as the waves dashed against them. The statesmen, astronomers, and great men called out for mercy, but it was too late. They had disobeyed the God of mercy. He had called, and they refused. He had pleaded with them, but they laughed and mocked. The time came for judgment instead of mercy.

The time will come again when God deals in judgment with the world. We don't know exactly when, but it is sure to come. God's word has been proclaimed that this world will be rolled up like a scroll and burnt up with fire. What will become of your soul? It is a loving call: *Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark* (Genesis 7:1).

Twenty-four hours before the rain began to fall, Noah's ark wasn't worth much more than firewood. But twenty-four hours after the rain began to fall, Noah's ark was worth more than all the world. There wasn't a man still living who wouldn't have given everything for a

seat in the ark. You may turn away and laugh. You may say, "I would rather be without Christ than have Him."

The time is coming when Christ will be worth more to you than ten thousand worlds like this. He is offered to you now. Today is the day of grace. Now is the day of mercy. If you read your Bible carefully, you will find that God always precedes judgment with grace. Grace is a forerunner of judgment. He called the men in the days of Noah in love. They would have been saved if they had repented in those one hundred and twenty years. When Christ came and pleaded with the people in Jerusalem, it was their day of grace; but they mocked and laughed at Him.

He said, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* (Matthew 23:37). Forty years afterward, thousands of the people begged that their lives might be spared. Over one million perished in that city.

In 1857, a revival swept over this country from the east, clear over to the Pacific coast. It was God calling the nation to Himself. Half a million people united with the church at that time. Then the Civil War broke out. The country was baptized with the Holy Spirit in 1857, and in 1861 we were baptized in blood. It was a call of mercy preceding judgment.

Are Your Children Safe?

The Bible passage I selected has a special application to Christian people and to parents. This command of the Bible was given to Noah not only for his own safety, but also for that of his household. The question I ask each father and mother is this, "Are your children in the ark of God?" You may brush it off, but it's a very important question. Are all your children in? Are all your

grandchildren in? Don't rest day or night until you get your children in. I believe my children have fifty temptations where I had one. I believe that in the great cities there is a snare of the devil on the corner of every street for our sons and daughters. I don't believe we should squander our time accumulating wealth and worldly possessions. Have I done all I can to get my children in? That is what we should be doing.

Now let me ask another question. How would Noah have felt if, when God called him into the ark, his children had refused to go with him? If he had lived such a poor example that his children had no faith in his word, what would he have felt? He would have said, "There's my poor boy on the mountain. I would rather have perished myself." David cried over his son. *O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!* (2 Samuel 18:33). Noah loved his children, and they had confidence in him.

Someone sent me a paper a number of years ago. It contained an article that was marked. Its title was "Are all the children in?" An old wife lay dying. She was nearly one hundred years old. The husband who had taken the journey with her sat by her side. She barely breathed. Suddenly she revived, opened her eyes, and said, "It is so dark."

"Yes, Janet, it's dark."

"Is it night?"

"Yes, it's midnight."

"Are all the children in?"

Her youngest child had been in the grave twenty years, but she traveled back to the old days that night when she fell asleep in Christ, asking, "Are all the children in?"

Are they all in? Ask yourself now. Is John in? Is James in? Or is he immersed in business and pleasure? Is he living a double or dishonest life? Where is your boy, mother? Where is your son and your daughter? Is it well with your children?

Can you say it is?

After being superintendent of a Sunday school in Chicago for a number of years—a school of over a thousand members, children who came from godless homes, having mothers and fathers working against me, taking the children off on excursions on Sunday and doing all they could to break up the work I was trying to do—I used to think that if I should ever stand before an audience, I would speak only to parents. That would be my primary objective.

It's an old saying, "Get the lamb, and you will get the sheep." I gave that theory up years ago. Give me the sheep, and then I will have someone to nurse the lamb. If you convert a little lamb and he has a godless father and mother, you will have little chance with that child. We want godly homes. The home was established long before the church.

I have no sympathy with the idea that our children have to grow up before they can be converted. I once saw a lady with three daughters at her side. I stepped up to her and asked her if she was a Christian. "Yes, sir."

Then I asked the oldest daughter if she was a Christian. Her chin quivered and tears came into her eyes. She said, "I wish I was."

The mother became angry with me and said, "I don't want you to speak to my children about that. They don't understand." And in great rage, she took her daughters and left. One daughter was fourteen years old, one twelve, and the other ten. Their mother thought they weren't old enough to be talked to about Christianity. Let them drift into the world and plunge into worldly amusements, and then see how hard it is to reach them.

