

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

February 2009

“Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love” (2 John 1:3). I pray that you are doing well in this new year. The things of this world may seem more and more out of reach since the economy is swiftly going down hill. Count this as a blessing. The things of this world are only temporary and the love of them demonstrates that God’s love is not in the heart. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2). Take the turmoil in this world as an opportunity to seek the Lord as never before, for God is the only stability we can have in this world.

Worldwide Change!

Could the Rapture be Next?

by Lynnford Beachy

Today the earth is facing seemingly unsurmountable challenges. Global warming is changing the environment, economic collapse seems imminent. Iceland’s economy collapsed in October, 2008, and its government resigned in January, 2009. Britain is on the verge of bankruptcy. The economy of the United States is very unstable. The moral climate of the world is just as unstable. Homosexuality is considered a normal way of life. Children are murdering people with no remorse. The whole world is on the verge of multiple crises on many fronts.

As this world encounters these changes, many are expecting biblical prophecies of the last days to unfold before our eyes, and rightly so. Yet, there is confusion among biblical scholars regarding what events are going to take place. Much of this confusion arises from the lazy attitude taken toward Bible study. Far too many people, even pastors and church leaders, are more willing to let someone else do their Bible study for them, rather than taking the time to study for themselves.

Because of this laziness, Satan can mislead multitudes just by deceiving a few leaders. The Bible says, “For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed” (Isaiah 9:16). It is extremely important that we study for ourselves so that we do not have to depend upon the word of frail humans, who are susceptible to deception. If there was ever a time when diligent Bible study was important, it is now. Satan is working to deceive people today more than at any other time.

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Revelation 12:12). His deceptions concerning the events of the last days have great potential for destroying many people. In fact, Jesus, speaking of the events of the last days, warned, “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24).

Brethren, if you have been holding ideas about the last days and are not completely sure that they are exactly what the Bible teaches, I strongly appeal to you to lay those preconceived ideas aside and open your Bibles to read for yourselves to see if those things are so.

Jesus expounded, “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these

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things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.... But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:6-9, 13).

Notice that Christ's warnings to Christians included the announcement that we will be delivered up to be afflicted and even killed for His name's sake. This warning is contrary to a widely held belief called the secret rapture.

The Secret Rapture

The secret rapture theory has gained popularity in recent years due to the "Left Behind" series of videos, books, and cassettes that are found in many Bible book stores. There is even a song on the radio about this with a line that says, "You've been left behind." Each of these media are designed to portray the idea that, just before the tribulation, Christ will return secretly to rescue His people from the hard times ahead. This "secret rapture" theory postulates that all Christians will one day mysteriously disappear, while the wicked are left on the earth. This theory is based on a misunderstanding of what Jesus said in Matthew chapter twenty-four. Jesus prophesied, "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matthew 24:40, 41). Many assume from these verses that Jesus was saying that there will be a day when the righteous will be taken to heaven and the wicked will be left here on the earth. However, look at the verses again, and you will see that Jesus did not say who would be taken, nor did He say where they would go.

In order to assume that the righteous are taken to heaven while the wicked are left to go through the tribulation, one would have to ignore the immediate context of Christ's words. Let us look at the context to get an understanding of what Jesus was talking about. Jesus said,

"But as the days of Noe 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. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matthew 24:37-41).

Jesus used the story of Noah and the flood as a parallel to what would happen at the second coming of Christ. In Noah's day the world was deeply involved in their worldly

lives, oblivious to what was about to happen. They were like the wicked will be just before the second coming of Christ who say, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:4). Jesus said that when the flood came it took them all away. Who did the flood take away, was it the righteous or the wicked? The flood took away the wicked in death. The only ones left were the eight righteous people in the ark. In the story of Noah's ark, the wicked were taken in death, and the righteous were left alive. Immediately after telling this story Jesus said, "so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matthew 24:39-41).

The following questions must be asked. Who will be taken? Who will be left? Where will the ones taken go? From the immediate context all these questions have an obvious answer. At Christ's second coming the wicked will be taken in death, and the righteous will be left standing alive. This scene is described in Revelation chapter six. Here we read, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and *who shall be able to stand?*" (Revelation 6:15-17).

Regarding the coming of the Lord, Malachi wrote, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap" (Malachi 3:2). Only the righteous will be able to stand when Christ comes. They will be the ones left. Isaiah wrote concerning the coming of the Lord: "Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left" (Isaiah 24:6). Who will be left? It will be the righteous.

Paul wrote, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then *we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). The ones who are left alive will be caught up to be with Christ. These are the righteous.

Paul said that the man of sin will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming, which will also be true of

all the wicked. "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

Where the Wicked are Taken

Luke's account of Christ's conversation, where He said, "one shall be taken, and the other left," leaves us in no doubt regarding what Jesus was talking about. Jesus said, "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, *Where, Lord?* And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together" (Luke 17:34-37).

The disciples who heard Christ's words wanted a clarification, so they asked Him, "Where, Lord?" Were they asking "Where will they be taken?" or "Where will they be left?" The answer is obvious. They could not be asking where will they be left, because Jesus had plainly told them that the one in a bed will be left in the bed, the one at the grinding mill will be left at the grinding mill, the one in the field will be left in the field. The disciples wanted to know where the ones taken would go. Jesus answered, "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together" (Luke 17:37). Here Christ is saying that the ones taken will be taken in death, and their dead bodies will attract flesh-eating birds. We read about this in Revelation: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Revelation 19:17, 18).

