

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

June 2001

"Unto the church... which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2) I pray that you are all doing well, and that you are planning to attend the West Virginia camp meeting in July. (See pages 8 and 9 for more information.) This month we are including a list of our publications. I trust that you will find something in it that will be a blessing to you and others. I am looking forward to meeting all of you at camp meeting.

Hatred or Forgiveness

by Lynnford Beachy

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." (1 John 2:9-11)

Anyone who has any hatred toward his brother is blind, and doesn't know where he is going. Examine yourself, has anyone done something to you for which you are still holding a grudge against them? The Bible plainly states that we are not to hold a grudge. *"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."* (Leviticus 19:17, 18)

Peter counseled us to add to our *"godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."* (2 Peter 1:7-9) We need to love our brothers and sisters. If we do not love them, then we are blind.

How many of us are blind? How many of us yet need to be totally submitted to Christ, so that He can take away our hatred for our brothers and sisters?

Jesus tells us today, *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."* (Matthew 16:24)

For us to finally get rid of hatred we must deny ourselves; we must forsake our thoughts and let Christ live in us. *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."* (Isaiah 55:7)

God has promised, and cannot lie, that if we confess our sins, He will forgive 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 1:9) To bear a grudge and hate your brother is a sin that must be confessed and forsaken. Pride seeks to step in and keep you from acknowledging your transgression. Refuse to hold on to your anger any longer. Say with David, *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness:*

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according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.” (Psalm 51:1-3)

Conditions

The Bible teaches that there are conditions that must be met before we can be pardoned from our sins. We must acknowledge that we have done wrong, and be sorry for our sins. *“For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.” (Psalm 38:18)* We must confess our sins, and we must believe that He will forgive us because He promised.

One of the most important requirements for us to be forgiven, is for us to forgive others. *“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.” (Luke 6:37)* In the heart of the “Lord’s Prayer” this same thought is found. *“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” (Matthew 6:12)* We are to ask the Lord to forgive us our sins in the same way that we forgive those who have wronged us. That is very serious friends. We better make certain that we forgive those who sin against us.

Jesus said, *“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” (Luke 17:3, 4)* Regardless of how severe the sin that someone has committed against you, if they ask you to forgive them, you must do so if you expect God to forgive you.

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, Jesus gave us an illustration of why it is so important to forgive others. He said, *“Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents [an extremely large amount of money—about \$16,180,000] But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.*

“But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence [a

very small and insignificant amount of money—about \$14]; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

“So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” (Matthew 18:23-35)

If we do not forgive our brothers God will not forgive us. My friends, let us be very quick to forgive. I would much rather be found on the side of leniency than on the side of inflexibility.

Marital Forgiveness

“For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear: For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat; For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.” (Proverbs 30:21-23) In the New King James Version, it reads, *“A hateful woman when she is married...”*

A person who hates, when they are married is something that is very hard to deal with. If anyone of you is in this situation, I am sure you know what this scripture means.

The wise man told us, *“An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.” (Proverbs 29:22)* Let all contention and strife be put far away from you. Always be careful not to say or do anything that will cause contention and strife. Especially in the marriage relation is this most necessary. Many needless hours of grief and hardship are endured, all because of minor differences, misunderstandings, and intentional controversies. Satan exalts when he has triumphed in bringing out some bitter word or railing accusation from the lips of those who claim to be living in the light of last-day truths.

"A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping." (Proverbs 19:13) Much, if not all, contention can be stopped if only one or the other, preferably both, of the individuals involved, would stop rendering evil for evil.

The Golden Rule

Again, the wise man said, *"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."* (Proverbs 24:29) We are admonished not to do unto others as they have done unto us, but to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Jesus said, *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."* (Matthew 7:12) These are the words the "Golden Rule" are based on.

Much care must be taken to guard every thought and word that proceeds out of our mouths. It is not merely what is said, but the tone or manner of speaking. Certain things might be said with a calm and mild spirit that would not cause contention. But those same words spoken with an envious or rebellious attitude, which is evident by the raised voice or harsh manner of speaking, will cause strife.

James wrote, *"If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."* (James 3:14-16)

Contention

According to the Bible, all contention is brought on by pride. *"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."* (Proverbs 13:10) If there is any contention in your life, you can be sure that it is caused by pride.

As an example, someone may say; "Well that sure was a stupid thing to do." This statement implies that the one saying it could, and would, do it better. This is a statement that originates in pride. The response may be; "You're not so good yourself." Here again is a statement that tries to lift up self, justifying self. This response also originates in pride. *"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."* (Proverbs 16:18)

In the above example, the one responding is returning railing for railing. Peter exhorted us, *"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."* (1 Peter 3:9) When someone

says something bad about us, or to us, then we are instructed not to return harsh words for harsh words.

