

The Greater Light

The End Time Messenger

“... Let all have Faith. Turn to The Lord and obey His Commands. Heed Repentance and Baptism that The Way of The Lord shall be among men. His Kingdom shall fill the whole earth. The hands must be laid upon all that THE GREATER LIGHT might come to them.”
Message 53:3

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Happy Thanksgiving & Merry Christmas

“Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people.”

- 1 Chronicles 16:8



The Church of Christ With The Elijah Message
THE ASSURED WAY OF THE LORD, Inc.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE AMERICAS, AFRICA, ASIA, AUSTRALIA, AND EUROPE

Articles of Faith and Practice

1. We believe in God the Eternal Father, who only is Supreme; Creator of the universe; Ruler and Judge of all; unchangeable and without respect of persons.

2. We believe in Jesus Christ the manifestation of God in flesh, who lived, suffered, and died for all mankind; whom we own as our only Leader, Witness, and Commander.

3. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, which searcheth the deep things of God, brings to our minds things which are past, reveals this to come, and is the medium by which we receive the revelation of Jesus Christ.

4. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression, and that as a consequence of the atonement of Christ "all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the Law. For the power of redemption cometh on all they that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent, and unto such, baptism availeth nothing." (Moroni 8:22)

5. We believe that through the atonement of Christ all men may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel; viz.: Faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ; Repentance and Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; Laying on of Hands for: (a) Ordination; (b) Blessing of Children: (c) Confirmation and the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:17); (d) Healing of the sick.

6. We believe in the literal second coming and millennial reign of Jesus Christ; in the resurrection of the Dead, and in Eternal Judgment; that men will be rewarded or punished according to the good or evil they may have done.

7. We believe in the powers and gifts of the everlasting Gospel; viz.: The word of wisdom; the word of knowledge; the gift of faith; the gift of healing; working of miracles; prophecy; discerning of spirits; divers kinds of tongues; interpretation of tongues.

8. We believe the fruits of the Spirit to be love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

9. We believe that in the Bible is contained the Word of God; that The Record of the Nephites is the added witness for Christ; and these contain the "fullness of the gospel."

10. We believe in the principle of continuous revelation; that the canon of scripture is not full, that God inspires men in every age and among all people, and that He speaks when, where, and through whom He may choose.

11. We believe that where there are six or more regularly baptized members, one of whom is an elder, there the Church exists with full power of Church extension when acting in harmony with the Law of God.

12. We believe that man must be called of God by revelation and ordained by those having authority, to enable him to preach the Gospel and administer the Ordinances thereof.

13. We believe in the same Church organization as existed in the time of Christ and His apostles. The highest office in the Church is that of an apostle, of whom there are twelve, who constitute special witnesses for Jesus Christ. They have the Missionary Supervision and the General Watchcare of all the Churches.

14. The primary function of the General Church, of which each Local Church is a component part, is missionary and the building up and extension of the Kingdom of God in all

the world.

15. We believe that Local Churches should govern their own affairs and that General Church officials should not dominate or interfere therewith. On invitation such general officers may, with propriety, give counsel and assistance. Local congregations are subject to the Articles of Faith and Practice and must be governed thereby.

16. We believe The Church of Christ comprehends the true brotherhood of man where each esteems his brother as himself and wherein the Divine command to "love your neighbor as yourself" is demonstrated by the prevalence of social equality.

17. We believe that all men are stewards under God and answerable to Him not only for the distribution of accumulated wealth, but for the manner in which such wealth is secured. The primary purpose of stewardship is not the increase of church revenue or the mere contribution of money by those who have to those who have not, but to bring men to a realization of the common fatherhood and the universal brotherhood of man in all the affairs and expressions of life, and to maintain such social adjustments that each may enjoy the bounty and gifts of God, and be free to exercise his talents and ability to enrich the life of all.

18. We believe that men should labor for their own support and that of their dependents. Ministers of the Gospel are not absolved from this responsibility, but when chosen or appointed by the Church to devote their entire time to missionary work, their families are to be provided for out of the General Church fund. The admonition of Christ that ministry should not provide purse or scrip for their journey, but good trusting in God and the people, is applicable.

19. We believe that the temporal affairs of the General Church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the supervision and direction of general conferences of the Church. The temporal affairs of the Local Churches shall be administered by local bishops under the supervision and direction of the local congregations.

20. We believe that marriage is ordained of God, and that the Law of God provides for but one companion in wedlock for either man or woman. In case of a breach of this covenant the innocent one may remarry.

