

21ST CENTURY

WATCH

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-TRUTH-



WHAT IS TRUTH?

FAKE RELIGION

by Michael Armstrong

What does the world want? People desire justice, a morality of some flavor. They thrill over a righteous cause. They need something to believe in that is true in a higher sense, bigger than oneself. They also want their problems solved. They want the practical and even luxurious accouterments of life. This is cause enough for some, though there is an added danger when base desire aligns with the pretension of righteousness.

Faith is a comfort. More than that, studies show that practitioners suffer less from stress and depression, tend to be more optimistic and have a greater sense of purpose. Benefits carry over into the physical realm, purportedly being linked to things like lower blood pressure and better immune response.

The world is grappling with progressive social values, novel problems created by technological advancement and AI, and myriad conflicts around the globe. Many believe this is causing more people to turn to faith. Reports have indicated that church attendance in the US is up, particularly among young men. Older data from Pew Research shows that Christians declined as a percentage of the global population between 2010 and 2020, despite increasing by an estimated 121 million adherents. This number was slightly exceeded

by Hinduism but was less than half of the increase seen in Islam.

Europe saw the largest decline in religious affiliation. Reports indicate this is particularly true of western Europe, while eastern countries have held steady. Interestingly, growth centers for Christianity have shifted to nations in Africa and South America, places where the largest overall population growth is also taking place. Even India and China report rising numbers, despite resistance to or even outright repression of Christian practice. Perhaps research that catches up to the present day will paint a different picture in the US and Europe as well. Many of the issues that have driven more recent growth have transpired during the last five years.

The question is, is a general turning to faith or religion enough? There are some positive aspects that are obvious: Limitations on abortion, emphasis on the family unit, a return to traditional values, straightening out the nonsense surrounding “gender dysphoria” from the classroom to the Supreme Court and everywhere in between. Enshrining standards that align with God always produces good results. These are the automatic blessings of natural law.

However, religion does not necessarily align with God’s expressed will. This creates a

new problem. Consider the many admonitions in scripture. Jesus quoted Isaiah, telling the religious of His day, “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8-9 NKJV). False religion, or substituting our own ideas for God’s word is not pleasing to Him.

Moses similarly warned Israel before his death, “...evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands” (Deuteronomy 31:29). This is exactly the situation that will exist prior to Christ’s return. Revelation describes this false religious system as being “full of names of blasphemy” and riding upon the beast, a depiction of the world ruling power of the end time (Revelation 17). The religion is characterized as a woman, a harlot. Compare this to the church, the sum total of true worshipers, portrayed as the “bride of Christ” in 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:32 and Revelation 19:7. The contrast is obvious.

Christ had strong words for those who would engage in vain worship: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but

Continued on page 8

For the time will
come when they will
not endure sound
doctrine; but after
their own lusts
shall they heap to
themselves teachers,
having itching ears;

And they shall turn
away their ears
from the truth, and
shall be turned unto
fables.

(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

2 *COMMENTARY:*
Fake Religion

4 *GARNER TED ARMSTRONG:*
Do You KNOW Christ?

7 **The Media in Full Flower**
Mark Armstrong

9 **The Pope's Bridge to Unity**
Ken Hartbarger

12 *WORLD NEWS BRIEF:*
In Case You Missed It

15 **The Cult of Emperor Worship**
Craig M. White, FriendsOfSabbath.org

24 **Digital ID**
Michael Armstrong

22 *BIBLE STUDY:*
**Faith in Action:
The Epistle of James**

27 *BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE:*
Lesson 21 - Sin (Part Two)



Do You KNOW CHRIST?

by Garner Ted Armstrong



All your life, you have heard a message about the person of Jesus Christ, but you are not told about the MESSAGE HE BROUGHT to this earth! The very first words he spoke were, “REPENT ye, and believe the gospel!”

But what does it mean to repent? And what about all the preachers who say you need only BELIEVE on Jesus to be saved?

The devil believes on the Lord Jesus Christ! Is HE saved? James wrote, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:19- 20).

IS SIMPLE “BELIEF” ENOUGH?

If I were to write about the Kingdom of Great Britain, or the Kingdom of Holland, or the Kingdom of Jordan, you would know immediately that I am writing about a GOVERNMENT; a specific country, or empire; a king or queen; a system of law; subjects who live in that kingdom, and who are subject to that royal throne.

But instantly, when I speak of the “Kingdom of God,” it is as if the mind goes “tilt”! Suddenly, all is ethereal, vague, nebulous, “other-worldly,” spiritual, mystical, UNREAL! To most, the expression “Kingdom of [not “in”] Heaven,” — as Matthew alone, among the gospel writers, expressed it, or the “Kingdom of God,” as Mark, Luke and John expressed it — is not real, but imaginary; fantastic; something that belongs in the realm of the surreal.

Not one out of ten thousand church-going professing Christians truly believe in, or expect, the establishment of a new world order under Jesus Christ right on this good, green earth!

Instead, they think of “going to heaven.” But such is sheer nonsense, and will not stand the test of inspired scripture. To constitute a kingdom, there must be a KING. The KING of His Kingdom, soon to be established on this earth, is Jesus Christ of Nazareth!

Isaiah 9:6-7 says, “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 and peace 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 Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Now, notice what Christ said to Pilate when He was on trial for His life: “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

“Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

“Pilate saith unto him, ‘What is truth?’” (John 18:36-38).

“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

“And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:11-16).

How can ANY professing Christian doubt the plain meaning of this tumultuous, awesome prophecy? Christ is COMING BACK TO EARTH to RULE it with a rod of iron!

The KING of His Kingdom is Jesus Christ! The “good news of the coming government of God” is the same thing as “The gospel of the Kingdom of God.”

“MILLIONS have heard a gospel “about” Jesus Christ, but they have never heard the gospel HE BROUGHT to this earth...”

The Greek word “world” comes from the word *cosmos*, meaning “society,” or the worldly system. Notice Christ said His kingdom was not a part of “this world” THEN!

Now, notice John’s description of Christ at His second coming, as He vanquishes the armies of the Beast power which will fight His return: “These [the armies of the Beast] shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful” (Revelation 17:14).

This is reiterated a couple chapters later, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

“And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

It is not vague, nebulous, ethereal nonsense, but a powerful advance message about a super, world-ruling government!

Millions have heard a gospel “about” Jesus Christ, but they have NEVER HEARD the gospel HE BROUGHT to this earth, and delivered to His disciples! Jesus Christ came preaching the “Gospel of the Kingdom of God.” Few know WHAT He preached! As shocking as it may sound, as INCREDIBLE as it may seem, millions of professing Christians have NEVER HEARD the real Gospel!

The true GOSPEL; that is, the announcement that Christ is coming to this earth to CONQUER it; to RULE it with a rod of iron for a thousand years HAS NOT REACHED THE MASSES to any great degree!

But a FALSE “gospel;” a sanctimonious, smarmy, sentimental story “about” Jesus has! Millions “believe” in “another Jesus,” and in an entirely different “gospel” (Galatians 1:6-9). They know NOTHING about the REAL Jesus Christ of

history; the Christ of the Bible!

They do not know WHEN He was born! Millions suppose He was born on December 25th, when He was actually born on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the autumn. They do not know the circumstances of His birth! Millions suppose Mary was “immaculately conceived,” and very, very few know that Jesus Christ was the “Logos” or the “Spokesman” of Divine Elohim Who said “Let there be light,” and said “Let US make man in OUR image” (Genesis 1:26; John, 1st chapter). They know nothing of the pre-human existence of Christ.

They do not know to which RACE He belonged! The Bible says several times He was a Jew; both in His genealogies, and in plain statements! They do not know what He looked like! Millions have pictures they bought in Bible book stores which are pure conjecture of artists! The “Jesus” of fanciful, mythological nominal “Christianity” is a complete fake, a farce, who never lived! The REAL Jesus looked like any ordinary Jewish young man of His day, and had “no form nor comeliness that, when we see Him, we would desire Him.”

They do not know why He came! He did NOT come to bring the world a “new religion.” He did NOT come to reform the synagogue. He did NOT come to abrogate God’s laws. Millions suppose His primary purpose was to “nail the Ten Commandments to the Cross.” He did not die on a “cross,” which is a PAGAN symbol, but died while nailed to an upright pale, called a “*stauros*” in the original Greek of your Bible. His arms were pinioned over His head, which was why the soldiers broke the sufferers’ legs, to prevent them from heaving themselves up to get a breath!

See *Bullinger’s Companion Bible* for the proof.

They do not know what He taught! Millions have swallowed the “only believe” theory, thinking salvation is so easy it only requires you to “come forward” in an evangelistic campaign, or to “confess Jesus publicly.” Millions think the formula for salvation is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved!” But Jesus Christ said to REPENT! Peter said “REPENT, and be baptized, and you shall receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

Millions do not know Christ was the greatest PROPHET who ever lived; that His powerful prophecies lay before us a step-by-step series of events leading to the destruction of civilization as we know it, and the CONQUERING of this evil, Satan-led world by Christ at His second coming!”