After examining the evidence, we can see that Christ was not talking about a secret rapture when He said, "*one shall be taken, and the other left.*" In fact, if Christ had been referring to such a teaching He would have contradicted His own words that He had spoken a few minutes earlier. He said that the Christians would be here during the tribulation. He said, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake" (Matthew 24:9). I doubt anyone could have convinced the true Christians during the Dark Ages, who were tortured to death, that they were going to be raptured before things got difficult. Nor could you convince the Christians in the world today who are, even now, being tortured for their faith in places like

Afghanistan, India, China, Saudi Arabia, etc. that they were going to be raptured before things got difficult.

Jesus said, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:20-22). It would be pointless for Jesus to admonish us to pray that our flight be not in the winter nor on the Sabbath day if we were to be raptured before the tribulation.

Jesus continued, "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matthew 24:23-28).

Jesus said specifically that if anyone tells you that Christ has come secretly we are not to believe it. He said that His coming would be as the lightning, filling the entire sky so that every eye shall see Him. "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). "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (Mark 13:26).

Jesus warned us that there would arise false prophets who would seek to deceive His people on this very subject; and we can see His prophecy fulfilled today. Many false prophets are proclaiming that Christ will come secretly for His people, but Jesus told us *when* He would come for His people. He said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see *the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven* with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:29-31).

Final Thoughts

There should be no doubt in our minds regarding this issue. Christ has made it plain. He said, "Behold, I have

told you before.” God’s people who are alive on the earth when the tribulation for the world begins will go through the tribulation. Some will be killed. Some of the wicked will be converted during this time. Nearing the end of the tribulation the seven last plagues will be poured out upon the wicked (Revelation 16) while the righteous will be protected from these plagues (Psalm 91:1-16). Immediately following the plagues Christ will come very visibly and the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. The graves of the righteous will be opened and they will rise to meet the Lord. Then the righteous will be caught up to be with the Lord. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:16.)

The popularity of the secret rapture is relatively new. It is not scriptural, and it gives people a false hope that if they are not ready at the secret rapture, perhaps they will be able to get ready before the tribulation is over. Friends, that is a delusion of the enemy. Jesus said, “believe it not.”

I would like to share a testimony with you regarding this false theory. Several years ago I attended a Bible prophecy meeting that had been advertised in a local newspaper. Being quite interested in Bible prophecy, I decided to attend. It was held in a local church, and the main point of the speaker was that there would be a secret rapture where Christ would secretly come to rapture His people out of the earth. I had studied the Bible on this subject and knew that the idea of the secret rapture was false. However, after hearing the first presentation I was shocked with the reality of how dangerous this teaching is. The speaker distributed a book entitled, *No Guillotine for the Bride*, in which he sought to demonstrate that no true

Christians would be here during the tribulation, except the ones who would be converted after the secret rapture.

I was amazed at how appealing and deceptive this theory is. It is appealing to believe that we will never suffer any hardship on this earth, and if we happen to miss out on the rapture, we will always have a second chance during the tribulation. As appealing as this may sound, it is contrary to scripture and a trick of the devil to lull you to sleep. The Bible says, “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thessalonians 5:3). Paul wrote, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

I pray that you will be ready to meet the Lord when He visibly returns. There will be no second chances then, for the proclamation will have gone forth, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:11, 12).

There are far too many people who already have the idea that they will put off their conversion until the last minute so they can “enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). Sadly, many people who “neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews 2:3) do so too long, until it is forever too late. Let us not encourage them in their wickedness by giving them a false hope of a second chance after the second coming of Christ, for it will not happen. For a thorough study on this subject please contact us and request the tract entitled, “The Millennium.” ✍



Elder Glen David Ford
“Papa Glen”
The Late Elder of Smyrna Chapel

Obituary Notice

Our beloved brother, Glen David Ford, went to sleep in Jesus on January 14, 2009, at the age of 82, following an automobile accident that occurred on December 30, 2008. Brother Glen was affectionately known by many as “Papa” or “Papa Glen.” The Smyrna Chapel family is deeply grateful for Glen’s faithful service as head elder at the Smyrna Sabbath Chapel. As a serious student of Scripture, his greatest joy was studying God’s Word and sharing his faith, and even on the morning of his death at Health South Rehab Center in Princeton, West Virginia, he was engaged in a Bible study with one of the rehabilitation workers. He also enjoyed being out in nature and was an avid gardener. Until recent years, he took to the woods at every opportunity in the fall to go ginsenging. Glen delighted in people, and he loved to visit others

and to host gatherings in his and Ann’s home. Hospitality was truly one of his many gifts. He was a good storyteller, and his wit and humor endeared him to everyone who knew him.

Glen served as a medic on a hospital ship in the US Army during World War II. After the war, he pursued carpentry as his vocation until his retirement, and he was well known through the region for the quality of his craftsmanship in home building and in remodeling.

In addition to his parents, Glen was preceded in death by two sons, two grandsons, three brothers, and one sister. Survivors include his wife, Anna Hall Ford, three sons, two daughters, four sisters, thirteen grandchildren, and sixteen great-grandchildren.