Many sons are now beyond their mother's reach. They will not allow their mothers to pray with them. She may pray *for* them, but they will not let her pray or talk *with* them. When their minds were

tender and young, she might have led them to Christ.

Bring them in. *Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 19:14). Is there a prayerless father reading this? May God's Word pierce your very soul. Make up your mind that, God helping you, you will get your children in. God's order is to the father first, but if he isn't true to his duty, the mother should be true and save the children from the wreck. Now is the time to do it, while you have them under your roof. Exert your parental influence over them.

Parents:

Pray for your children. Pray with your children. Let your own example demonstrate to them the importance of walking with God, following Jesus, and walking in the Spirit every day. How wonderful if their memories of you include seeing you read God's Word every day, loving God and them, and praying for and with them!

R. J. Danbury

I never speak to parents without thinking of two fathers, one of whom lived on the banks of the Mississippi, and the other in New York. The first one devoted all his time to amassing wealth. He had a son to whom he was very attached. One day the boy was brought home badly injured. The father was informed that the boy would only live a short time. He broke the news to his son as gently as possible.

"You say I won't live, Father? Then pray for my soul," said the boy.

That father had never said a prayer for his son, and he told him he couldn't. Shortly after, the boy died. Since then, that father

has said that he would give all he possessed if he could call his boy back only to offer one short prayer for him.

The other father had a boy who had been sick for some time. He came home one day and found his wife weeping. She said, "I can't help but believe that this is going to prove fatal."

The man said, "If you think so, I wish you would tell him."

But the mother couldn't tell her boy. The father went and saw that death was near. He said, "My son, do you know you're not going to live?"

The little fellow looked up and said, "No. Is this death I feel coming over me? Will I die today?"

"Yes, my son. You won't live out the day."

The little fellow smiled and said, "Well, Father, I'll be with Jesus tonight, won't I?"

"Yes, you'll spend the night with the Lord." The father broke down and wept.

The little fellow saw the tears and said, "Don't weep for me. I'll go to Jesus and tell Him that ever since I can remember, you have prayed for me."

I have three children. If God chose to take them from me, I would rather have them take that type of a message to Him than to have the wealth of the whole world. I pray to God that I could say something to motivate you, fathers and mothers, to get your children into the ark.

—D. L. Moody

To be continued in the next issue of the Amish Voice

This article was taken from the book *The Overcoming Life* — by D. L. Moody. To order this book, send \$7.00 and your address to Aneko Press, PO Box 652, Abbotsford, WI 54405.

Feedback and Response Section

1

Dear Friends,

Enclosed is a check to help you pay for your newsletters. We thank you for all the efforts you put in to keep them going. Lives are being

touched. There is currently a movement of God going on in some of our churches. People are finding freedom in Christ and having a personal relationship with their Lord and Savior.

Praise His Name.

A. M., Ohio

A. M.,

Thank you for your kind letter and your gift to help us keep sending out the *Amish Voice*. We continue to pray that all might be changed by the truth and love of God, through Jesus, changed by His Holy Spirit, as they see Him in His Word.

It is great to hear testimonies that people are finding freedom in Jesus Christ. Two thousand years ago, Jesus spoke with many who were very religious, bound in their religion. Most rejected Him, but some found freedom in Jesus, too—just like many are doing today.

Then, those who found freedom in Christ

spread God's Word to others all over the world. Thank you for helping us spread God's Word. May you, too, and all who know and love Jesus, take His Word to all around you so that all will hear and so many more will find freedom in Jesus Christ, being born again by His Holy Spirit.

We want to hear from you! We would love to hear your testimonies of how you have been changed by Jesus! We would love to hear how the *Amish Voice* is helping you grow closer to God. We would even love to hear from you if you do not fully agree with one of our articles. Let us know why you disagree and what the Bible says about it. Take a few minutes and write to us and tell us your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, your testimony of how God is working in your life, or anything else you want to say.

You can write to us at the: Amish Voice, PO Box 128, Savannah, OH 44874

JW, continued from back cover

He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night (Revelation 14:10-11). False religions and cults have one thing in common when they start – they always begin with one or more false teachings. What they begin in error only grows in error, with false teaching added to false teaching, until everyone is sadly misled from the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Is God's Name Really Jehovah, and Should it Matter to Us?

