

INTERDEPENDENT-INTERACTIVE, CHURCH OF GOD, SABBATH SERVICES,  
BIBLE STUDIES, AND OPEN FELLOWSHIP PLUS THIS NEWSLETTER  
May/June 2001--Issue No. 3

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We welcome all visitors. We welcome live speakers and special music--any week. For our out of town visitors, we have 1 self-service guest room at 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, North Dakota. If you need it please call ahead to be sure it is open for the time you will be here. If there is anyone else in the Bismarck area who would be willing to volunteer a guest room for out of town guests, please let us know.

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SABBATH SERVICES:

We plan to have Sabbath Services every week. If we do not have live speakers, we do phone hookup with Dave Havir in Texas, Ray Wooten in Alabama or Ken Westby in Washington. We rotate phone hookups to avoid a following of one man. If you know of any other phone hookups you would like to see added to our rotation please let us know. We also welcome Cassette Tape Sermons brought by others, and Video Sermons brought by others.

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BIBLE STUDIES:

All of our Bible Studies are interactive, and if you have a topic to discuss, please bring it. We usually have Bible Studies approximately every 6 weeks. We usually have a pot luck meal before we start.

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SABBATH SERVICES AND BIBLE STUDIES:

ARE HELD AT THE HOME OF: Darwin & Laura Lee  
320 N. Griffin St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501 (701) 258-7172 (Please Leave a Message)  
Please use the upper door by the garage.

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SCHEDULE FOR SABBATH SERVICES EVERY SATURDAY:

12:00 NOON--Open Fellowship (Door unlocked, just walk in.)  
1:00 PM---Sabbath Services  
3:00 PM---Open Fellowship

This time may vary sometimes, so if you are coming from out of town, please call ahead, to be sure the times have not changed.

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BIBLE STUDY AND POT LUCK MEAL ON FRIDAY JUNE 1, 2001

6:30 PM---Open Fellowship (Door unlocked, just walk in.)  
7:00 PM---Pot Luck Meal (bring food)  
8:00 PM---Bible Study  
9:00 PM---Open Fellowship

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BIBLE STUDY AND POT LUCK MEAL ON FRIDAY JULY 13, 2001

6:30 PM---Open Fellowship (Door unlocked, just walk in.)  
7:00 PM---Pot Luck Meal (bring food)  
8:00 PM---Bible Study  
9:00 PM---Open Fellowship

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DEADLINE FOR OUR JULY-AUGUST NEWSLETTER IS: 6-15-2001 THANK YOU

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John 13:34 & 35

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

I John 4:20

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

Romans 13:10

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

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For this newsletter, Bible quotes or paraphrases are from the Layman's Parallel Bible, Copyright 1991 by The Zondervan Corporation, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

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**GROUP NAME:** We have no official name--nor do we want one--however we provide the following: INTERDEPENDENT-INTERACTIVE, CHURCH OF GOD, SABBATH SERVICES, BIBLE STUDIES, AND OPEN FELLOWSHIP

**ADDRESS:** 320 N. Griffin St. **COUNTRY:** USA **CITY:** Bismarck **STATE:** ND **CODE:** 58501 **PHONE:** (701) 258-7172

**FAX:** Possibly in the future. **E-MAIL:** Darwin-Laura@juno.com **WEBSITE:** Possibly in the future.

**LEADERSHIP BODY:** Christ the Head of God's Church, Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 5:23, and I Corinthians 11:3. Local contact persons are Darwin or Laura Lee.

**PURPOSE:** To provide Interdependent-Interactive, Church of God, Sabbath Services and Bible Studies to all of God's People, including those who are not welcome to visit or attend other groups due to having been suspended or disfellowshipped, as well as those who want a place to attend weekly, those who are just visiting our area, and anyone else who is interested in God's way of living. We also have open fellowship here, meaning that you are welcome to come visit with us during our open fellowship times even if you are not interested in attending our Sabbath Services or Bible Studies.

**HISTORY:** We held our first Bible Study here on June 30, 2000 and our first Sabbath Service was held on December 16, 2000.

**AFFILIATION/MEMBERSHIP:** Our affiliation is with God our Father and His Son Jesus the Christ. Our membership includes all of God's people, no matter where they are.

**DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES:** John 13:34-35

**USE SACRED NAMES?:** Since salvation is between God and each individual (Philippians 2:12), so the use of sacred names would be between each individual person and God.

**OBSERVE HOLY DAYS?:** We believe that God commands us to keep the Weekly Sabbath as well as Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day, however, we also believe there is much controversy out there in understanding if certain ones should or shouldn't be kept, how to keep them and when to keep them. So with this in mind, we will try to the best of our ability to accommodate these differences, believing and having faith that someday through God's Holy Spirit, we will all be brought into the same understanding on this subject. Until then let's follow John 13:34-35.

**EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS:** We provide a service to God's People no matter where they are to the best of our ability. This service includes Interdependent-Interactive, Church of God, Sabbath Services, Bible Studies and Open Fellowship. We also welcome live speakers for interactive, and special music, on a volunteer only basis.

**PERIODICALS:** We have a newsletter which we publish every 2 months.

**LITERATURE:** We distribute tapes and literature for ourselves and others to the best of our ability.

**PARENT GROUP:** The greater Church of God--The Ekklesia. **LANGUAGE:** English **OTHER:** None **COUNTRY:** USA

**NAME:** Contact Persons are Darwin & Laura Lee **ADDRESS:** 320 N. Griffin St. **CITY:** Bismarck **STATE:** North Dakota  
**CODE:** 58501 **PHONE:** (701) 258-7172

**E-MAIL:** Darwin-Laura@juno.com **DIRECTIONS TO MEETING:** 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, North Dakota, located at the corner of Rosser Avenue and Griffin Street, with plenty of side street parking.

**TIME OF MEETING:** Usually 1:00PM, but may vary.

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The Journal	United Church of God	Servants' News
News of the Churches of God	Big Sandy	PO Box 107
PO Box 1020	PO Box 690	Perry, Michigan 48872
Big Sandy, Texas 75755	Big Sandy, Texas 75755	(517) 625-7480
(903) 636-9974	1-800-946-5545	Norman S. Edwards
Dixon Cartwright Jr.	Dave Havir	
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The Churches of God Newsletter	United Christian Ministries	Assoc. for Christian Development
PO Box 30272	PO Box 361725	PO Box 4748
Winston-Salem, NC 27130-0272	Hoover, AL 35236-1725	Federal Way, WA 98063
{336} 774-2939	1-888-985-9066	(253) 852-3269
Rick & Eileen Beltz	Ray Wooten	Ken Westby

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**ATTENTION READERS--**If only there were more hours in a day, then it would be possible to do more things in a day. Much effort is put into this newsletter, and into many other things we do here, and sometimes I do get physical help with these things, however much of what is done here with the newsletter, answering letters and E-mails, and our small tape program, is done by me, and sometimes I can't keep up. Even though I would love to answer all letters as they come in, and dub all tapes requested the same day--I just can't, I'm only one person. When we started this, we wanted to answer all letters, and we still want to, and we are trying. We ask that you please be patient in waiting for a reply to your letters and E-mails. If you have written after 3-21-2001, we are that far behind in answering letters, but we do read every one of them as they come in, and if you will please wait, we will also answer them all. I am also working on getting tapes out faster. Since we realize that everyone writes a letter hoping for a reply, we want you to know we haven't forgotten you, and we are working on it. We appreciate all of you, both those we agree with and those we disagree with. You are all very wonderful individual people, both in our eyes and in God's eyes. Laura Lee

INTERDEPENDENT-INTERACTIVE, CHURCH OF GOD, SABBATH SERVICES,  
BIBLE STUDIES, AND OPEN FELLOWSHIP PLUS THIS NEWSLETTER

SEND ORDERS TOO:  
Darwin & Laura Lee  
320 N. Griffin St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 258-7172

SEND TAPES OR LITERATURE TOO:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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THESE TAPES ARE FROM THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES 2000 HELD AT THE RAINTREE RESORT IN WISCONSIN DELLS, WISCONSIN.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What The Feast Of Tabernacles Pictures--Garry Pifer 10-14-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Come Let Us Go Up To The Mountain Of The Lord--Mitchell Smith 10-14-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Road Building--Hal Geiger 10-14-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Practice True Religion--Tony Stith 10-15-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The Meaning Of Succoth--Hal Geiger 10-16-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. What Is Your Future?--Dave Havir 10-17-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Listening To God In Attitude Of Service--Neil McIver 10-18-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The Gift Of God Is Eternal Life And...--Garry Pifer 10-19-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Depression, Arrogance, And Ignorance--Dennis Mouland 10-20-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Tithing--Garry Pifer 10-20-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Greatest Risk God Undertook--Dennis Mouland 10-21-00

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THESE TAPES ARE FROM THE BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAM SPONSORED BY A CHURCH OF GOD GROUP IN MINNESOTA. FOR INFORMATION ON THE BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAM YOU MAY CONTACT DALE & DONA FEHR DLFehr@compuserve.com, TAPES MAY BE ORDERED THROUGH US.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. C. Wayne Cole--12-18-99
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Ray Wooten--3-25-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Wayne Speed--4-22-00--Includes Study Papers
  - A. Wayne & Claudia Speed--4-23-00
  - Marriage Seminar (4 Tapes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Ken Westby--6-10 & 11-00 (2 Tapes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Dave Havir--9-9-00
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Norm Edwards--11-18-00 (2 Tapes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Steve Collins--1-6-01 (3 Tapes)