Brother Glen was buried at the Smyrna Chapel Cemetery, where he awaits the call of Jesus. He is dearly missed by all his Smyrna family and all that knew him. ✍

The Gospel in Creation (Part 1)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

Introduction

In the fifteenth chapter of Romans and the fourth verse, the Spirit of God, through the apostle Paul, sets the seal of approval upon the whole of the Old Testament, in giving the object for which it was written. He says, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

The reason why we find comfort and hope in the Old Testament is plainly revealed by Christ when, in His reply to the Jews, He gave the divine sanction to it, and especially to the writings of Moses, saying, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me." "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John 5:39, 46, 47, R.V.). We may find comfort and hope in the Scriptures, because Christ is in them.

The spirit of the Old Testament is the Spirit of Christ. We read of the ancient prophets that they searched "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:11).

The Old Testament is the Gospel: Not only so, but the Old Testament contains the gospel. In the verse following the one last quoted we read, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." That is, the prophets, Moses among them, ministered the very same things that were preached by the apostles, namely the gospel. Since the gospel of God is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:1-3), and the Jews would necessarily have believed in Jesus if they had believed Moses, because Moses wrote of Christ, it follows that what Moses wrote was the gospel.

The Gospel in Creation: The first thing that Moses wrote, through the inspiration of the Spirit of God, was the story of creation. That, therefore, is one of the things through which we are to receive hope and comfort. Why is it that we can receive hope and comfort through the story of the creation? Because that story contains the gospel. A few words will serve to establish this fact before we proceed to study the lessons in detail.

The declaration of the apostle, that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16), is familiar to all who have ever heard the gospel preached. The gospel is the manifestation of God's power put forth to save men. The same thing is stated in substance by the apostle Peter when he speaks of the inheritance reserved in heaven for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Peter 1:5).

Creation, the Measure of God's Power: But what is the measure of the power of God? Wherein is it seen in a tangible form? Read Romans 1:20, where we are told that ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. It is in creation, therefore, that the power of God is to be seen by everybody. But the power of God in the line of salvation is the gospel. Therefore the works of creation teach the gospel. This is declared in Psalm 19, where we read, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language; without these their voice is heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

I have given the rendering of the margin, as conforming more closely to the original. The idea is, that no matter what language a people speak, all can understand the language of the heavens. Their message can be read much more easily than if they uttered an audible sound; for all people on earth cannot understand the same articulate speech, but all who have reason can read the simple language of the works of God.

This thought is expressed in the following beautiful lines by Addison:

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue, ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim;
The unwearied sun, from day to day
Does his Creator's power display
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the listening earth

Repeats the story of her birth;
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing, as they shine,
"The hand that made us is Divine."

The gospel is the power of God, and the power of God is manifest in the things that He has made; therefore, the psalmist is speaking of the gospel, which the heavens teach. That this is so is shown by the apostle Paul in Romans 10:15-18. "How beautiful are the feet of them that

preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world." The apostle is here speaking about the gospel, which, he says, all have not obeyed. Then he declares all have heard, and as proof that they all have heard, he quotes from Psalm 19: "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Their words concerning what? Why, concerning the gospel, of course. Thus we have a plain statement that the heavens do preach the gospel. There is no man so illiterate that he cannot read the gospel; no man so deaf nor so isolated that he cannot hear a gospel sermon. This truth will be more evident as we proceed.

To be Continued...

(This article was taken from pages 7-12 of the book entitled, *The Gospel in Creation*, by Ellet J. Waggoner. *Editor*)

Florida Camp Meeting


The Florida camp meeting this year is scheduled for Thursday, February 19 through Tuesday, February 24, 2009. It will be held at a group campsite called Doe Lake that is maintained by the US Forestry Dept. and is in the Ocala National Forest. You can check it out at the Internet address at the bottom of this page. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. on the 19th and we must be cleaned up and out by 1:00 p.m. on the 24th.

It is a lovely area that will be exclusively ours during our retreat. It is on a lake, with a multi-purpose meeting building that has a huge kitchen, open to our use, that is equipped with a commercial sink and serving area, two toasters, three refrigerators and one chest style deep-freeze. It has NO stove or oven, and NO utensils or pots and pans, but it does have two small microwaves and multiple electrical outlets for the use of any cooking appliances you might like to bring with you such as: crock pots, electric skillets or griddles, waffle makers, electric hot pots, etc. Camp stoves are allowed at individual campsites, and campfires are allowed in fire rings, which are sprinkled throughout the camping area, as are water spigots. All will be responsible for their own meals, with the exception of the noon meal on Sabbath, which will be provided for all.

Don't forget your lawn chairs, as the only seating in the meeting area is picnic tables. The bathhouse is new, nice, and fully tiled. There is an electric plug-in area that will

support about five camping trailers, but NO sewage hook-up or dump station. Flashlights and lanterns will also be real handy as it gets VERY dark after sundown.

The campsite is a little difficult to find, but when you arrive you'll be glad you did! The nearest main road is State Rd. 42 which runs east to west all the way from interstate 95 to highway 27/441 (which can be accessed from interstate 75 in Ocala). From Hwy. 42, turn onto 182nd Ave. Rd. (it only turns one way) at a blinking light where you'll see a little country store called Brooks Grocery & Hardware. Continue on that road about three miles or so till you see a tiny brown sign that says 573 and 14, marking a dirt road that goes to the right (we'll also post an Eden House Camp Meeting sign there). The campsite is about one mile up that road on the right, well marked with a forestry service sign saying Doe Lake group camp. Enter and choose any site you wish to set up your camp. If you have an RV, follow the entry road all the way to the back, just past the meeting pavilion and you'll see a post with plug-in capabilities for about five RV's. You'll need a very long cord so park close to the post.

