

The Real Reasons Why Christ Came To This Earth



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The Real Reasons Why Christ Came To This Earth

Shocking? Yes, it is! Millions suppose Christ came to “save the world.” They believe He came to die for the sins of mankind, yet do not know *what sin is*. Millions think He came to establish the “Christian religion.” Almost no one knows why Christ really came to this earth, even though Christ plainly says so! He came to qualify as the King of kings and Lord of lords; to *disqualify* the present evil world ruler, Satan; to *preach the good news* of His coming world-ruling government; to call and train His disciples to proclaim that message; to *build His church*, or His group of “called-out” ones; to *commission* His church to perform the work of preaching the gospel and caring for the flock; to qualify to become our High Priest; to die for the sins of mankind; to be raised from the dead three days and three nights later; to ascend to His father in heaven, where He awaits the time of His return as conquering King.



“Peace on earth—good will toward men.” How many times have you heard it? At Christmas, millions of church-going, professing Christian people attend church services, concerts, performances of Handel’s stirring “Messiah.” Millions decorate their homes, their lawns, or even their rooftops with scenes of the Christ child in a manger; with wise men, shepherds, Mary, and the angels.

They suppose they are doing this in honor of Christ’s birthday, which they erroneously believe was on December 25. History proves Christ was born in the *autumn*, very likely on the *First Day of the Feast of Tabernacles*, not in the middle of winter.

God’s Word shows Christ was “tabernacling” (dwelling only temporarily) in human flesh (John 1:14); that He came to this earth for many important purposes.

What were the real reasons for the very Person of the Godhead Who said, “Let there be light,” and “Let Us make man in Our image,” to *become human flesh*? Study carefully the entire first chapter of the Gospel according to John for *proof* of Christ’s pre-human state.

Did Jesus Christ come to give us a *new and different religion*? Did He come to bring *peace*? Did He come to *save the world*? Did He come to revive the synagogue? Did He come to heal everyone He could, cast out every demon He encountered, teach every person He met, and *convert* as many as possible?

No, believe it or not, Jesus Christ did not come to save the world—*then!* Had Jesus Christ decided to “save” the world, He would have *done*

it. Instead, He told His disciples: "Think NOT that I am come to send *peace on earth*: I came NOT to send peace, but a sword [a symbol of violent death; symbol of war!].

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

"And a man's foes shall be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36).

Are you mature enough; is your mind open, and enquiring enough to really *think* about that scriptural passage? Do you *believe* it? Christ said it. He meant it. He did *not* come to bring peace during His physical lifetime of "tabernacling" in human flesh.

But what of the oft-repeated phrase, "peace on earth"? It is a blatant *mistranslation* in the King James Bible of 1611. Most marginal references clear it up: The Oxford KJV margin says: "Or, on earth peace among men of good will, or, on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased" (Luke 2:14).

Christ Himself tells you He *did not come to bring peace* to this earth. Eventually, He *will*, but that time is in the future.

This Is Not God's World

Many people hope for a time of great ecumenism, a time when all men of good will, working together, can bring about a vast Christian revival which will influence governments, and bring the world *peace* at last.

The Bible prophesies no such thing.

Instead, God's Word says that Satan the devil has *deceived* the institutions of this world (Revelation 12:9); that he is the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), and the present "god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4). As such, Satan is the architect of this world's institutions, its governments, its societies, and its religions.

The world is in total spiritual *darkness*, deceived by Satan. Jesus Christ did not attempt to penetrate the veil of darkness and deception that clouded most men's minds.

Christ's disciples, wondering why Jesus spoke in puzzles and riddles to his audiences, asked Him *why* He did this. Millions have supposed Christ's parables were to *make the meaning plain* by giving His audiences cozy little stories to illustrate His point.

But Christ told them: "It is given unto you [His disciples] to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it *is not given*...therefore

I speak unto them in parables [puzzles]: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias [Isaiah], which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; *lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and should understand with their heart, and should be CONVERTED, and I should HEAL them!*" (Matthew 3:10-16).

Do you understand what Jesus plainly said?

Christ was telling them He was making a *conscious decision* to speak in puzzling terms, *LEST those people should understand, and become converted!* He quoted Isaiah's prophecy which said the masses would have become *deceived*; that their ears would hear words, but not understand the deep, spiritual intent; that they had *closed* their eyes to God's truth!

Not only did Jesus say He had come to a world of spiritual darkness and deception, He plainly said He was *not sent* to the whole world then, only to *Israel!*

Read it, in your own Bible. Jesus was approached by a Gentile woman, a Canaanite, who desperately begged Him to heal her daughter, to cast out a demon. But Jesus did not so much as answer this poor woman! He "answered her not a word" (Matthew 15:23).

Are you prepared to *believe* what your own Bible says, instead of what mainstream evangelicals have always supposed or what you have always *assumed*?

What your Bible tells you is that *if* the Canaanitish woman had not shown an example of unusual tenacity, Jesus Christ would have turned a deaf ear to her appeals; He would have gone His way, and paid *no attention whatsoever* to her desperate cry for relief for her daughter!

Even the disciples wanted to be rid of her. "And His disciples besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

"But He answered and said, 'I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.'

"Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me.'

"But He answered and said, 'It is not meet [proper, fitting] to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs'" (Matthew 15:23-26).

At this point, had the Savior of all mankind said such a thing *today*, in our "politically correct" society, this dark, swarthy woman would have fiercely bridled: "*What!? You're referring to me and my kind as DOGS?*"

What are you, a racist, white male, homophobe, bigoted religious fanatic?"

Sure she would.

Think about it.

His analogy said that parents of children who were sitting at the dining table would hardly take food from their plates, and toss it to their pets! The meaning was clear. He was only sent to the "lost sheep of the House of Israel," and it was not yet *time* for God's grace to be extended to the Gentiles.

But the Canaanitish woman did not react the way millions of her female countrywomen might react today.

Instead, she persevered, "Truth, Lord [notice the agreement! notice the respect!], yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

"Then Jesus answered and said, unto her, 'O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto you even as you will.' And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:27,28).

God's Word proves that Jesus Christ *did not come to save the world then!* Yet, millions *assume* He made every effort to heal, rescue, save, convert every human being He came across. They think, quite falsely, that He was engaged in a desperate *saving mission*, preaching, teaching, appealing, healing—trying to *get the people saved!*

They only think so because they are complete biblical illiterates.

Christ Did Not Come To Do Away With God's Law

Millions have supposed Christ came to *do away with the law!* They imagine, because of the deceptive propaganda of liberal churchmen over the centuries, that Christ set Himself *against* what they suppose were the harsh, unyielding, "legalistic" old laws of the "Father God of the Old Testament," that He came to abrogate that old law, the Ten Commandments.

They think He came to give us some "new" commandment having to do with "love." In the minds of millions, this "love" each of us is to have toward our fellow man is all that is necessary, once we "receive Jesus," profess His name, and "believe" on Him.

Today, millions "believe on Jesus," but they *do not BELIEVE* Him!

They do not believe what He *said!*

He said: "Think NOT that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets:

I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). Christ lifted the law to a spiritual plane; applied God's Ten Commandments in a *spiritual* sense, showing that the law was broken even by *thoughts of the human heart*, and not by the breaking of the letter of the law only.

Of course, millions of people, including countless thousands of churchmen, have no special quarrel with nine of the Ten Commandments. Millions believe it is well and good to honor one's parents; to avoid stealing, or murder, or lying. But the *Fourth* Commandment? For real biblical insight into God's law, write immediately for your free copy of our booklets, *The Ten Commandments*, and *The New Covenant—Does It Do Away With God's Law?*

Christ spoke continually about God's Ten Commandments. He upheld the law against murder and hatred (Matthew 5:21); said it was a sin, breaking the command against murder, to call a brother by a hateful name (Matthew 5:23); said the commandment against adultery was intact (Matthew 5:27); observed the Passover (John 2:13,23; Mark 14:1-16); observed the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day of the Feast (John 7:10-14; 7:37).

Paul wrote, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," and concluded: "So then with the mind I myself *serve* the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:12,25).

