



Anchor of the Soul

Vol. 2, Issue 10

October 2008

A New Design

By Casey Head

As you can see, “Anchor of the Soul” has been redesigned. There is a new banner at the top of the main page. A variety of new font styles are used, and there are now more graphics. You will even find a number of new features, including a “Bible Word Puzzle” and a “Current Events and the Bible” section.

We simply thought that it was time to modernize the newsletter, to give it a bolder and more professional design, and certainly there is nothing wrong with that. *BUT* there is something wrong when people have this same attitude about the New Testament and Christ’s church!

There are some people who feel that the gospel is outdated. It is often argued that the gospel is too exclusive. After all, it does say that the only way to salvation is *through* Jesus Christ (Ac. 4:12). That condemns the Muslims, the Buddhists, the atheists and even the Jews! It also condemns things such as homosexuality (Rom. 1:26-27) and adultery (1 Cor. 6:9). But that’s not politically correct, is it? So let’s water down the gospel and make it more palatable to people today...that’s the attitude of many.

Others argue that the Bible is primitive. After all, it does teach that the wife is to be subject to her husband (Eph. 5:22-24), and that certainly isn’t popular in a feminist society. “Paul the apostle was a horrible sexist,” some ignorantly argue in an effort to discredit the scriptures.

Still others reject God’s pattern for the church, saying that God’s pattern is insufficient and boring. Instead of Bible classes, they play pool and ping-pong. They build gymnasiums, fitness centers, softball fields, dance clubs and bowling allies. But where in the New Testament did the church ever engage in these kinds of works? They studied the Bible, preached the word, worshiped God and helped needy saints, but the local churches of the first century never sponsored recreational activities and social functions (1 Cor. 11:22, 34). But that’s out-of-date and boring, right?

It’s one thing to update a church newsletter, but it’s another thing altogether to update and renovate the Lord’s church (Eph. 5:26-27).

Anchor of the Soul
P.O. Box 401
Spruce Pine, NC 28777

Church Origins

By Andy Mitchell

No church, Catholic or Protestant, can trace its historical lineage to New Testament times. The oldest denominations are too young in age to be the New Testament church. How far back can the roots of denominations be traced?

Notice the following dates of origin:

- **Roman Catholic Church** – 606 A.D., Rome, with Boniface III as pope
- **Lutheran Church** – 1520 A.D., Germany, with Martin Luther’s writings as authority.
- **Episcopalian** – 1534, England, when Henry VIII broke away from Roman Catholicism.
- **Presbyterian** – 1536, Switzerland, led by John Calvin.
- **Congregational** – 1550, England, by Robert Browne.
- **Baptist** – 1607, Holland, by John Smythe.
- **Methodist** – 1739, England, by John Wesley.
- **Latter Day Saints (Mormons)** 1830, America, by Joseph Smith.
- **Adventists** – 1830, America, by William Miller.
- **Christian Scientists** – 1866, America, by Mary Baker Eddy
- **Jehovah’s Witnesses** – 1872, America, by Charles T. Russell

When Christ built His church, no denomination of any kind was in existence. Christ’s church was established in 33 A.D. in the city of Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus (Ac. 2). They were referred to as churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16) or churches of God (1 Thess. 2:14). The following churches cannot belong to Christ:

- Any denomination founded by someone other than Jesus.
- Any denomination that originated after 33 A.D..
- Any denomination that originated in another location other than Jerusalem.

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One CD containing four complete Bible studies that are guaranteed to deepen your knowledge of the word of God. If you are interested, provide the information below and mail this coupon to P.O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. Or, call (828)467-1463.

NAME: _____

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Current Events and the Bible...

It is no secret that our economy is struggling right now. Large investment banks are faltering, and some have even declared bankruptcy. Insurance companies are in trouble. Our utilities are getting more expensive. Food costs are rising. We’re all feeling the effects of soaring gas prices. In times such as this, it is very easy to be overwhelmed with anxiety and stress. But let us not forget the promises of God. Matthew 6:33-34 says, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” Paul instructs us in Philippians 4:6 to be anxious for nothing and in verses 11 he says, “Not that I speak in respect to want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” During times of economic hardship, let us trust in God!

More about the Spruce Pine church of Christ...