Solomon gave us some very wise counsel. He wrote, *"take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others."* (Ecclesiastes 7:21, 22) Don't take heed to everything that is spoken against you. There are many times when the words spoken are misunderstood, which can lead to many contentions and strife.

When a person is angry it is not wise to stir up contention. *"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."* (Proverbs 15:1)

"He that hateth dissembleth [is recognized] with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart. Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation." (Proverbs 26:24-26) He that hates is recognized by the things that he says. He tries to hide his hatred with deceit, but his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation.

We are warned to be careful what type of friendships we make. Solomon wrote, *"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul."* (Proverbs 22:24, 25) We should never learn the ways of evil men. Any interaction we have with them needs to be to help, encourage, and teach them the ways of God.

Conclusion

For those who have hatred in their heart, submit your whole life to God, and He will give you a joy that will be much more satisfying than retaining that hatred toward others. Those who have been wronged, do not take it into your own hands to take vengeance. *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."* (Romans 12:19)

It is our glory to pass over transgression, to forgive those that transgress against us. *"The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression."* (Proverbs 19:11)

We are admonished by the Lord Himself to love our enemies and do good to them that hate us. Jesus said, *"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good*

(Continued on page 7)

Christ the End of the Law

by E. J. Waggoner

In Romans 10:4 we read as follows: *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Before showing what this text means, it may be well to briefly show what it does not mean. It does not mean that Christ has put an end to the law, because 1. Christ Himself said concerning the law, *"I am not come to destroy."* (Matthew 5:17) 2. The prophet said that instead of destroying it, the Lord would *"Magnify the law and make it honorable."* (Isaiah 42:21) 3. The law was in Christ's own heart: *"Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."* (Psalm 40:7, 8) And 4. since the law is the righteousness of God, the foundation of His government, it could not by any possibility be abolished. (See Luke 16:17.)

The reader must know that the word "end" does not necessarily mean "termination." It is often used in the sense of design, object, or purpose. In 1 Timothy 1:5 the same writer says, *"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."* the word here rendered "charity" is often rendered "love," and is so rendered in this place in the New Version. In 1 John 5:3 we read, *"This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments,"* and Paul himself says that *"love is the fulfilling of the law."* (Romans 13:10) In both these texts the same word (agape) is used that occurs in 1 Timothy 1:5. Therefore we say that this text means, Now the design of the commandment (or law) is that it should be kept. Everybody will recognize this as a self-evident fact.

But this is not the ultimate design of the law. In the verse following the one under consideration, Paul quotes Moses as saying of the law that *"the man that doeth those things shall live by*

them." Christ said to the young man, *"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."* (Matthew 19:17) Now since the design of the law was that it should be kept, or, in other words, that it should produce righteous characters, and the promise is that those who are obedient shall live, we may say that the ultimate design of the law was to give life. And in harmony with this thought are the words of Paul, that the law *"was ordained to life."* (Romans 7:10)


But *"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,"* and *"the wages of sin is death."* Thus it is impossible for the law to accomplish its design in making perfect characters and consequently giving life. When a man has once broken the law, no subsequent obedience can ever make his character perfect. And therefore the law which was ordained unto life is found to be unto death. (Romans 7:10)

If we were to stop right here with the law unable to accomplish its purpose, we should leave all the world under condemnation and sentence of death. Now we shall see that Christ enables man to secure both righteousness and life. We read that we are *"justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* (Romans 3:24) *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Romans 5:1) More than this, He enables us to keep the law. *"For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21) In Christ, therefore, it is possible for us to be made perfect—the righteousness of God—and that is just what we would have been by constant and unvarying obedience to the law.

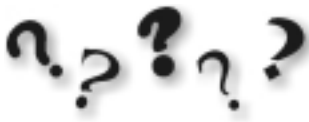
Again we read, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which*

are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.... For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1-4)

What could not the law do? It could not free a single guilty soul from condemnation. Why not? Because it was *"weak through the flesh."* There is no element of weakness in the law; the weakness is in the flesh. It is not the fault of a good tool that it cannot make a sound pillar out of a rotten stick. The law could not cleanse a man's past record and make him sinless; and poor, fallen man had no strength resting in his flesh to enable him to keep the law. And so God imputes to believers the righteousness of Christ, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, so that *"the righteousness of the law"* might be fulfilled in their lives. And thus Christ is the end of the law.