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OTHER TAPES

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Nimrod's Effect on the Church Today--6-17-00--Wes White
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Pure Religion--Tony Stith & Godly Compassion--Dennis Mouland--12-23-00
  - Church of God Big Sandy Seminar--Part 1--12-24-00
  - Church of God Big Sandy Seminar--Part 2--12-24-00

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WE ALSO HAVE THE FOLLOWING LITERATURE.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Why Were We Disfellowshipped By The United Church of God an International Association?--by Darwin & Laura Lee--111 pages
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. January/February 2001--Issue No. 1--Editor Laura Lee
  - A. UCG Attendance Policy Raises More Questions (From Servant's News)
  - B. Ending the Cycle of Abuse in the Church of God--by Laura Lee
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. March/April 2001--Issue No. 2--Editor Laura Lee
  - A. Is Disfellowshipping a Christian Practice?--by Arlan Weight
  - B. Just Judgment Important For Local Congregations--by Darwin Lee & Norman Edwards
  - C. Letter of Appeal--by Ned Dancuo
  - D. Go To Your Brother...--by Arlan Weight
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Life After United AIA (Books #1-#4)--by Darwin & Laura Lee--20 pages each
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Have We Passed OVER The Passover?--by Berean Bible Study Group--35 pages

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ALL OF THE ABOVE ITEMS ARE FREE OF CHARGE.  
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When we put prayer requests in this newsletter, we won't publish the persons address for privacy reasons (unless they want us to), however we really think your cards and letters and E-mails are important for the sick and hurting, so send them to us and we will forward them to the sick or hurting person. Just write that persons name on the envelope some place, so we don't open it. We really feel that the Church of God has been lacking in this area of sending cards and letters to comfort the sick and hurting in recent years. You don't even have to buy a card, make it on your computer, or just send a short little note. Something which will help these hurting people to know that you really care and want to comfort them in their time of need. We Thank You Very Much for your concern in this area.

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Darwin and I request your prayers for a person within the Church of God who needs emotional healing and family healing--God knows who this person is, so we request your prayers anonymously. Thank You.

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We are requesting prayers for Jean Prestbroten. She has a very serious eye condition. She has had 4 retina tears (3 on the left eye, 1 on the right eye). Because there is bleeding in the vitreous of the eye when this happens, blood droplets form "blobs" in the vision. When they dissolve in the fluid of the eye, it turns to "dirty water". Her vision is as if looking through a dirty fish tank. Surgery is not recommended at this time--too risky. Please pray for physical healing of her eye condition. Jean is also very down (depressed) and needs emotional strength as well to continue on. We also request prayers for Jean's emotional healing in regard to this serious depression she has due to her eye problems. Please pray also for her husband and family who have requested prayers on her behalf.

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Brian Higginbotham, age 22, died before 6:00AM on Thursday March 8, 2001, of an unknown illness. Brian's brother Chris also displays some of the symptoms of this unknown illness, so please continue to pray for Chris and his mother Deborah. You may send cards and letters to Deborah's sister at the following address: Belinda Reno, 502 McFaddin Avenue, Sumter, South Carolina 29150-3722, USA

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Samuel Metz, is requesting prayers for his wife Margaret, who is suffering from Bronchitis, fluid buildup and some other nasty symptoms. Please pray for her physical healing.

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Samuel Metz asks for continued prayer for his wifes physical healing. Margaret Metz was admitted to the hospital on 3-13-2001.

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We have a group of people who meet on the Sabbath, near the Minnesota state line. Loved ones are becoming alarmed as they seem to be getting fed spiritually by only one man, and they are looking to this man as if he were God himself. Some members see the problem and try to introduce other spiritual material, and are rejected. At least one member seems to be getting physically ill, when loved ones try to get this person out of this group. We need fervent prayer on this one, that these people will see the problem, and stop. Special prayers for those who become ill when trying to break from this group.

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Rick & Eileen Beltz (rbeltz@mindspring.com) have requested prayers for Robert Laurita, who has been suffering with stomach cancer since late 1999. Update as of 3/22/2001. He had a bypass operation on his stomach on 2/2/2001. The doctors said that the cancer has spread to some of the other organs. Bob is still very sick and weak, and confined to his apartment. He receives little energy from food. He has asked the brethren to pray for an increase in energy and for his complete recovery, as his life is now totally in God's hands. We're sure he would appreciate any cards or letters of encouragement from his fellow brethren. Please send to him at: Robert Laurita, 105-00 Shore Front Parkway, Rockaway Beach, NY 11694

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Peggy Tolbert is requesting prayers for her 75 year old cousin who is on her death bed in South Carolina. Prayers of healing are requested for both Peggy's cousin and the other family members.

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Margaret Metz got out of the hospital on 3-27-2001, after being in there for 2 weeks, however she does need continued prayers, because her kidneys stopped functioning and she now needs to go for dialysis 3 times a week. Margaret is also very tired all the time. So please pray for her full recovery.

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Wanda Croyle has asked for prayers, for family healing, and for financial problems.

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Please send your prayer requests by snail mail or by E-mail. Our E-mail address is Darwin-Laura@juno.com.

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### ARE YOU BUSY?

Satan called a worldwide convention. In his opening address to his evil angels, he said, "We can't keep the Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't even keep them from forming an intimate, abiding relationship experience with Christ. If they make and keep a personal connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken."

"So let them go to their churches, let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time, so they can't gain that experience in Jesus Christ."

"This is what I want you to do. Distract them from maintaining a vital connection throughout their day with their Savior!"

"How shall we do this?" shouted his angels.

"Keep the people busy with the nonessentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered.

"Tempt them to spend, spend, spend, and borrow, borrow, borrow."

"Persuade the wives to take a job and to leave their children at daycare. Convince them that school is the place to teach children truth. Allow them to think children don't need to pray or recite the ten commandments. Let the husbands work 6 or 7 days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day, so they can afford their empty lifestyles. Have them focus on the nice things they can buy their children."

"Let the children get their self worth from designer jeans and NBA endorsed sneakers, gangs or drugs. Give them many extra-curricular events to make life stressful. Keep the parents from spending time with the children. As the family fragments, the home will offer no escape from the pressures of work!"

"Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive. Pound their minds with world news and commercials 24 hours a day. Over stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear God's still, small voice."

"Keep their TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their homes. Let them become busy at doing nothing! See to it that every store, restaurant and business everywhere plays worldly music constantly. This will pre-occupy their minds with messages of the flesh and break that union with Christ."

"Fill the house with magazines and newspapers portraying fantasy lifestyles. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, catalogues, sweepstakes, lotteries, and product catalogs and every type of home business newsletter filled with false hopes."

"Make sexuality pervasive. Put sexy, beautiful models on the magazines so husbands will lust after external beauty and they'll become dissatisfied with their wives. Give them movies that portray a luxurious, gaudy, lusty lifestyle that does not actually exist. Keep them disgruntled."

"This will force them to be excessive in pleasure seeking. Make their recreation stressful, ego driven and competitive. Have them return home exhausted, full of self and disquieted. Don't let them go out in nature to reflect on God's wonders. Give them thrills at amusement parks, sporting events, concerts and movies instead."

"Keep them busy, busy, busy!!

"And when they do meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip, envy, or self righteousness, so that they leave with troubled consciences. They will then restrict their conversations to shallow, vain, unimportant topics."

"Go ahead, let them be involved in soul winning. But crowd their lives with so many causes they have no time to seek power from Christ. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and families for the cause. They will lose sight of how important a human soul really is."

"It will work....I tell you....it will work!"

It was quite a convention. And the evil angels went eagerly about their assignment of causing "God's people" to be busy, busy, busy, and to rush here and there.

The evil angels even stole the God-ordained day of rest!

Ask yourself...

Does this describe my family?

Who is glorified by my lifestyle?

Does God want my life to be different?

Am I willing to do what it takes to change?

EDITOR'S COMMENTS: "Are You Busy?", was reprinted here with permission from Rusty Ames of Turning Point Ranch Ministries, PO Box 901, Proctor, Texas 76468. E-mail address: info@turningpoint ranch.org Besides distributing the above article, they also duplicate and mail sermon tapes for Don Esposito. If anyone is interested in receiving these sermon tapes, please let them know and they will be glad to put you on their tape mailing list. Laura Lee

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### WHAT IS ANGER?

3-9-2001

Hello Laura,

I received yet another packet in the mail this early am. Please save yourself the postage and do not send me "your" material anymore. (I do not remember requesting it...similar to many others who did not ask for your info.) (Man's Name Removed) in (Town Name Removed), (one of our members) recently on a visit also asked me to convey the same request regarding

the packets/letters you are sending him...

Laura, I have known you for many years...please ask yourself the candid question...what exactly is it that makes me so angry towards The United Church of God IA, its Ministry and leaders? Reading your material, it jumps out clearly to me. I have partially read your material, repetitive as it is...and will pray for you and Darwin. Some things never seem to change...

Regards,

Scott Hoefker (Via E-mail)

Milton, Wisconsin

Answered on March 10, 2001

Dear Scott,

In regard to (Man's Name Removed), I actually do not even know (Man's First Name Removed), and until I received this letter from you, I had absolutely no idea he was a member of the United Church of God AIA. On January 29, 2001, I received the following from (Man's First Name Removed):

Greetings: Darwin & Laura,

I received your informational letter yesterday, but you are so far away. I have no need for any more information, so please take me off your mailing list.

Thanks!

Best Regards

(Man's Name Removed)

We took (Man's Name Removed) off of our mailing list the very same day that he requested to be taken off. Was I required to send him confirmation that his name was removed?