John wrote: "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

"He that saith, 'I know Him,' and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:3,4).

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and *keep His commandments*.

"For this IS the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:2,3).

Jesus Christ said: "The Sabbath was made for *man* [He did not say, "the Jews"], and not man for the Sabbath:

"Therefore the Son of man is *Lord* also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27,28). Which day is the "Lord's Day"? The *Sabbath*.

Christ said: "Why call ye me, 'Lord, Lord,' and *do not the things which I say?*" (Luke 6:46), and told His disciples: "Not everyone that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

No, Christ did *NOT* come to "do away with the law"! Yet, millions of

blinded, deceived, biblical illiterates *suppose He did!*

Christ Did Not Come To Establish A New Religion

Millions suppose Christ came to do away with all things "Jewish," and to establish a new, and very different, religion—that of "Christianity."

But, as we just saw above, Christ continually *upheld*, by His teaching and by His example, the *law of God!* And why not? For, after all, He *WAS* the Divine Agent of the Sovereign God in heaven Who *gave Moses the law!*

Read it! "In the beginning was the Word [Greek: *Logos*, or "Spokesman"] and the Word was with God [Greek: *Theos*, equivalent to the Hebrew *Elohim*, which is a *plural* word], and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made...He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14).

Any fifth-grade child can understand this plain statement of Scripture! The One Whom we know as Jesus Christ *WAS* the One Who said "Let there be light"; Who said "Let us make man in our image"; Who sent Moses into Egypt; Who wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger; Who called Abraham; Who dealt with the patriarchs and prophets.

Now, *think* what this truth does to the false theology of millions who think Christ came to "do away" with the law and the "Old Testament"!

Notice further: "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, *by Whom also He made the worlds*" (Hebrews 1:1,2).

Jesus Christ *IS* THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. Not that there is no reference to *both* Father and Son in the Old Testament, for there is. However, your Bible plainly tells you that Jesus Christ of the New Testament is the Member of the Divine Family of the Old Testament Who *DID THE CREATING!*

Did Christ, as millions suppose, *change* God's truth, abrogate the Divine law, do away with any requirement to *obey* God?

"For I am the ETERNAL [Jehovah], I *change not*, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," God said.

Jesus said, "Ye shall *see* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, and ye yourselves cast out" to the Pharisees. How? Did people "get saved" under *Moses* back then? But Moses was not even *born* when Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived.

Did God somehow *CHANGE* the manner in which men may please Him, serve Him, believe Him, obey Him? He says not. "Jesus Christ, the *SAME*, yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

No, Christ did not come to establish some "new religion"! He chided the Pharisees for their burdensome human traditions which they had *added* to the laws of God, while *upholding* the law. He said: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?...Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

"But in *vain* do they *WORSHIP* me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:2-9).

Jesus said it is possible to *worship* Him, to laud Him, to praise Him, to sing about Him, to "believe on Him," to adore Him, to love Him, and to feel all kinds of worshipful emotions about Him, and to do it *ALL IN VAIN!* How?

By "appropriating" Christ, by claiming to "believe on Him," and by "accepting" Him as Savior, but *REFUSING TO OBEY* Him! Millions worship their fantastic concepts of Christ, but *reject the Ten Commandments of God* (which that same Christ wrote with His own finger), claiming they are "done away."

Thus, they have substituted the hundreds of years of churchianity, of Catholic and Protestant *tradition*, for the truth of God from His Word.

The Real Reasons Christ Came To This Earth

One could cite many reasons Christ came to this earth. Here are the main ones.

Jesus Christ came to this earth to qualify, in human flesh, as its future King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Notice: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the *government* shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His *government* there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Eternal of Hosts will accomplish this" (Isaiah 9:6,7).

Study this scripture carefully. Do you see the word *religion* included anywhere? Is "revival" of the synagogue, or "doctrines," or "liturgy," or "ritual," or "vespers," or "Christian endeavor," or the lighting of candles, or Gregorian chants, or rosaries, or indulgences, or anything smacking of hidden, "spiritual" *mysteries* mentioned?

No, of course not.

What is plainly set forth is *GOVERNMENT*! Christ was prophesied to come to assume the role of *King*, to sit upon a throne which was prophesied to remain *on this earth*—the throne of David!

The archangel Gabriel said to Mary, the mother of Jesus: "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be *great*, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him *the throne of His father David*, and He shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33).

God made a covenant with David, promising him that his throne would never fail. The prophesies show that throne would be *overturned* a total of three times, until "He come whose right it is [Christ]." It would remain *on this earth* (Ezekiel 21:25-27). For a full understanding about the throne of David, its present location, and how it came to be there, write (or call 903-825-2525) immediately for your free copy of *Europe and America In Prophecy*.

Millions "spiritualize away" the plain meaning of God's Word concerning Christ's return to this earth to *RULE* it, from the throne of David, with a rod of iron (Zechariah 14:4; Revelation 2:26; 20:4). To them, Christ is somehow "ruling" up in heaven! They are utterly deceived, unknowing, in spiritual darkness.

The prophecies concerning Christ's sojourn on this earth prove He was coming to *qualify* as its future KING! Notice the prophecy of Isaiah again; how His function would be as a *ruler*, as a *judge*, as a *counsellor*; how His government would continually expand!

What are the problems of this world today, and what are the *causes* of

those problems? Crime, divorce, poverty, squalor, sickness, warfare—all the result of human lusts, and the feeble attempts of mankind to govern himself apart from the laws of God.

Continually, the prophets of old went to the *political leaders* of their time. They warned *kings* of their chicanery, duplicity, idolatry, dishonesty, corruption, and sins! Study Jeremiah 23, particularly versus 4 through 6, about the return of Christ to inherit David's throne! While *religious* leaders (pastors) are surely indicted for their watering down of truth and exploitation of the flock, an ultimate solution is proposed, which is the overthrow of all present world governments, and the setting up of the *Government of God* in their place!

Study Christ's stirring prophecy of Matthew 24. For decades, I have asked, "What's religious about a *drought*?" Jesus spoke of "natural" calamities, such as droughts, famines, and earthquakes. He also spoke of vast *wars* to come, as some of the signs preceding His return.

None of these are "religious" exercises. None smack of "ecumenism," or the sugar-coated smarm of the utterly fallacious cliché: "By men of good will working together everywhere, we shall have world peace."

God said the false prophets would be crying, "Peace! Peace!" when there IS no peace! (Ezekiel 13:10).

Jesus Christ plainly said He did not come to *bring peace* to the world then! "Think NOT that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36).

Christ foretold *great tribulation*; a time of wars and rumors of wars; a time of betrayal, of persecution, of suffering and death!

Continually, He reminded His disciples He would become the KING over His Kingdom. What was the very *title* of His message? The *KINGDOM* of God!

Matthew 13 is replete with many of Christ's Kingdom parables. After prophesying that many of His own disciples would "see Him coming in His Kingdom," He provided them with a *vision* about that Kingdom (Matthew 17:1-9).

One of His most outstanding Kingdom parables was about "A certain nobleman [who] went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (see Luke 19:11-27).

In this parable, Christ describes Himself as the young Nobleman, Who, upon returning, apportions positions of *authority* in His Kingdom to His servants, according to their natural, individual abilities and accomplishments. When the first servant showed his accomplishments, Christ said: "Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, *have thou authority over ten cities*" (verse 17).

He concluded the parable by describing those who *rebel* against God; who will not repent, and obey Him. "But those mine enemies, who would not that I should *reign over them*, bring hither, and slay before me" (verse 27).

Dozens and dozens of times in the four Gospels, the whole message, life, and future purpose of Jesus Christ is summed up in the gospel of the *Kingdom of God!*

He said: "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, *then shall He sit upon the THRONE* [David's throne, which is on this earth] *of His glory*: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth His sheep from the goats...Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, **INHERIT THE KINGDOM** prepared for you from the foundation of the earth'" (Matthew 25:31-34).

For a complete understanding about the Kingdom of God, write, or call, for my book, *The Real Jesus*, and the booklet, *What Is the Kingdom of God?*

Christ Came To Disqualify the Present Evil World Ruler

The greatest struggle in the history of the world did not involve warring armies. It had nothing to do with border disputes, unfair trade practices, sanctions, embargoes, or politics.