To conclude, then, we have found that the design of the law was that it should give life because of obedience. All men have sinned and been sentenced to death. But Christ took upon Himself man's nature and will impart of His own righteousness to those who accept His sacrifice, and finally when they stand, through Him, as doers of the law, He will fulfill to them its ultimate object, by crowning them with eternal life. And so we repeat, what we cannot too fully appreciate, that Christ is made unto us *"wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."* 

(This article was first printed in the February 15, 1892 issue of the *Bible Echo*. It is also found on pages 69-71 of the book *Lessons on Faith*, by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. Editor)



Questions and Answers

by Lynnford Beachy



Question:

“My Jewish friend has stumped me with a Scripture that I don’t understand. It’s in one of the Psalms, and says that they/we ‘are all gods.’ This verse is also quoted by Jesus, which I have never understood. Can you help me? Thanks!”

Florida

Answer:

Let’s read the verses in question. *“I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.”* (Psalms 82:6) Jesus quoted this verse in John 10:34. *“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”* (John 10:34-36)

The Hebrew word אֱלֹהִים (elohiym) was translated “gods” in Psalm 82:6. This word was used 2606 times in the Old Testament. Most of the time (2347) it refers to the true God of heaven. However that leaves 259 times where it refers to men or false gods. When it refers to men they are usually great men, or judges. Moses is called *elohiym* in Exodus 7:1. This does not mean that Moses or other men are the true God of heaven any more than gods of wood or stone are the true God of heaven. When this term applies to men it signifies authority, but has no reference to the nature and divine attributes of the true God.

Notice that Jesus didn’t even claim to be God, but only the Son of God. He used this verse to show that the Bible even refers to men as gods so when He referred to Himself as the Son of God, the Jews should not take offence.

Neither Jesus, nor the Psalmist, were trying to teach that we are on the same level as the God of heaven as far as our physical makeup (nature) or powers. Whenever the term *elohiym* applies to men it must be understood in a very limited sense. David wrote, *“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels [elohiym], and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.”* (Psalms 8:4-6)

Not only does the Bible say “ye are *elohiym*,” it also says men were made “a little lower than *elohiym*.” To man has been given “*dominion over the works of [God’s] hands; [God] hast put all things under [man’s] feet.*” In a sense, man is a god or ruler over his own life and affairs, and even over the things in this world, but he is not the true God, or even on an equality with Him; man was made lower than God.

Question:

“I would like to know if the number 144,000 is literal or symbolical. I would also like to know who will make up this number. I believe also that this number has to do with the resurrection of the dead. I want to know how many of the resurrections are there.”

Zimbabwe

(All questions in this issue from Zimbabwe come from the same letter.

Editor)

Answer:

I do not seek to get involved in controversy over this issue, since it has no bearing on our salvation. We need to all strive with every part of our being to be part of the 144,000. Only those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus will make up that number. They will be alive when the Lord comes, for they will be protected from the seven last plagues. (See Revelation 9:4; 16:2.)

There are very good and logical reasons that support both views. The number 144,000 appears to be a literal number since it is contrasted with “*a great multitude, which no man could number.*” (Revelation 7:9) However there are reasons that make it appear that this number must be symbolic because they are said to be “*of all the tribes of the children of Israel,*” and then exactly 12,000 are listed from each tribe. I believe these tribes are symbolic because Paul wrote, “*Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*” (Romans 9:6-8) If the tribes of Israel are symbolic, then it only makes sense that the number would be symbolic as well.

There are two general resurrections, one for the wicked, and one for the righteous. *"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."* (Acts 24:15) These resurrections will be separated by 1000 years. (Revelation 20:1-7) The righteous will be raised at the second coming of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53) The wicked will be raised 1000 years later. (Revelation 20:5)

There was a special resurrection when Christ was raised from the dead. Matthew wrote, *"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."* (Matthew 27:52, 53)

The Bible also tells us about another special resurrection where not only saints will come forth, but also some wicked people will arise. This takes place just prior to the second coming of Christ. We read about this in Daniel chapter 12. *"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And **many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.**"* (Daniel 12:1, 2)

Some wicked and some righteous will arise at this time. This helps us understand why the Bible says that when Christ comes in the clouds the soldiers who pierced His side will see Him come. *"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."* (Revelation 1:7) The very same people who drove the nails in His hands and feet, and the one who pierced His side will see Christ come with the clouds of heaven. In order for this to happen they will have to be raised from the dead before Christ's coming.

John Gill claims that this verse refers to "Christ's second coming... And they also which pierced him; his hands, feet, and side, when they crucified him; both the Roman soldiers, who actually did it, and the body of the Jewish nation, the rulers and common people, who consented to it, and at whose instigation it was done; these, being raised from the dead, shall see him with their bodily eyes, whom they so used." (*John Gill's Expositor on Revelation 1:7*)

John Gill understood that certain wicked people will be raised from the dead before the second coming of Christ. It is clear that he referred to a special resurrection when we compare this with what he wrote regarding Revelation 20:5;

"But the rest of the dead, &c. Meaning not the dead saints, for they will be all raised together, but the wicked dead; and not them as morally or spiritually, but as corporeally dead: these lived not again until the thousand years were finished; so that there will be such an exact term of years between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked; nor will there be any wicked living upon earth, or in bodies, during that time; for the wicked dead will not be raised with the saints at Christ's coming, and the wicked living will be destroyed in the conflagration of the world, and neither of them shall live again until the end of these years." (*John Gill's Expositor on Revelation 20:5*)

Let me make something clear here. Just because Gill understands these things this way does not mean they are right. We must only accept what the Bible says. I merely quoted Gill to show that the idea of a future special resurrection before the second coming of Christ is not unique to me.