21. We believe oppose to war. Men are not justified in taking up of arms against their fellows except as a last resort in defense of their lives and to preserve their liberty.

22. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the ten lost tribes.

23. We believe a Temple will be built in this generation, in Independence, Missouri, wherein Christ will reveal Himself and endow His servants whom He chooses with power to preach the Gospel in all the world to every kindred, tongue, and people, that the promise of God to Israel may be fulfilled.

24. We believe that New Jerusalem shall be built upon this land "unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, (Ether 6:6-8; III Nephi 10.1-4), which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot."

25. We believe that ministry and membership should abstain from the use of tobacco, intoxicating liquors and narcotics, and should not affiliate with any society which administer oaths or covenants in conflict with the Law of God, or which interfere with their duties as freemen and citizens.

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know and a hard copy will be mailed to you.

Message 53.3, "Give ear, Oh ye people of the earth. Hear The Warning today. I speak The Words and Will of The Lord. Let all have Faith. Turn to The Lord and obey His Commands. Heed repentance and baptism that The Way of The Lord shall be among men. His Kingdom shall fill the whole earth. The hands must be laid upon all that **THE GREATER LIGHT** might come to them."

Message 53.10, "Yea, I have brought a Warning and few prepare for **THE GREATER LIGHT**, but be thou Faithful even all who hear, for The Lord's Will shall be fulfilled in all things. All have their work to do and the day comes when The Lord shall breathe upon The Chosen and they shall do His Work in Mighty Power for their love toward the brethren. All that offend and that do not keep His Commandments shall not be His in the Last Day. Moreover, it is Christ's Words that shall judge all men."

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It is the agreement of *The Quorum of Twelve of this Church*, that no Minister is to Ordain any man into *The Ministry* until said candidate has with all his heart and soul confessed he agrees with everything written in *The Articles of Faith and Practice*.

It is each Elder's duty to Seek Guidance from and to keep The Territorial Apostle informed of his works in the region he is laboring.

Secretary For The Twelve

FOREWORD

THE GREATER LIGHT, the official publication of *The Church of Christ With The Elijah Message, The Assured Way of The Lord, Inc.*, comes to YOU as an expression of a united people, whose only aim is to promote *The Cause of Christ* by spreading abroad to every nation, tongue and people, *The True Gospel of Christ* that through Obedience to His Laws we might be found worthy of *Eternal Life*.

In this publication, *The Record of The Nephites* is quoted many times. This Book was Revealed and Translated by *The Gift and Power of God*: the year 1829 marked the beginning of *The Restoration of all things*. It is history of the people who once lived in the region around *The Great Lakes*, some of whom are Ancestors of The Native Americans. Though it contains a Record of two other groups of people who once lived here, it is for the most part a Record of The People of Nephi.

The Messages so often mentioned in this publication are Messages from The Lord, brought to earth by His Chosen Servant, John

The Baptist, who comes to earth in a Glorified Body to finish The Work given to him of God; that of Restoring all things (Matthew 17: 11-13). The Angel first came in 1829, and Restored *The Authority of the Son of God*, that *The Church of Christ* might be Established as in The Days of The Apostles.

In 1927, The Angel Messenger again appeared, and on numerous subsequent visits, has brought to us *The Word of The Lord* that *The Church of Christ* might be set in Order, that a people might be Prepared to be *The Bride of Christ*. This is *The Elijah Message* so many have looked for, *The Midnight Cry* has been Proclaimed, *A Warning of Destruction*, but to *The People of The Lord*, a Message that Christ's soon Coming is near at hand. Fear God and give *Glory to His Name*, for *The Hour of His Judgement* has come. Awake those that sleepest and Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you *Light*.

We hope that whosoever reads these pages might make it a matter of Prayer and Fasting in Humility before God, that they may know for themselves, that God has again Spoken and Revealed *His Will* from Heaven. To this end, we Dedicate *The Greater Light*.

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Thank you.

THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST TODAY

To All People

Thirty-First Message

A Messenger of the Lord came to me at my home, Nucla, Colorado, Monday morning, October 4, 1937.

Sunday night, after coming home from church, I retired with earnest prayer from my heart, asking God for direction and that I might live to please Him. I also thanked him greatly for the blessings I had received.