- ❖ We are undenominational (1 Pet. 5:2)
- ❖ We worship in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24)
- ❖ We preach the word of God (2 Tim. 4:2)
- ❖ We are a closely-knit spiritual family (Eph. 4:16)

Times of Services

Sunday.....	Bible study	10:00 AM
	Worship	11:00 AM
	Evening Worship	6:30 PM
Wednesday....	Bible study	7:00 PM

Directions

To get to our building, follow 226 South to McHone Road (located between the Mitchell Veterinary Clinic and the Spruce Pine United Methodist Church). Once you turn onto McHone Road, turn right into the second driveway. You will see our sign at the top of the hill.

Call (828)467-1463 for more information

PAPAL PRIDE EXPOSED

By Bryan Matthew Dockens

“Pride goes before destruction” (Proverbs 16:18), and the following reveals nothing if not the pride of the man called “pope”.

The etymology of the word “POPE” can be traced through Latin and Greek and has the meaning “Father”, but Jesus taught, “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven” (Matthew 23:9). Anyone claiming “papal” authority usurps the supremacy of God.



The man Catholics call the “pope” claims the title “BISHOP OF ROME”. The scripture says, “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...” (1st Timothy 3:2), yet Catholics don’t allow their priests, much less their “pope”, to marry. They are required to take a vow of celibacy, but Paul wrote, “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry...” (1st Timothy 4:1-3). How can any man be a bishop who does not meet the qualifications for that office?

The “pope” also wears the title “UNIVERSAL BISHOP”. However, it is Jesus Christ Himself who is the “Bishop of your souls” (1st Peter 2:25).

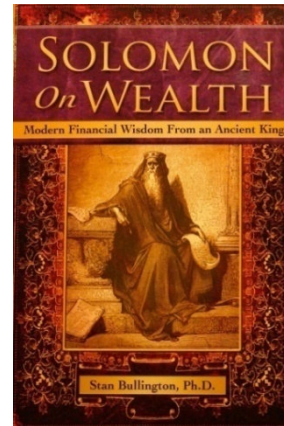
The etymology of the word “PONTIFF” suggests “way”, “passage”, or “bridge”. Christ said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). He also said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved...” (John 10:9). It is Jesus Christ who provides exclusive access to God the Father.

The “pope” is presumed to be the “HEAD OF THE CHURCH” on earth, but no such thing is taught in scripture. It is written, “And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:17-18). Did the “pope” create all things? Did the “pope” rise from the dead? No, Christ did those things! Christ’s body, which is His church, has but one head: Christ Himself.

The “pope” is also called the “VICAR OF CHRIST”. The word “vicar” means “substitute”. By it, Catholics mean that the so-called “pope” is Christ’s representative on earth, but nothing is authorized in scripture concerning a Christ substitute. However, Jesus did warn that “false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matthew 24:24).

Solomon on Wealth

October 17-19, 2008



Stan Bullington, author of the book Solomon on Wealth, will present a series of lessons regarding Solomon’s insight on wealth.

These lessons will help us understand what God desires us to know about dealing with the opportunities and problems that come with the financial blessings that He supplies. Heeding the advice of the wisest and wealthiest man, King Solomon, could easily solve the financial difficulties faced by many today.

Schedule of Lessons

Friday	Oct 17	7:00 PM	“Money Matters”
Saturday	Oct 18	10:00 AM	“What About Debt?”
Saturday	Oct 18	11:00 AM	“A Practical Guide to Faithful Stewardship”
Sunday	Oct 19	10:00 AM	“The Virtuous Wife: Her Money and Her Family”
Sunday	Oct 19	11:00 AM	“Firstfruits: Learning to Trust in God”
Sunday	Oct 19	6:30 PM	“Transform Your Life”

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**If you have any questions, call us at (828)467-1463
Or visit us online at www.LookingToJesus.com**



Lessons From a Flock of Geese

Author Unknown

Scientists have discovered the secret of the great strength of the Canadian Geese in their long flights. Some flocks fly from Hudson Bay to the Midwest at a powerful 70 miles per hour, nonstop. Together, co-operating as a flock in a V-shaped formation, wingtip to wingtip, none misses a stroke. They are able to fly a 71% longer range than when a solitary goose tries to make it. The lead goose cuts a swath through the air resistance and creates a helping uplift for the two birds behind him. Each bird rotates as the lead. In this manner the tired ones fan out to the edges of the "V" for a rest and the rested ones go toward the point of the "V" to the lead of the flock.