It was a *spiritual* struggle between Jesus Christ, shortly after His baptism and just prior to His public ministry, and Satan the devil, the god of this world.

Satan was hurled down to this earth by God when he failed in his attempt to overthrow God from His throne (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:16). He is called "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2).

Satan was instantly present when God finished His masterpiece of creation: making man in God's own image, and placing our first parents in paradise. By his magnetic, charming, subtle suggestions and lying hints, he *deceived* Eve, who influenced her husband, Adam, to disobey God's

commands.

The Hebrew word *nachash*, erroneously translated "serpent" in Genesis, means "whispering enchanter," and has nothing to do with the physical *appearance* of the creature Eve saw. Rather, it implies a creature who charmed, influenced, and deceived the woman. Today, Satan is described as "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, *which deceiveth the whole world*" (Revelation 12:9).

Paul wrote: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Corinthians 4:4). Millions *worship* various "gods," or ancestors, or vague, ethereal, metaphysical concepts, not knowing they are deceived by Satan; that he is the "god" of this sin-sick world of poverty, illiteracy, disease, crime, and war.

Satan was present at Christ's birth, influencing Herod, who then viciously slew thousands of little toddlers and babies, all male children from two years and younger, in his attempt to murder Christ. Satan then appeared to Jesus in the wilderness, attempting to appeal to every human instinct in order to cause Christ to sin, and therefore to *fail* in His mission.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew 4:1). This was *planned* of God the Father. It was a necessary *first step* in Christ's mission on this earth. Before He could fully qualify as the "Messiah," or the "Anointed One" (which is the meaning of the title "Christ"), to qualify as future "King of kings, and Lord of lords," to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God, to call His disciples, to die for the sins of the world, He had to *disqualify* the evil world ruler, Satan the devil.

"And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungered" (Matthew 4:2). You and I cannot imagine a fast of such duration. But Jesus Christ was in *perfect* physical health. Further, He was in complete control of Himself mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. He did not allow Himself to burn up energy needlessly by fretting, worrying, or becoming panic-stricken, like most humans would in only three or four days without food and water. Nevertheless, he was no doubt much thinner, having lost much weight. He would have been right at the point of starvation, His body crying out for food and water!

At this precise time, when He would have been at the lowest ebb of His physical strength, Satan appeared!

"And when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread'" (Matthew 4:3).

Notice Satan's subtle suggestion, aimed at human vanity. He did not say, "Since you are the Son of God," but "IF" you are. Most people, when having their legitimacy, their office, their rank, or their authority challenged, will swell up, and say: "Just what do you mean, 'IF'? I'll show you whether or not....," and so on.

Not Jesus. He did not give in to this human impulse. Instead, He instantly *quoted the Scriptures*, saying: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). The record does not show whether Satan had carefully selected several rounded stones which were the shape and color of bread, hoping to plant the thought in Jesus' mind of fresh-baked, hot, soft, tasty bread, or whether he merely pointed to stones lying about. Whatever the case, Satan not only attempted to appeal to Jesus' starving condition of extreme, painful hunger, he also tried to appeal to *vanity*, to get Christ to "prove" to Satan that He, Christ, had the power of God.

"Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:5,6).

Christ allowed Himself to be transported through the air from the "arabah," or the desert-like wilderness to the east of Jerusalem, to the city itself, where He was placed atop the temple building. Then, Satan quoted scripture. But He misapplied it, taking the intent of Psalms 91:11,12, and *twisting* it, suggesting that Christ tempt God by flinging Himself down as if committing suicide.

Had Christ given in to this temptation, the devil would have laughed in derision, and Christ *would have died!* God would not have saved Him from suicide. No angel would have intervened.

Had Jesus Christ failed this titanic battle of wills; had He given in to the subtle, charming, magnetic, tempting influence of Satan, then you and I would *have no Savior!* Christ would have *failed* in His great mission on this earth, "tabernacling" among mankind in human flesh as the Firstbegotten, as the Firstborn from the dead. Satan would be laughing still.

Christ knew this. He knew the *real* meaning of David's psalm; that God places His protective angels about His people to spare them from *accidental* injury or death, but will *not* intervene to prevent suicide!

Christ said: "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not *tempt* the Lord thy

God'" (Matthew 4:7), once again refusing to give in to Satan's temptations.

"Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain [scholars believe it was Mt. Hermon, which is snow-clad the year around, and provides a breathtaking view for hundreds of miles in all directions on a clear day], and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, 'All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me'" (Matthew 4:8,9).

Notice that Christ did not dispute Satan's claim to *possess* the kingdoms of this world; did not contend they were not Satan's to *give*. Here, the devil was implying to Christ that He need not *wait* for world rulership—He need not worry about trials and tests, about the terrible beating He was to receive, or about being nailed to a tree (Acts 5:30; 10:39); that He could have world rulership right *then and there!*

But, of course, since Satan had the power to *give* it, he had the power to *take it away*, didn't he? Further, even though he may have given over the power to rule the world to Jesus, since he was the one who *allowed* Christ to rule, it would have meant he would always have been right there, looking over His shoulder; in the background, like a "kingmaker," the one who was *really in control*.

If the chairman of the board appoints a CEO, but then second-guesses him, alters his every decision, listens to complaints against him, and ultimately decides to *replace* him, the CEO is in a very precarious position, indeed.

Jesus Christ knew this, of course. Satan's suggestion that Christ should *worship the devil* was outrageously blasphemous, hideously revolting. To do so would have meant Christ would have been *abjectly placing Himself under Satan*, obeying him, influenced by him, ordered about by him—become his slave!

Now, it was time to give Satan a *command!* Now, Christ had taken his wily suggestions and magnetic, charming hints long enough. Now, Satan's outrageous proposal had gone far, far beyond the bounds of temptation!

"Jesus saith unto him, 'GET THEE HENCE, SATAN! For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve.' Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him" (Matthew 4:9-11).

At Christ's command, the devil had to obey!

Now, God's angels provided Christ with sustenance. Perhaps He ate real "angel food," and drank water they provided. Perhaps, having now

passed the supreme test of His life, and having been completely physically *drained* of strength as a result, God really *did* provide miraculous food and drink. It is doubtful the term “ministered unto Him” merely means shaking His hand, or cradling His head, or smiling at Him.

This was no casual encounter. Christ did not toss it off like a super weightlifter in the Olympics, casually picking up a mere 100 pound weight. No, this was a *struggle for control of the nations of this earth!*

Satan appeared as the *present evil world ruler*, even *admitting* this was his position to Jesus.

Christ DISQUALIFIED Satan by overcoming his every wily temptation! Christ *qualified* as future world ruler, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Christ Came To Preach the Wonderful Good News Of His Future Kingdom

The word *gospel* should be relegated to an archaic dictionary, where it appears only as a curious relic, long fallen into disuse. Millions hear about the “gospel,” and have not the slightest clue as to what it means.

Many think it is a kind of country-western religious music. When they say “gospel,” it means the entire religious music industry, “stars,” traveling family singing groups, and maybe a Willie Nelson album.

Some use the word as a synonym for “truth.” (And that’s *gospel*, fella!). To many, anything whatever from the Bible is “gospel.”

Millions suppose they have heard a “gospel” *ABOUT* Christ, meaning a story about His birth, death, and the forgiveness of sins.

Little do they know the word *gospel* is a contraction of *two* old Anglo-Saxon words, meaning “good news.”

Jesus Christ came with a message. His message was *about the future world-ruling government of God*. Millions today believe they are worshipping Christ, worshipping the *Messenger*, but know nothing about the *message He brought!*

Millions “believe ON” Christ, but they do not BELIEVE CHRIST.

Christ’s message was called “the gospel [good news] of the Kingdom of God.” A king rules over a kingdom. Such a kingdom has *territory, subjects, and laws*. For a fuller understanding of just what *is* the Kingdom of God, write (or call) for my free booklet, *What Is the Kingdom of God?*

Christ taught His message to His disciples. His “Kingdom” parables (Matthew 13), together with many other examples, stories and analogies, continually emphasized the coming Kingdom of God.