If you desire a room in a hotel, the nearest place to find one is a town called Lady Lake that is about a 20 minute drive from the camp. Call Jerri Raymond if you need the names and phone numbers, or if you have any questions. She can be reached at (407) 291-9565. 

www.recreation.gov/camping/Doe_Lake_Group_Site_Fl/r/campgroundDetails.do?contractCode=NRSO&parkId=75493&topTabIndex=CampingSpot

The National Sunday Law (Part 4) by Alonzo T. Jones

(The following is a portion of an argument of Alonzo T. Jones before The United States Senate, December 13, 1888, opposing the Blair Bill promoting a Sunday law. *Editor*)

For as Mr. Buckle has most forcibly expressed it:

"In this way, men being constrained to mask their thoughts, there arises a habit of securing safety by falsehood, and of purchasing impunity with deceit. In this way, fraud becomes a necessity of life; insincerity is made a daily custom; the whole tone of public feeling is vitiated; and the gross amount of vice and of error fearfully increased."

Consequently, it is only at its own peril that the State can ever enforce the observance of a day of rest.

More than this, for the State to allow itself to be dictated to by the church as is here proposed by Mr. Small, is to render the church superior to the civil power, which can end in nothing but a religious despotism, which is the worst of all despotisms. Thus by every line of reasoning that can spring from the subject, it is demonstrated that for the State to fix a day of compulsory rest can only end in evil. Therefore, my proposition is proved, that Sunday laws are not for the good of anybody.

Further: as it is only the religious sanctions which surround a day of rest, that can prevent it from being a day of idleness, and consequently of evil; and as God only can supply these sanctions, it follows that to God only, can Sabbath observance be rendered. He only can command it; he only can secure it; and being a duty which can be rendered only to God, we are brought again directly to the command of Jesus Christ, to render unto God, not to Caesar, that which is God's, which clearly forbids the State to have anything to do with Sabbath observance.

This whole line of argument is fully sustained by the Sabbath commandment itself. That commandment says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the

seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Here are the reasons: first, he rested on the seventh day; second, he blessed it and made it holy. That you may become tired is not given as a reason for doing no work on the seventh day. God does not say that on the seventh day you shall do no work, because if you should, you would overdo or break down your physical system. Nothing of the kind. Man's physical wants are not referred to in the commandment. It says, Work six days, because the Lord worked six days; rest on the seventh day, because the Lord rested on the seventh day; keep that day holy, because the Lord blessed it and made it holy. It is the Lord who is to be held in view. It is the Lord who is to be exalted. Therefore the fourth commandment and its obligations have solely to do with man's relationship to God. It is not man's physical, but his spiritual, needs that are held in view in the Sabbath commandment. It is intended to be a day in which to worship God, — a day of holy remembrance of him, and of meditation upon his works. The day is to be kept holy. If it is not kept holy, it is not kept at all. When the State undertakes to demand the observance of the Sabbath, or Lord's day, it demands of men that which does not belong to it, but which belongs only to God. When the State undertakes to secure the observance of the Sabbath, it undertakes that which, to it, is an impossible task, because holiness is not an attribute of civil government, nor has it either the power or the credentials to promote holiness; and as has been already demonstrated, all that it ever can do in any such effort is to enforce idleness and put a premium upon recklessness, which, for its own welfare, the State can never afford to do. If the State undertakes to supply, from whatever source, the religious sanctions which alone can keep the day from being one of idleness, generating evil, it only enforces hypocrisy, and increases sin.

Therefore I repeat, that by every logical consideration of the subject, I have sustained my proposition that Sunday laws are not for the good of anybody or anything in this world.

Senator Blair: Do you understand that this bill undertakes to make anybody worship God?

Mr. Jones: Yes, sir, I affirm that it does; and I will prove it by statements made by those who stood here to-day. But I have some other points to make first; and here I propose to introduce my historical

argument. I want you all to see that in this way the papacy was made in the fourth century. I shall read all that I do read, perhaps, on this point, from *Neander's Church History*, vol. 2, Prof. Torrey's edition, Boston, 1852. I can only refer to it by the page. As I have related, the Roman empire was forced by the principles of Christ, to recognize the right of every man to worship as he chose. This right was recognized in the Edict of Milan, A. D. 312. But liberty of conscience trembled in the balance but a moment, and then the bishopric, with that ambitious spirit that developed the papacy, took up the strain, and carried forward that line of work which ended in the imperious despotism of the Middle Ages. I want you to see just how that was done, and you will then have no difficulty in seeing the tendency of the present movement.

Neander says

"There had in fact arisen in the church a false theocratical theory, originating not in the essence of the gospel, but in the confusion of the religious constitutions of the Old and New Testaments, which... brought along with it an unchristian opposition of the spiritual to the secular power, and which might easily result in the formation of a sacerdotal State, subordinating the secular to itself in a false and outward way." — p. 132.

A theocratical theory of government tending to subordinate the secular to itself, was the scheme. In other words, the church aimed to make the ecclesiastical power superior to the civil power. These theocratical bishops made themselves and their power a necessity to Constantine, who, in order to make sure of their support, became a political convert to the form of Christianity, and made it the recognized religion of the empire; for says Neander further:

"This theocratical theory was already the prevailing one in the time of Constantine; and... the bishops voluntarily made themselves dependent on him by their disputes, and by their determination to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims." — *Idem*.