They do not know WHY He died or HOW He died! Millions suppose He died of a broken heart. Some have blasphemously suggested He was STONED to death! Many think His death was a hoax; that He was merely in a “swoon,” and that His disciples plotted with Him to fake His death! Millions do not know He died because they have sinned and have broken the Ten Commandments! Millions do not believe He was really DEAD, but was ALIVE, “preaching to spirits in hell!”

Millions do not know HE IS ALIVE today, and on a COUNTDOWN from heaven, planning to come back to this earth at the exact moment when, IF He did not intervene, mankind would destroy himself, and there would not be a man, woman or child left alive!

When you DON’T know that much about someone, can you honestly say you KNOW Him? ☐



Order the free book
“The Real Jesus”
 by Garner Ted Armstrong
 (903)561-7070 • www.GTAEA.org

Or scan to read online:



THE MEDIA IN FULL FLOWER

by Mark Armstrong

There's a big discussion about AI. It's getting out of control, and who wants to be in a world where AI makes all the decisions? It's all the rage, but we won't accept AI as the last word. After all, somebody had to feed in the answers.

Take me back to the Seventies, please. Things have gotten so complicated that nobody can figure it all out, and who'd want to? Things were a lot simpler back in the — whatever decade you choose! If you look at it, music has gone the way of the dodo bird. I guess all we can do is keep listening to the greats from back in the 70's.

We don't even recognize the world we're living in. Donald Trump is President. You couldn't even imagine such a thing back when. My Dad made a joke about it some twenty years ago.

James Comey looks like he'll come out of the charges smelling like a rose. Not so fast. There are appeals and the judge was suspect. He's still in trouble, no matter what the media wants you to believe. As you read the media articles, one thing is clear: They hate "the Donald." We've got a President who doesn't care what they say.

The media is so full of Trump bashing, it's hard to keep up. They accuse him of lying publicly, then get their comeuppance at the next press conference. He's not playing their game. I don't know about you, but something tells me Trump's going to come out on top. These so-called journalists haven't been right about a lot. Just look at what they've been telling us.

I read their headlines and they aren't nice. Trump reads them too, and he knows the media is out to get him one way or another.

On the international front, I think Maduro is in a lot of trouble. Trump has declared Venezuela a narco state, and he's not fooling around. We've got ships down there, scaring everybody. They've got a connection with Iran and that is not good. We've just blown up Iran's nuclear program, and Maduro is seen to have connections with the drug cartels. They call it the Cartel of the Sun, and Maduro is in on it. By the time you read this Maduro may be in custody.

Europe has been overrun. You dare not walk the streets. Coexistence? They don't believe in it. These boat-loads need to be going the other way. We don't have time for it, and we don't want their culture, however superior they think it is. I've been there, and it's not. Europe is in trouble. Suddenly they're trying to get their house in order.

Trump is working overtime on getting the criminal rabble out of here, but maybe their sensibilities won't allow for that in Europe. Minnesota is where many lighted in the U. S., thinking that they could change us a little at a time.

Donald Trump wants to send them home, where they belong. Can you imagine boat-loads arriving here and looking for us to support them? Can you imagine their culture taking hold in the U.S.? They don't need to make up a significant portion of the population to commit most of the

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crimes. Thanks anyway, but we don't want to convert to Islam. We don't want to become "culturally enriched."

Some are now publicly calling for orders to be disobeyed in the military. We'll see how that turns out. Mark Kelly comes to mind.

Zohran Mamdani has been elected mayor of New York. He visited Trump in the White House recently, then doubled down on his accusations. Trump was magnanimous, but this thing may get ugly. Mamdani is a socialist, and won't be tolerated as the guy who wrecked New York. It's hanging fire and the outcome will be delicious.

Meanwhile, we've got world war to worry about. The war between Russia and Ukraine is ongoing, and Trump has two rascals to deal with. It looked like Trump was backing Ukraine, but that may be over. Hopefully it'll all be resolved by the time you read this. But I wouldn't bank on it. □

Fake Religion

Continued from page 2

he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" (Matthew 7:21-23). These people will have actually preached in Christ's name, but in a way that is contrary to His word and to God's law.

In the end time, the world will worship the beast power, an individual and a system that is contrary to God. Yet, they will be directed to do so by a false prophet, an influential religious system (Revelation 13). In this context, can we view the world

becoming more religious as a positive development? Not unless it is founded on the true word of God, the Bible, rather than "the commandments of men" Christ warned against.

The trend can only turn out positive if it is founded on scripture. Otherwise, it may provide some temporary social reprise, but will ultimately slide towards a type of worship that is an utter abomination in God's eyes. During Christ's ministry, His strongest words were against those who pretended to be religious while twisting God's word to their own purposes.

A minister in the United Methodist Church recently announced from the pulpit that he was transitioning, claiming it was supported by the bishop, their doctrine and scripture. The first two maybe, but scripture!?

Absolutely not! Still, such tortured logic is embraced by many large churches. It is utter hypocrisy. It is remaking God in the image of man's twisted desires. It is changing evil for good, and good for evil (Isaiah 5:20).

"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 burdensome" (1 John 5:2-3).

God is not interested in pageantry or pretense. He is not interested in the rationale behind every dark desire of man. He has seen it all before. He wants to know if you will obey. He wants to know if you truly love Him and follow Him. And if you do, the only way is His way. Everything else is fake religion. □

The Pope's Bridge to Unity:

Efforts to Reconcile Catholics and Protestants

by Ken Hartbarger

In an era marked by division — political, social, and religious — the Catholic Church under recent pontiffs is attempting to be seen as a beacon of reconciliation. The Protestant Reformation, which began in 1517 with Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses*, splintered Christianity into myriad denominations, creating wounds that have festered for centuries. Yet, today, there is mounting evidence that the Vatican is actively attempting to heal these rifts. They are seen as doing so not through coercion or conversion campaigns, but via dialogue, shared faith, and mutual respect.

This article explores the initiatives of Pope Francis and his successor, Pope Leo XIV, drawing on official statements, ecumenical events, and public discourse to illustrate a deliberate push toward bringing Protestants back into closer communion with the Catholic Church. While full reunification remains a distant goal, these efforts signal a profound shift toward “reconciled diversity,” (notice the wording), where differences are embraced rather than erased.

POPE FRANCIS:

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF DIALOGUE

Pope Francis, who served from 2013 until his passing in early 2025, made ecumenism a cornerstone of his papacy. He built on the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which redefined Protestants not as heretics but as “separated brethren,” or daughters if you will, worthy of collaboration. Francis' rhetoric emphasized unity through action, often framing reconciliation as a spiritual imperative guided by the Holy Spirit.

One of the most compelling pieces of

evidence came during his October 16, 2024 general audience, where he spoke of “reconciled differences” among Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants. Reflecting on historical flashpoints like the Filioque clause in the Nicene Creed — a point of contention since the Great Schism — he noted that dialogue has softened these divides. “I like to say this: ‘Reconciled differences,’” he declared, highlighting how love and joint endeavors under the Holy Spirit can bridge gaps.

The presence of Orthodox and Protestant leaders at the Synod on Synodality in Rome underscored this, serving as a tangible symbol of progress. Francis' outreach extended to specific Protestant groups. In December 2024, addressing the World Methodist Council, he described reconciliation as a “task of the heart,” urging the unification of “differing minds and wills” through Christ's love. He pointed to the upcoming 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea in 2025 as an opportunity for shared witness, emphasizing joint theological dialogues via commissions like the International Joint Commission between Catholics and Methodists. This wasn't mere rhetoric; it built on decades of ecumenical work, fostering trust without demanding doctrinal surrender.

High-profile events further demonstrated his commitment. In 2016, Francis commemorated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Sweden, signing a joint statement with Lutheran World Federation President Munib Younan. The document celebrated 50 years of dialogue that had “overcome old controversies and suspicions,” affirming that “what unites us is greater than what divides us.” Through faith, prayer, and service to the marginalized,

Continued next page

Catholics and Lutherans were no longer “strangers.” This event, attended by global leaders, marked a pivotal moment, shifting from historical enmity to partnership.

The “Together” gathering in Rome in October 2023 brought Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox leaders for prayer and discussion, reinforcing unity amid global divisions. Ongoing dialogues, supported by the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, included the 2024 document “The Bishop of Rome: Primacy and Synodality in Ecumenical Dialogue,” which explored papal authority in ways that could accommodate a “reunited Church.” Francis repeatedly condemned proselytism as a “sin against ecumenism,” prioritizing relationships over recruitment. He even praised Luther’s reformist zeal,



Image: Marco Iacobucci Epp/ Shutterstock

While in Rome, King Charles III, “Supreme Governor” of the Church of England, received the title of “Royal Confrater,” was given a permanent chair at a papal basilica and even prayed with the Pope — a 500-year first for a British Monarch.

acknowledging corruption in the pre-Reformation Church while lamenting the resulting schism.