You state that you have partially read our material, and unless someone else gave you our 111 page document, then we know that you didn't read that either, for we never mailed that to you, and that disappoints me Scott. I would think that you being a deacon and all, that you would know what your Bible says. Read this:

Proverbs 18:13

#1--King James--He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

#2--New International--He who answers before listening--that is his folly and his shame.

#3--Living Bible--What a shame--yes, how stupid!--to decide before knowing the facts!

#4--New Revised Standard--If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame.

Quite frankly Scott, you and I have never discussed anything in regard to any of what happened between August of 1998 up until we were disfellowshipped. This E-mail is the first correspondence I have received from you since I moved from Wisconsin in April of 1999 and actually even before that I never received phone calls of friendship from either you or your wife, even when I only lived 16 miles away from you. You state that you've known me for many years. A truer version of that, would be that you knew I existed for many years, and you knew my name, and we had a few conversations, and I even came to you a couple of times and asked you a question or two, because you were a deacon. Many of the conversations that we had though, would never have been, had I not mowed your lawn for you for 2 years. The relationship which I shared with you and your family, was pretty much the same as many church members in a congregation have--very superficial. I never got a feeling from you that I was like a family member to you or your wife.

We did not get any warnings from Paul Luecke before he suspended me (Laura), I only ever had 3 conversations with the man before I received a suspension letter from him, and none of those conversations had anything to do with telling me I was going to be suspended. We tried to get a meeting right away, it took 4 months. We were told that we could have a second meeting, and they kept refusing to set it up, because we wanted witnesses there, and they did not. In my opinion Scott, the ministry seems to be the ones who are angry, because if they truly wanted reconciliation with us, then they wouldn't have had a problem setting up meetings with us according to Matthew 18:15-17. We wanted to straighten the matter out with them, but one cannot do that if one is not allowed the time to do so.

Have you ever gotten mad at a person, and then went around for a period of time not speaking to that person, because you were...what??? angry at them. Not talking to people, shunning people, marking people, those are all actions which are carried out through anger directed at the other person. One does not do those actions out of anything other than anger towards another.

If on the other hand, you feel bad, because you may have offended someone, your goal would be to talk to that other person and try to make that relationship work on some level, even if you decided that you do not agree on all matters, you might through talking at least be able to find common ground.

You have children Scott, which method do you use on your children when they make you angry?? Since I have a daughter of my own, and understand that concept, it is my opinion, that you, as I would, try to talk to your children and try to mend the

break in the relationship which happened. If I am wrong, and you would use the shunning method on your children for long periods of time, then I sincerely feel sorry for your children.

My question to you, would be, what makes you think that I am angry at the United Church of God AIA, its Ministry and leaders? I am not shunning them, I am not refusing to speak to them, in fact I would welcome the opportunity to reconcile with all of them according to Matthew 18:15-17, as God tells us to do. They, as you and your family, are all welcome in my home. Ask yourself, am I welcome in yours?

Most of the material in my last newsletter was not even written by me, I just typed it and sent it. Both articles written by Arlan Weight, were Biblical, and if you can find where these articles go against scripture, then please show it to me, and I will print it. The letter which Norm Edwards went over, was written by my husband, and was a mix of facts and opinion. Norm Edwards wrote what he did based upon reading not only our 111 page document, but other things also. Neither Darwin or I personally really know or have ever personally met Norm Edwards. The other article was an actual letter of Appeal written by Ned Dancuo in Canada. I have never met Ned. I only know him through E-mail. In my opinion, the actions of the leaders in many corporation churches are disgusting, and perhaps we need to look closer at these actions, because they in some cases, and probably more than we know, are discouraging people from having a relationship with God. God wants to build a family, not destroy a family.

We also receive much un asked for mail, every week, so I feel for you in that regard, however, our mailing list is actually none of your business, however, I will tell you, many ministers in your organization are on our mailing list and receive our newsletter. Now, I believe that we are talking about adults here, and all people on our mailing list including yourself were told right up front on the invitations that were mailed in Nov, Dec, and Jan, that if they did not want to receive this information from us that all they had to do was let us know, and we would be glad to take them off of our mailing list. We assume that as long as people do not request to be taken off of our mailing list that they want to continue to receive our newsletter. So if you wish to control our mailing list, you will have to do it from your end, because you have no authority here.

If people are telling you that they do not want to receive our newsletter, just tell them to drop us a note stating that they no longer want to be on our mailing list, as (Man's Name Removed) did. Snail mail is best. Another way to do it, is instead of opening the letter and looking at it, just write refused on it, and the post office will see that we get it back. When we get refused mail we assume automatically that you do not want anything from us, and we automatically take you off of our mailing list. If they use the telephone method, they may well not get good results in having their name removed from our mailing list, as we have a digital answering system, which requires a person to leave a message before the beep tone, rather than after the beep tone, as many have been trained to do for years. E-mail is also an option for letting us know that you want your name removed from our mailing list. Here's one more thing to keep in mind, if they write me a letter as you did, I will respond with a letter as I did with you. As per your E-mail request, your name has been removed from our mailing list.

Scott, I still consider both you and Gayle and your children to be a part of God's family, just like I and Darwin are part of God's family. With that in mind, as I said earlier, you and your entire family are always welcome in our home, should you ever be in the Bismarck, North Dakota area. We thank you for your prayers, and we will also pray for you and your family.

With Much Love,  
Darwin & Laura Lee (Via E-mail)

3-10-2001

"We took (Man's Name Removed) off of our mailing list the very same day that he requested to be taken off. Was I required to send him confirmation that his name was removed?"

Of course no confirmation needed, just following up on his request. Thanks for doing so. I will let him know he has been removed. No further comments on your letter Laura...

Scott Hoefker (Via E-mail)  
Milton, Wisconsin

Editor's Note: The ... was the way Scott ended the above letter. There was no more to it.

Answered on March 11, 2001

Scott,  
Ok, and remember you and your family are always welcome in our home.  
With Much Love,  
Darwin & Laura Lee (Via E-mail)

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#### WHAT IS A HEART?

3-13-2001

Dear Darwin & Laura,

Greetings in the precious name of our master Yahshua. It was a real pleasure receiving your newsletter, and seeing how our heavenly Father is using you in his service. Petra and myself have been hard at work in the Middle East proclaiming the good news of Yahshua's coming Kingdom. I conduct two weekly bible studies, and our Father has been blessing our efforts here. We

also have been able to send aid to truly hurting brethren in parts of the world where they don't even have the basics of life, such as food, water, and shelter, and clothing. Many freeze to death each winter in places like Russia, Bulgaria, and Romania. I am also out in the streets each week, handing out papers, and bibles, and booklets about the kingdom. This also has borne much fruit. Many people have never heard the true gospel, only watered down heresy from the world's churches. We also try to help homeless people when we are out in the streets.

I can really feel for you, what you went through in United Church of God. When I left WWCG over the heresy there, I started a United congregation before there was even a United. There was a ministerial underground called Mal 316, on the internet. We had our United congregation for about 3 or 4 months. Then I was contacted by an International Church of God congregation that had lost it's minister, and they asked me if I could come and preach once a month. I gladly excepted. When United got wind of it, they basically told me I could not preach in United if I had any other affiliations. I told them that my only affiliation was to our heavenly Father, and his son Yahshua. I had promised myself after leaving WWCG that I would never limit my service to Yah again through an organization. They said I had to decide to serve only United or not. So I resigned that day from the local board of directors, and the United Church of God. I have no problem preaching at United if asked, but will not join any organization ever again. But without my pledge to their organization, they have no use for me, and I have no use for their tactics either. I still believe in a ministry, which I am part of by the laying on of the hands of the elderhood. But I do not believe you join that ministry by attending some human college, or by nepotism, or kissing up to some man. Yah chooses his servants, and the Holy Spirit sets apart those it has chosen for the work of the ministry to be evangelists, and Pastors, not men. I am glad that through my experience in WWCG and United it helped me to learn true submission to Yah's holy saints, which I need for the kingdom. So all things do work out for the good of those that love Yah and are called according to His purpose. May Yah bless you both as you serve him according to his will. I also have a calendar paper explaining new moons and postponements, being sent to you by a brother in Celina Texas, who did a great research paper on it.

Your brother & sister in Yahshua Messiah,

Don & Petra Esposito  
Middle East

Answered on March 17, 2001

Don & Petra,

Your letter touched my heart. We as a whole, in general, in the United States, and other countries, who have so much, are in general an ungrateful bunch of people, and how many of us even stop in the middle of our days, to even try to put ourselves into our own brothers and sisters shoes, right in our own countries, let alone to even think of putting ourselves into the shoes of people who have nothing. There are times when I am truly ashamed of the Churches of God in general, whether we be corporation or independent, because of this air of exclusiveness we want to continue to perpetuate with in some groups and even with certain individuals. It is my opinion, that if we are truly God's called out people, and if we want to call ourselves "Christians", then we need to stop just talking about what we should do, and start doing what God tells us to do in the Bible. God gives us a very clear command in the Bible, one which over rides or comes before all others, and it is found in John 13:34 & 35: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. When we read this scripture from the Bible, where on earth are some people getting the idea, that they are better than the next guy in God's eyes. God is building a family that will eventually include everyone who is now dead and presently alive and those who are not yet born. The only people who will not be included in that family are those people who by their own choice, choose not to be there, and prayerfully, that will be few.