At the annunciation of the impending birth of Christ, the angel said:

“Of His *Kingdom* there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33). Christ came to qualify to “inherit the throne [the position of rulership of a king] of His father David.” Matthew continually referred to that Kingdom as “the Kingdom of Heaven,” while the other three writers, Mark, Luke, and John, all referred to it as the Kingdom of God. It is the Kingdom of God, Who presently dwells in heaven, which shall come down *out of heaven*, to *rule on this earth* (Revelation 20:4; 5:10; 2:26; Zechariah 14:4; Isaiah 11; Revelation 19:11-21).

Jesus “went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel [good news—news foretold in advance] of the Kingdom...” (Matthew 4:23). When He was about to be martyred, at His last Passover, He told His disciples He would not again drink of the wine that pictured His shed blood until “I drink it new [again] in the Kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25).

On one occasion, “He went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the *glad tidings* of the Kingdom of God” (Luke 8:1). Here, the word “gospel” is not used, but its *meaning* is plainly set forth: “glad tidings,” or “joyful announcement.”

Any exhaustive concordance will list literally dozens and dozens of references to Christ’s message about the “Kingdom of God.”

Here are but a *few* for your study: Matthew 4:17,23; 5:3,10,19,20; 6:10,13,33; 7:21; 8:11; 12:28; 13:11,19,24; 31,33,38,41,43,44,45,52; 24:14; 25:1, 14,34. I have omitted many from Matthew’s Gospel in this brief list. There are dozens more in Mark, Luke, and John.

Jesus said: “*Repent ye, and believe the gospel.*” Millions do not know what it means to repent. Repentance means contrition, sorrow, remorse. It means to be deeply, emotionally, mentally and psychologically *moved* with shame and sorrow over one’s rebellious deeds and thoughts; it means to be broken up, emotionally, over the knowledge that one has *sinned*.

And what IS sin?

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the *law*: for *sin is the transgression of the law*” (1 John 3:4). I have in my possession a newspaper ad placed by a major denomination, urging people to learn more about their church.

The ad asks: “What is SIN?” In the text, it says: “But, on this subject of sin, let’s ask—just what is it?”

“The way we look at it—that is, the way it’s interpreted to us—sin is de-fined as the error of imposing our own wills over God’s will” (emphasis mine).

What a shameful admission. The writer of the ad for this large, mainstream denomination either was *ignorant* of his own Bible, or else he deliberately tried to deceive his readers. If he had quoted the Bible definition of sin, he would probably have been fired from his job, and someone else would have written the ad.

But it really doesn't matter how one or another group of people, theologians or not, ad writers or not, "look at" the subject of sin! It is God Who defines what is sin, not man in his clever manipulations, twisting of Scripture, and carnal point of view.

Paul wrote: "I had not known sin, but by the law: For I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet'" (Romans 7:7). The law defines sin. It is only through God's Ten Commandments that we know what sin IS. Paul also wrote: "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for *by the law is the knowledge of sin!*" (Romans 3:20).

Justification means the forgiveness of sin. It is the removal of guilt from past lawbreaking. Being "justified" means being "rectified," or "made right." It is not a future state, or a future guarantee. It has only to do with God's unmerited *grace*, mercy, and pardon in forgiving repentant believers who are deeply sorry they have broken His laws. Being justified means being forgiven for *sins that are past*.

The law defines sin, not the "way humans look at it."

Christ commanded men and women to *repent of sin*, and BELIEVE His advance witness of the coming Kingdom of God! Millions of professing "Christian" people, including regular church-going people, "believe on" Jesus, but do not know anything about His message! He came to deliver His advance good news to the people of His day, and to teach it, privately, to His disciples.

He then commissioned His disciples to announce His coming Kingdom to the world.

Jesus Christ Came To Call, Train, and Commission His Disciples

Millions suppose Christ came to "save the world." They believe He made every effort to convert people, to explain God's Word to them, to get them to repent and believe on Him.

Yet, as you read in the beginning (Matthew 13:10-17), Jesus plainly said it was *not given* to the masses to understand. He said He spoke in puzzles, "*lest* they should understand with their heart, and should be convert-

ed...."

While Christ did not attempt to convert the masses, He vigorously taught His disciples. Though they were yet *carnal*, and did not understand much of what He said and did, He prophesied that, when they were converted—when the Holy Spirit would be sent on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)—they would *remember*.

He told them the Holy Spirit would lead them into all truth (John 16:13), and would "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

Christ *called* His disciples individually. He said: "Ye have not chosen Me, but *I have chosen you*, and ordained [set apart, appointed] you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain..." (John 15:16).

Who is not familiar with Jesus' invitation to Peter and Andrew: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men?"

He was with them for three and one-half years, eating sleeping, praying, traveling about. During that time, they saw countless miracles. They saw Him cause deaf people to hear; blind people to see. They saw Him cast out demons, heal withered, shrunken human members, and *raise the dead*. They saw Him calm a violent storm with His word. They watched, stupefied, as a basket of food was miraculously replenished each time they divided bread and dried fish, until they fed two huge groups, one of 4000 and another of 5000, by a *miracle!*

They heard His enigmatic messages; heard His condemnation of posturing, hypocritical "religious" leaders; heard His loving concern for the sick, the poor, the elderly, and little children. They *watched Him walk on water*. Then, they saw Him arrested!

They fled in the night, believing the revolution they had expected was all over, that they would be killed!

They *saw Him killed*; saw Him hoisted into the sky above Golgotha on an upright pale; saw His disfigured face, lacerated body, and huge spikes protruding from feet and wrists. They *watched Him die*.

Then, they saw an *empty tomb*.

He appeared to them time and again following His resurrection. At first, they were *unbelieving*. He had to virtually *force* them to accept the fact of His resurrection. An outstanding example of this is the famous case of "doubting Thomas," who said: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25).

In the ensuing verses, you read of how Christ *materialized through the walls when the doors were shut and locked*, and appeared to them.

"And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace be unto you.' Then saith He to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.' And Thomas answered and said unto Him, 'My Lord and my God'" (John 20:26,27).

Now, there was no further doubt in any of their minds. They had seen Him die, but He was alive again—He had been resurrected from the dead, as He had prophesied (Matthew 12:40). Now, they not only "believed"; now, they KNEW.

Finally, Jesus Christ appeared to them and *commissioned* His disciples. He said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age [Greek: *aeon*]. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

For three and one-half years, He had taught, trained, and led His disciples. He had set them an amazing *example* in His perfect conduct, His sin-free life, His constant *prayer* to His Father, His miracles, His compassion, His forgiveness, His doctrines.

He knew He was constructing a major part of the *foundation* of His assembly of "called-out ones" who would come along over the generations to follow (Ephesians 2:18-22; Matthew 16:18).

This was one of the major purposes for Christ's sojourn on this earth, "tabernacling" in human flesh—that of choosing, training, and commissioning His disciples. Few understand, today.

His disciples lived in the "here and now" with Jesus. Over and over again it is apparent from the Gospel accounts that they believed He would overthrow the Jewish leadership, that He would become *King*. From His birth, when the Magi from Persia asked, "Where is he that is born 'King of the Jews,'" the stories had persisted.

To His disciples, it was only a matter of time when He would depose the Sanhedrin, throw the Sadducees out of the temple, rouse the masses, and expel the Romans from Palestine. He would restore the kingdom as it had been in the greatest days of David and Solomon; its borders reaching from the Nile Delta to Syria; from the Mediterranean to the desolate Arabah.

Each time Jesus challenged the hypocritical authorities, they thought this great event was near. Twice, he drove from the temple the cheating money-changers and vendors of sheep, cattle, and doves. When He fed the four and the five thousand, many of those present wanted to hoist Him atop their shoulders and begin a triumphal march on Jerusalem.

When Christ entered Jerusalem in the van of a shouting, tumultuous crowd, His disciples thought this was the moment! At the last supper, thinking Christ would establish His Kingdom at the Passover, when many thousands were in Jerusalem from all over the world, His disciples argued among themselves about who would have the topmost positions: "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

"And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

"For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as He that serveth.