Public reactions on platforms like X (formerly Twitter) reflected mixed views. Some Protestants hailed his efforts as “great for Christendom,” appreciating the maintenance of their traditions amid outreach. Others noted his fostering of ecumenism despite criticism from conservative quarters. Critics, including traditionalist Catholics, accused him of diluting doctrine, but these initiatives undeniably advanced practical unity.

POPE LEO XIV: BUILDING ON THE LEGACY WITH BOLD STEPS

Elected in May 2025 as Pope Leo XIV — a former Augustinian friar and missionary bishop — the new pontiff has swiftly continued and amplified these efforts towards unification. With less than six months in office by November 2025, his papacy has been dubbed “the Pope of Unity” for its emphasis on visible reconciliation.

Drawing from his diverse experiences, Leo XIV views Christian unity as vital for global peace and evangelization. In a June 2025 address at a Nicaea anniversary symposium, he asserted that “what unites Christians is far greater than what divides us,” calling for “reconciled diversity” enriched by differences. His August 2025 World Day of Peace message urged Protestants and others to become “architects of reconciliation,” stressing that Christ’s willed unity must be “visible” through dialogue and witness.

In his inaugural address to ecumenical representatives, Leo XIV reaffirmed commitments to “full and visible unity” via “respectful listening and fraternal dialogue,” echoing Vatican II’s vision. He highlighted personal relationships as key to overcoming barriers. Key initiatives include the October 23, 2025 meeting with King Charles III in the Sistine Chapel, addressing unity and joint efforts on peace and the environment. This historic encounter aimed to mend the Anglican-Catholic divide rooted in the Reformation.

Leo XIV has also bolstered the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, supporting dialogues with Lutherans and Methodists, prioritizing an “ecumenical spirit.” Invitations to Protestant leaders

for the 2025 Nicaea celebrations underscore shared creedal foundations.

Like Francis, Leo XIV promotes “unity in diversity,” focusing on collaboration against poverty and migration. Protestant responses have been largely positive, seeing it as authentic outreach, though some traditionalists decry it as accommodationist.

BROADER IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE HORIZONS

These papal efforts represent a strategic evolution in Catholic ecumenism, moving from theoretical discussions to actionable partnerships. By emphasizing shared baptism and Christ-centered faith, the Church invites Protestants into a broader ecclesial family without requiring submission to Rome. This aligns with global trends toward inter-faith cooperation amid secularism and conflict.

However, challenges persist. Doctrinal differences on sacraments, authority, and scripture remain hurdles. Critics argue that “reconciled differences” risks relativism, while optimists see it as prophetic. Public discourse on X reveals a spectrum: enthusiasm for unity’s potential in addressing crises, tempered by skepticism over true integration.

Looking ahead, the 2025 Nicaea anniversary could be a watershed, potentially yielding new joint declarations. As Pope Leo XIV steers the Church, his missionary background may inspire innovative approaches, perhaps incorporating digital dialogues or youth-focused ecumenism.

The evidence — from statements and events under Francis and Leo XIV — paints a picture of a Church actively seeking to draw Protestants closer. This isn’t about “bringing back” through conquest but through love, as Francis often said. In a fractured world, soon may be the moment that the daughters are brought back to the mother church. □



The Catholic Church recently ruled that Mary is not “co-redemptrix” with Christ, a doctrine that has been a major obstacle to ecumenism.

A hand holding a smartphone displaying the YouTube logo. In the background, a laptop screen shows a YouTube interface. The text "You Tube" is prominently displayed in a red and white logo. Below it, the text "WATCH US ONLINE!" is written in bold. A QR code is positioned to the right of the text. At the bottom, the text "Christian Sabbath Services streamed live every Saturday at 1 pm central time." is written. The image is signed at the bottom left: "Image: Shutterstock".

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Image: Shutterstock

IMMIGRATION CRACKDOWN

In the push to apprehend individuals who entered or have remained in the country illegally, ICE has arrested nearly 300,000 year to date, as of this writing in late 2025. Roughly 81,000 of those detained have been convicted of crimes including murder, rape, human trafficking and a multitude of drug and gang related charges. It is estimated that a further 1.6 million individuals have self-deported rather than risk being apprehended. Irregular border crossings have plummeted to near zero. While many cities have seen violent protests against federal agents, the administration continues to pursue its goals undeterred. The Department of Homeland Security issues regular press releases on their website detailing the results of their operations, highlighting many of the worst offenders that have been captured and deported. It would be hard to argue that is not a good thing despite some of the vocal opposition. It is also proof that serious enforcement is a credible deterrent to those seeking to enter the country illegally.

BUDGIE SMUGGLER

As an American citizen was returning to the country from Tijuana, Customs agents noticed a large bulge in the man's trousers. Upon being questioned, the man insisted he was just a very manly man, so to speak. Unconvinced, the agents decided to search him. What they found was not one but two parakeets of an endangered species, each sedated and stuffed into a brown paper bag. The man is facing charges that carry a hefty fine and potentially long sentence. The parakeets have made a full recovery. (Note: budgie smuggler is an Australian slang expression for a man in a Speedo, a budgerigar being the common indigenous species of parakeet.)

EU ON EDGE

Potential threats and aggressive actions by Russia has much of the EU in a tizzy. Poland has been particularly concerned. In recent months they closed their border with Russian ally Belarus during their joint military training exercise "Zapad." It was conducted close to the border and actually simulates taking key geographical areas crucial to an advance into Europe. Drones have also been an issue. A major incursion of Russian drones over Poland was downed by NATO back in September. Since then, major airports and military bases have reported sightings, including in Sweden, Denmark, Belgium and Germany. They have caused consternation as well as flight delays and cancellations. Russian jets and ships have also probed territorial waters and airspace, including one offshore Hawaii. Much of this is thought to be probing general readiness and response. The realities of the conflict in Ukraine has Europe contemplating the feasibility of a "drone wall" to defend their airspace in the event of an escalation. Should the conflict be settled shortly, the repercussions of European rearmament and the determination not to be reliant on the US will remain.

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

No more. The United States has announced the end of penny production. Each cent currently costs over \$0.035 to manufacture. Still, what are the ramifications? Some retailers have offered incentives to those who would turn in their unused jar-fulls. Others are grappling with the new reality and the expected supply crunch. Options include various charitable endeavors offering incentive to incrementally increase the total purchase price or straight up rounding. It is definitely an added pressure on the cash market.

POLIO

Polio was detected in sewage from the German city of Hamburg. It was the “wild” variant, typically only found in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Reports about the incident conclude that the wild variant is the least commonly detected; typically found is the more virulent type used for inoculation, for which some countries utilize live cultures. Think about that.

GOING NUCLEAR

The ultimate deterrent. China has embarked on a plan to have 1,000 operational nuclear warheads by the end of the decade. Comparatively, the US and Russia each possess over 5,000 and both have ramped up their rhetoric in recent months, from outright threats to demonstrations of capability. The UK is hoping to add a squadron of F-35A fighters to its forces that would be capable of delivering nuclear warheads. Currently, their warheads can only be launched by submarine and have suffered some embarrassing failures during demonstrations in recent years. Even South Korea and Japan have considered developing their own nuclear weapons or hosting those of the United States amidst tension with their similarly armed neighbors, China and North Korea.

PUBLISHER’S CLEARING OUCH

The big check wasn’t the only surprise past winners got. Publisher’s Clearing House declared bankruptcy this year. That means winners prior to July 15, 2025 are technically holders of “unsecured debt” and are unlikely to be able to collect a fraction of what they expected to receive, let alone the promised thousands of dollars per week for life. To many, the default came as an utter shock. Winners have had to scramble to sell luxury items or property, some even began looking for jobs. Unfortunately, for those who believed themselves secure, there is little legal recourse. The direct mail business has suffered from a decline in interest and an increase in costs at the same time. The company has been bought, however. Prizes continue to be offered. Future recipients could benefit from obligations being placed in secure accounts to ensure payment in spite of financial difficulties.

HIDDEN THREAT

Bombshell reports have detailed radios hidden inside of batteries and inverters in turbines and solar powered roadside equipment such as chargers for lights, cameras, and weather monitoring devices. This would enable monitoring or widespread shutdowns if all the affected devices received a signal to disable them at the same time. Most of these devices originate in China, who stridently denies any potential allegations. It is for this reason Chinese majors such as Huawei and ZTE have been cut out of Western cell and telecommunications infrastructure. It is also a factor in the prohibition against importing Chinese cars.

CIRCUMCISION

Studies have reported that circumcision rates have dropped below 50% in the United States. One of the potential factors cited is demographic change. However, the picture is far from complete. Most available data is obtained from hospitals and the reporting across states is not comprehensive or uniform. Excluded figures would include those who underwent the procedure as an outpatient or utilized a traditional practitioner such as a Mohel. This would include those who opted for the Biblically prescribed “eighth day” per Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3, or Luke 1:59. Interestingly, this is the time when vitamin K levels naturally peak in newborns, while hospitals require an injection to perform the procedure on the day of or the day after birth. The majority of major health organizations still recommend or actively promote the practice.