I had awakened several times in the night and went back to sleep praying. I awakened with a start, hearing footsteps on the ground floor. I raised up in bed and looking towards the staircase I noticed a light coming or beginning to shine up the stairway. I was somewhat astonished to think someone would be walking in my house, when I knew I had locked the doors. Immediately I say it was man dressed in a white robe, and with no light I his hand as I had supposed. A light seemed to radiate from him, lighting the whole room, while immediately around him it was much brighter. His beard was radiant, his eyes which shone like neon light, though piercing and bright, were gentle and pleasant, his looks kind. I was somewhat afraid, but his smile helped to drive away my fear. I thought perhaps it may be an angel from God. When he appeared on the top stair he seemed to float quickly to my bedside. I trembled and pulled the covers to my chest while sitting up in bed. He smiled and began to speak kindly. His tone was convincing and his voice slightly heavier than that of an ordinary man. When he spoke I seemed to be lifted in space, yet I knew I remained on the bed. Although this happened so very quickly, all fear had let me and I set my faculties to give attention and listen carefully. He said:

-W. A. Draves

1. "Fear not, let peace be with you. Your prayers have been heard; God hears the prayers of His children; He knows your hearts before you ask. Some are pleading to Him in your behalf, and God has looked on you in favor. The year has been good to your. Blessings have been yours to enjoy. Yea, be humble before your God.

2. Truly God has used you as an instrument in His hands— by the Power of that righteous Spirit He spoke through you. Many have obeyed His voice. Many have been made glad

and some have gone through sadness and will, before they will hear Him, but God will not fail the honest— those that seek Him diligently. Seek Him early while it is called today. Man is all selfishness unless he is filled with the Spirit of God."

At this juncture the visitor raised his right arm and seemed to reach almost over me swaying his arm gently. I watched every move he made and especially his lips as he spoke on with sternness and firmness as one speaking the truth.

3. "Now hear ye the Words of the Lord, all that tremble in His Sight, and at His Word. 'Yea, seek Me and walk righteously before Me, heed My Voice and great shall be your blessings. Remember you Lord and Master who drank of the bitter cup— all must drink of the cup of trial to know what I have suffered for you. Lift high your Banner, hold firmly to the Iron Rod. Yea, the righteous call unto Me and My countenance shines up on them.

4. I say unto thee all, for none have progressed as I would have you. The longing in your hearts is still unsatisfied because of that which brought broken confidence in each other and discouragement and shaken hope; thus speaking hard of each other, making hardness of heart. Behold, I would have you love one another. Do good to them that despitefully use you.

5. My sheep know My Voice. Many false delusions are going out, but again I say My Sheep know My Voice and heareth not another. Some have lost their affections for My Work. This ye must not do, but uphold My Work, or darkness will shake you one and all, and the gathering you long to accomplish shall come to naught. I know your desires; yea, when seasoned by My Spirit, much good will come from your works. Humble yourselves more before Me. In not doing this, ye do foolishly before Me.

6. Stand more firmly together, for I desire it of thee, that you may stand when greater powers of darkness shall come over you. Yea, it is, that dark clouds of deceitfulness and dangerous sayings shall come among you, which shall try many and some may fall. Pray for thy brethren. Cry unto God.

7. Indeed the angel that revived the Work is still at the helm, and verily has not come since the visit with the Message, that all must drink of the bitter cup, to thy brother Fetting, but shall come again. Yea, and indeed, I, your Maker, knoweth all that taketh place. When ye hear it said, "A shining light," "A great star," I say unto you, know ye this, it is not of Me; be not deceived by it.

8. Much is folly before Me and man is nothing of good when he heeds not My voice. Know ye the Witness of My Spirit, how that it caused the hearts of men to mellow before Me. Is this Spirit still with you? Heed ye the still Small Voice and the promptings of the Divine Spirit. Be not conformed to the works of darkness nor the ways of the world. Work with an eye single to My glory. When I speak answer by your actions; abide in My doctrine. Let your words and deeds be that to My honor and glory. Return your love and service to Me that your works may show your faith.

9. Ye that name My Name give thanks unto your Master; in so doing I will bless you that you will be a blessing, and bless others. Let My Spirit rule your lives. Be ye long suffering. Be not as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. Be filled with charity and let peace rule your minds and you lives. The fire of joy shall burn within you. Yea, the Lord will walk and talk with those that keep His Law in fullness. Seek not the praise of men. Be not heady nor highminded. Seek to do good. A good tree cannot bear corrupt fruit, nor a corrupt tree, good fruit.

10. Verily, the Courts from above have sounded these Words, and you have heard. Yea, be at peace, let not your heart be troubled. Be at peace with all men. Hear the Words that are true and faithful sent from the Realms above."