You are a man we can respect, for by your fruits we know you. Essentially when Paul Luecke wanted us to pledge allegiance to the United Church of God AIA, in our one and only face to face meeting on 3-6-2000, he put it this way, "Do you believe that United is a/the True Church of God?" Our answer was "God's Church is where ever 2 or more converted people meet." Naturally, he did not like our answer to that question, and they continued to bar us from services. We at that point, some how knew we were not going to be allowed to ever attend their services again, although we did try to get a second meeting, which never happened as we wanted witnesses and they did not want witnesses according to Matthew 18:15-17. We did attend as visitors with the Living Church of God on an irregular basis, and told them right up front the first time we visited, that we had no intentions of joining their corporation but would like to visit with them once in awhile for fellowship and services, and that seemed to be okay with them at first. Approximately 9 months later we found ourselves being purged from even being allowed to visit them, and to sum it up, they told us we should speak to their minister for the purpose of helping us to see where the True Church really is, meaning of course that the True Church is the Living Church of God. We were purged from the Living Church of God at almost the same time we were disfellowshipped from the United Church of God AIA. We are disgusted with these behaviors, which groups and even sometimes individuals take towards people who are still trying their hardest to do what God says to do, like you did. Another group asked you to help them, by speaking once a month, and United said "NO". God says "YES", do help other people. When I read my Bible, I don't see God telling us not to help others or not to love others, because they are not in our corporation. I see God telling us: Matthew 5:43-48: Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: (But God Says) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: That ye may be the



children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans (do the) same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans (do) so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

I just don't see any exclusivism in those words. I also do not see where it says we are only to help those who are affiliated with our corporation or individual group. It is sobering to hear what other peoples in other countries are suffering on a daily basis, while we here are spending a needless amount of time arguing about doctrines and where the True Church is or Who is doing the Work, to the exclusion of working on relationships with our own brethren as well as those not yet called. It is my opinion that many who claim to be God's are still in need of a heart.

Thank you for your letter. Please continue in your service to God. If you are ever in North Dakota, please stop and visit with us, and thank you for the calendar study paper, it is yet a future study we will be looking into.

With Much Love,  
Darwin & Laura Lee

EDITOR'S COMMENTS: If you are interested in learning more about or donating money to help this overseas ministry, you may write to: Don Esposito, Church of God, 28 Swarthmore Drive, Carteret, NJ 07008. Don & Petra, please keep up the good work you are doing over there, and please keep us updated on what you are seeing as needs over there. In my opinion it is time to start stating the way it is, even when it hurts. I believe it is through our own hurts and the hurts of others that we gain a real heart. Laura Lee

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WHAT IS DIVISION?

3-14-2001

Hello Darwin & Laura,

I'm sorry I didn't write sooner, but I've been very busy with things going on in my life and trying to keep a good relationship with God by doing His will.

All the years I've been in the church, I've seen many people come and go, and it hurts to see that. I've learned not to get involved in other peoples problems, because I have plenty of my own. I've learned that God will deal with any of His ministers or people that are doing wrong. I've also learned you can't play games with God, because He knows our hearts & minds.

The split in the Church in 1995 was a test by God to find out who really loves God's Way. There are tougher tests coming and we better be preparing for tougher persecution.

I have talked to some of the brethren about the letters you have been sending and you can do us a favor by taking us off your mailing list. We are not interested in playing your mental game. You are good at quoting scriptures, but what you are really doing is causing division in the Church. A scripture that comes to my mind is Proverbs 6:19. The 7 things that God hates: the last one is causing division in the Church. I will be praying that you can overcome your anger.

In Christian Love,  
Dave Baldauf  
Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

Answered on March 17, 2001

Dear Dave,

Hi, we were glad to hear from you after such a long time. We can see that your view of us is a little off. Did someone just tell you we were angry and you believed them? I would assume this, since I believe it has probably been a year since you last called us on the phone. We can see by your letter, that you have clearly over looked a few very important scriptures in your Bible, such as: Galatians 6:2: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. This verse certainly doesn't say what your letter said. You wrote: "I've learned not to get involved in other peoples problems, because I have plenty of my own." Your view seems to be the direct opposite of what God says. How do you explain that?

First, before we cover the subject of division, I think we need to define a couple of terms. First of all let's define as you put it, The Church. We assume you are speaking of God's Church. The Bible, God's word, no place says that The Worldwide Church of God or The United Church of God AIA is/are The Church (meaning exclusive). The Bible, God's word defines church as the Ekklesia (Greek), meaning called out ones (people). This covers a whole lot more territory than you covered by naming only 2 groups. Now you must go on to define what constitutes division. People in your United AIA congregation have been receiving literature from us since October of 2000. That is several months now. You are an adult, and if you did not want to continue receiving our literature, then you needed to either refuse it without opening it, or drop us a note telling us not to send anything else. You make it very clear in your letter, that not only did you open our literature, but you also read at least some of it, discussed it, and you even went on to say that we are good at quoting scripture. If you are now seeing division in your corporation church, might it be caused by the fact that some looked to see if the scriptures we quoted were truly in the Bible, and woke from their slumber? I don't know Dave, you will have to decide. Division as defined by the Bible, would be caused only if we were teaching a doctrine contrary to God's doctrine's, and we aren't doing that. See Romans 16:17: Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine (God's) which ye have learned;

and avoid them. This is Paul speaking and he is talking about God's doctrines as given in God's word the Bible, and not the doctrines of any corporation church in existence then or today. This scripture clearly indicates to me that division is caused because some teach God's doctrine as stated in the Bible, and some do not, they twist scripture to suite themselves. For some scriptures spoken by Christ, read on: Luke 12:51: Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: John 7:42-43: Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was division among the people because of Him (Christ). John 9:16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees (Name of corporation church of Christ's day), This man (Christ) is not of God, because He (Christ) keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was division among them. John 10:18-21: ...This commandment have I (Christ) received of my Father. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He (Christ) hath a devil, and is mad: why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

From the above scriptures, we can clearly see, that even Christ was accused of creating division. Just because a Pharisee or a corporation church accuses a person of causing division, does not make it so according to my Bible. If people accused Christ of causing division, then why would they not accuse God's people of the same? Just as the Pharisee's did in Christ's day, many corporation churches are also deceiving many, by their twisting of scripture. Do not believe us, prove it for yourself, read and study the word of God.

As your letter also states, "I've learned that God will deal with any of His ministers or people that are doing wrong." Again, you do have a responsibility in this area. Read Isaiah 58:1: Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Many ministers within the Churches of God, have their congregations so well trained that even when the people know ministry or leaders have done something which is clearly against scripture, the people don't say anything to them or anyone else, because the people believe the direct opposite of what God says to do.

As per your request, we have removed your name from our mailing list. Your letter seems to mention we should remove other names from our mailing list also, however, in order for us to do that, we would have to hear directly from those people. We will not remove anyone's name on another person's say so. We sincerely hope we have cleared up your assumption, that we are creating division within God's Church. We sincerely hope that you start really studying your Bible to see what it really says, and don't just go around taking someone's word for what they say it means.

We thank you for your prayers, and we will also pray for you. We also want you to know that if you are ever in the Bismarck, North Dakota area, you are always welcome in our home.

With Much Love,  
Darwin & Laura Lee

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#### WHAT IS INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY?

3-16-2001

Dear Darwin & Laura,

I received and read your March/April Newsletter today.

I really can and do sympathize with people who have been maligned, abused, and "disfellowshipped" by those who think they are servants ("ministers") of God. I agree with Arlan Weight's assessment of the status quo system of disfellowshipment. It is not biblical.

The elite little group of the hierarchy with the corporation churches hold "power" within the organizations. They are not willing to relinquish that power. When their power is threatened by someone within the common folk, they must be dealt with quickly and severely. I am way beyond thinking that they are doing it for the good of the church. It is my experience that the act of disfellowshipping has been carried out solely to protect and sustain hierarchical power over the people.

You mentioned, at one point, that a woman recently wrote to you with a statement of "If you are going to be in a corporation church, you have to go by their rules." I am assuming you were referring to my letter as I remember writing that statement or something similar. I see by your comment that I may not have been clear enough on my meaning.

When I made this statement, I was not referring to a group's by-laws and the nice sounding documents that the "leaders" put together in order to rope the people in, placate them and convince the membership that all will be fair.

The rules I was referring to is the basic rules of a hierarchy. We know what those are--if we were a part of HWA's WCG. The rules are--the ministry is always right (and even if they are wrong God will back them up! Remember that one?) and must always maintain control and power. Any one who has the audacity to question these rules must go! (For the good of the other stupid sheep of course.)

You and I did abide by these rules as long as we stayed there. Not only did we bow to these rules, we paid hard earned cash for the "privilege" of doing so.

Once we decided that we could no longer abide by their tyrannical rules, we were out either by disfellowshipment or by removing ourselves. You were disfellowshipped--I left.

To have remained, we would have been required to continue buckling down to their rules.

I hope this explains more clearly what I meant.

You made another comment I'd like to touch upon. You stated "We thought maybe our brothers & sisters would go to the

ministry on our behalf, however to date, we only know personally of one person who has written to the home office of the UCG-IA on our behalf and that is Norm Edwards."

First of all, most of the people who read Servants' News are probably independent who have had their fill of dealing with these little men who claim to be somebody of power and honor. (Give me a break.) And as you stated "Norman Edwards really did a good job in showing why we could not get any place with the UCG-IA ministry," so did we know. The analogy concerning "beating a dead horse" comes to mind, or "speaking to a brickwall."

I once went to bat for a friend of mine concerning her D&R situation in the Global Corporation. I experienced first hand the incredible audacity that their "ministry" exhibited in wielding power over the "common" folk.

I have written numerous letters to these people for various reasons and all I got was silence.