LARGEST ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

The world’s largest Orthodox cathedral has just opened in Romania. It can accommodate a crowd of 5,000 (no free lunch though, Matthew 14) and reaches a staggering 400 feet into the sky. It took over 15 years to build. Romania is one of the world’s most devout countries with over 85% of citizens espousing faith. It cost over \$300 million to build and has been a major tourist draw. Hundreds of thousands came to worship in the days following its opening in a trend that is likely to continue for years to come.

REFILLING GALILEE

This publication reported in the 4th Quarter 2018 that water levels at the sea of Galilee were low enough for Israel to consider pumping desalinated water from the Mediterranean to try to refill it. Those plans are about to become a reality. Despite increased restrictions on use, Galilee remains a concerning 700 feet below sea level, the same as reported in 2018. The pumping operation is the first of its kind. Israel is the world leader in desalination of sea water. Over 500,000 gallons of water could be pumped into the sea every hour, though only half that is currently being moved. Still, it is enough to support agriculture, maintain an emergency reserve, and ensure the Lord has a nice place to walk should He require it (Matthew 14, Mark 6, John 6).

CLOGGING THE FILTER

Mussels (the ever-flexed cousins of oysters and clams) have long been used as a measure of pollution in bodies of water. Why? They are filter feeders. Precisely the same reason they are not listed among animals that should be eaten in Leviticus 11. Because they filter toxins out of the water, mussels are widely used in research of this nature. Bags of them are submerged at various depths and left for a period of time before being retrieved and tested. They have been utilized recently to detect microplastics in the Mediterranean. The results show pervasive contamination, as do captures by net across the surface and examination of most aquatic species.

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

The Trump administration has made headlines by advocating for Christians that have been targeted in Nigeria. Critics allege that violence often occurs due to other differences, such as conflicts between herders and farmers. Yet it is undeniable that Christians have been the particular targets of kidnapping for ransom schemes all too common in Northern Nigeria. At this writing, over 300 Catholic students have been taken hostage from a single school. 50 managed to escape but the fate of the rest hangs in the balance. The US has offered to cooperate with local authorities, even to the point of military intervention, to eliminate what

has become a major source of revenue for Islamist militant groups such as Boko Haram. Kidnapping is so common that it is technically illegal to pay ransom for the return of a loved one in Nigeria.

“CULTURE”

But think in terms of bio-engineering. One result is essentially milk without cows. Bovine mammary cell samples are grown and induced to lactate in a lab setting. The product is actually set to hit select store shelves in the near future, similar to the “Impossible Whopper” of recent years. Far more disturbing is the application to the emerging field of bio-computing. Human stem cells are harvested from skin samples. These are used to produce neurons, like those that function in the human brain. Arranged into arrays, these cells can react to signals that can be interpreted into usable data by algorithms. You can actually pay to have these masses attempt to process your tasks at a research facility in Switzerland. The benefit is in the potential for speed and reduced energy consumption. It is possible that bio-computing could rival the speed and capability of both quantum computing and AI while consuming a fraction of the resources. Of course, ethical questions around its use remain.

DOOMSCROLLING

The cynical phrase has taken on a more literal meaning. Excessive amounts of information being fed through various online platforms seem to be having a profound effect on how our minds operate. Of growing concern is the mental fatigue known as “Popcorn Brain.” It’s a byproduct of the tremendous amount of time spent on screens watching short videos, clicking ads, scrolling through images, checking emails, etc., and is characterized by scattered thoughts, fatigue, increased stress, difficulty concentrating, memory loss, and anxiety. According to one study, the average adult attention span is now only around 8 seconds, a decrease of 4 seconds since 2008. Research suggests that by setting time limits on devices, disabling mobile notifications, and taking breaks from social media we can retrain our brains to calm down and operate at the speed of life... and that’s fast enough! □

THE CULT OF EMPEROR WORSHIP

Will It Return?

by Craig M. White, FriendsOfSabbath.org



For thousands of years, mere mortal humans have claimed to be gods, a god in the flesh or revered as sort of gods.

These vile claims ranged from ancient Emperors who were identified as gods to modern

sporting heroes and celebrities who are treated as such.

Of later incarnations of such evil, God's Word warns us:

"Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes

first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be

Continued next page

God.” (II Thess. 2:3-4, ESV).

“And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?’

“And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

“It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.” (Rev. 13:4-6, ESV)

Whether a prophesied political or religious figure or a modern-day celebrity, there seems to be this vanity-led desire for excess honour and even literal worship as a god or even as God Himself. The blasphemy is incomprehensible.

THE ANCIENT ORIGINS OF THE HUMAN DESIRE FOR WORSHIP

It is almost as if there is something within human nature that seems to need to worship a higher and superior being. But alas, humans have been deceived to follow and worship the wrong “gods” — humans. This has been happening since the early days of human existence on this planet.

Professor Henry Burton explains the ancient roots of emperor worship:

“The impulse that led to the deification of the Roman emperors came from the East. The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, Lycurgus and Lysander of Sparta, and Alexander the Great

were worshiped as divinities both while living and when dead. When Rome conquered the East, the same divine honors were transferred to the Roman proconsuls. Naturally, then, when a single ruler of the empire appeared, he was acclaimed as a god in the eastern provinces. Meanwhile the way had been prepared for the imperial worship in the minds of the Romans themselves. The heroes of Roman legend, as Aeneas, Latinus, Romulus, whom the Romans accepted as historical personages and as the founders of the nation, were believed to be of divine descent and were themselves honored as deities. It was natural, therefore, that the founder of the empire, a new and greater Rome, should likewise be regarded as a god and be accorded the same homage. Another precursor of the imperial cult was the worship of the *Dea Roma*. This divinity, the personification of the growing power of Rome in the East, was a Greek invention. Temples were first erected to her in the second century B.C. in Asia Minor, her cult became associated with that of the emperor both in the East and in the West during the reign of Augustus and finally received full recognition at the capital through the building of Hadrian’s great temple of Venus and Roma.” (“The Worship of the Roman Emperors,” *Biblical World*, August 1912, p. 80)

Caligula (37-41 BC) demanded to be worshipped as a living god; having failed to establish military credibility and concerned for his safety, he

chose to proclaim his divinity. He also intended to relocate to Alexandria in Egypt, where he could present himself as a living god, beyond the legal reach of the Senate. He constructed temples in his honor but was not granted posthumous deification due to the Senate’s refusal.

The practice, commonly referred to as the Imperial Cult, involves the veneration of Emperors and certain members of their families as divine figures. They carried the divinely endorsed authority of the Roman state. This tradition commenced following the death of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, when the Roman state officially recognized him as “divus,” or divine. This system drew upon both Roman and Greek traditions and was established during the early Principate of Augustus. The cult of worship played a significant role in fostering unity across the expansive empire.

Nero (54-68 AD) garnered a cult following in the East and was promoted as divine, yet he was not deified (condemned by the Senate after his demise). Domitian (81-96 AD) insisted on being addressed as *Dominus et Deus* (i.e., Lord and God). Commodus (180-192 AD) identified himself as Hercules and was permitted worship.

Other emperors received posthumous deification after their deaths.

Initially, Roman Emperors demanded worship and persecuted both the true and the false churches to eliminate rivals:

“As the emperor cult

developed, it became ever more clearly a form of Antichrist, as Christians were commanded to substitute the words *kyrios kaiser* ('Caesar is Lord') for their basic Christian confession *kyrios Jesus* ('Jesus is Lord'), Augustus had been the first emperor to claim divinity and solicit worship ... But it was Domitian, who became emperor in 81 AD and demanded to be worshipped as *Dominus et Deus*, who persecuted those who denied him the divine homage he coveted." (John Stott, *The Message of Thessalonians. The Bible Speaks Today*, (1961) p. 161).

MIDDLE AGES

The Holy Roman Emperor, despite the title "Holy," could not be considered a deity as he was inherently Christian. Furthermore, while the doctrine explicitly prohibited the veneration of the Emperor as a god, this also served as a benefit to the Emperors because it stated:

1. Jesus had already manifested on Earth and possessed the sole legitimate divine claim. Now he resided in Heaven, where he rightfully belonged (and, by the way, could not cause disturbances by advocating for the impoverished).

2. Consequently, no one else could emerge to assert divine authority. This positioned the Pope and the Emperor as the "representatives" of the divine on Earth. However, the most advantageous aspect for them was that any future prophets would necessarily be deemed false prophets. Thus, the orthodoxy that upheld

photo: Jacques MOSSOT / Wikipedia



Temple of Augustus, first Emperor of Rome, and his wife Livia.

both the Pope and the Emperor could not be contested.

It is this representation that often led to their conflicts.

But it didn't end there — the continuing rivalry has been unabated ever since:

"Francis I, Louis XIV, Napoleon, saw themselves as the Holy Roman Empire's legitimate heirs. Popes waged a thousand-year-long battle with emperors for the right to Rome." (Friedrich Heer, *The Holy Roman Empire*, p. 1)

"The supremacy of ecclesiastical power must finally give way to the stronger sceptre of the secular monarch. Becket must yield to Henry. The struggle may be prolonged and disastrous" (Benjamin Newton, *Progress Towards the Formation of the Ten Kingdoms* (1873), p. 415). A future conflict after a brief 'fling'

with the State will result in disaster for the Great Church.