The name "Jehovah's Witness" is taken from Isaiah 43:10, which says, *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord [Jehovah]*. So, is God's name really Jehovah? Yes, but there are at least twenty more names of God in the Bible. These names are descriptive of who God is and show us various attributes of His nature, all of which are good.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name (Matthew 6:9). It is clear from reading Scripture that we may call God our Father, as He truly is our Father if we are born again into His family. There is no biblical commandment to call God Jehovah.

Why Do They Talk about the Kingdom So Much?

The Watchtower Society teaches that following Armageddon (Revelation 16:16), the earth will be cleaned up and restored to an Eden-like paradise; then the second resurrection will occur. According to them, only JWs will be cleaning up the earth, and after the second resurrection, the people who are still dead will be given a "second chance" to repent and conform to the "truth" and "be saved." They teach that the new kingdom will be made up of JWs in charge of the earth and doing the work on earth for "Jehovah," hence the great anticipation for the kingdom.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27). The Bible clearly shows us that there is no second chance after death.

Furthermore, 2 Peter 3:13 says that there will be a new heaven and a new earth, not that a select group of people (JWs) will clean up the earth we live on today. *This old earth will pass away with a fervent heat* (2 Peter 3:10).

All this is simply more evidence that the Watchtower Society is a false organization and is responsible for misleading their people. —Jeremiah Zeiset

This article will be continued in the next issue

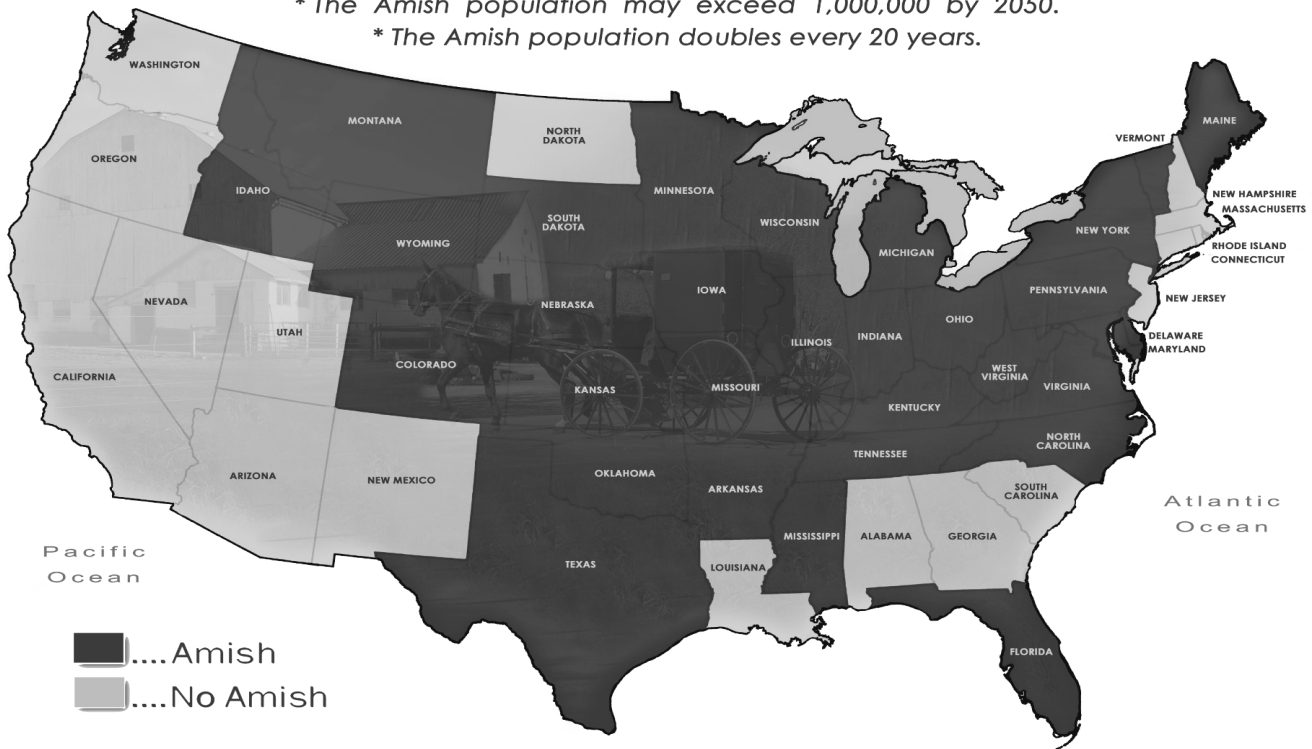
2018 Amish Population and Statistics

330,465 Amish People Live In The USA, Canada, And South America

* A New Amish Community is formed, on average, every 3-1/2 weeks.