I have ceased in dealing with them as somebody of God. They are not. As time goes by you will see how fruitless and vain it is to deal with them for any reason.

The corporations and their leadership are not of God! They do not operate on biblical principles. Dealing with them is useless.

I hope this helps to explain why, in all probabilities, most of S.N. readers (if not all) did not bother to write United's homeoffice.

Again, I wish to express to you that I do admire and respect what you are doing by speaking out against abusive power and by opening up your home for the benefit of others. I admire your attitude as well.

N.E. commented in his response to your letters that he felt certain places were "cynical, insulting and showed disdain for the UCG corporation (rather-administration)."

Well, excuse me if I happen to be insulting and show disdain for a group of "pharisees" who show by their actions what they are about! We are to judge actions! And a "pharisee" is as a "pharisee" does. Check Matthew 23 to see how God himself views such practices. These practices we can disdain!

I wish you both good things to come.

In Friendship,  
Tawanda Ray  
Hamilton, Alabama

Answered on March 25, 2001

Tawanda

We couldn't have stated what you stated in your letter any better. You have brought up so many valid points, I'm not sure where to start with my comments.

Actually, when I made the statement, "If you are going to be in a corporation church, you have to go by their rules." Yes, you are the woman who made that statement. Yes, I understood originally what you said to mean rules of hierarchy, but to us that would also include their written rules and regulations, as each one of these individual ministers or leaders, probably reads the rule, and then bends it to suite exactly what he wants to accomplish from the situation. These men who claim to be of God, will do whatever it takes, to get a person to either leave their group or they will bend and break their own spoken rules, written rules, and definitely God's rules, to get people out of their corporations. When one has been through it, one can understand the craziness of these men holding on to this power and control of people at all costs, even when it means getting rid of one of their own people.

We also, very much understand the "beating a dead horse" or "speaking to a brick wall" concept. We certainly did encounter it with UCG-IA. We understand why people don't write to them if they are now independent, however, our newsletter goes into other countries, as well as many states in the USA, and most of our mailing list consists of corporation ministry, and corporation sheep. We believe that corporation sheep should help their brothers and sisters in dealing with corporation leaders. If more corporation sheep even understood that they can be sacrificed so readily just on the whim of another corporation sheep going to ministry to report on them, and that once ministry no longer views you as a corporation sheep in good standing, your downward spiral from grace and out the corporation door is not too long in coming. What corporation sheep also don't seem to understand, is that all these corporation sheep who are now gone from their corporation, were once corporation sheep, who were members in good standing, just like themselves.

If the corporation sheep, who are yet members in good standing actually went to the aid of their fellow sheep members, we feel that either the ministry having been put on the spot many times by their member sheep who are currently in good standing, would be forced to change their ways by these confrontations, or the member sheep who is currently in good standing would wake up and see how these corporation leaders treat these sheep. The goal should be to stop the abuse of power and control by leaders. For member sheep in good standing to believe the ministry would never treat them in the same manner as people who left or were disfellowshipped claim to have been treated, is not in their realm of thinking, because they don't yet have a first hand experience with the interaction that takes place in these situations, and even if they do, they sit there and do nothing, claiming God will take care of it. Again God did take care of it. He left us very clear instructions on how to deal with many situations, in His word the Bible.

For instance, when you went to help your friend in a D&R situation with the Global Corporation, wasn't it an eye opener for you? These situations, in going to help a friend deal with corporation leaders, do not take on the characteristics of what God

wants from his people, and if more corporation sheep would get involved in helping their fellow sheep to deal with corporation leaders, I can guarantee you, there would be a lot less people just sitting there doing nothing, and there would be a lot less abuse going on among God's people.

God does not back up corporation leaders who do not follow God's rules, regulations, doctrines or laws. Corporation leaders some how have many people believing that no matter what a corporation leader does or says that God will back him up on it, even if it is wrong. We as God's people, and we here believe, that there are many people and leaders in corporation churches, which are God's people. However, we all as God's people have an individual responsibility to only follow these leaders as they follow God. If we just sit there and say nothing when they depart from God's way, we are putting our approval on it.

We do understand that there are many situations where a person will never get any kind of result that a person can see. However, it doesn't mean we should give up. We are not looking for rewards in this life, our rewards will come when Christ returns. When we see these situations which come up in our day to day lives, and we are asked to help someone, let's just do it to the best of our abilities, without worrying about how we will be thrown out or maligned. Our focus should be on other people and not on ourselves.

With Much Love,  
Darwin & Laura Lee

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PENTECOST on Sunday May 27, 2001

12:00 NOON--Open Fellowship (Door unlocked, just walk in.)  
1:00 PM----Pentecost Service  
3:00 PM----Open Fellowship  
5:00 PM----Eat at Royal Fork Restaurant, Bismarck, North Dakota  
(Open to anyone who wants to join us.)

Again, we realize that this is not the only day that God's people observe Pentecost, and we have respect of all people who have our understanding or some other understanding of this day. We have not studied Pentecost as we have studied Passover, so our understanding of Pentecost may change at a later date, or it may not. For now, we will keep it as traditionally taught to us, and if you have a study paper on Pentecost that you would like for us to take a look at, you may send it to Darwin & Laura Lee at PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502.

If there is someone who wants to keep Pentecost on a different day than May 27th, 2001, and needs a place to keep it, please call us and leave a message (701) 258-7172, and we will try to accommodate you to the best of our ability.

WE HOPE EVERYONE HAS A GOOD PENTECOST

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## PASSOVER

by Arlan Weight, Bismarck, North Dakota

When should we keep it? Should it be observed at the beginning of the 14th of Abib (Nisan), or at the end? Should we observe eight days of unleavened bread or seven. Is the Passover called a Feast? Many people of the churches of God are confused over these questions. Why?

Let's face it. Most, if not all of the people in the 'church', have come to observe these days as a result of the preaching and teaching of Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God. The way and manner is still kept the same as he taught it, by many of the corporate churches of God. Yet a number of people and groups are coming to see some things that don't seem to square with the Bible. Is it just their ideas or is there something we may have overlooked?

Herbert W. Armstrong always taught that we need to study God's word and prove to ourselves whether he was right or wrong on any given subject. If it needed correcting, he said the true church would do so. Pentecost was a good example of this. So it is with this frame of mind this study of Passover is undertaken.

To begin this subject, the very first question to answer is should we observe the Passover and how often? To those of us who have been in the church for many years the answer is elementary and plain. Yes we're commanded to keep it (Ex. 12:14) and once a year in it's season (Num. 9:2). This is something most of us in the church take for granted, but it's only because we have kept them for so long. It's good to review these commands from time to time, though, because we need to stand on the facts of the Bible as we have proved them to ourselves and not just because the church says so. But we also need to look deeper and see if we are truly observing these things as Jesus kept them.

### Traditional Observance

Traditionally, the church has taught that the Passover is to be observed at the beginning of the 14th of Abib (Nisan) because that is the night Jesus kept his last Passover with his disciples. This night was to be a most solemn occasion because it pictured the suffering and death of Jesus Christ to pay the death penalty for the sins of mankind.

Following the Passover on the night of the 15th the church taught and observed a festival occasion where people gather in predetermined locations to eat fine food and drink. This night was to be a gala event to celebrate the Israelites coming out of slavery in Egypt. It also was to picture spiritual Israel's deliverance in coming out of sin. This was to be that 'night to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations'. (Ex. 12:42)

On the one night the church observes an event in a funeral type atmosphere and the next as a festival type. Exodus 12 indicates the time of the actual passing-over (Passover) the Israelites houses and their deliverance ('night to be observed') as happening the same night. Why does the church observe two nights with two separate events and meaning? How can this contradiction be resolved? Did Jesus change the day as well as the symbols of the Passover?

### Jesus' Example and Instruction

Jesus custom was to observe the Passover from childhood. He was an obedient son and obeyed his parents. Notice Luke 2:41. "Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast."

Shortly after Jesus began his ministry, Jesus was still keeping the Passover as he had been taught as a boy. It says it was the "Jews' Passover." (John 2:13) In verse 23 it says "now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day many believed in his name... Was Jesus keeping the feast day at a different time than all the rest of the Jews? No, it's quite obvious he was observing it right along with all the rest. If Jesus was keeping it at another time, surely the Scribes and Pharisees would have pointed it out, but no where did they take issue with him on this.

In fact Jesus taught the people to do the things the Scribes and Pharisees taught. Notice Matt. 23:2-3. "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do..." Surely that must have included the Passover with the timing and the various aspects as they had always done for so many centuries.

So then we must conclude from this that Jesus did not come to do away with the commands of Moses or the Law. He came to fulfill. Notice Matt. 5:17 "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Was Moses a prophet? Acts 3:22 says, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me;..." (Deut. 18:15) What did Jesus say of Moses? "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:27)

So if Moses is considered a prophet and Jesus came to fulfil what he said, we must come to see that for the first 32 years of his life, he kept the Passover and the Days of unleavened bread at the very same time the rest of the Jews kept it, the same as Moses commanded them back then. Some have said the Jews were keeping it a day late. Now really? Does that sound logical when we look at all the evidence? Hardly. No... Jesus was not contrary to the Scribes and Pharisees on this point.

At his last Passover Jesus had to keep it at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan, because at the end He would have already been dead. The most important fact to remember is that Jesus is our Passover sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. 5:7) He was killed, just as all the lambs had been killed for centuries prior...at the very same time. Therefore at this one time He had to deliver the symbolic bread and wine service to his disciples at the beginning...before he suffered. "And He said unto them, with desire, I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15)

Here Jesus is saying he desired to eat this Passover meal before he suffered. Again this had to be done at the beginning of the 14th. All other times Jesus ate the Passover meal when all the other Jews did, at the beginning of the 15th. So by eating this meal a day early, is Jesus changing the date we are to observe the Passover. I think not. For again he says continue to observe the things the Scribes and Pharisees taught because they sat in Moses' seat. (Matt. 23:2-3) Continue to observe the Passover as Jesus had kept it from boyhood...at the same time as the Scribes and Pharisees.