MODERN WORSHIP AND GLORIFICATION

It also seemed that Napoleon might have perceived himself as superior to the Pope. During his coronation ceremony on December 2, 1804, Napoleon denied the Pope the privilege of placing the imperial crown upon his head, opting instead to crown himself. Furthermore, he took it upon himself to crown his first wife, Josephine, as Empress, once again excluding the Pope from this act.

Napoleon sought to place the Pope under his dominion. The irony of the entire scenario should not be overlooked. The French Revolution had nearly eradicated Catholicism from the nation, primarily due to the

Continued next page

radical transformations brought about by the Enlightenment. Many participants in the Enlightenment movement were either atheists or deists, indicating that God was not a significant influence in many of the advancements initiated by Enlightenment thinkers. Ironically, several years following Robespierre's death (an ardent deist), Napoleon (who was also a deist), managed to restore the church that had been so harshly persecuted just a few years prior. Nevertheless, he twice imprisoned Popes.

More than a century later, Benito Mussolini was born to an atheist father and a devoutly Catholic mother. Although Mussolini was baptized as a Catholic, he renounced his faith in his youth, choosing instead to adopt his father's beliefs. Over time, he developed a form of worship centered around the State.

His fascist movement made the following statement:

"The Fascist State has never tried to create its own God, as at one moment Robespierre and the wildest extremists of the Convention tried to do; nor does it vainly seek to obliterate religion from the hearts of men as does Bolshevism: Fascism respects the God of the ascetics, of the saints, of the heroes, and also God as seen and prayed to by the simple and primitive heart of the people." (*La Dottrina del Fascismo* [The Doctrine of Fascism], published in *Enciclopedia Italiana*, June 1932.)

Following his acquisition of power during the March on Rome in 1922, Mussolini strategically softened his atheistic stance to garner support from both the Catholic Church and Italian nationalists. He entered into the Lateran Treaty with the

Vatican in 1929, which reinstated papal sovereignty and acknowledged Catholicism as the official religion of Italy. This represented a significant rhetorical shift, framing Fascism as being in harmony with faith, yet not subordinate to it, much like the German National Socialists.

Despite this, Mussolini remained an atheist throughout his life; however he expressed remorse and reverted to the Catholic faith of his youth days prior to his capture and execution — probably due to pragmatism and fear, rather than genuine repentance. In 1957 his remains were returned to his family and were buried in a Catholic grave.

Hitler believed similarly. *The Occult in National Socialism* by Stephen Flowers is a must read in regard to all of this. British historian Richard J. Evans, who writes primarily on Nazi Germany and World War II, noted Hitler claiming that Nazism is founded on science: "Science, he declared, would easily destroy the last remaining vestiges of 'superstition.' Germany could not tolerate the intervention of foreign influences such as the Pope and 'Priests', he said, were 'black bugs', 'abortions in black cassocks'" (Richard Evans, *The Third Reich at War* (2009), p. 547).

"As late as 1933, he still described himself publicly as a Catholic. Only the spreading poison of his lust for power and self idolatry finally crowded out the memories of childhood beliefs and in 1937 he jettisoned the last of his personal religious



Photo from the Lateran Treaty with Vatican representatives and Benito Mussolini (center front) as Italian Premier. Despite his Catholic upbringing, Mussolini later identified as an atheist and used the Catholic church as a political ally in his quest for power.

convictions, declaring to comrades, ‘Now I feel as fresh as a colt in the pasture’” (Max Domarus, *The Essential Hitler: Speeches and Commentary* (2007), p. 21).

The biographer John Toland recounts that following an attempted assassination in 1939, Hitler informed his dinner guests that Pope Pius XII would have preferred the “plot succeed” and “was no friend of mine.” However, he also notes that in 1941, Hitler remained “a member in good standing of the Church of Rome despite his detestation of its hierarchy” John Toland, *Adolf Hitler: The Definitive Biography* (1976), pp. 589, 703).

Nazi Propaganda Minister, Joseph Goebbels, played a pivotal role in constructing Adolf Hitler’s “Führer cult” or cult of personality, systematically elevating him to a god-like, messianic status through speeches, articles, broadcasts, and media campaigns. This portrayal depicted Hitler as an infallible saviour chosen by providence, a quasi-divine mediator between the German people and higher powers, and the embodiment of national destiny.

In 1935 Goebbels proclaimed: “He is flesh of its flesh and spirit of its spirit... He is now what he always was, and always will be: Our Hitler!” In 1936, he declared: “Germany has been transformed into a great house of God... where the Führer as our mediator stood before the throne of the Almighty.” And in 1945: “We feel him in us and around us. God give him strength and health and preserve him from every



Though raised Roman Catholic, Hitler disdained Christianity. The Nazis eventually developed “Positive Christianity,” blending Nazi ideology with approved elements of traditional Christianity.

danger. May he remain what he is to us and always was — Our Hitler!”

Hitler did nothing to rebuke Goebbels and overturn these appalling god-like references.

THE FATE OF THOSE WHO CLAIMED DIVINITY OR MOCKED CHRIST

Below is a curated list of historical and modern figures who either explicitly claimed to be God, Jesus Christ (or his reincarnation/second coming), or a messianic figure, or who made blasphemous statements elevating themselves to divine status (e.g., mocking or comparing themselves to God/Jesus). I’ve focused on those with notably strange, violent, or mysterious deaths.

John Nichols Thom (also known as Sir William Courtenay — 1799 - 1838) claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus Christ, the “Saviour of the World,” and

invulnerable to bullets. He was killed by government soldiers during the Battle of Bossenden Wood.

Arnold Potter (also known as Potter Christ — 1804 - 1872) was a religious leader who claimed the spirit of Jesus entered his body, making him the “Son of the living God.” Died attempting to “ascend into heaven” by jumping off a cliff in Marquette, Michigan; his body was later retrieved from Lake Superior and buried by followers who believed he would resurrect.

Edmund Creffield (also known as Joshua — 1856-1906) Founder of the “Brides of Christ” cult who preached “free love” and claimed followers would birth the reincarnated Christ through ritual purification. Shot in the face on a Seattle street by George Mitchell, the brother of a former follower.

John Lennon (1940 - 1980) famously stated in 1966 that the

Continued next page

Beatles were “more popular than Jesus,” which was seen by many as mocking or elevating the band to divine status, sparking global backlash including record burnings. He was assassinated outside his New York apartment by Mark David Chapman, an obsessed fan.

Krishna Venta (born Francis Pencovic — 1911 - 1958) founded the Fountain of the World cult; claimed to be the reincarnated Jesus Christ who led rocket ships from the lost planet Neophrates to Earth. He was killed in a suicide bombing by two disgruntled ex-followers.

Adolf Hitler (1889 - 1945) cultivated a messianic image as Germany’s saviour, with propaganda portraying him as a divine or quasi-godlike figure; some followers viewed him as a Christ-like redeemer. Committed suicide by cyanide capsule and gunshot in his Berlin bunker as Soviet forces closed in during WWII’s final days; his body was partially burned by aides in a shell crater and remains were later desecrated and scattered to prevent a gravesite pilgrimage.

Benito Mussolini (1883 - 1945) Italian fascist dictator who styled himself as *Il Duce* (The Leader), with a cult of personality implying god-like infallibility; allied with Hitler in promoting authoritarian “salvation” narratives. Captured by Italian partisans, summarily executed by machine gun, and hung upside down from a meat hook in a Milan gas station alongside his mistress Clara Petacci; their bodies were stoned, spat on, and urinated upon by crowds in a public desecration.

Amy Carlson (also known as Mother God — 1975 - 2021) was leader of the Love Has Won cult; claimed to be a 19-billion-year-old deity embodying Jesus, Mother Earth, Cleopatra, and others, with full memories of being crucified. Her mummified body was discovered wrapped in a sleeping bag adorned with Christmas lights and glitter in a Colorado trailer home after followers transported it across states believing she would resurrect; autopsy ruled death from alcohol abuse, anorexia, and drug ingestion.

This list highlights patterns of violent ends, failed ascensions, or cult-related fallout often tied to their claims. Many such figures attracted devoted (and dangerous) followings, contributing to the strangeness of their demises.

Be careful of what you wish for or who you claim to be. Do not pretend to be something you are not!

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION AND MIRACLES?

If one looks at the historical record, it would appear that the system that has been so prominent for centuries has seen movements of morphing from a Holy Roman Empire into one that glorifies the emperor similar to the Roman Empire.

Consider Napoleon’s, Mussolini’s and Hitler’s initial Concordats with the Vatican. But Napoleon took two Popes into captivity and Hitler had definite plans to do the same (both of these men were deists).

Mussolini’s relationship

with the Vatican was not always smooth. Read Peter Kent, “How Pius came to regret his deal with the duce: The Pope and Mussolini,” *The Irish Times*, 24 May 2014.

The future Beast will turn upon the Great False Church as the Beast will want to be worshipped in lieu. To be a sort of Roman Emperor (cp. Dan. 11:37; Rev. 13:4).