Question:

"I would like to know about the so-called Trinity. The nature of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and whether the Spirit has anything to do with the seven spirits of Revelation 1."

Zimbabwe

Answer:

We have so much literature on this subject that I will not go into it here. For further study on this subject, the following materials may be requested: "The Love of God," "God's Plan to Save You," "The Truth About God," "The Importance of Knowing the Truth About God," "The Holy Spirit," "Satan's Deadliest Lie," "Which God," "The God of the Bible," and "The Formulation of the Doctrine of the Trinity."

The seven spirits in Revelation 1 refer to the angels. *"Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the **seven Spirits** [Angels—see Revelation 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 8:2; Zechariah 4:10; Hebrews 1:14; 1 Timothy 5:21; and Adam Clarke's Commentary.] which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth."* (Revelation 1:4, 5) It is true that the angels minister the Holy Spirit to us just as God has

commissioned us to minister the Spirit to others. (See Galatians 3:5; Zechariah 4 and the April 1999 issue of *Present Truth* for a thorough study on this subject.)

Question:

"I would like to know about justification by faith; how one is justified." *Zimbabwe*

Answer:

"We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 3:28) We are justified by faith, by believing that God can and will forgive us (make us innocent) if we confess our sins to Him. (1 John 1:9) We cannot be justified by keeping the law. We keep the law, not to be saved, but because we are saved. Obedience is the fruit of faith. Keeping the law can never save anyone, but not keeping the law can cause a person to be lost. (Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 22:14)

For a thorough study on this subject, please request the April 2000 issue of *Present Truth* and the tract "God's Plan to Save You."

Question:

"Can you write about the principles of faith of Smyrna Gospel Ministries and Truth Seekers Ministries and what your name is (i.e. the denomination name). I understand you have the main and basic Bible principles of the Ten Commandments and the seventh-day Sabbath and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12). Kindly write about your methods of the missionary work." *India*


Answer:

Present Truth is a publication of Truth Seekers Ministries, which is a division of Smyrna Gospel Ministries. We are a small print ministry dedicated to providing truth-filled literature to the world. Our main goal is to more clearly reveal the character of God so that people will have a better understanding of God's character, enabling them to have a closer relationship with Him.

We do not have a large operation and we are not affiliated with any denomination.

We have a print shop where we publish our own literature. Much of our literature is designed to present truth that has been hidden for many centuries, and to reveal truth that is "present truth" for our day. Our literature is sent to nearly every state in the United States, and many countries around the world. Much of our missionary work involves distribution of literature, camp meetings, and street witnessing.

Many like believers worship together around the world in small home churches, or they meet in buildings they rent. Some have built their own churches to worship in. There may be one of these groups in your local area. If you are interested in being able to meet with other like believers in your area, contact us and we will try to get you in contact with someone close to you.


We do not have a creed or statement of beliefs other than the Bible. We believe in salvation through faith in Christ. You are right that we believe that it is our God-given duty to keep the Ten Commandments, including the Seventh-day Sabbath. (See Matthew 19:17; Revelation 22:14 KJV; and Ecclesiastes 12:13.) Also, we believe there is "one God, the Father... and one Lord Jesus Christ," (1 Corinthians 8:6) that "the dead know not any thing," (Ecclesiastes 9:5) and that a day will come when the wicked, along with Satan, will "burn" up and will be turned into "ashes." (See Malachi 4:1-3; Ezekiel 28:12-19; and Revelation 20:9.) 

(Hatred or Forgiveness, continued from page 3)

to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5:43, 44)

Before we ask God to forgive us, let us consider whether we have forgiven others who have asked us to forgive them. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11:25, 26)

When a person does something against you that you do not approve of, and you question whether you should forgive him, then you might as well ask the question, "Do I want God to forgive me if I trespass against Him?" If you neglect to forgive any that have done you wrong, and have asked for forgiveness, then God also will not pardon your iniquities, but they will stand against you in the day of judgment. Let us forgive one another even as God has forgiven us. "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32)

Whatever trials you are going through, whatever someone else may be doing to you, don't let it jeopardize your salvation. Don't let another person's anger and hatred become the very character defect that defines your character. The thing that you most dislike in another person may soon become a part of you; don't let it happen. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21) 



WEST VIRGINIA CAMP MEETING

JULY 17-21, 2001



Smyrna Gospel Ministries would like to invite all who are interested in preparing for the return of the Lord to attend camp meeting this July 17-21 at the Smyrna Sabbath Chapel in West Virginia. We believe that this is going to be one of the best camp meetings the movement has ever had, so plan now to bring your Bibles and a cheerful heart.