The Conquering of Canaan:

1. When Rahab hid the two spies, she hid them using what type of plant?
2. The inhabitants of what city deceived Joshua and Israel by dressing up in old garments?
3. In total, how many times did Joshua and his army march around the city of Jericho before it fell?
4. How many spies did Joshua send out to view the city of Jericho?
5. Where was the tabernacle first placed after Israel entered Canaan?

Parables Concerning the Kingdom:

6. What is the seed of the kingdom?
7. In the parable of the leaven, the leaven was hidden in how many measures of meal?
8. In the parable of the wheat and tares, who is the enemy that sowed tares among the wheat?
9. In the parable of the wheat and tares, who are the reapers?
10. What is the primary point of the parable of the full net?

Answers:

1. Flax (Josh. 2:6); 2. Gibeon (Josh. 9); 3. Thirteen (Josh 6:3-4); 4. Two (Josh. 2:1); 5. Shiloh (Josh. 18:1); 6. The word of God (Lk. 8:11); 7. Three (Mt. 13:33); 8. The devil (Mt. 13:39); 9. The angels (Mt. 13:39); 10. The separation of the wicked and the just (Mt. 13:49-50)

How did you do?

Scientists think the incessant honking is a way the stronger ones lend encouragement to the weaker ones. If a goose becomes exhausted or ill and has to drop out of the flight, a stronger member of the flock will follow the weak one to his resting place and stay with him until he is well enough to fly again. This is a valuable lesson to Christians. Just as geese can go farther and accomplish more by flying "in a family," we, with the support of fellow Christians and friends who care for us, go farther in the Lord's work than we could go alone.

If I "fly" in the "family," the church, I will never fly alone, neither feel rejected or ignored. Another will support me, and my efforts will help other members of the church.

The lesson of the geese adds strength to the conclusion that "if we help others, we are helping ourselves." In serving and giving of ourselves, we ourselves are lifted up and helped along. On one occasion Jesus' disciples were arguing over which one of them would be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus' reply was short and sure. He indicated that one's care of others is the measure of one's greatness (Lk. 9:48).

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The Suffering of Jesus

By Byron Smith

As we continue to study the suffering of Jesus, be reminded that Jesus “gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father” (Gal. 1:5), and that these events were brought about “by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God...” (Ac. 2:23). Jesus’ suffering involved tremendous physical and emotional anguish.

- In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus desired the company and encouragement of His closest comrades, but they failed Him in His agony—they slept and He suffered alone (Mt. 26:37, 40).
- It was in the garden Jesus was betrayed by an alleged friend, Judas Iscariot (Mt. 26:50).
- In the garden, Jesus was altogether abandoned by His inner circle of disciples who with fear and bewilderment fled. The text says, “all the disciples forsook Him and fled” (Mt. 26:56).
- In the garden, Jesus was arrested as if He were a vicious criminal. Jesus said, “Have you come out, as against a robber...” (Mt. 26:55).
- During the preliminary hearing before Annas, Jesus was undeservingly struck by an officer “with the palm of his hand” (Jn. 18:22-23).
- As Jesus faced Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, He suffered injustice, misrepresentation and false accusation (Mt. 26:57-68).
- Multiple times Jesus was mocked, insulted, taunted, ridiculed and disgraced—these mocking included the crown of thorns, being spit upon, being shamefully displayed before the multitudes, and other cruel gestures of hatred (Mt.26:67-68; 27:27-31, 38-44; Lk. 23:11).
- Jesus was scourged by the Romans—whereas the Jews were limited to 40 blows, the Romans had no such compunction as they inflicted this tortuous punishment (Mt. 27:26).
- Last, He was put to death by means of crucifixion. The text simply says, “Then they crucified Him...” (Mt. 27:35). With remarkable brevity the historian refers to a means of execution that was prolonged, cruel and excruciating. While the cross in modern times has become an object of adoration, when Jesus died on the cross it bore no symbolism of honor. Yes, Jesus “endured the cross, despising the **shame**” (Heb. 12:2).

Since Jesus “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people...” (Tit. 2:14) should we not respond with gratitude and devotion?