Something will happen to trigger this — perhaps an attempted assassination (Rev. 13:3), similar to Hitler’s.

“Whether the death is real or faked (cf. v.14; 2 Thess. 2:9) is not clear ... Antichrist’s alleged death and resurrection will be a counterfeit of Christ’s death and resurrection, staged, as one of the ‘lying wonders’ perpetrated by the false prophet (13:12-15; 2 Thess. 2:9 NKJV). Antichrist’s death will be phony since he never really died” (John MacArthur, *Revelation 12-22. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (2000), pp. 45-46).

As only God can resurrect (the Devil cannot), it is unlikely that he will be fully dead. Perhaps clinically dead in the sense of no heartbeat, etc., for a minute or two; or in a coma. In any event, he counterfeits Christ. This will lead to his worship and increased rivalry with the Great False Church. Many will see this as the coming of Christ (II Thess. 2:9 compared to verse 8) accompanied by amazing miracles and wonders that could even deceive the elect (Matt. 24:24).

“... when they see such a miracle wrought in the person of Antichrist — namely, in his

resurrection from the dead [probably a coma], and his speaking death-dealing effigy — there will be no room left for further scepticism, and they will at once render Divine homage to the man of sin or lawless one ... that man-worship, which will be one of the worst signs of the last times.

“... he will become supreme king of revived Rome. To this dignity he will be elevated by the ten kings of eastern and western Rome ... thus electing Antichrist as Emperor ... as in the case of his prototypes, the two Napoleons ...” (Edward Hytche, “The Doom of the Antichrist”, *The Prophetic News and Israel's Watchman*, June (1882), p. 173)

Consider precedents of the latter Roman Emperors being considered as gods as discussed above; Napoleon behaved god-like; Wilhelm II enacted Christ's entry into Jerusalem on a Sabbath riding on a white horse; Goebbels called Hitler a god; Mussolini likened himself to God.

There is no doubt that this will bring about the final falling out between the political/military leadership and the Great Church, the mother of many whores. This would lead to a falling out with the Great Church.

HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS – FUTURE REPEATS

If we look at the resurrections of the old Holy Roman Empire and its Church dominance, that should provide us with a clue to the future.

This new system will commence as a restoration of the Holy Roman Empire in cooperation with the Church, but will morph into Roman Emperor worship with ensuing rivalry between the two, ending in disaster for the Church (Rev. 17:16). Not that different from State-Church conflicts during the Middle Ages.

“And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire” (Rev. 17:16).

Consider this: over time Europe has experienced the rise and fall of the First Reich (the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation or Sacrum Romanum Imperium Nationis Germanica); the Second Reich from Bismarck to the end of WW I — the neo-Protestant Prussian period; and of course, the Third Reich — the Hitler-Mussolini period).

The day will come when the Germans and many European nations will forge a military confederation which will be the world's supreme power on earth through the powerful Fourth Reich — the final revival of the Roman Empire combined with eventual emperor worship.

This culmination of Satan's favourite system will result in both the final Roman leaders being expunged by the returning Christ. This will mark the end of puny, short-living humans' claiming either to be god or being glorified in some way.

God alone is God and there is no other. Any claimants and rivals will be finally expunged:

“And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.

“And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.” (Rev. 19:19-20, ESV). □

Final 3 ½ years of the Beast's rule



BIBLE STUDY

by Dr. James Ricks & Natalie Ricks, M.A.

FAITH IN ACTION: THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Image: Shutterstock

FAITH WITHOUT ACTION IS NOT TRUE FAITH

The Apostle James is clear and straight forward in declaring that a believer must look to God through His laws and act accordingly. A true believer must not only listen to God but act. A person's actions reveal what he really believes.

James 1:21-22, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." (NKJV)

James bluntly declares that if one listens to God's Word and is only a hearer and not a doer, that person is deceiving himself. He has false faith, period! The Apostle gives a clear example of just how that deceived person is behaving.

James 1:23-24, "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was."

If a believer looks at the high, accurate standards of God's laws and sees his own face all smeared with sinful mud but does not work on cleaning up, he is really living in self deception. Further, James describes what each believer should do in light of the

truth revealed by the Laws of God.

James 1:25-26, "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. 26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless."

It is normal for human nature to live in self deception. Everyone wishes to believe that they are right, often no matter how awful their behavior. Self deception is part of the human condition that God is teaching us to overcome.

Jer.17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

Proverbs 16:2, "All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits."

Proverbs 16:25, "There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death."

James is very clear that we cannot and should not live based on our human standards, but must look to God instead.

THE LAW AND GRACE

Christians are saved by grace and no one is good enough to earn salvation. When a new believer

BIBLE STUDY

is baptized and repents, what is he or she repenting of? Isn't it dead works as defined by God's Laws? This is obvious and a basic doctrine. Note:

Hebrews 6:1, "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,"

As one is saved by grace we are required to repent of sinning, which is the breaking of the law. We are not saved by our obedience; only Christ can save us by His sacrifice. But we are then expected to repent of our former ways and obey God.

Romans 3:31, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law."

Romans 6:1-2, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"

Without laws to establish exactly what sin is, one cannot sin; faith establishes the law. In repentance, we acknowledge that God and His laws are right and we carnal humans are wrong.

TO LIVE YOUR FAITH REQUIRES ACTION

James makes the need for Christian deeds crystal clear both of charity and obedience.

James 2:14-17, "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not

have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

The last six of the Ten Commandments guides us into how to show love for our fellow man. He further uses the example of Abraham, who demonstrated how painful it was for God the Father to sacrifice His own Son by Abraham's own actions.

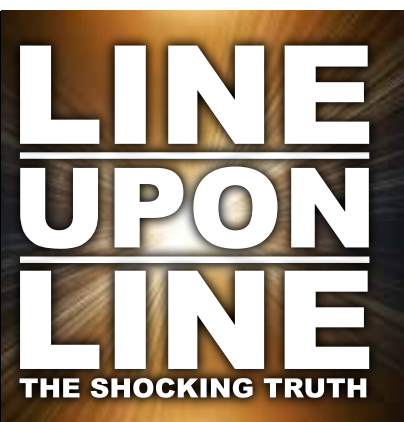
James 2:23-24, "And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

In verse 26 James goes beyond any doubt in regard to the partnership between law and grace: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The Apostle gives additional advice in regards to good deeds and resisting the many pressures of this age to live in sin. He says when we need extra help resisting sins and obeying God, ask for it and move closer to God and further from the sinful world.

James 4:6-9, "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.' 7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners...purify your hearts, you double-minded..."

We must demonstrate what we believe by our deeds or our faith is dead. □



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Digital ID

by Michael Armstrong

From the time the book of Revelation was written to the present day there has been an enormous amount of speculation about the evil power that will rule the world at the time of the end. Who is the dreaded “beast” of prophecy? What is his “mark” exactly? How could any government have the power to control commerce across the entire globe? Many of the answers to those questions are still speculative. However, more and more we can see developments that are capable of enabling the type of dominance outlined in Bible prophecy.

One such innovation is digital identification. As we delve into the specifics of currently available or proposed roll-outs of digital ID it is important to remember that no system currently in place fits that of the end-time. Rather, we WATCH these developments because they

are steps along the way. They demonstrate that the potential for such a system to be deployed exists in a way it never has since the creation of man.

We do not claim “the sky is falling.” There are and will continue to be legitimate arguments in favor of the digitization of many aspects of our lives. As with many other innovations such as driver’s licenses or Social Security cards, there will likely be concerns and resistance to full adoption. Many with well founded logic and objections behind them.

Yet as with those objections, time, necessity or force will eventually overcome them. Far from being the forehead tattoo envisioned once upon a time, the accouterments of the final system most likely will be something humanity is largely comfortable with. Technological progress and its incorporation into existing

systems show us how the prophetic becomes possible.

WHY DIGITAL?

Security and cost are some of the major inducements touted. Physical cards and documents open the potential for forgery. Leading nations like the US incorporate elaborate measures such as holographic images and other unique security features to prevent reproductions. All of this involves time, effort and expense. Many other nations lack the resources or technological sophistication to create secure physical IDs, making them an unreliable method of identification. Even reliable physical IDs end up being verified by an individual. This leaves the process open to abuse and criminality regardless of how sophisticated the document itself is.

It is estimated that over 30% of the population in low

income countries does not have any form of ID. When you think of this in terms of refugees storming the beaches of Europe or caravans to the US border the problem is clear. Most have no documents of any kind, and verifying those who do can be nearly impossible. This is even a problem with travel, or vetting those who cooperate with the US military in foreign operations. Look at the recent case of the Afghani who was granted asylum for his assistance, only to end up opening fire on the National Guard. Not knowing who you are dealing with is a problem, regardless of whether you would prefer to let them in or send them home.

This is a major reason why organizations such as the UN push the roll-out of digital IDs worldwide. They believe lower cost will lead to wider adoption and tout the inclusion of biometrics as a benefit for all sides. Impossible to forge, ease of verification for authorities, security for the individual. A permanent personal record.

GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION

It is hard to argue against these inducements. For this reason we already see a blurring of the lines between physical and digital IDs. We do not balk at the inclusion of a photo on our drivers license. Fingerprints are willingly given. Bar-code on the back for extra verification.

Even more advanced methods such as facial scans are becoming commonplace. They are in use at the airport. And compared to the scan that sees

through your clothes or a questionably motivated frisking...

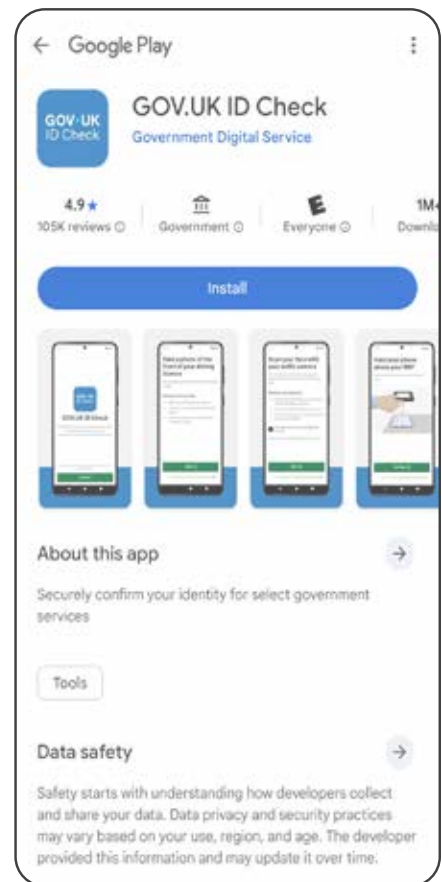
The United States is actually requiring facial scans for all non-citizens entering the country as of December 26, 2025. The EU also requires facial scans and fingerprints upon entry. Neither creates an entirely new system; they incorporate new technology alongside the traditional IDs and Passports people are already comfortable with.

FULL DIGITAL

Britain is taking it a step further. Digital ID will be necessary to work in the UK by the end of this session of Parliament. It is optional for other uses. The rosy portrayal includes that it's free (as opposed to the fees that come with traditional IDs) and claims that it will stop people from entering the country illegally and working (which doesn't bode well for cash). Their government website (gov.uk) claims, "Your free digital ID will be stored securely on your phone... simplifying access to government services..."

Simplified? Perhaps, but the same type of system can be used to restrict as well as allow. China has such a system that can be modified in real time, restricting the ability to travel (particularly to protest), changing your health status, manipulating your finances. Extreme examples, but evidence of what is possible. The system has to be in place before it can be abused.

Yet, convenience can be a strong incentive, as can fear. A quick scan as opposed



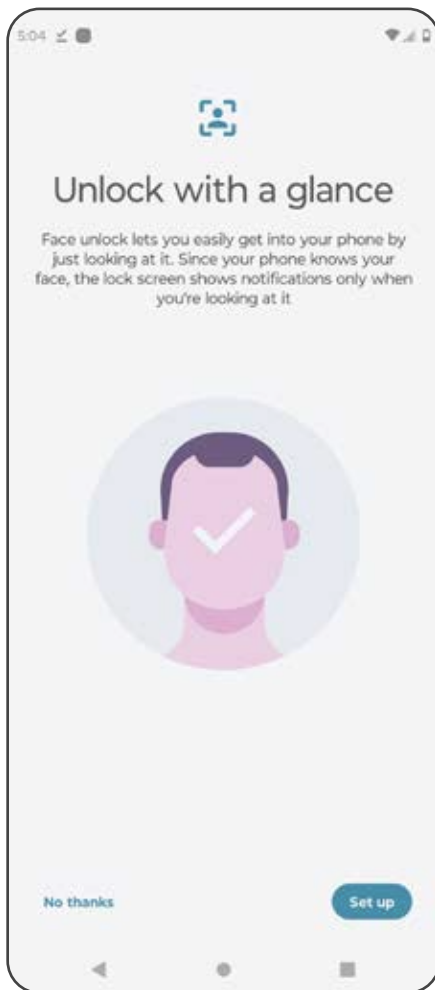
Screenshot of Britain's digital ID app, soon to be required for employment in the UK.

to mustering your trove of documents. Comfort in not sharing personal details like age or address with everyone who wants to check your ID. Cancellation if lost, as opposed to worrying your information is being misused if a card goes missing.

Many already enroll in optional, private digital ID services for security reasons. Others pay for protections to monitor and ensure fraud isn't taking place. Digital ID can offer all of that and will be a strong inducement to voluntary adoption.

Nor is bribery off the table. Consider Sam Altman of Open AI. He helped found "Tools for Humanity" which offers an app

Continued next page



It is estimated that 82% of phones had biometrics enabled as of 2022, particularly face or fingerprint unlock features.

called “World.” Advertised as a digital ID to ensure humanity and exclude bots from many online services, World distributes their own cryptocurrency to those who are verified through an iris scan.

It is an interesting example of creating a problem and a solution. An oversimplification perhaps, but not without merit. As governments race to create more powerful and advanced AI tools (or weapons) more elaborate protections will be necessary to ensure your identity and financial security. It all leads to more oversight, which equals control.

However benevolent or reasonable the path may seem along the way, we have to beware of the destination.

INEVITABILITY

The final chapter of the book of Revelation includes the phrase, “...these words are trustworthy and true” (Rev. 22:6 ESV). God clearly reveals what will befall humanity in the last days. It is not pleasant, but it will ultimately result in God’s victory over evil and salvation for the faithful. As with the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25, it is important to WATCH and be

spiritually prepared at all times.

These events cannot be avoided. The final, world ruling system is not here yet but we can see its shadow looming. We see that it is possible in ways never before envisioned. Do not let this be a cause of discouragement or terror, but a reassurance of our faith and the promises of God. Do not let fear make you disengage from life, but share the warning of what is to come and the hope that lays beyond. As Christ told His disciples, “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4). □

A press release from Data M Intelligence, which provides analysis for investment strategies, labeled AI powered biometrics an area of major market growth. They cited developments in 2025 which included...

- Deployment by US border security agencies
- Utilization by large financial institutions to combat fraud
- The deployment of facial recognition at airports
- The alignment of biometric identity platforms to comply with the EU’s AI Act
- Digital ID systems adopted in India, Thailand, Indonesia and many other Asian countries
- Improvements to biometric processing on digital devices
- Growing government and private sector demand coupled with increased voluntary consumer adoption



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LESSON TWENTY-ONE: SIN PART TWO

Sin is the transgression of God's law — the falling short or missing the mark of the character of Jesus Christ. Although the penalty for sin is death in the lake of fire, all sin can be completely forgiven by God who desires that all men be saved. God forgives sin upon the repentance of the individual who accepts the shed blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ as payment in full for the penalty of his sins.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Sin is more than the breaking of one of the Ten Commandments in an outward, physical manner. Christ amplified the law of God to include the spirit and intent of the law. Likewise, this amplified the meaning of sin to include the breaking of the spirit or intent of the law through one's actions or attitudes. For example, the New Testament expands the law so that looking upon a woman to lust after her is the moral equivalent of adultery and thereby sinful; so that hating one's brother is the moral equivalent of murder and is sinful. Thus one appearing outwardly righteous may inwardly harbor all sorts of evil.

Such external appearances of righteousness can often lead to self-righteousness, perhaps the most insidious of sins since it is so difficult for the person himself to comprehend since he "knows" that he hasn't done anything wrong. Christ spoke pointedly against this type of hypocrisy which is common to men.

Paul understood the universal power of sin. It permeates every nation, every race, every citizen of planet earth. "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands, no one seeks for God" (Romans 3:10-11; Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3); "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Sin envelops every human life. On the one hand, sin includes much more than just our occasional wicked actions. On the other hand, true sinlessness is more, much more, than just the outward adherence to any set of behavioral regulations and/or religious rituals. Paul saw this clearly in his own life, "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do... For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members" (Romans 7:19, 22-23). All is not hopeless, indeed the recognition of the full reality of the almost omnipresent problem of sin in one's life is the first step toward — indeed it's the major part of — the solution to the problem. "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 7:24-8:2).

Although sin and the breaking of God's holy way of life ultimately originates in the mind, mere temptation to sin is not sin, however strong the

Continued next page

temptation may be. Christ was tempted by Satan in all points and in every respect but never sinned (cf. Matthew 4:1; Hebrews 4:15). No temptation should make a Christian feel guilty; temptations are normal, but they must be instantly resisted because the line between temptation and sin may become fine indeed. James expressed it this way: “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived

Christ, so that the millennium will be devoid of his evil influence. This was also represented in ancient Israel by sending the “scapegoat,” Azazel in Hebrew, into the wilderness on the Day of Atonement. Leviticus 16:10.)

Satan likewise introduced sin to mankind through Adam and Eve. Although created in moral and spiritual neutrality, Adam and his wife were deceived by Satan into disobeying God’s command

“It is crucial that Christians deeply realize that God does not forgive sin begrudgingly.”

gives birth to sin, and sin when it is full grown brings forth death” (James 1:14-15). As this verse and others point out, the ultimate penalty for all sin is the second death in the lake of fire (Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:14-15).