"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me:

"That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:24-30).

To the disciples, this even might be taking place within the very next day! They were, on that night, sitting at His table in a larger upper room, partaking of the Passover about seventeen hours earlier than usual! No doubt they thought this was because He intended doing something very different; something unique, on the moment of the Passover. "His table" in "His kingdom" might well be set in the governor's palace the following night!

It was with shock and dismay they saw Him arrested!

In a rage, feeling both betrayal and futility, Peter tried to precipitate the revolution at the moment of Christ's arrest. He drew his sword, and tried to kill the closest person to him, which happened to be Malcom, the servant of the high priest.

Malcom dodged, and Peter's razor-sharp sword severed his ear! Christ rebuked Peter on a loud voice, commanded him to put up his sword! Then, He picked up the severed ear, placed it against Malcom's head, and mirac-

ulously healed it! The bleeding stopped, the ear was as before.

At this, His disciples melted away into the night, fearful of being arrested with Him. Only hours later, Peter would curse and blaspheme, standing in a courtyard outside the building where Christ was being beaten, claiming he had never known Jesus.

None of His disciples remotely imagined they would grow to be old men, many of them to be martyred for their faith—that the centuries would slowly pass; that the world would enter a “dark age,” gradually emerge into an Industrial Revolution; that World War I and World War II and the Cold War would be waged; that the world would enter the jet and then the space age.

None of them remotely believed that Christ would still not have set up His Kingdom in the late 1990s, AD!

At the last moment of His final appearance to them, they *still* were thinking of the “Kingdom” only in terms of “greater Israel.” It did not enter their minds that the whole world would be involved.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, ‘Lord, wilt Thou *at this time* restore again the kingdom to Israel?’” (Acts 1:6). They said nothing about Rome, or England, or India, or Africa, or Asia. They asked whether He would restore the kingdom that had existed under Solomon, the kingdom at its greatest heights, the kingdom of Israel.

He responded: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive *power*, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and *unto the uttermost part of the earth*” (Acts 1:7,8).

These were the last words Jesus Christ spoke on earth to His assembled disciples. He was taken up visually from them, disappeared into the clouds, and rose to heaven.

They had asked about *restoring* a kingdom to Israel, and He had shown them they would carry His message far beyond—to the “uttermost part of the earth.”

Few professing Christians really understand that Christ came to call, teach, train, and set an example for His disciples; that He commissioned them; that they would form a part of the building blocks of His “assembly” (Greek: *ekklesia*, translated “church” in English) which would be an instrument in His hands for proclaiming the good news of His coming Kingdom to the world.

Jesus Christ Came To Build His Church

The English word *church* is mostly misunderstood, misapplied, and distorted from the Greek original. To most people a “church” is a *building*. Or, it is a “denomination,” such as the “Catholic Church,” or the “Baptist Church,” or the “Methodist Church.”

To many, it means a *religious organization* of one name or another. Most people would say: “We’re going to *go to church* today,” meaning, go to the *building*, probably with its traditional steeple, stained-glass windows, bell tower, pews, and altar.

But the Greek word connoted none of the above.

Instead, the word *ekklesia* meant, simply, “assembly,” or “group.”

Jesus Christ is the One Who *called*, taught, commissioned, and formed His disciples together into a *group*, or assembly of men, who would then be responsible for proclaiming the good news of His kingdom to the world.

As a result of their powerful witness, some few people among the masses would respond to the *calling* of God, and would *repent* of their sins, ask for baptism, and begin to live a new and different way of life. They would become “new creatures in Christ” (II Corinthians 5:17).

To care for these newly-begotten children of God, Christ established His *ekklesia*, His “group” of disciples, giving to them a *two-part* COMMISSION!

Read what He said: “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20).

He prophesied: “And this gospel [advance good news!] of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end [the end of civilization as we know it; the end of an age, and the dawning of a new age—the Kingdom of God on earth] come” (Matthew 24:14).

Christ never relinquished the *Headship* of the church! He promised He would be continually *present with it*, leading, guiding, correcting, inspiring. “Lo, I am *with you alway*, even to the end of the age.”

Notice how Paul wrote that God had placed Christ “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath

put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the *Head* over all things to the church [the “assembly” of called-out individuals]. Which is *His body* [in metaphor], the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:21-23).

Christ, Who was the Creator (John 1), “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the *Head of the body, the church*: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things He might have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:15-18).

Today, some mortal, puny, temporal *men* claim to be the “head of the church”! In one rather well-known case, the person who has the “preeminence” is called “Holy Father” (a blasphemous title; see Matthew 23:9), and is *worshiped*, claiming “infallibility.”

But Jesus Christ alone is to be worshiped, and only God is our “Father” in a spiritual sense.

For further understanding about the *church*, about Christ as the *Rock* upon which the church is founded, and about Peter’s role in the church of the first century, write or call for our free booklet *Where Is the True Church?* and the surprising article, “Did Peter Have The Primacy?”

Christ called, trained, then commissioned His disciples, who became a part of the *foundation* of the church: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners [Paul told the Gentiles], but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the *Chief Corner Stone*; In Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 1:19-22).

Yet, millions of professing Christians suppose the “Old Testament is done away,” and pay no attention to the prophets of the Bible.

But your God and your Savior insists they are *part of the foundational building blocks of the true church!*

Why did Jesus call His “group” of disciples, and ordain them, *sending* (“apostle” merely means “one sent,” or “a messenger”) them into all the world?

He told them the primary purpose for their calling was to preach the good news of His coming world-ruling *government*, His *Kingdom*, to the

nations of the world! Their *first* commission was *evangelism*, and their *second* commission was to “feed the flock” of converted people who would repent at their preaching.

That remains the function of God’s church today!

Christ Came To Set An Example

Jesus Christ *kept* His Father’s commandments. He lived an absolutely *perfect*, sin-free life, filled with God’s Holy Spirit without measure from birth (John 3:34).

He told His disciples: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15:10). John wrote of Him: “He that saith, ‘I know Him,’ and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk [live], even as He walked [lived]” (I John 2:4-6).

This is one of the many Bible definitions of a Christian: “Live as Christ lived”—follow His *example*.

Paul wrote: “Be ye followers of me [Greek: “imitators”], even as I also am of Christ” (I Corinthians 11:1).

The example of Christ included His many sufferings, rejections, and persecutions. He promised His disciples: “If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you,” and predicted, “Yea, the time cometh that they who kill you will think they do God a service.”

Following the *example* of Christ clearly meant more than living a good life. It meant suffering, if God so willed, the *consequences* of living that life—the rage, hatred, rejection, and persecution from others.

Peter wrote: “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For *even hereunto were ye called*: because Christ also suffered for us, *leaving us an example*, that ye should follow His steps” (I Peter 2:19-21).

Such conduct goes far beyond that of most professing Christians today.

The world of “churchianity” is filled with backbiting, accusing, persecuting, name-calling, labeling, blame-placing, rumor-mongering, and scurrilous attacks by various groups and individuals against other individuals or religious groups. Many little groups are *organized* for the very *pur-*

pose of doing nothing but muckraking, scandalizing, accusing, maligning, persecuting.

Many “professing Christians,” like so many Yorkshire hogs at the slop trough, cannot wait to get their hands on the latest gossip, rumors, scandals, and vicious attacks against this or that group. They *feed* on scandal the way hogs feed on slop, thus continually feeling scandalized and outraged at *others*. In this way, they bask in the self-deceived comfort of pointing the finger away from self, at others.

Like practitioners of Islam, engaging in *Jihad*, or “Holy War” against their enemies, many professing Christians feel it is their “holy” duty to attack others.

All such activity is satanic, and not remotely influenced or guided by the Holy Spirit. It is antithetical to the life, teachings, and example of Jesus Christ.

At the final Passover, Jesus Christ washed His disciples’ feet. After doing so, He seated Himself, and said: “Ye call Me ‘Master’ [Teacher] and Lord, and so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have *given you an example*, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than His Lord; neither He that is sent greater than He that sent Him. If ye know these things, happy are ye *if ye do them*” (John 13:13-17).