We will be feasting upon God's Word, special music, testimonies, and great fellowship. David Clayton, Gary Richmond, Howard Williams, Bob Habenicht, Ben Vela, Willis Smith, Lynnford Beachy, and Allen Stump are some of the speakers currently scheduled.

The first meeting will be Tuesday evening, July 17. Each day will begin with an early (6:00 a.m.) morning devotional. Then there will be a morning meeting, a mid-morning meeting, afternoon seminars, and an evening meeting. There will be three afternoon seminars Wednesday through Friday. One on medical missionary work, one on how to give in-home Bible studies, and one on homiletics, or the art of preaching.

This is a *camp* meeting. We *do not* have cabins or rooms available. Interest is running very high and while we hope to have enough space for all, we will be much more

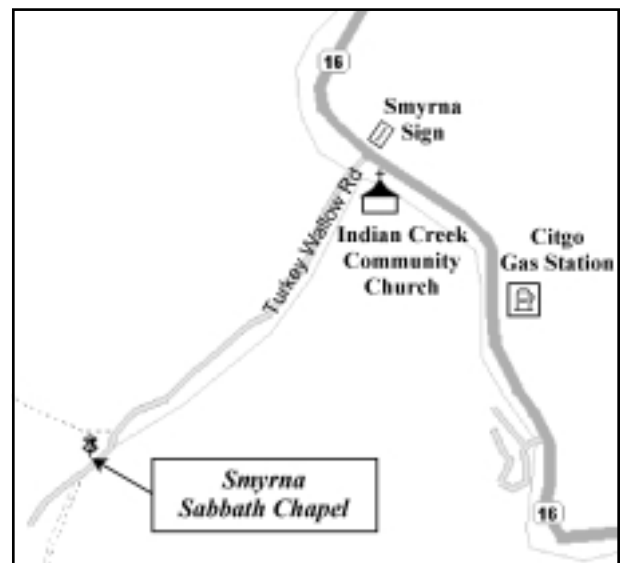
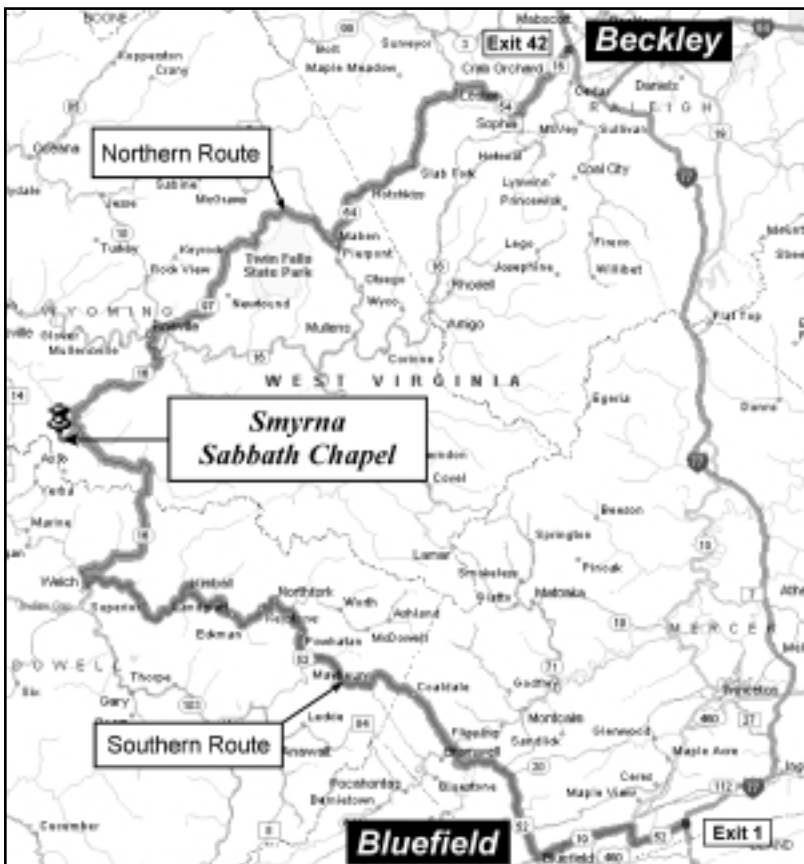
tightly packed than last year. Smyrna will have a few tents and camping supplies for those who do not have and cannot afford to purchase them. The supply is limited, so if you need to use a tent, camp stove, etc., please request early. Two showers with hot and cold water will be available. Don't forget items such as tents, bedding, flashlights, food, toiletries, insect repellent, and modest casual and Sabbath clothes.