The common penalty of death for all sin illustrates the important truth that God does not categorize sin in the ultimate spiritual sense. Some sins, of course, cause more character damage than others, or demand a more severe physical penalty, or are more depraved than others, but spiritually speaking, all sins are equally serious because they equally demand the death penalty. One who has broken any of God’s laws is a lawbreaker and, except for God’s great mercy, is unfit for His Kingdom (James 2:10-11; note that two of the Ten Commandments are used to define God’s law.)

God did not originally create sin, but by giving free moral agency to His created beings He did leave the door open for sin to be committed. One of these great beings — later named Satan the Devil — had been created full of wisdom and perfect beauty (Ezekiel 28:12). This being was actually perfect in his ways until iniquity, sin, was “found in” him (Ezekiel 28:15). Satan is the one who introduced sin into the universe and became the adversary of God and man (Isaiah 14). (Ultimately, God will place the full responsibility for sin on its originator. This is the meaning behind the Day of Atonement which pictures Satan being bound after the return of

that they must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In turn, all since Adam and Eve (except Jesus) have sinned and incurred the death penalty for their own sins. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all man, for that all have sinned...” (Romans 5:12).

Sin can be either by omission or commission, individual or national, affecting others or affecting only one’s self. But in the final analysis, all sin is against God, because God is the author of the law against which man transgresses (Psalms 51:4). While the types of sin are as numerous and varied as human beings, the effects of sin are direct and specific. As explained, the final penalty for all sin is death in the lake of fire. But sin has other effects.

Sin makes people miserable; it ruins their lives and their families; it maims, devastates and kills; it is the cause of all human misery and suffering. This is why God hates sin so much — not because of what sin does to God, but because of what sin does to sinners whom God loves. Furthermore, sin perverts the mind; it can change the values of the sinner, his point of view and outlook, and make him rationalize that he is doing right when he is actually doing wrong. Sin blinds and deceives the sinner by causing a veil to fall over his eyes so that he cannot understand the reality of God’s truth as expressed in the Bible. More importantly, it cuts one off from God. “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that

it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Sin is the absolute antithesis of God, the opposite of everything He represents and for which He stands. Thus the sinner can never be given eternal life as a member of God’s family until all sin has been wiped away from his life — until it has been repented of and forgiven by God. This forgiveness is available only through the sacrifice of Christ upon repentance (Acts 2:38). But it is freely and fully given to all who ask. There is no sin that God won’t forgive, if the sinner is truly repentant.

Repentance is a gift from God. It comes when God opens one’s eyes to recognize his own sinfulness, and to see that his life has been a constant journey of self-centered vanity in defiance of God. Once one has acknowledged the reality of his sins, and has come to the heartfelt determination to change to a new life with Christ’s help, he can be baptized and receive total forgiveness for his sins. But repentance is not a one-time thing. Rather, one must repent of additional sins as he becomes aware of them; the now converted Christian must confess them before God on a daily basis.

It is crucial that Christians deeply realize that God does not forgive sin begrudgingly. He is quick to forgive lovingly and mercifully any repentant person of any and all sins, no matter what their magnitude, number or frequency may be — and then permanently block even the memory of those sins from His mind for eternity. God says He “hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust” (Psalms 103:10-14).

In connection with the topic of sin, many skeptics and sincere believers alike through the centuries have wondered why God allows sin to even exist: “If God is both all good and all powerful,” they ask, “why does He allow such terrible evils on earth?” The answer is rooted more in the

biblically stated purpose of human life than in the philosophically structured arguments of intellectual tradition.

God is, through man, reproducing Himself. In order to enable man to build righteous character, God created his mind with free moral agency. This means that human beings have been given the right and the capacity to make their own choices and to guide their own actions, thoughts, and lives. Therefore, in effect, God has given man the right and the capacity to do evil. Yet even this accomplishes God’s purpose. For in allowing man to commit evil, God enables man also to learn a great lesson from the experience of the evil: that disobedience to God’s ways, laws and principles will produce horrendous results. Once man has thoroughly and completely learned this hard, painful lesson of history — that disobedience to God produces destruction and death — he will never make the same fatal mistake Satan did; he will never rebel against God, because he knows such rebellion will produce only corruption and calamity.

While we need to deeply recognize the presence of sin in our lives as highlighted by God’s law, we need to forgive and forget sin, just as God does (Psalms 103:12). This applies to both our own sins and the sins of others. One of the most common problems for true Christians having been trained in, and imprinted by, puritanically based Western culture, is the continuing guilt-complex over past sins even after they are fully repented of and buried with Christ. As far as God is concerned, He sees no reason why the repentant person should feel guilty since He Himself will not even remember their sins. Christians, therefore, should grow toward having this same attitude regarding their own sins and (equally important) the sins of others. Once forgiven, all sins should be forgotten.

Certainly, sin affects us all because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But sin, however heinous and antithetical to God’s way, has become an intimate part of God’s plan of reproducing Himself through mankind. God’s forgiveness — the greatest expression of His total loving kindness and mercy — is the perfect antidote that completely nullifies and makes void Satan’s efforts at turning man from his Creator. □

SUMMARY: Read these scriptures in your own Bible:

- **1 John 3:4 — Sin is the transgression of the law.**
 - **Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3 — The Lord looketh down from heaven to see if any seek God.**
 - **Romans 3:23 — All have sinned.**
 - **Romans 7:19, 22-23 — Though sin dwells in us, we can delight in the law of God.**
 - **Romans 7:24 to 8:2 — There is no condemnation to those in Christ, who walk after the Spirit.**
 - **Matthew 4:1; Hebrews 4:15 — Jesus was tempted as we are.**
 - **James 1:14-15 — Sin is a process that ends in death.**
 - **Romans 6:23 — The wages of sin is death.**
 - **Revelation 20:14-15 — Whosoever is not found in the Book of Life is cast into the lake of fire.**
 - **James 2:10-11 — If we sin in one point, we are guilty of all sin.**
 - **Ezekiel 28:12 — Satan was originally created full of wisdom and beauty.**
 - **Ezekiel 28:15 — Sin was found in Satan.**
 - **Romans 5:12 — Sin entered the World by one man, Adam**
 - **Psalm 51:4 — When we sin, we sin against God.**
 - **Isaiah 59:1-2 — Sin separates man from God.**
 - **Acts 2:38 — Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.**
 - **Psalm 103:10-14 — God does not reward us according to our iniquities.**
 - **Psalm 103:12 — God removes sin far from us.**
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QUESTIONS (ANSWERS BELOW):

1. Sin is the transgression of the ____ [what?]
 2. Christ came to amplify the law of God to include the spirit and intent of the law. True or False?
 3. According to amplified law, hating your brother is the moral equivalent of murder. True or False?
 4. Probably the most insidious of sins is...
a) murder b) adultery c) self righteousness d) covetousness
 5. The power of sin is universal, permeating every nation, every race and every citizen. True or False?
 6. Sincere recognition of sin in one's life is the first step toward solving the problem. True or False?
 7. When we experience temptation, this too is sin. True or False?
 8. When we experience temptation, we should feel guilty. True or False?
 9. Which of the following statements are true?
a) Jesus experienced temptation
b) sins don't just happen but are the result of a process
c) all sins begin with a thought
d) sins result in the death of the sinner
e) all statements are true
-

10. Spiritually speaking all sins are equal. True or False?
11. God originated sin to test man. True or False?
12. Sin originated in...
a) God b) the world c) Satan d) man
13. Sin entered the world by...
a) God b) Satan c) man
14. Sin can be ...
a) by commission b) by omission c) individual d) national
e) affecting self f) affecting others g) all of the above
15. Sin blinds and deceives the sinner to the reality of God's truth. True or False?
16. Forgiveness of sin by God is only possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. True or False?
17. Repentance must be earned through obedience to God. True or False?
18. Repentance is a one-time action. Once one repents, he repents for all past and future sin. True or False?
19. Repentance must be done on a daily basis. True or False?
20. God's primary plan is to reproduce Himself. True or False?
21. To do this [God reproducing Himself] God gave mankind the right and capacity to make their own choices and to guide their own actions, thoughts and lives. True or False?
22. God has given man the right and capacity to do evil. True or False?
23. God did this so man would learn the futility of doing evil. True or False?
24. When God forgives us our sins, He forgets them. He wants us to do the same. True or False?
25. God's forgiveness of sins defeats Satan's plan to turn man from God. True or False?

LESSON TWENTY-ONE — ANSWERS:

- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. (law) | 6. (true) | 11. (false) | 16. (true) | 21. (true) |
| 2. (true) | 7. (false) | 12. (c) | 17. (false, it is a gift) | 22. (true) |
| 3. (true) | 8. (false) | 13. (c) | 18. (false) | 23. (true) |
| 4. (c) | 9. (e) | 14. (g) | 19. (true) | 24. (true) |
| 5. (true) | 10. (true) | 15. (true) | 20. (true) | 25. (true) |



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