* The Amish population may exceed 1,000,000 by 2050.

* The Amish population doubles every 20 years.



Amish Population By State

United States of America

State	# of Settlements	# of Church Districts	Est. Population
Pennsylvania	56	514	76,620
Ohio	62	574	75,830
Indiana	24	392	54,825
Wisconsin	55	160	21,035
New York	58	153	19,835
Michigan	48	121	15,465
Missouri	46	103	12,860
Kentucky	43	95	12,630
Iowa	23	67	9,475
Illinois	20	57	7,825
Minnesota	22	38	4,385
Tennessee	12	26	3,220
Kansas	8	17	1,725
Delaware	1	10	1,650
Maryland	3	11	1,575

[Continued next column.](#)

State	# of Settlements	# of Church Districts	Est. Population
Virginia	7	9	1,230
Montana	7	9	780
Maine	6	7	755
Oklahoma	4	7	645
Colorado	3	5	600
Nebraska	4	5	390
West Virginia	4	4	300
North Carolina	2	2	260
Mississippi	1	2	260
Arkansas	2	3	240
Wyoming	1	1	105
Florida	1	2	100
South Dakota	1	1	85
Idaho	1	1	75
Texas	1	1	65
Vermont	1	1	55

Canadian Provinces

Province	# of Settlements	# of Church Districts	Est. Population
Ontario	16	41	5,120
Prince Edward Island	2	2	140
Manitoba	1	1	60
New Brunswick	1	1	45

South American Countries

Country	# of Settlements	# of Church Districts	Est. Population
Bolivia	1	1	150
Argentina	1	1	50
Total	549	2,445	330,465

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What Do Jehovah's Witnesses Actually Believe? Part 1

—Jeremiah Zeiset

Jehovah Witnesses and Their Beliefs

Central Jehovah's Witness Teachings
Compared with Important Scripture



Free booklet—the Amish Voice, PO Box 128, Savannah OH 44874, or call us at (419) 962-1515

My wife and I have Jehovah's Witness (JW) neighbors, and like all good JWs, our neighbors tirelessly reach out to us with what they think is the Gospel. But there's a problem – we are already Christians. After many conversations, during which I am never quite sure exactly what they are trying to tell me, I decided it was time to find out exactly what the JWs believe and why they think it is necessary to "reach" us. It seems like every time I ask our neighbors what they believe about specific

biblical topics, they'd give me an invasive or deceptive answer and then promptly invite me to a Bible study or church service. It's as if what they really want is to get us into the JW system, and once there, we'd be entangled in a web of deceit. It turns out there is truth to that. The JW religious organization, called the Watchtower Society, teaches that you have to be joined to their organization in order to be saved, and that they are the one true religion.

You've very likely had some of these well-dressed visitors knock on your own front door, and upon answering, found gentle smiles and soft demeanors (they generally do their ministry in pairs and are trained to be friendly). But whether or not they are friendly is not what really matters – I've also met atheists who were kind and friendly. Instead, we must know

whether or not the JWs believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Bible. The truth is what I'm after, as everyone must be. Galatians 1:8 says: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

A pastor named Andrew, from Owen, Wisconsin, helped with my research to find out just what JWs believe. He went with some of his church members to a few local JW meetings and to a statewide regional conference hosted by the JWs to learn more about their beliefs. Andrew gave me some rare insights that I couldn't get from talking to my neighbors; this is because JWs are trained to say anything, even if it means lying, in order to get you into their organization. I also gleaned a lot from a book titled *Approaching Jehovah's Witnesses in Love*. Wilbur Lingle, the author of this book, researched hundreds of Watchtower Society publications and other pieces of literature and spoke with many JWs personally in order to gather the facts necessary for a thorough understanding of what they teach.

Are you ready? We'll be looking at a number of very important beliefs that differentiate JW teachings from true, biblical Christianity. Following each question is a short summary of what the Watchtower Society teaches, selected Scripture to see what is true, and a sentence or two of my own commentary. For the sake of space, I had to limit the answers to the questions, but if you wish to know more, I highly recommend Wilbur Lingle's book.

How Did the JW Organization Begin?

A man named Charles Taze Russell left a Congregational denomination to start a Bible study (1872), and then he started a "church" of his own (1879), mainly because he didn't like the

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