So when did the Scribes and Pharisees observe the Passover that year when Jesus was killed? Notice all four gospel writers date his crucifixion on the preparation day, that is the day before the first Day of Unleavened Bread, the day before the Passover meal was traditionally kept by Jesus and all the Jews as taught by Moses. There can be no mistaking which day they ate the Passover meal.

"And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb... Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation..." (Matt. 27:59-62)

"And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath"-Mark 15:42 (This Sabbath was the First Day of Unleavened Bread.)

"This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on." (Luke 23:52-54)

"And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour (John 19:14)... The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,)" (John 19:31)

Again Jesus could not partake of that meal that year at the same time as the rest of the Jews, because he would have been dead by then. It's not that he changed the date of the observance, which he didn't. This would not be consistent with the way God does things. Every other 'High' day is observed at the exact time of the original designation in Leviticus 23. Why, in the New Testament, would God choose to observe Passover a day early? If Jesus could have, he no doubt would have observed the Passover meal and introducing the symbols of the unleavened bread and wine at the same time he always kept it before...the night portion of the 15th, which is the first day of Unleavened Bread.

The main pivotal thing to remember is that Jesus died at the exact same time as the lambs were killed on the 'preparation day' because he became our 'Passover Lamb'. So now that we understand Jesus was sacrificed exactly as the lambs were, exactly as the Jews understood it, and that Jesus, together with the Jews kept it, and the Passover meal the same time as the original in Exodus, we can rely on that account. We can read that account and see just how he 'fulfilled' it.

#### The First Passover and Christ's Fulfillment

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:...Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year:...(Ex. 12:1-5) Jesus was a male and he was without spot or blemish. "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. 1:18-19)

"And you shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." (Ex. 12:6) Numbers 9:3 says "In the fourteenth day of this month, at even ye shall keep it..."



The word 'evening' and the word 'even' are translated from the Hebrew word 'eth ereb' meaning between the two evening times. (Young's Concordance)

If Jesus crucifixion fulfilled this precisely at the same time the lambs were sacrificed, it had to be in the afternoon of the 14th. "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice...when He cried again with aloud voice, yielded up the Spirit." (Mat. 27:46&50) This is exactly as the Hebrew word implies. It occurred on the 14th 'between the two evening times'...between the beginning of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th.

"And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it" (Ex. 12:7) The blood was to be daubed on the two side posts of the entrance of a house to show the death angel that the occupants within that house were to be separated from the Egyptians. They had a special relationship with their deliverer and they were to be spared. Hebrews 13:12 says it's by Jesus own blood that which separates the people. "Wherefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." The word 'sanctify' is from the Greek word 'hagiazō' meaning to set apart. (Young's Concordance) The analogy is exactly the same. Just as the lambs blood separated the Israelites and spared them from the death angel. So are we to be spared from destruction by the true 'Lambs Blood'.

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night" (the night of the 15th) "roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover" (Ex. 12:8-11)

Even as the Israelites were to eat the flesh of the roasted lamb Jesus said we are to eat of his flesh. He explained this to his followers in John 6:51-58. He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat: Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so He that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.

The symbols of Christ's flesh and blood are that of the Unleavened Bread and wine he presented to his disciples at his last Passover with them. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:26-28)

So just as the Israelites were to eat the roasted lamb, we are to partake of the symbols Christ gave us to represent his body and blood. What night are we to eat and drink of them? Moses instructed the Israelites to eat the lamb 'in that night'. Jesus told the people to follow that instruction. (Mat. 23:2-3) We too then should ingest of the Lamb, in that same night, the night of the 15th, which is the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

The afternoon of the 14th is when the lambs were killed, but the 15th of Abib is the actual "Pass Over", the actual time when the death angel saw the blood and 'passed over' (Ex. 12:27) the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt." Exodus 12:29 says, "And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh"... This was the night of the 15th of Abib.

"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses:" (Ex. 12:18) The word 'even' here comes from the Hebrew word 'erev' which simply means 'evening or eventide'. It is not the same word as Exodus 12:6. That word specifically means 'between the two evening times'. This word implies that the 1st day of Unleavened Bread begins at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th of Abib. We must count inclusively in that the 15th is the 1st day and the 21st day is the last day. From the beginning of the 1st day (15th) to the end of the last day (21st) is seven days. (See Chart)

#### Passover Defined

Is the Passover a feast or is it the memorial of the death of Jesus Christ? Or, is it both? Traditional observance has tried to separate these two. The church has used Leviticus 23:5-6 and Numbers 28:16-17 to separate the Passover from the Feast day. Let's take a close look at these two references.

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord:..." (Lev. 23:5-6)

"And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast:..." (Num. 28:16-17)

How do these square with Exodus 12:8-11? Here it indicates the passover lamb was eaten the night of the 15th. "It is the Lord's passover." (verse 11) Is there a conflict here? How can this be explained?

Throughout the old and new testaments the term passover has been applied sometimes to a feast and sometimes to denote the killing of the lambs. Let's look at just a few cases.

"Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover" (lamb). (Ex. 12:21)

"Then they killed the passover" (lamb) "on the fourteenth day of the second month"... (2 Chron 30:15)

"Then came the day of unleavened bread when the passover" (lamb) "must be killed"... (Luke 22:7)

"And thus shall you eat it;" (the lamb) "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it" (the lamb) "in haste; it is the Lord's passover." (Ex. 12:11)

"And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast" (eating the lamb on the 15th) "to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast" (eating the lamb on the 15th) "by an ordinance for ever." (Ex. 12:14)

"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover" (lamb)? (Mat. 26:17)

There are many more examples like those above where sometimes the term 'passover' is used in conjunction with killing the lamb and sometimes it's used in eating it. Such is the case with Leviticus 23:5-6 and Numbers 28:16-17. In each of these two places we are simply talking about doing two different things. The fourteenth day is the day for killing and preparing the lamb, the fifteenth day is for eating it.

The main thing to remember in this context is that Jesus (the Lamb of God) fulfilled the killing of the lamb on the fourteenth. The eating of the symbols representing his flesh and blood were to be eaten on the fifteenth. This he observed like all the Jews for the first 32 of his 33 years.

#### What day did the Israelites leave Egypt?

So when did the Israelites leave Egypt? In Deut. 16:1 it says "God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night." So did the Israelites leave their homes the night of the 15th? No. It's plain to see that the people could not have left that night. Notice the instruction Moses gave the people. "none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning." (Ex. 12:22) So what's the answer to this seemingly contradiction?

In Deuteronomy 16:1 it says God brought them out of Egypt by night. But does it say here what day of the month? In Numbers 33:3 it says "And they departed from Rameses in the first month on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the Passover..." This says plainly that they did not leave Egypt the night of the 15th. The word 'morrow' comes from the Hebrew word 'mochorath' which simply means the next day. And of course, it fits because the Israelites were to remain in their houses all night.

So if they didn't leave Egypt the night of the 15th, what night was it that they actually left? Continuing on in Numbers 33 it says "they removed from Rameses and pitched in Succoth. And they departed from Succoth and pitched in Etham...And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which is before Basslzephon: and they pitched before Migdol." At each of the places mentioned it says they pitched, meaning they encamped. It does not say how long they stayed at each location, but one might assume they encamped at least one night at each place. So it was at least three days journey till they reached the point where they had to cross the sea.

### Summary

All of the difficulty in answering the questions about the old testament Passover and the New testament Passover stem from starting out on a wrong premise. That premise is that we must keep the Passover on the night beginning the 14th because Jesus kept it that night. But, as was explained before, Jesus had to keep it early that year because he knew it was his last and to fulfill the prophesy that he was to be that Passover Lamb, he could not keep it as he did before, on the 15th with the rest of the Jews.

The church has taken it's cue from 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 where it says "for I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread"... Here it says Jesus observed the Passover the same night he was betrayed, but does it clearly say we are to do so as well? Rather shouldn't his first 32 years of keeping the Passover prove to the contrary, especially when his command is to keep the Passover as the Scribes and Pharisees were doing it? (Mat. 23:2-3) Could it be that the church has erred in viewing 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 as a command to keep the Passover at the same time, when it should only be viewed as a statement of historical record?

The most important thing to remember is that Jesus fulfilled the sacrifice and shedding of his blood at the same time as the original lambs were killed, on the afternoon of the 14th of Abib. Jesus observed the eating of the lamb and the 'night to be observed' the same as all of the Jews of his day, the night of the 15th, which is the first Day of Unleavened Bread. This he did first as a boy with his parents and then during his ministry. Furthermore he told us to follow the Scribes and Pharisees in this example (Mat. 23:2-3). He didn't change the day of it's observance.

When we look closely at the Exodus account we are able to see the step by step of events that transpired that first Passover. We are able to see that there is no separation with the event of Pass-over and the first day of Unleavened Bread. Rather these occurred the same day. The night to be much observed is also the same night. So all three, the Passover, Night to be Observed, and the First Day of Unleavened Bread are all one and the same day.