While there is room for RV's, we do not have hook-ups. RV's will need to be self-contained. For those who wish, there are motels in the area. The nearest motels are: Pocahontas Motel, (304) 436-2250; Woody's Motel, (304) 732-6540; The Cow Shed, (304) 732-7000; Twin Falls State Park Resort, (304) 294-4000.

All campers will need to be responsible for their own food. Meals will not be served. For those who use ice chests, ice is available one mile away. Some health food items will also be made available for purchase by Sister Gina Campbell, who will be bringing some things from her health food store. You may call Gina ahead, to let her know what you might expect to need, at: (901) 845-5859.

Parents will need to be responsible for their children, including "youth" at *all* times.

For further information contact us by using the contact information on page twelve of this newsletter. *Editor*



Directions: (See previous page for maps)

Traveling from the North, Northeast, or Northwest: From Beckley, traveling I-77 south take the third Beckley exit #42 (Sophia - Mabscott). Follow Sophia - Rt. 16, south branch of exit. After entering Rt. 16 south (four-lane undivided road at this point), go 3.7 miles and turn right on Rt. 54/97. Go 13.6 miles to Maben. Turn right on Rt. 97 and go 12 miles to Pineville. Upon entering Pineville you will stop at a "T" in the road. You will have a Baptist Church on the right and a BP service station on the left. Turn left and go 1/3 of a mile. Stop at four-way stop. Turn left and go .8 miles. Turn right on Rt. 16 south. Go 6 miles. Watch for Smyrna sign on the left side of the road. Turn right at the sign and go 7/10 miles. (These values have been measured and are very accurate.)

Traveling from the South, Southeast, or Southwest: From Wytheville, VA, traveling I-77 north take exit #1 upon entering West Virginia, immediately after exiting East River Mountain Tunnel. Follow Route 52 north to Welch (about 40 miles). At Welch follow signs for Route 16 North. Once leaving town, you will travel about nine miles. You will pass a Citgo gas station on the right. We are about 1/4 of a mile past the Citgo station. Watch for the Smyrna sign on the right side of the road. Turn left at the sign and go 7/10 miles. (These mileages are approximates and not exact values.) *Beware traveling through the towns of Northfork, Keystone, and Kimball, they are well-known speed-traps!*

Tentative 2001 Campmeeting Schedule

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sabbath
6:00—7:00	Camp Setup	Malcolm McCrillis	Dennis Robertson	Howard Williams	Lynnford Beachy
7:00—9:30		BREAK			
9:00—10:30		Bob Habenicht	Gary Richmond	Gary Richmond	Allen Stump
10:30—11:00		BREAK			
11:00—12:00		STL	STL	STL	STL
12:00—1:30		BREAK			
1:30—2:20		Ben Vela: Medical Missionary Work Seminar	Ben Vela: Medical Missionary Work Seminar	Ben Vela: Medical Missionary Work Seminar	Testimonies
2:30—3:20		Willis Smith: In-Home Bible Study Seminar	Willis Smith: In-Home Bible Study Seminar	Willis Smith: In-Home Bible Study Seminar	
3:30—4:20		STL: Homiletics Seminar	STL: Homiletics Seminar	STL: Homiletics Seminar	
4:20—7:00		BREAK			
7:00—8:30	Lynnford Beachy	David Clayton	David Clayton	David Clayton	David Clayton
Youth’s Meetings: 2:30-3:20 Wednesday-Friday — Children’s Meetings: 2:30-3:20 Wednesday-Friday					



Letters from our Readers



"Thank you and Truth Seekers Ministries for the last two Bible studies. They are presenting God's Word in a different way than I usually think about God's Word. It is very much like when reading the Bible through. Each time through we see more than we saw the previous readings. To me it is proof of God's Word being alive. Like you stated so well 'It never gets stale.' The Word gives us Christians a means to continue our spiritual growth. God is good!

"Here are lessons 5 and 6. They were fun to do as I turned to each verse and read the scripture. The study of God's Word is food that strengthens our spiritual relationship with the Father.

"As I read the April, 2001 issue of the *Present Truth*, I was pleased to see excerpts of my letters printed in the Letters section. If anyone can be encouraged by anything I have spoken or written, it is for the glory of God. We are called to learn, to share, and to teach the Truth that brings about eternal life.

"May God bless you, Lynnford Beachy, all the workers at Truth Seekers Ministries, and all of the God-centered ministries around the world for presenting God's Word to a desperately needy world."

Michigan

"Myself being a believer in Christ, picked up three of your pamphlets left in a chair at my job... I love reading anything with Jesus involved. Would you please send me your free book on last day events, and Bible Study Course. Your pamphlet, "Who is Worthy of Worship" added more enlightenment to my faith. Look to hear from you soon."