Out of that theocratical theory of government came the papacy, which did subordinate the civil to the ecclesiastical power, and that same spirit is to be guarded against to-day in the United States as much as in any other country.

I want you to see that there is a theocratical theory underlying this whole scheme. Mr. Bateham has said that the

Woman's Christian Temperance Union started this movement a short time ago, and that they had worked it up. What is their aim in civil government? I quote from the monthly reading of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of September, 1886, — a monthly reading for all the local Unions throughout the country — the following:

"A true theocracy is yet to come, and the enthronement of Christ in law and law-makers; hence I pray devoutly, as a Christian patriot, for the ballot in the hands of women, and rejoice that the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union has so long championed this cause."

A theocratical theory, you see, is behind this movement, and is again coming in to interfere in civil things, to establish a theocracy, and to subordinate the civil power at last, to the ecclesiastical.

Senator Blair: Do you think the question of giving the ballot to women is a religious question?

Mr. Jones: No. I only read this for the purpose of giving the proof that there is a theocratical theory underlying this, as there was that in the fourth century, so as to show the parallel.

Senator Blair: But the parallel seems to imply that the extension of the suffrage to woman is by divine appointment, and is the introduction of a theocratic form of government?

Mr. Jones: Yes, they want the ballot so as to make a theocracy successful.

Senator Blair: Therefore you would be against woman's suffrage?

Mr. Jones: I would be against woman's suffrage, or any other kind of suffrage, to establish a theocracy.

Senator Blair: But that is not the question. It is possible these women have misstated their own idea there.

Mr. Jones: No, because I have other proofs. Let me read them.

Senator Palmer: Do you suppose they intended there a practical theocracy?

Mr. Jones: I do, sir; but let me read further, and you will get their own words.

Senator Blair: If these women are trying to overthrow the institutions of the country, and are about to establish a sacerdotal State, we ought to know it.

Mr. Jones: That is true, and that is why I am speaking here; we want the nation to know it.

Senator Blair: These women need looking after, I admit.

Mr. Jones: They do in that respect, and there are many men concerned in the same business.

Senator Blair: Otherwise it would not be dangerous.

Mr. Jones: It would be dangerous anyway. A theocratical theory of government is dangerous any where. It is antichristian, as well as contrary to right and the principles of justice.

Senator Blair: Do you suppose that the government of heaven is a theocracy?

Mr. Jones: Yes, sir; but a civil government — a government of earth — is not.

Senator Blair: Then why is it dangerous?

Mr. Jones: Governments of earth are not dangerous when properly controlled.

Senator Blair: They only say that a true theocracy is yet to come. A millennium is supposed to be coming; perhaps they have reference to a millennium that we have not yet got, so that they will wait some years before they get it.

Mr. Jones: But I am going to read what kind of laws they propose to make to bring in the millennium.

Senator Blair: So far as you have read, you have not touched the question; for they say a true theocracy is yet to come, and it may be they are looking to the coming down of the New Jerusalem, for the time of the new theocracy.

Mr. Jones: No, because no true theocracy can ever come through civil laws, or through politics, or through the ballot.

Senator Blair: That is not sure at all.

Mr. Jones: It is by the Scriptures.

Senator Blair: I do not know; I have read the Bible several times. But go on.

Mr. Jones: The government of Israel was a true theocracy. That was really a government of God. At the burning bush, God commissioned Moses to lead his people out of Egypt. By signs and wonders and mighty miracles multiplied, God delivered Israel from Egypt, and led them through the wilderness, and finally into the promised land. There he ruled them by judges "until Samuel the prophet," to whom, when he was a child, God spoke, and by whom he made known his will. In the days of Samuel, the people asked that they might have a king. This was allowed, and God chose Saul, and Samuel anointed him king of Israel. Saul failed to do the will of God, and as he rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord rejected him from being king, and sent Samuel to anoint David king of Israel; and David's throne God established forevermore. When Solomon succeeded to the kingdom in the place of David his father, the record is: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father." 1 Chron. 29:23. David's throne

was the throne of the Lord, and Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king over the earthly kingdom of God. The succession to the throne descended in David's line to Zedekiah, who was made subject to the king of Babylon, and who entered into a solemn covenant before God that he would loyally render allegiance to the king of Babylon. But Zedekiah broke his covenant; and then God said to him:

"Thou profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Eze. 21:25-27; see chap. 17:1-21.

The kingdom was then subject to Babylon. When Babylon fell, and Medo-Persia succeeded, it was overturned the first time. When Medo-Persia fell, and was succeeded by Grecia, it was overturned the second time. When the Greek empire gave way to Rome, it was overturned the third time. And then says the word, "It shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Who is he whose right it is? — "Thou... shalt call his name Jesus. 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 forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:31-33. And while he was here as "that prophet," a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the night in which he was betrayed he himself declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." Thus the throne of the Lord has been removed from this world, and will "be no more, until he come whose right it is," and then it will be given him. And that time is the end of this world, and the beginning of "the world to come." Therefore while this world stands, a true theocracy can never be in it again. Consequently, from the death of the Christ till the end of this world, every theory of an earthly theocracy is a false theory; every pretension to it is a false pretension; and wherever any such theory is proposed or advocated, whether in Rome in the fourth century, or here in the nineteenth century, it bears in it all that the papacy is or that it ever pretended to be, — it puts a man in the place of God.