True, the Passover lambs were killed on the fourteenth, the preparation day, but the actual Passover, the night to observe when the death angel passed-over, occurred on the night of the 15th, The First Day of Unleavened Bread. It's no wonder then that the Passover is called a Feast in some places. For indeed it did occur on the Feast Day. It also explains why there can only be seven days of unleavened bread, not eight, because the first day the Israelites ate unleavened bread was the same night they ate the lamb roasted with fire, the night of the 15th.

Then there is the matter of tradition. Can we tell from scripture what day the Apostles continued to observe the Passover? If they did what Jesus commanded them, they kept it on the 15th. 1 Corinthians 11 only says "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread..." It accurately tells what day Jesus kept it the year he was killed. It does not say he changed it to that day, nor does Paul tell you to keep it at that same time.

Once we begin to realize the words Jesus said that he came to fulfill what Moses said are true, everything fits. We then begin to understand that you must start with Exodus 12 and go forward. This is the starting place. You cannot start with the New testament and fit the events of Exodus into the evening Jesus observed his last Passover. This is starting with a wrong premise. It appears that the only reason Jesus kept his last Passover at the beginning of the 14th that year, is that it was impossible to do it later. He most certainly would have if he could have.

Finally, it comes down to this. Jesus said he did not come to do away with what Moses instructed. He said the Scribes and Pharisees, were keeping these days properly and that we need to observe them as they taught because they "sat in Moses' seat" (Mat. 23:2-3). Furthermore Jesus, himself observed the keeping of these days from boyhood as he was taught by the leaders of his day. Should we then scrap all that in favor of observing the passover on the beginning of the 14th simply because Jesus kept it at that time, that year?

Jesus said he desired to eat that passover 'before he suffered'. This was his last passover. Could he have eaten it after he suffered? Pretty obvious it couldn't have been done, unless he would have done it after the resurrection, and that would have completely been out of the sequence of events in Exodus.

No, the answer should be quite apparent that Jesus fulfilled the scripture exactly as he said. His command to keep it as he fulfilled it is still valid. If tradition chooses to observe it at a different time than what he says, should we follow that? I think not. If tradition is to be our guide, we might well start observing Sunday as the Sabbath instead of the 7th day along with a host of other observances, but this is not what we're supposed to do.

Jesus last instruction is as important for us today as it was to his disciples just before he left this earth. "Go ye

therefore, and teach all nations,...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. A'men." (Mat. 28:19-20)

If his command is to keep the passover as the Scribes and Pharisees observed it, as he observed it for 32 of his 33 years, shouldn't we listen to that? If it means breaking with tradition shouldn't we do it? What should be our response?

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COMMENTS FROM THE EDITOR:

We sincerely hope that you will take a few minutes to really look over the enclosed chart. It has valuable information on it, which perhaps will help some in seeing at what point these different Passover events happened. Again, Arlan has done a very good job in presenting a very controversial subject.

If you are doing a study of Passover, the best place to start is in your Bible, with Exodus Chapter 12. We also know of two other excellent Passover study papers, which contain much information on this subject. We do not agree with every point in these other two study papers, however most of the points we disagree with, are minor, and do not throw the basic conclusion off one way or the other. You may obtain these other two study papers through us, by writing to us or via E-mail, and those addresses are in the front of the newsletter. Or you may write to the following places to obtain these study papers: #1-Have We Passed Over The Passover? by Church of God, Berean Fellowship, PO Box 215, Dousman, WI 53118 and #2-Passover by Norman S. Edwards, Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan/Feb 1997, Servants' News, PO Box 107, Perry, Michigan 48872.

Again, do not believe us, study it for yourself, and we welcome any comments or corrections you may have for us.

The next article, may also be a bit controversial to some, however, many times in the church of God culture which most of us have been taught in, we many times were either directly lied to, important information was just not given to us, or we took the least complicated meaning of a word and made a whole doctrine out of it. Most of this, is shame on us for not studying those things which ministers and others told us, to see whether these things were true. Darwin's reaction to my article was, "I never heard that one before." Darwin did go through, and is still working on going through what I wrote, and checking all the scriptures, and so far, he hasn't been able to dispute it, according to the Bible. Again, as you read this, do not believe me, study it for yourself. Please send your comments and corrections to us at the address listed in the front of this newsletter.

For some more help on this subject, we have available through us a five tape set of tapes, which is a marriage seminar given by Wayne and Claudia Speed in Minnesota. See our list at the beginning of this newsletter. Another very excellent tape, which helps to clarify and define some other aspects of this subject, is a tape which is offered by Ray Wooten of PO Box 361725, Hoover, AL 35236-1725. We do not have permission to copy and send this tape, but you may obtain it by writing to Ray Wooten at United Christian Ministries. The tape is called "Heal the Family & You Fix the Culture" by George Crow. Also, one more point of interest is a very good and to the point letter which appeared in the March 30, 2001 issue of "The Journal" on page 4. The letter is written by Paula Wik of Cave Creek, Arizona. I do not know Paula Wik, but I salute you, as a woman who has the courage to speak out. Thank you. Laura Lee

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PENTECOST on Sunday May 27, 2001

- 12:00 NOON--Open Fellowship (Door unlocked, just walk in.)
- 1:00 PM----Pentecost Service
- 3:00 PM----Open Fellowship
- 5:00 PM----Eat at Royal Fork Restaurant, Bismarck, North Dakota  
(Open to anyone who wants to join us.)

Again, we realize that this is not the only day that God's people observe Pentecost, and we have respect of all people who have our understanding or some other understanding of this day. We have not studied Pentecost as we have studied Passover, so our understanding of Pentecost may change at a later date, or it may not. For now, we will keep it as traditionally taught to us, and if you have a study paper on Pentecost that you would like for us to take a look at, you may send it to Darwin & Laura Lee at PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502.

If there is someone who wants to keep Pentecost on a different day than May 27th, 2001, and needs a place to keep it, please call us and leave a message (701) 258-7172, and we will try to accommodate you to the best of our ability.

WE HOPE EVERYONE HAS A GOOD PENTECOST

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MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE  
by Laura Lee, Bismarck, North Dakota

Matthew 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

The two words that jump out at me in this scripture are "fornication and adultery". Most people think they know what those two words are talking about, however, do we? The Bible, God's word defines the words that are used. Let's take a look first at how the Bible defines "fornication".

FORNICATION

In the Old Testament, there are five scriptures in the King James Bible that use the word "fornication", they are 2 Chronicles 21:11, Isaiah 23:17, Ezekiel 16:15, 26, 29. If you read the entire chapters of 2 Chronicles 21, Isaiah 23, and Ezekiel 16, you will find that the Old Testament definition of fornication is in the context of idolatry. All 3 of these chapters are talking about idolatry and what it includes.

In the New Testament, in Matthew 19:9 the word for fornication in the Greek is "porneia", and is found in that exact form 6 more times. In 1 Corinthians 5:1 it is used in context of sexual sin, incest. Next is 1 Corinthians 6:13, and if you read this entire chapter, it is in context of sin in general. In 2 Corinthians 12:21, the context is speaking of unrepented sins. Galatians 5:19, is again speaking of sin in general and if you read the entire chapter it is speaking of both the fruits of the spirit and the fruits of the flesh (or sin in general). Again in Ephesians 5:3, the word is used in context of sin in general, and is directed at saints in general. In Revelation 19:2 the word "fornication", "porneia" is being used in the context of idolatry.

In Galatians 5:19-21 it says: Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication (porneia), uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Colossians 3:5 tells us what idolatry is: ...fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry;

2 Kings 21:21-22 says: And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them: And he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

So by these scriptures, we can know what the Bible definition of fornication is, it is sin, and sin is idolatry, and it is a lifestyle.

Matthew 15:18-20: But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit 1 Corinthians 6:19 and you are bought for a price, 1 Corinthians 6:20, and your body is not your own. Both your body and your spirit are God's. If your lifestyle is to lust after other gods (idols), this comes from the heart and is spiritual as well as physical, and is called fornication or the worship of idols. There are several lists of behaviors in the Bible which could be called sin lists or lists of idols, and fornication is idolatry. Colossians 3:5.

Strongs Concordance under fornication #4202 & #4203 even lists fornication to mean idolatry in the Greek. How did we miss this, and why have we held so many women and children in bondage through marriage, telling them they can only leave Egypt for sexual sin (how we looked at fornication). We have a society and its within the Church of God also, a mindset that if people know a woman is being beaten by her husband they call her stupid for staying in it, and when she tries to get out they not only won't help her, but they tell her she can only leave for sexual sin, so if there is no sexual sin, she can never marry again because she will be committing adultery and cause the other person also to commit adultery.

WHAT DOES A FORNICATOR LOOK LIKE?

Study Esau; Hebrews 12:16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

## ADULTERY

Matthew 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication (idolatry), and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

"Adultery", in Strong's Concordance in the Hebrew-Old Testament is #5003 and means to "Apostatize". #3431, #3429, and #3430 in Greek-New Testament all refer to #3432 which means "Apostate". In Webster's Dictionary "Apostasy" means: an abandoning of what one believed in, as a faith, political party, principles, etc. "Apostate" means: to revolt, stand off. "Apostatize" means: to be an apostate; abandon one's faith, political party, etc.

This can also mean emotional divorce from your mate. This Apostasy, may even mean you are still in the marriage, physically, but you just plain old don't have a marriage relationship of any kind. Apostasy can include both physical and spiritual things.

What does God say about adultery?

Proverbs 6:32: But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

Jeremiah 5:7: How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are not gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots's houses.

Jeremiah 7:9: Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Ba'al, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

Ezekiel 23:37: That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery; and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them.