Missouri

"I received your pamphlet 'Jesus Wants a God-Fearing Church' a long time ago at the Stand in the Gap Rally in Washington, D.C. I've been meaning to write to you for awhile to receive your *America in Prophecy* book but I have a real bad problem with procrastination. I really enjoyed the truths you shared in your pamphlet and was blessed by the Scriptures it led me to as I examined them. I really feel if this book has more of the same truths in it I will be truly blessed by it and then be able to bless someone else with it. I hope I can still receive one from you. Thank you and keep up the good work."

New Jersey

"Hoping this letter will find you well. I'm one of those who have been touched by your gospel, but my setback is that I rely most on borrowing from others, some of the books. I would be most delighted if you can kindly send me copies. Probably as soon as possible."

Zimbabwe

"Just picked up your brochure on 'What the Bible Says About Hell.' I am amazed at some of the interpretations and I'm not being too critical but this was not an article to get people saved but to bring dissension. We need to be getting people saved. After all, what difference does it make where we are when we die. After all, Jesus told me the same thing he told the thief on the cross. Because of my acceptance of Him, this day I will be in paradise."

Alabama

(It makes a great deal of difference whether the dead are really dead or not. There are thousands of people, even Christians, who are in communication with those whom they think are their deceased loved ones. The Bible makes it clear that they are really in communication with devils. (Read 2 Corinthians 11:4 and 1 Timothy 4:1.) That is serious! Not only this, but it effects how we understand the death of Christ. Please study and think about this some more before coming to a conclusion. The tract "What the Bible says About Hell" helps clarify Christ's words to the thief. Anyone who would like to read this tract for himself, please contact us.

Editor

"I am very happy that you have sent me some literature and I am sorry that you can no longer send Bibles. Please, I want my name to be added to this mailing list to receive [*Present Truth*] on a monthly basis. Again, I want you to send me more copies of tracts so that I will share it with my church members so they will also have a better understanding of God's character enabling them to have a closer relationship with Him. Please friend, try to send the tracts. About 150 tracts so that everybody will get some... Please, I want you to come and take to spend some time with you. Give me the answer of this, and try to send me the Gospel literature."

Ghana

(In the past we have sent many Bibles overseas. However recently we have been overwhelmed by the amount of Bible requests we are receiving. Some individuals request anywhere from 1 to 1000 Bibles. Unfortunately, at this time we are unable to fill these requests. We do not have the facilities to print Bibles here nor the manpower to operate a Bible distribution ministry. We are a print ministry dedicated to providing truth-filled literature to the world. If any of our readers knows of an organization dedicated to supplying and distributing Bibles, please let us know so we can refer these requests to them.

Editor

"After sending you an e-mail I visited the post office, and I was able to receive the *Present Truth* newsletter. As I scan and read it I found announcements about the camp-meetings and many other things and in the last part I found my letter published in the *Present Truth*. How I wish I could be a part of *Present Truth*, and could be able

to contribute some message about the Present Truth we are spreading and preaching to people who need the truth at this time. I hope you could grant my wish.

"Just this morning I sent a letter to one of the inmates of a prison in Davao who asks for a Bible and other materials for personal use inside the jail and I have scheduled to visit him on May 20, 2001. I hope that the Lord will permit me to visit the place and I am soliciting your prayers for this purpose. *Philippines*

"Thank you very much for sending me the book *Shelter in the Storm* and the newsletter. I'm grateful. I'm prayerfully reading your materials. You have a good message to opening my eyes and in my mind for sharing the truth. God will bless you abundantly..." *Philippines*

"Thank you very much for the last issues [of *Present Truth*]. I ask you if possible subscribe one for those two Bible studies: 'Christ Our Righteousness' and 'These Last Days.' ... Keep on by faith. Jesus comes soon as He promised!" *Mozambique*

"I would like to be having monthly supply of your magazine. I saw one from someone in our church. May you give me more information and how to obtain one or more. I will be very grateful if my request will be considered." *Zambia*
(Last month in the Questions and Answers section we addressed some issues brought up by a man in Maryland regarding the articles 'Individuality in Religion' parts 1-3, by A.T. Jones, that were printed in the March, April, and May 2001 issues of *Present Truth*. The following letter is a response from this man in Maryland. *Editor*)

"Brother, my whole point in objecting to Jones' book was that he is saying that choosing sin or not choosing to sin is just as much 'freedom' and 'liberty' as choosing to do God's commandments... If I choose to do the commandments, whichever ones I decide to do, as Adam had a choice to eat from any *other* tree in the garden, that *kind* of choosing is FREEDOM. 'Choosing' sin is always, always evil and it is always bondage and leads to more sin and corruption. You might see this as a semantic issue, but the Bible describes 'liberty' and 'freedom' as gifts we have in serving Christ, never in doing sin or contemplating sin. Such use of these words leads people to the wrong idea, that the commandment is a 'choice,' and such a thing I know you are not trying to teach anyone. It seems to me that you are trying to teach that we are and must be responsible for our decisions and that God is not the author of sin. I agree with both of these.