Now I will read another statement as to the purpose of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. It is from the annual address of the President of the National

Union, at the Nashville convention, 1887. It is as follows;

"The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, local, State, national, and world-wide, has one vital, organic thought, one all-absorbing purpose, one undying enthusiasm, and that is that Christ shall be this world's king."

Senator Blair: "Shall be."

Mr. Jones: "Shall be this world's king."

Senator Blair: But you are a clergyman, and you read the Bible to us.

Mr. Jones: I am going to read a passage presently right on this point.

Senator Blair: Is it not in the same Bible that the time when Christ is to be the king, is the present?

Mr. Jones: I am going to read a passage from the Bible in connection with this subject. Allow me to finish this extract:

"The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, local, State, national, and world-wide, has one vital, organic thought, one all-absorbing purpose, one undying enthusiasm, and that is that Christ shall be this world's king; — yea, verily, THIS WORLD'S KING in its realm of cause and effect, — king of its courts, its camps, its commerce, — king of its colleges and cloisters, — king of its customs and constitutions.... The kingdom of Christ must enter the realm of law through the gateway of politics."

That emphasizes "this world's king." Jesus Christ himself said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Then assuredly the Woman's Christian Temperance Union stands against the words of Jesus Christ, in saying that he shall be this world's king; and that that kingdom is to enter the realm of the law through the gate-way of politics. Jesus Christ has his entrance through the gate-way of the gospel, and not through politics.

Nor did this purpose end with the Nashville National Woman's Christian Temperance Union convention. The proposition was repeated by the New York national convention last summer, in the following resolution:

"Resolved, That Christ and his gospel, as universal king and code, should be sovereign in our Government and political affairs."

Well, let us apply the resolution. Suppose the gospel were adopted as the code of this Government. It is the duty of every court to act in accordance with the code. There is a statute in that code which says:

"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if the 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."

Suppose, then, a man steals a horse. He is arrested, tried, and found guilty. He says, "I repent." "Thou shalt forgive him," says the code, and the Government must conform to the code. He is released, and repeats the act; is again arrested and found guilty. He says, "I repent." "Thou shalt forgive him," says the code. And if he repeats the offense seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turns to the court, saying, "I repent," the Government must forgive him, for so says that which the Woman's Christian Temperance Union has resolved should be the governmental code.

Any such system as that would destroy civil government in twenty-four hours. This is not saying anything against the Bible, nor against its principles. It is only illustrating the absurd perversion of its principles by these people who want to establish a system of religious legislation here. God's government is moral, and he has made provision for maintaining his government with the forgiveness of transgression. But he has made no such provision for civil government. No such provision can be made, and civil government be maintained. The Bible reveals God's method of saving those who sin against his moral government; civil government is man's method of preserving order, and has nothing to do with sin, nor the salvation of sinners. If civil government arrests a thief or a murderer and finds him guilty, the penalty must be executed, though the Lord does forgive him.

The theocratical theory referred to seems to pervade the whole body, for the eighth district of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, at Augusta, Wis., Oct. 2-4, 1888, representing fifteen counties, passed this resolution:

"Whereas, God would have all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father; and:

"Whereas, The civil law which Christ gave from Sinai is the only perfect law, and the only law that will secure the rights of all classes; therefore,

"Resolved, That civil government should recognize Christ as the moral Governor, and his law as the standard of legislation."

The law which Christ gave from Sinai is not a civil law; it is the moral law. But if that be a civil law, and this a civil government, what in the world does a civil government want with a moral Governor? These excellent women should be informed that civil government is based upon civil law, and

has civil governors only. Moral government is founded in moral law, and has a moral Governor only. Any governmental theory that confounds these is a theocratical theory, which is precisely the governmental theory of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, as is demonstrated by these proofs. And any theocratical theory of government since Christ died, is the theory of the papacy.

These extracts prove that the purpose of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union is the establishment of "a practical theocracy." Please do not misunderstand me here. There are none who have more respect or more good wishes for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, in the line of its legitimate work, than have we. We are heartily in favor of union, of temperance union, of Christian temperance union, and of woman's Christian temperance union; but we are not in favor of any kind of political Christian temperance union, nor of theocratical temperance union. We sincerely wish that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union would stick to its text, and work for Christian temperance by Christian means; and not for Christian temperance by political means, nor for political temperance by theocratical means. I believe in Christian temperance. Not only do I believe in it, but I practice it. I practice Christian Temperance more strictly than the Woman's Christian Temperance Union even preaches it. But believing in it as thoroughly as I do, and endeavoring to practice it as strictly as I believe in it, I would never lift my hand nor open my lips in any effort to compel men to practice the Christian temperance in which I believe and which I practice. Christianity persuades men, instead of trying to compel them. By the purity and love of Christ, Christianity draws men instead of trying to drive them. It is not by the power of civil government, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, that Christianity secures the obedience of men and the practice of Christian temperance.

The establishment of a theocracy is the aim of the prime movers in this Sunday-law movement, as it was also the aim of the church leaders of the fourth century. And what came of that movement at that time? I read again:

"This theocratical theory was already the prevailing one in the time of Constantine; and... the bishops voluntarily made themselves dependent on him by their disputes, and by their determination to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims." — *Neander*, p. 132.

This being their theory, which resulted in the determination "to make use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims," the question arises, What means did they employ to secure control of this power? The answer is, They did it by means of Sunday laws.