2 Peter 2:14-15: Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: Which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bo'sor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

Revelation 2:21-23: And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death: and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

There are many more scriptures throughout the Bible about adultery, that you can also look up, but it looks like the definition of adultery according to God is apostasy, or abandonment of His way (God's Way). It is a departing from God's way and going the way of Satan. Can people in the Church of God commit adultery or abandonment? You bet they can. If your lifestyle consists of any of the things which are listed on God's sin lists, you are committing adultery. So next time you thumb your nose at a divorced person who is doing the best they can to do things God's way, please look at yourself first, because if you are lying to your wife, stealing from friends, smoking, drinking to excess, treating your wife as garbage and as a lower life form than the family pet, you are committing fornication (idolatry) and because you are departing from God's way by doing these things, it is adultery (apostasy). (Read the entire Chapter of Jeremiah 3.) The twisting of these Bible scriptures has been to long used as a way for men and even women sometimes not to take responsibility for their own actions against others, especially their own brides whom they are to cherish.

God divorced Israel for adultery (abandonment of His ways). (Again read the entire Chapter of Jeremiah 3.) Their adulteries were their sinful lifestyles which they did not want to give up. Their sin was fornication (idolatry), which according to the Bible, not only included their worship of molten images, but also those things they did not want to give up in their lifestyles, which could and did definitely include sexual sin, but it also included their lusting from the heart after things like lying, drinking, etc. etc. etc.

Here's an example of fornication. My second husband was a drinker. He loved to drink. He was also Mr. Macho man, I never saw him cry except once. I was yet recovering from a back injury which was caused from a beating I had taken at his hand 2 years before this incident. He had stopped drinking for over a year, but decided to take it up again one day. He came into our apartment, with a bottle of 30 proof rock gut wine, and offered me a glass and of course, it looked like he had already had at least one and was going for another. I saw that bottle in his hand and I knew, that when the bottle came back into our house, so do the beatings he used to inflict. I knew I would not survive another beating at his hand, I wasn't and am still not fully recovered from the last one he inflicted on me. I looked him straight in the eye, and I said, "You will have to choose between

me or your drinking." That is the first time I ever saw the Mr. Macho man cry real tears. He was crying as he gathered his stuff and took his bottle and left. The next time I saw him was after he filed for divorce and came back to get some more of his things. That was fornication (idolatry), he loved his drinking (idol), more than his wife (relationship, marriage, joining). He committed adultery (apostasy, abandonment) when he left.

#### MATTHEW 19:9 & MATTHEW 5:32

The church has used these to hold people in bondage indefinitely, and it is my opinion that we stop doing this, as these scriptures when you dissect them, do not mean what people have been taught they mean. Please do not believe me, study it yourself.

In Matthew 19:9, for instance, in the Greek, the last part isn't even there, and many Bibles don't put it in. In Matthew 19:9 as it is written in the King James Bible, you have a "him, him, her" thing and in Matthew 5:32, you have a "him, her, her" thing, which is important to understanding these verses. In Matthew 19:9 the word "commit" implies an intentional action, where in Matthew 5:32, the word "causeth" implies either an intentional or a non intentional action. In Matthew 5:32, the Greek word which was translated as fornication is "logouporneias", and since it only appears in that form one time in the entire Bible, there is some dispute as to what this word really means. Also in Matthew 5:32, the word adultery used in the King James Bible, is used twice here and is translated from two different Greek words, into the same English word.

Matthew 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication (idolatry), and (he who puts her away for something other than idolatry, and) shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away (for idolatry) doth commit adultery. (The last part of this scripture does not even appear in the Greek and some versions of the Bible, do not even put it in there.)

This would sort of blow the idea that if one spouse is free to remarry, so too is the other one no matter what they did. As I understand corporation church culture, once a group of ministers chooses to say God loosed one person from the marriage, then it means that both are free to remarry again. So in other words, if one person is unbound from the marriage, because of fraud (lying, deception), or for adultery (sexual sin or abandonment) the other person is freed by the ministry also to go and do it all over again. It never did sound right to me. Once a person knows the definition of fornication and adultery, one can see that God does hold at least one person accountable for the divorce, and it may or may not be the person who actually physically filed for divorce and left the marriage. It is impossible to have a relationship with an unrepentant person--or any person who is unwilling to change their own destructive behaviors into good behaviors for the good of the relationship.

Matthew 5:32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication (idolatry), (will) causeth her to commit adultery (apostatize, not being a family, not joined): and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced (for idolatry), committeth adultery.

#### REPENTANCE

Matthew 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance...

Matthew 9:13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth. I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Acts 26:20 ...that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

These scriptures show that true repentance of our sinful behaviors require that of doing works and these works will produce fruit. In our relationships with each other, just saying you are sorry doesn't cut it. We can say we are sorry to someone forever if we want to, but if we do not change our behaviors towards that person, we will get no where in having a right relationship with that other person. Many men, and probably even some women, use scriptures to especially beat up on their mates. Matthew 19:9, and Matthew 5:32, have actually been used by many men, both in the church and out to keep women and children from leaving very destructive relationships. When I study these scriptures, it looks to me like men and women are each accountable for their own behaviors and if a man or a woman is hard hearted (unrepentant), stiff necked (unrepentant), and going down the path of destruction, God does not require that men or women stay in these situations and stay in bondage. Just for the record, I am not recommending divorce at the drop of a hat, because God does not like divorce, and neither do women. God wants very much for us to work on our marriages. However, if only one person is working on the relationship, and the other person is totally refusing to work on anything, there may come a point in time when it would be more destructive to stay than to leave. Sometimes whether to leave a marriage or not is a very hard thing. Myself being a woman and having gone

through it, I can tell you I would not recommend divorce unless there is no other way.

### MARRIAGE

Up until now, I've been rather lenient on men, so now I'm going to start on you, and what your responsibilities are within the marriage relationship. Men are the head of the house, and men are over the wife as Christ is head of the church. What does this mean to you men? Does it mean you beat your family sheep and lambs into submission under you, and whatever you say goes? Men all around the world love this next scripture. Ephesians 5:22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands... For some reason men forget to read the entire scripture. We should start in Ephesians 5:21: Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Men, Christ has set you in a leadership role. Christ has not set you up in a boss role to be telling your wife what to do every chance you get. Christ has not set you up in a dictatorship role over your wife, so that you can oppress her and keep her from reaching her full potential, because you are beating her once a week or more. Christ has given you a special calling, with a lot of responsibility. Christ holds you responsible for the well being of your family. God holds men 100% responsible for the well being of their family's. I'm actually glad I'm a girl, because that is a lot of responsibility when one sits down and thinks about it. Men you are responsible to provide for your families, spend time with your families, and guide them through life's ups and downs in a loving way, as Christ would do it. Submitting to each other is to be done by both husband and wife, and a better term would be, to work together for the good of the family.

Now, you men and women may or may not have noticed a couple of other things in the above scripture. Christ commands women to submit to their own husbands, and as I already stated, submitting is working together for the good of the family. Women are not required to take either abuse or orders from men outside their immediate families, or in their immediate families either. This is not to say that you cannot help other families or other men. It just means they do not have licence to boss you around because you are a woman. This may not even be a problem many women have, but I've seen it, and it is not pretty.

The other part of this goes like this men. Christ has given you a job that requires you to lead (guide by your example) your wife, as Christ leads the church. That means you are to guide in a Christ like manner, and not as Satan leads. There is a very large difference in those two paths. If a husband is trying to lead in a Christ like manner and makes a few mistakes along the way, that is one thing, at least he has a repentant attitude, and is working on himself. However, if a man, lies or deceives his wife on a regular basis, if he's never home, if he puts others and his job above his marriage relationship, if he's out partying every night, if he gets drunk on a regular basis, etc. etc. etc. If this is your lifestyle to follow Baal, and you don't want to give it up, and if you don't think you need to, not only apologize to your wife, but also repent (change your behaviors), then I suggest that you get out your concordance and check to see what all the things are that God holds you responsible for, because you are in the leadership spot. If you lead your wife and family down the path of destruction, you are accountable to God for that. The other thing is, that God does not hold your wife and family burdened and bound to live their lives in your sewer.

Just as God divorced Israel, for unrepentant lifestyle (hardness of heart), God does allow divorce among His people for the same reason, and by God's own word, people who leave a marriage for this reason are free to remarry. Read Matthew 19:3-8, Christ did not change the reason for divorce. All Christ said here, was that it was meant from the beginning for man to only have one mate, but because of the hardness of your hearts (unrepentant sin as a lifestyle), God allowed divorce. Unrepentant sin (hardness of heart), lifestyle, would include any reason listed on the sin lists (idol lists). God did not in his word confine divorce only to sexual sin, as so many want to do, in order to not take responsibility for their own deviant lifestyles. (Read 1 Corinthians 6:13-18)

Wives are very relational, they want to be loved and cared for and God does command husbands to love their wives, understand their wives, and husbands are also very much responsible for their wives happiness. Now I know guys, these things may not seem fair to you, after getting sermon after sermon on how to control the wife and family, but face it guys, does that control thing really work? Because wives are relational, they aren't quite as quick as men sometimes are to leave their homes and start all over again. Women have a tendency to work on the relationship with their husbands even long after they have already perceived, it ain't going no where. So guys if your wife leaves because she now feels freer to because of this article, don't blame me, because I wasn't the one who was in your house, you were. You as the leader, and head of your home are 100% responsible for the guiding and caring of your families, and if you don't want to clean up your life, God does give His permission for her to get out, and she is justified by scripture to do so. I purposely haven't given you all the scriptures that pertain to men, because it is my opinion that you should look at what God says about your role under Christ anyway, so study men.