Millions of professing Christians completely *ignore* God’s annual Sabbaths; His Holy Days, such as the Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Tabernacles. They suppose all such observances were somehow “done away.” But Christ did not perform such rites to “do away” with them, but to *set us an example* that we should DO them.

When would the disciples have been obedient to His commands to wash one another’s feet? They did not do so right then, for Christ had already washed them.

Their first opportunity would have been exactly *one year later* at the *Passover* (Lord’s Supper)!

That they continued this practice is proved in your Bible. Year after year, God’s people continued to observe the Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan, just as Jesus Christ had. It took *centuries* for the apostate, great false church (Revelation 17:1-6) to stamp out this practice, often by *force of arms*. Those who continued to follow Christ’s example were labeled “Fourteenthers,” because of their tenacity in sticking to the “faith once delivered,” and observing the Lord’s Supper exactly when Christ observed

it. The Latin label for them was “Quartodecimans.”

Paul, writing to *Gentile* Christians in the late 50s, AD, over *twenty years* after the resurrection of Christ, was still teaching *Gentile* Christians—not “Jews”—to *keep the Lord’s Supper*!

He wrote: “For I received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, ‘Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this *do* in remembrance of me.’ After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, ‘This cup is the New Testament [the New Covenant, or New Will] in My blood: *this do ye*, as oft as ye drink it [and it was a *memorial* occasion, done once each year, on the anniversary of the event], in remembrance of Me. For as often [once each year] as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till He come” (I Corinthians 11:23-26).

Christ has not come yet. Therefore, the observance of the rites of the “Lord’s Supper,” instituted by Jesus Christ at the last Passover, are *still binding upon God’s people—those who profess Christ—today!* For a thorough understanding of this vital subject, write or call immediately for our free booklet, *The Passover—Is It For Christians?*

Millions “profess” Jesus. Millions say they “believe on Him.” But they will NOT OBEY Him. They will NOT DO WHAT HE SAID.

He cried out: “Why call ye Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and *do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46).

Christ set us an example, that we are to follow in His steps. Are you one who follows His example?

Jesus Christ Came To Qualify As Your High Priest

Jesus Christ came to become our High Priest, making *daily intercession* for us with God. Notice how clearly this is set forth:

“For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for God in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but that he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Hebrews 5:1-4).

Here, Paul explains the function of a priest, showing how the priests under the Aaronic line were selected by God to serve as intermediaries for

those who came to offer “gifts and sacrifices.” He fully explains how such men were, themselves, afflicted with human weaknesses (“compassed with infirmity”), and so could empathize with those who came to them.

Now, notice the *context* of this entire passage, and its central Figure:

“So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, ‘Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee.’ As He saith also in another place, ‘Thou [Christ!] art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Who [Christ!] in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared: Though He were a Son [Christ!], yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:6-8).

Jesus Christ was ordained a High Priest “after the order of Melchisedec,” or according to the *rank*, or *designated time of service*, of Melchisedec.

Who was Melchisedec? He was the One of the Divine Family in heaven who *appeared to Abraham* (Genesis 14:18-20); the One who was to “empty Himself” (Philippians 2:5-8); Who was to be *made flesh* (John 1:1-14), and to “tabernacle” among humankind. To Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He was “Yahweh,” or “Jehovah,” or “I AM.” Today, to you and me, He is “Jesus Christ,” or Jesus, Who is the Christ, or the Messiah, the Anointed One.

He is sitting at the right hand of God the Father in heaven as *your daily High Priest*.

Again, contrasting the human priesthood of Aaron and the Levites with the *spiritual, eternal Priesthood of Melchisedec*, Paul writes: “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another Priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal [physical] commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For He testifieth, ‘Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec’” (Hebrews 7:14-17).

A human priest could *empathize* with worshipers and supplicants to some degree, and was “compassed with infirmity,”

But Jesus Christ can actually *feel* our infirmities, for He suffered through them, was “tempted in every point” as we are!

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infir-

mities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace [undeserved, unearned pardon!] to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14-16).

The ministry of Christ’s true church is *not a priesthood*. NEVER is it necessary to obtain absolution, or a feeling of forgiveness and relief of spiritual burdens by “confession” of our sins to some other *human being*!

Jesus Christ is now sitting at the right hand of God, waiting for His enemies to be made His footstool (Acts 2:33-36). He is *alive* (Revelation 1:18), and is right beside His Father.

He acts as the “counsel for the defense” before God when we go to the throne of grace to confess our sins and faults, and ask for forgiveness.

Satan, on the other hand, is like the “prosecuting attorney,” who is called “the accuser of the brethren,” who “*accuses* them before God, day and night” (Revelation 12:10).

When we pray to God our Father “in the name” of Jesus Christ, we establish a *private, deeply personal conduit*, like our own special “frequency,” or wave length, to God.

To fully understand and appreciate Christ’s function as our High Priest, write or call for a free sermon tape, “Jesus, Our Friend.”

Millions of professing Christians suppose they must divulge every secret sin to a *human priest*. Others, equally deceived, believe they must confess sins to a human *minister*, thus allowing that man to be placed *between* them and Jesus Christ.

But there is *no human being on earth* who is qualified to stand *between* you and Jesus Christ!

You never need ask “permission” to go to Christ.

You never need worry about being in the “good graces” of some *man* or *woman* in order to be in the good graces of Christ. There is not a single human being on earth, in any nation, that has any say-so whatsoever concerning *your personal spiritual life—your confession—your prayers*!

There is no more *intense, personal, deeply private relationship* possible than that between you and your Savior; your soon-coming King, and your daily High Priest, Jesus Christ!

Christ Came To Offer Himself

A Sacrifice For the Sins of the World

The favorite scripture of millions is only partially understood: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoso-

ever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Many repeat this scripture endlessly, like a spiritual talisman. Some venture to plaster the name and numbers on T-shirts, hats, jackets; on billboards, bumper stickers, and rocks along the highway. Some paint it on cloth, then position themselves so cameras at major sports events like golf tournaments or football games will photograph it, thus believing they are somehow helping to "spread the gospel."

But this passage is not to be cheapened by being paraded about, or worn on clothing. It is one of the most beautiful, and profound, scriptures in the Bible.

First, it obviously identifies the *Father* of Jesus Christ, using the Greek word *Theos*, translated "God."

Jesus continually spoke of His Father in heaven. He said: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:37,38).

Calling Himself the "living bread" that came down from heaven, He spoke in metaphor of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, as well as the daily Christian life of allowing Christ to dwell in human hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me [in metaphor] even he shall live by Me" (John 6:57).

Christ said the Father directed His every work; that the Father "dwelt" in Him; that none could come to Jesus Christ except the Father drew him.

Notice the profound import of John 3:16. "*Theos so loved the world*, meaning sinning, lost human beings, that He *gave* His only begotten Son." The Greek *Theos* is the same as the Hebrew *Elohim*. For a full understanding of the nature of the Divine Sovereign, write or call for our free booklet, *God Is Not A Trinity*.

Now, notice the rest of the verse: "that whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish*, but [as an opposite, contrasted to "perishing"] should have everlasting life."

Yet, millions assume this beautiful verse is *wrong*. They cling to their superstitions, which come down to us from Plato and Socrates and other pagan philosophers—that of the "immortality of the soul."

To countless professing Christians, the verse implies, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not *live forever in hell*, but live forever in heaven!" But the Bible says *perish*. The same word would be used of canned

fruit that "perished," or of "perishable" foods, like fruits and vegetables.

If you read of an airliner crash wherein over one hundred people *perished*, you know they *died*. In some cases, only tiny fragments, of what moments before had been living human beings, are left.

Here, two *opposites* are presented. To reject Christ means we *perish*, cease to exist, go to the grave, *die*. To believe in Jesus Christ, to obey God, and to believe what Jesus *said* results in *eternal life*, the opposite of "perishing."

The greatness of God's love toward His creatures is illustrated by the ultimate gift He could give us: the death of His own Beloved Son.

Paul wrote: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8).