The first and greatest aim of the political church managers of that time was the exaltation of themselves; and second only to that was the exaltation of Sunday. These two things had been the principal aim of the bishops of Rome for more than a hundred years, when Constantine gave them a chance to make their schemes effectual by the power of the State. The arrogant pretensions of the bishop of Rome to secure power over the whole church, was first asserted in behalf of Sunday by Victor, who was bishop of Rome from A.D. 193 to 202.

"He wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates commanding them to imitate the example of the Western Christians with respect to the time of celebrating the festival of Easter [that is, commanding them to celebrate it on Sunday]. The Asiatics answered this lordly requisition... with great spirit and resolution, that they would by no means depart in this manner from the custom handed down to them by their ancestors. Upon this the thunder of excommunication began to roar. Victor, exasperated by this resolute answer of the Asiatic bishops, broke communion with them, pronounced them unworthy of the name of his brethren, and excluded them from all fellowship with the church of Rome." — *Mosheim*, chap. 4, par. 11.

The one means by which these church managers secured from Constantine the use of the power of the State, was the famous edict prohibiting certain kinds of work on "the venerable day of the sun." That edict runs thus:

"Let all the judges and towns-people and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by Heaven."

This edict was issued March 7, A. D. 321. Only judges and towns-people and mechanics were to rest on Sunday; people in the country were at full liberty to work. But this did not satisfy the political managers of the churches for any great length of time. "The object of the first Sunday law," says Sozomen, "was that

the day might be devoted with less interruption to the purposes of devotion." And as the government was now a theocracy, it was only consistent that all should be required to be religious. Consequently, an additional Sunday law was secured, which commanded all people to do no work on Sunday.

"By a law of the year 386, those older changes effected by the Emperor Constantine were more rigorously enforced, and, in general, civil transactions of every kind on Sunday were strictly forbidden. Whoever transgressed was to be considered in fact as guilty of sacrilege." — *Neander*, p. 300.

Then as the people were not allowed to do any manner of work, they would play, and as the natural consequence, the circuses and the theaters throughout the empire were crowded every Sunday. But the object of the law, from the first one that was issued, was that the day might be used for the purposes of devotion, and that the people might go to church. Consequently, that this object might be met, there was another step to take, and it was taken. At a church convention held at Carthage in 401, the bishops passed a resolution to send up a petition to the emperor, praying:

"That the public shows might be transferred from the Christian Sunday, and from feast-days, to some other days of the week." — *Idem*.

History does not say whether or not this petition represented the names of fourteen million petitioners, the greater part of whom never signed it at all. History is also silent as to whether the petition was indorsed by any one man who could be counted for seven million two hundred thousand men. But history is not silent as to the reason why it was necessary to send up the petition. The petitioners themselves gave the reason, and it was this;

"The people congregate more to the circus than to the church." — *Idem*, note 5.

In the circuses and the theaters large numbers of men were employed, among whom many were church-members. But rather than to give up their jobs, they would work on Sunday. The bishops complained that these were compelled to work: they pronounced it persecution, and asked for a law to protect those persons from such "persecution." The church had become filled with a mass of people, unconverted, who cared vastly more for worldly interests and pleasures than they did for religion. And as the government was now a government of God, it was considered proper that the civil power should

be used to cause all to show respect for God, whether or not they belonged to a church, or whether they had any respect for God.

The people, not being allowed to work, crowded the circus and the theater. They had no wish to be devoted; and as they were forced to be idle, a flood of dissipation was the inevitable consequence. Neander says of it:

"Owing to the prevailing passion at that time, especially in the large cities, to run after the various public shows, it so happened that when these spectacles fell on the same days which had been consecrated by the church to some religious festival, they proved a great hinderance to the devotion of Christians, though chiefly, it must be allowed, to those whose Christianity was the least an affair of the life and of the heart." — *Idem*.

And further:

"Church teachers... were in truth often forced to complain that in such competitions the theater was vastly more frequented than the church." — *Idem*.

And the church could not then stand competition; she wanted a monopoly. She got it, at last.

This petition of the Carthage Convention could not be granted at once, but in the year 425, the desired law was secured; and to this also there was attached the reason that was given for the first Sunday law that ever was made; namely:

In order that the devotion of the faithful might be free from all disturbance." — *Idem*, p. 301.

It must constantly be borne in mind, however, that the only way in which "the devotion of the faithful" was "disturbed" by these things, was that when the circus or the theater was open at the same time that the church was open, the "faithful" would go to the circus or the theater instead of to church, and therefore their "devotion" was "disturbed." And of course the only way in which the "devotion" of such "faithful" ones could be freed from all disturbance, was to close the circuses and the theaters at church time. Thus, and by this means, every reason for not being devoted was taken away from all the people. Then in the very next sentence Neander says:

"In this way the church received help from the State for the furtherance of her ends."