Of God and the Bible

The Earth’s population growth curve is evidence of a young earth. In 1999, there were six billion people on this planet. There were a total of five billion people on earth in 1985, and in 1810 there were one billion humans in the world. Back in the first century, when Jesus was living, it is estimated that there were ¼ billion people on planet earth. Obviously, the population has been increasing dramatically since the first century, and the *greater* the population, the *faster* it grows. Well, this population growth curve supports 4,400 years of human existence, which lines up perfectly with the flood of Genesis 7-8. The evolutionary theory (which contradicts the Bible) says that humans have been around for three million years. If that were true, there would be 150,000 people today per square inch! You do the math. Clearly, this is evidence for the biblical timeline, NOT the evolutionary timeline!

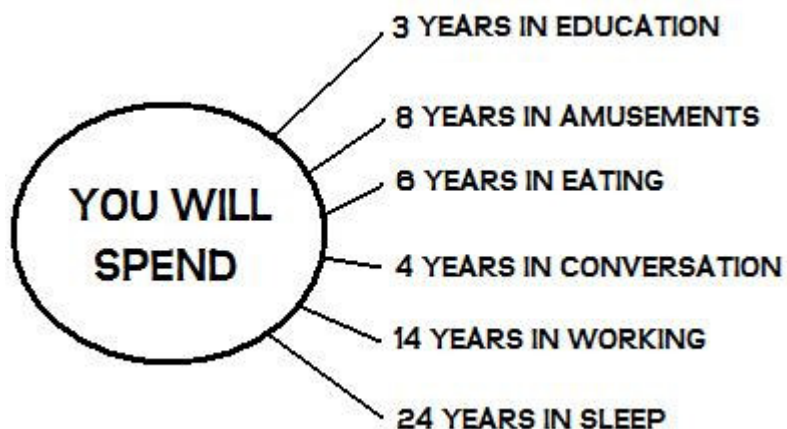


LIGHTNING LESSON

We’re cutting out the “challenge question” segment of our trivia page, but I do want to go ahead and answer the last one from the September issue. The question was: how should the religious world strive for unity? What will it take? In answering that question, it is first of all important to recognize that the religious world *is* divided. You have thousands of distinct denominations who all have their own manuals, creeds and disciplines. They have different views on salvation, eternal security, the nature of God, the hierarchy within the church, morality, and the list goes on. They may get along with one another and extend fellowship to those of other denominations, but that is not biblical unity. Unity exists only when we surrender ourselves wholly to the word of God (Jn. 17:11). We must learn to “speak the same thing...and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). There is, after all, just one pattern that we are to follow...the New Testament (Heb. 8:5-6). We must strive to obtain the “unity of the spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 1:3). So what will it take for unity to exist in the religious world? Church creeds will have to be laid aside and human denominations will have to be abandoned. There will have to be an unwavering desire to emulate New Testament Christianity!

Your life in review --

If you live to be 70:



...AND...

If you attend church services
Every Sunday morning and every Sunday evening, and
If you go to Bible study every Wednesday night, and
If you read the Bible 5 minutes every day,

You will spend Two years worshipping God and studying
His word...

TWO out of SEVENTY!

The spruce Pine church of Christ invites you to assemble
with them every chance you get. Think about it...

Fluctuating Moral Standards

By James E. Cooper

The moral standards of practicing Christianity are certainly higher than those of the general public. This is always so. But, like public morals, it appears that Christian morality also fluctuates. At times of higher public morality, the lives of Christians will be nobler still. But when public morality is lower, the lives of Christians are also on a lower moral plane. This should not be, for Christians should always follow the ethical standards set forth in the Word of God. His standards do not fluctuate with the times.

But, whether we want to admit it or not, our attitudes toward right and wrong are affected by the attitudes of others about us. Nowhere is this more evident than with regard to the "sexual revolution." Publicity given to changing public attitudes toward pre-marital sex, living-together-without-benefit-of-marriage, marriage-and-divorce problems, and the homosexual's push for social acceptance, is bound to have some effect on the thinking of church members.

With the lower standards of morality now being advocated by a sizeable number in our society, we must be doubly alert to the dangers of being "conformed to the world" (cf. Romans 12:1).

Bible Word Challenge

Rules: To answer the following question, you must read the scriptures below and fill in the blanks. Then, take the new words and write them in the spaces below according to their number...

QUESTION: How much time passed between Israel's exodus from Egypt and the construction of the temple?

1. "And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the _____ winds..." (Mk. 13:27)
2. "How think ye? If a man have an _____ sheep..." (Mt. 18:12)
3. "And Methuselah lived an hundred _____ and seven years and begat Lamech." (Gen. 5:25)

ANSWER: _____ years!
(1) (2) (3)