By repenting with broken hearts, then being *baptized* (which is a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as a symbol of the death of our old, sinful selves, then the resurrection of the "new man," or the "new creature in Christ") and by receiving the begetting of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 5:32), we become the children of God.

We repent of *sin*, which is the breaking of God's laws. Baptism symbolizes the claim over our lives by the *penalty* for sin, which is death (Romans 6:23). But God substitutes the death of *Christ*, who died to pay the penalty for sin, in our stead.

"Therefore we are *buried* [in water, temporarily, in baptism] with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk [live] in newness of life. For if we have been planted together [as in a grave] in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man [the old self, with its carnal attitudes and sin] is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ [in symbol], we believe that we shall also live with Him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:4-11).

Study this entire chapter (Romans 6). It is the "baptism" chapter, and

filled with profound meaning. By repenting and being baptized, we are “justified” with God; we have had all past guilt removed. Justification means forgiveness of sins that are *past*, not a present, and continual “condition” of the Christian.

Having been forgiven for breaking God’s laws, we now, through the power of the Holy Spirit (for we could never accomplish it on our own), *live a life of obedience to God and His laws.*

As Paul wrote: “But now being made *free from sin* [by forgiveness], and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is *death*, but the gift of God is *eternal life* [two diametric opposites!] through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:22,23).

As in John 3:16, here are two complete opposites. The one, death, or “perishing,” and the other, *eternal life.*

Paul also wrote: “Christ died to *save sinners*, of whom I am chief” (I Timothy 1:15).

Millions know Christ “died to save sinners,” yet do not know *what sin is* (I John 3:4), and do not have the faintest idea that, once *forgiven for sin*, which is the breaking of God’s Ten Command-ments, they should begin *living a life of obedience* to God’s Ten Command-ments. Of course, the millions have no special quarrel with God’s laws against stealing, murdering, dishonoring one’s parents, or lying—it is the *Fourth* Commandment they absolutely hate. For a full understanding of God’s Ten Commandments, of how the whole world would change if a nation obeyed even *one* of them, write for our free booklet, *The Ten Commandments.*

Jesus Christ *died.* He said so! “I am He that liveth, and was *dead*; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [*hades*, the grave] and of death” (Revelation 1:18). Many major church denominations deny this. They insist Christ *did not die*; that only His *body* died, but that He descended into hell, preaching to demons! They completely misinterpret the scriptures of I Peter 3:19,20; II Peter 2:4,5; and Jude 6.

In those scriptures, it is clear that the One Who became Christ witnessed against the “angels that sinned” *during the flood.* The word *hell* is from the Greek *tartaroo*, used only *once* in all the Bible, which means a condition or place of *restraint.* The Bible shows Satan and his demons were cast down from heaven; that the demons are *bound to this earth.*

When the flood waters prevailed on earth, and all humanity had been destroyed save eight people in the ark, the One Who became Christ, the

Logos of the Divine Family in heaven *witnessed against them* of the coming destruction of the earth *by fire* (II Peter 3:10-12).

Instead, major denominations *set aside* Christ’s own words, deny He was truly *dead*, and claim He was preaching to “lost souls” in “hell” during the three days and three nights in the tomb!

But unless Jesus Christ *died*, unless He was truly *dead and buried*, you and I have no Savior! The wages of sin is *death*, not eternal life in some other state of being (Romans 6:23).

But Jesus’ death was not the only part of His sacrifice. His sacrifice also included of the twenty-four hours or so of beatings, scorn and ridicule, and final agony on the stake.

The prophecies said of Christ: “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness [He was not outstanding, humanly; was not a striking-looking, or handsome, man]; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isaiah 53:2).

Again, millions are completely ignorant of this important prophecy about Christ. They suppose He was an outstandingly handsome man; a striking, attractive, comely person. They believe they could easily spot Him in a crowd of a hundred thousand, for He would be dressed in a white robe, with a shepherd’s crook and a little lamb in His arms; light brown hair, softly cascading over His shoulders; small, neat mustache and full, pointed beard; high forehead, with neat, chiseled nose, intense, deep-set eyes of brown, with a distant, contemplative stare.

Go to any Bible book store, and look at the favorite “pictures” of Christ, and you will see what I mean. But no artist ever painted Christ, and no photographs existed then. Your Bible says He was an ordinary-looking Jew of His time; shows how He escaped out of crowds when they were trying to kill Him!

Time and time again this happened! In the temple in Jerusalem, at Nazareth in the synagogue—they tried to kill Him. But the Bible says that “He, passing through their midst, went His way.”

A deaf man would not notice Christ, because there would be nothing physically attractive or outstanding about Him. A blind man would be startled, intrigued, amazed—for He would *hear the power and authority in His voice* (Matthew 7:29; Luke 4:36).

Jesus Christ’s sacrifice lasted for a *lifetime!* Notice: “He is *despised and rejected* of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him

not" (Isaiah 53:3).

Have you ever experienced *rejection* by someone you love? Divorce is perhaps the cruellest form of rejection; that, and estrangement among close family members. It is mentally and emotionally traumatic, anguishing.

Have you felt *despised*, hated, by others? Jesus Christ was despised and rejected as a young man by His own brothers and sisters. He said "a prophet hath no honor in His own country, and among His own kin."

Jesus Christ did not live a life of ebullient happiness; of gaiety, fun, and frolic. No, He was a "man of sorrows," and "acquainted with grief." Could He laugh at the antics of a balky mule, or some human situation? Very probably so. But there were tears of sorrow more often than tears of joy in Jesus' eyes. If you have never read my book, *The Real Jesus*, please write or call (903) 825-2525, for a free copy. Also, for a sermon I believe you will find informative and moving, ask for a tape entitled "Christ's Lonely Sacrifice."

Perhaps millions can repeat the religious-sounding cliché, "He died to save sinners," but few know the real breadth and depth of Christ's lifetime of sacrifice.

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities [sins]: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed [notice I Corinthians 11:27-30 in this regard]. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Eternal hath laid upon Him the iniquity [lawlessness; sin] of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:4-7). This entire chapter demands careful study and contemplation. Few professing Christians have ever read it.

Jesus Christ Came To Die, Then To Be Resurrected

Christ foretold His own death, burial, and resurrection. He said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's [great fish's] belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39,40).

He told His disciples, "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night; for it is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' But after that I am *risen*, I will go before you into Galilee" (Mark 14:27,28).

Near the end of His ministry, when the terrible ordeal of beating and death lay just ahead of Him, Jesus cried out to His Father, who answered, probably by the voice of an archangel (for no man has ever heard the voice of God [John 5:37]): "Father, glorify Thy Name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, 'An angel spake to Him.' Jesus answered and said, 'This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world [Satan] be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth [on the stake], will draw all men unto Me.' This He said, signifying what death He should die" (John 12:28-33).

Literally millions of professing Christians in the major denominations *flatly reject* the ONLY SIGN Jesus Christ left as a *perpetual witness* that He was truly the Savior of the world—the "sign of the prophet Jonas."

Clearly, Jesus said He would be exactly *three days AND THREE NIGHTS* in the tomb. Count up, on your fingers, or on a piece of scrap paper, the beliefs of millions in the big churches. They believe Christ died on "Good Friday" (what was "good" about it?). Friday sunset to Saturday sunset is one day and one night. Saturday sunset to Sunday sunset is two days and two nights. Sunday sunset to Monday sunset is *three days and three nights*.

Was Jesus then not raised from the dead until Monday sunset?

No, *He was not put to death on a Friday, but on a Wednesday late afternoon!*

Because of hundreds of years of professing Christian "tradition," millions of people will *flatly reject* the truth of their Bibles, and cling, instead, exactly as Christ said the Pharisees did, to their "traditions." Good Friday to Easter at sunrise is the "tradition" of nominal "Christianity."

Here, we will publish excerpts from the *Companion Bible*, by Dr. Bullinger, published by Zondervan, for your careful study. The finest *details* of the final days of Christ on this earth are contained in the gospels.

Bullinger wrote: "I. That the first day of each of the three feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, was 'a holy convocation', a 'sabbath' on which no servile work was to be done. See Lev. 23.7,24,35. Cp. Ex. 12.16.