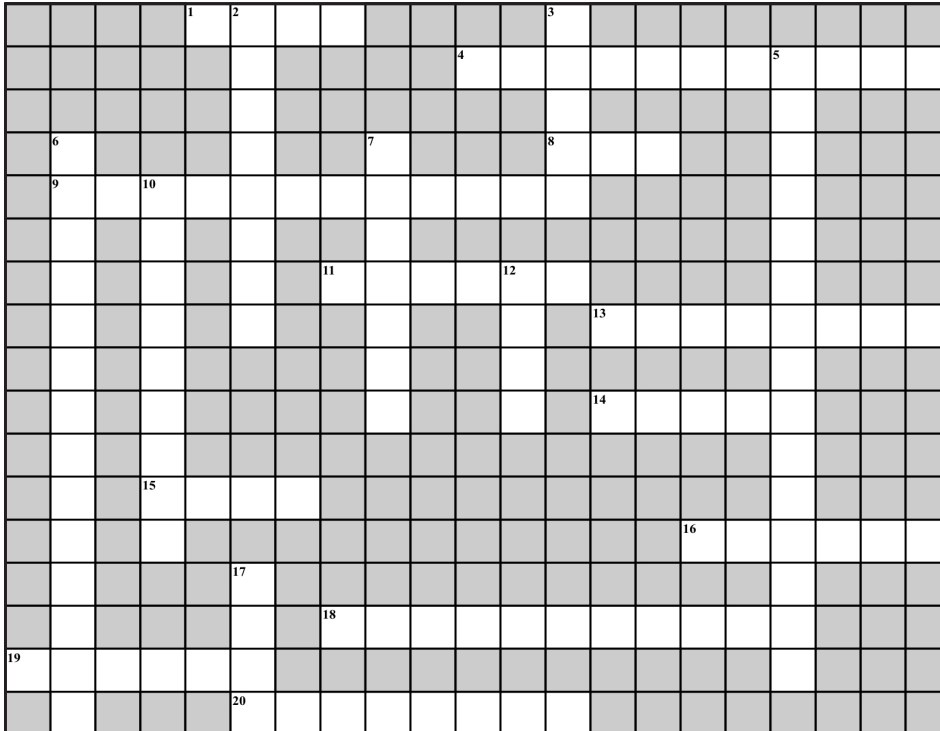
To be Continued...

(This article was taken from pages 54-71 of the book entitled, *The National Sunday Law*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing was done for this publication. Editor)

Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are beginning a series of crossword Bible studies based on a Bible Lesson written by Lynnford Beachy, entitled, "God's Love on Trial," based on the book by the same title. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line.

The Identity of God - Part 2 (Lesson 4)



Answers will be printed on the last page of next month's issue

Note: In part one of this study we learned that both Jesus and Paul understood that there is one God, and that this one God consists of one Person, God, the Father, and nobody else.

➤ Jesus addressed His Father as the "____ true God." John 17:3—**12 Down**

➤ A possessed man confessed that Jesus is "the Son of the ____ God." Mark 5:7 (2 words)—**20 Across**

➤ The angel Gabriel called the Father of Jesus the _____. Luke 1:35—**7 Down**

➤ Paul said that Jesus would show who is the only ____ which also means "supreme ruler." 1 Timothy 6:15—**10 Down**

➤ This Person is also called the _____. 1 Timothy 6:15 (3 words)—**18 Across**

➤ The ____ also shares this title. Revelation 17:14—**1 Across**

➤ A king named ____ also shared this title: Daniel 2:28, 37—**6 Down**

Note: We can see that the title, "King of kings," is shared by more than one individual. How then can we know who is the only Potentate in 1 Timothy 6:15?

➤ The only Potentate is the only One who hath _____. 1 Timothy 6:16—**4 Across**

➤ No man ____ this Person. 1 Timothy 6:16 (2 words)—**13 Across**

➤ Jesus said that this Person is the _____. John 6:46—**19 Across**

➤ "No man hath seen ____ at any time." John 1:18—**8 Across**

Note: Paul is evidently referring to God, the Father as the only Potentate, for He is the one whom no man hath seen at any time.

➤ This one God is _____. (2 words) Ephesians 4:6—**2 Down**

Note: The Bible is very clear that the "one God" of the Bible is "God, the Father" (1 Corinthians 8:6).

➤ Unto Jesus, God said, "Thy ____ O God is for ever..." Hebrews 1:8—**16 Across**

Note: The fact that God, the Father, "the only true God," calls His Son "God" has confused a lot of people. How can the Father be the only true God and yet Jesus is also God? Notice the next verse.

➤ God continued speaking to His Son, "God, even _____, hath anointed thee..." Hebrews 1:9 (2 words)—**11 Across**

➤ Paul says the Father is the God of our _____. Ephesians 1:17 (3 words)—**5 Down**

➤ The Lord said unto _____, "I have made thee a god..." Exodus 7:1—**14 Across**

Note: How can there be "one God, the Father" and "none other but He" yet men and Christ are also called God? The word "God" must have a broader application than solely for "the only true God." In a very limited sense, men are called gods. Both the Greek word *theos* and the Hebrew word *elohim*, which are most often translated "god" are used in reference to men. (See Exodus 7:1; Psalm 82:6; John 10:34) When the word "god" is used in that sense, then there are hundreds and thousands of gods, even though there is still only one "true God" (John 17:3).

➤ The Bible says that Christ is the minister of the ____ tabernacle. Hebrews 8:2—**15 Across**

Note: The Greek word that was translated "true" in the above verses literally means "original" (*Thayer's Greek Dictionary*).

➤ Christ is the ____ of the invisible God. Colossians 1:15—**3 Down**

➤ Christ is called the ____ of His Father's person. Hebrews 1:3 (2 words)—**9 Across**

Note: An image is a likeness of the original, and cannot be the original itself. Jesus is called the image of His Father, and His Father is called the "only true God," or "only original God." It would be inappropriate and unbiblical to call the Father the image of His Son, and it would be just as inappropriate and unbiblical to call Jesus the true, or original, God.