"Again, 'freedom' and 'liberty' are never, never in any act of sin, whether it be merely in the heart, or in real physical action, mental or bodily. That is my point.

"I am not sure if I did, but if I denied that God gave us choice, or created us with choice to serve him, I was very wrong. This is a distinctive truth that God created us with.

I really agree with what you say in this paragraph [paragraph quoted]. The more I attempted to write about the whole question of 'choice' I realized that I stepped over the line in my denunciations of sin and sinfulness of the creature. To be tempted is not a sin. I realized that if I continued in my line of thought I would have to deny that Christ was a human being and that He came in the flesh, and also that God created us good. So, I am very wrong to put my point in such a way as to deny that God gave us free will as created beings. I do believe He did to our ancestors, Adam and Eve, and to the Angels in heaven. *Maryland*
(Thank you for your sincerity and willingness to share your thoughts and clear up the issue. In the future, please continue to share your concerns. *Editor*)

"I'm told you have the video, 'All in the Name of the Lord,' and would like to know if you have the other seven to complete the series. I have 'All in the Name of the Lord' and am looking for the other seven to complete my set. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have them and how much." *Montana*

(We have these excellent videos. I recommend them to all. You will see them listed in our list of publications. *Editor*)

"I am really very happy to receive your letter dated on April 11, 2001 with some literature. But we already published, about 'One hundred Bible Facts on the True and Biblical Sabbath.' Anyway I am very thankful to God and you and your coworkers there in Truth Seekers Ministries in USA.

"I am receiving continuously the *Present Truth* not only the name of *Present Truth*, what you publish there in the magazine, every word is present truth. I am sharing with my friends about all the messages. But now, my coworkers and friends also want the monthly publication...

"I received a camp meeting reply card with last month's issue of *Present Truth*. I am very interested to attend the meetings. [Due to] lack of finances, I could not come there. But my two friends are very eager to attend the camp meeting in West Virginia being held July 17 to 21, 2001. If you send an invitation letter to the two brothers they will be there in the right time... If you send invitation letter for getting visa, they will come with their own money. Kindly send reply immediately." *India*

"I would like to request any type of Bible tracts or Bible literature that your ministries might be able to forward to me at the address above. I am a strong believer of the Word of God as in Jesus Christ and have been most of my time in prison, as well as a country gospel song writer and singer that praises the Lord with my own heartfelt thanks to Him and His amazing grace. Your consideration in this first time requesting would be appreciated to the fullest. Thank you so much. A friend in Jesus. *Florida*

(Thank you so much for all your letters. *Editor*)

DIGITAL VIDEO PROJECT UPDATE

We currently have two more titles in the series, "The Good News About God," nearly ready for distribution. These titles are, "The Father and the Son," and "The Death of Christ." These are tapes 3 and 4 in this series. Tapes 1, 2, and 5 have already been completed and are ready for distribution. The titles for each of these are: "The Love of God," "Who is the God of the Bible," and "The Holy Spirit" respectively. These videos are also available in audio cassette format.

There are two more tapes in this series that are still awaiting production. They are: "Answers to Trinitarian Objections" and "The Roots of the Trinity." For those who are able and wish to help with the expenses, the cost of video tape production and postage is \$7.00 within the USA—\$10.00 outside the USA. The cost of audio cassette production and postage is \$2.00 within the USA—\$4.00 outside the USA. For those who need multiple copies of a video tape with the same title, we are requesting a donation of \$3.00 for each additional video tape requested within the USA, and \$4.00 for each additional video requested outside of the USA. (We have each of these messages available in PAL or NTSC format for use in the USA

and many places in the world.) For example, in the United States the suggested donation for one video would be \$7.00, the suggested donation for two videos would be \$10.00, the suggested donation for three videos would be \$13.00 etc. For each audio cassette, please add \$1.00 for those sent within the United States and \$1.50 for those to be shipped outside the United States. However, the audio and video tapes, as with all of our materials, are provided free. Anyone who sincerely requests materials and cannot help with expenses will be sent materials as we are able.

As with all of our literature that we print here, duplication of these tapes is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged.

Editor

Present Truth is published monthly by *Truth Seekers Ministries*, which is a division of *Smyrna Gospel Ministries*. It is sent free upon request. **Duplication of these papers is not only permitted but strongly encouraged.** *Present Truth* is available online at <http://www.present-truth.net>.

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