"That sabbath" and the 'high day' of John 19:31 was the 'holy convocation', the first day of the feast [i.e., the Feast of Unleavened Bread],

which quite overshadowed the ordinary weekly sabbath....

"This *great* sabbath, having been mistaken from the earliest times for the *weekly* sabbath, has led to all the confusion.

"II. This has naturally caused the further difficulty as to the Lord's statement that 'even as Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights' (Matt. 12:40). Now, while it is quite correct to 'speak according to Hebrew idiom of 'three days' or 'three years', while they are only parts of three days or three years, yet that idiom does not apply in a case like this, where 'three nights' are mentioned *in addition* to 'three days'....

"III. We have therefore the following facts furnished for our sure guidance:

"1. The 'high day' of John 19:31 was the first day of the feast.

"2. The 'first day of the feast' was on the 15th day of Nisan.

"3. The 15th day of Nisan, commenced at sunset on what we should call the 14th.

"4. 'Six days before the passover' (John 12:1) takes us back to the 9th day of Nisan.

"5. 'After two days is the passover' (Matt. 26:2. Mark 14:1) takes us to the 13th day of Nisan.

"6. 'The first day of the week'... (Matt. 28:1, &c.), was from our Saturday sunset to our Sunday sunset. This fixes the days of *the week*, just as the above fix the days of *the month*, for:

"7. Reckoning back from this, 'three days and three nights' (Matt. 12:40), we arrive at the day of the burial, which must have been before sunset, on the 14th of Nisan; i.e. before our Wednesday sunset.

"Therefore Wednesday, Nisan 14th (commencing on the Tuesday at sunset), was 'the preparation day', on which the crucifixion took place: for all four Gospels definitely say that this was the day on which the Lord was buried (before our Wednesday sunset), 'because it was the preparation [day]' the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, 'for that sabbath was a high day', and, therefore, not the ordinary seventh day, or weekly sabbath. See John 19:31" (Appendix 156, p. 179,180).

John's statement about the "High Day" Sabbath proves that the Sabbath following the death of Christ was our *Thursday*, the "First Day of Unleavened Bread." The "preparation day," or Friday, followed. The women then "rested on the Sabbath," according to the commandment, and

went to the tomb "very early, *while it was yet dark*, as it *began to dawn TOWARD* the first day of the week" (Matthew 28:1). But the tomb was empty. Jesus was not there. The angels told them "He is not here: for He *is risen, as He said*" (Matthew 28:6).

And *He said* He would have been exactly three twelve-hour days and three twelve-hour nights in the tomb! The angelic statement is *past* tense; He had already *been* risen from the dead many hours, for He had risen from the tomb exactly seventy-two hours after being laid in the tomb, just before sunset the previous *Wednesday afternoon*.

Study the information from the *Companion Bible* appendix carefully, checking every scripture in your own Bible.

In order to cling to false, musty *tradition*, churchmen in the seminaries teach eager, young, would-be clergymen that Jesus' statement about being *exactly three days and three nights* in the tomb was a "Jewish idiom." They say it meant only *part* of three days and three nights.

Look at the facts. Friday sunset to Saturday sunset is one day and one night. Saturday sunset to Sunday, early pre-dawn darkness, when the tomb was *already empty*, is but *part of one night*!

Therefore, the *traditions* of "churchianity" claim that Jesus was only in the grave for one full day of daylight, and one full night of darkness, plus another *partial* nighttime period! That's *two nights* and only *one day*!

Jesus Christ Himself, speaking only of the *daylight hours* of the twenty-four hour day, said: "Are there not *twelve hours in the day*?" (John 11:9). The night also has twelve hours. God's Word says: "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day [Hebrew: *yom*], and the darkness He called Night. And the *evening and the morning* [both the nighttime and the daylight hours] were the first day" (Genesis 1:4,5).

A "Jewish idiom"?

But Jesus said plainly: "For *as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly...*" (Matthew 12:40). When Jesus said "as Jonas," and said "three days and three nights," He obviously meant three days and three nights exactly as you and I count time today—exactly as Christ Himself counted time.

Any attempt to *twist* and *distort* what Jesus plainly said becomes obvious, on its face, as a carnal-minded, God-defying, Christ-rejecting desire on the part of *false teachers* to *cling to their cherished traditions*, such as "Good Friday" and "Easter," rather than believe and accept the plain statements of their Lord and Savior.

Christ said to the posturing religious traditionalists of His day: "Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men'...and He said unto them, 'Full well ye *reject* the commandment of God, that ye *may keep your own tradition*'" (Mark 7:6-9).

Tradition is a powerful influence on millions of professing Christians. Nostalgia, warm, cozy family memories; getting up in the pitch blackness of a pre-dawn "Easter" ("Ishtar," meaning the pagan Babylonian goddess of sex and fertility—hence the rabbits, eggs, and the like), dressing up in gay spring colors; little white patent-leather shoes, frilly green, yellow and white dresses and bonnets; millions remember going to a church, or an outdoor sports stadium, or a mountain top, for an "Easter sunrise" service.

Little do they suspect they are committing an *absolute disgusting abomination* in the sight of God!

God showed Ezekiel the filthy abominations committed by idolatrous Israel and Judah. After showing him their houses of worship, decorated with the signs of the Zodiac (Ezekiel 8:10-12), He said: "Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see *greater* abominations than these. And He brought me into the inner court of the Eternal's House [the temple], and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Eternal, between the porch and the altar [they were outdoors—so they could see the sun], were about five and twenty men, with their *backs toward the temple of the Eternal, and the faces toward the EAST*; and they worshipped the *sun* toward the east" (Ezekiel 8:16).

The sun is in the east at its rising. This was a *sunrise* service, performed by evil, perverted, false "priests" right in the door of the *temple of God* in Jerusalem. Read what God proposes to do about it in the ensuing chapter; how the pagan abominations will be ex-punged from His people.

For a fuller understanding of "Easter" and the real truth about the *Passover*, write for our free booklets, *Should Christians Observe Easter?* and *The Passover—Is It For Christians?*

Whether traditionalists want to believe it or not, Jesus Christ, your Savior, was resurrected from the tomb late on a *Sabbath afternoon*. He appeared to the women in the garden, and later, on the road to Emmaus. When they would have grasped Him, He told them: "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father" (John 20:17).

Yet, later, He appeared to them inside a closed room, demanding that "doubting Thomas" *touch* Him, placing his finger into the big wounds on

His hands, his hand into His side (John 20:19-31).

Christ had, in the meantime, ascended to His Father, and returned.

For over a month, He continually buttressed their faith by appearing to them here and there. They were, at first, *unwilling* witnesses! He chided them: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses [in the *Torah*, or the first five books of the Bible] He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:25-27).

The pagan doctrine of the "immortality of the soul" absolutely nullifies the necessity of Christ's resurrection! If God were running a "soul factory" here below; if, when each person dies, his or her "soul" goes to "heaven," or to "hell," and if Christ's shed blood atones for our sins, and if by His *death* we are "saved," then *why did He have to be resurrected?*

God's Word says: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we *shall be saved by His life*" (Romans 5:10).

Christ's shed blood "reconciles" us, brings us back to God in a sinless condition. When we repent and accept His atoning sacrifice in our stead, we are then brought into a sinless, forgiven, redeemed condition before God.

But we must then *live a life of overcoming* (Revelation 2:26; 3:21). To do this, we must *quit sinning*, meaning quit *breaking God's Ten Commandments*! We cannot do this on our own strength.

It is "Christ in us," through the Holy Spirit, that helps us obey God. When we stumble, as we often do (I John 1:8; 2:1-4), Christ is in heaven at the right hand of the Father to make intercession for us.

He is our *living Savior*, actively intervening, guiding, directing, passing on our supplications to His Father! He is our *living* High Priest, our best Friend, our closest Confidante, the One to whom we can confess our innermost problems, fears, faults and sins.

We are "brought back" before God, into a fresh start, a new beginning, by His *death*, but we are *saved* by His *life*!

Now, you know why Jesus Christ *did not* come to this earth the first time, and you know many of the major reasons why He did! May God help you to open your mind and heart, and *understand*! □