By this time I was fully convinced that my visitor was an Angel. As he spoke the last words he floated back to the head of the stairs, directly in front of a window. I rubbed my eyes, hoping to get a better look at him and then to ask his name, should he pause. But I could see him no more. The light remained in the room for an hour or more. I fell asleep and when I awakened the influence remained with Power and as I write I can feel the tingling influence of that Spirit. This is as near correct as I can remember.

- W.A. Draves

From The Apostles

Richard Johnson.

The Rapture Teaching

The Church of Christ with the Elijah Message does not believe or teach the doctrine of a secret rapture of the Church to heaven before or during the Great Tribulation that proceeds the second coming of Christ.

Articles of Faith and Practice 6: "We believe in the literal second coming and Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ; in the Resurrection of the Dead, and in Eternal Judgment; that men will be rewarded or punished according to the good or evil they may have done."

His words shall judge all in the last day, and great is His reward to the faithful when He comes, but dreadful to the wicked at His appearing.

What is the Pre Tribulation rapture doctrine? *It is a teaching and the belief that Jesus will be coming to secretly rapture the Church to heaven before the Great Tribulation that proceeds the second coming of Christ..* He will then return with them after the Great Tribulation with the second phase of the second coming with the saints to establish His Kingdom. The four versions of the in-gathering of the church are Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, Pre-Wrath, and Post-Tribulation. If one is true the rest are obviously wrong and causing confusion. God is not the author of confusion or private interpretation.

What is the definition and source of the word that some call rapture in the Bible? The word "rapture" is derived from the Latin Vulgate Bible which was translated from the Greek word "harpázō," meaning to "openly, forcefully take up" or "openly and suddenly catch away." (*i.e. not covertly or secretly*). We find such forms and tenses of the Latin word "rapio" as rapere, rapui, raptus, rapturo, and so on; when such forms and tenses are translated into English, they result in such words as rapt, rapture, rapturous, raptor, etc.

Where is it discussed and what is its meaning in scripture? The English word "rapture"

does not actually occur at all in the King James, New King James, NIV, or other modern translation of the Bible! Among many Christians, especially those in certain parts of the Protestant world, the meaning of the rapture is a secret snatching up to heaven of true Christians who are still alive *just before or during the Great Tribulation*.

This doctrine was started primarily by a young Scottish girl named Margaret MacDonald about 1830. The idea of secret rapture was promoted by Edward Irving. It was also taught by John Nelson Darby in 1833 by analyzing some Bible translations without scripture actually supporting his conclusions.

The correct understanding of those alive in Christ not being secretly caught up to heaven before or during the tribulation can be found with seeing the correct order of the resurrection according to the Scriptures. The correct teaching of the order of the Resurrection as found in 1Corinthians 15:22-24, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23. But every man in his own order: Christ the First-Fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24. Then cometh the end..."

The order of the resurrection of all men and Christ the First Fruits of the resurrection:

- A. Christ and the former dead saints¹ he raised with Him appearing in Jerusalem.
- B. Those which sleep in Jesus will be resurrected with a glorified body and believers who are still alive will have their bodies changed to glorified bodies and all will be caught up to meet the Lord at His appearing and coming to earth² with the angels from heaven³ following the Great Tribulation⁴ to live and reign with Christ for 1000 Years and Satan is bound.⁵ His words shall judge all in the last day, and great is His reward⁶ to the faithful when He comes, but dreadful to the wicked at His appearing.
- C. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection⁷.

³2Thessalonians1:7

⁴Matthew 24:21-22, 29-31, Revelation 7:14, Mathew13:24-30, Message 52:8, Message 88:12

⁵Revelation 20:1-4

⁶Revelation 11:18, 22:12

⁷Revelation 20.4-5.

Articles

The Kingdom of God, Part 2

The following study is an excerpt from the *Light at Evening Time: The Gospel Restored* by Maggie Macgregor, pages 14-26.

How to Enter the Kingdom

Of all questions this is the most important. Salvation can only be found within the kingdom of God.

There is an answer to this question. It was given by our Lord and was stated in unmistakable terms: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."- John 3:3-5.

This is the baptism of water and of the Holy Spirit. Water baptism is everywhere taught in the New Testament.³

Once again we find an answer to this ever-recurring question. It was stated by the Apostle Peter to an inquiring throng who had been melted to penitence through the effect of his powerful preaching: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)

Note the answer! With clarion clearness it rings in resounding terms:

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."- Acts 2:37, 38.

Again, when Saul sat blind and helpless, waiting to learn what he "must do," as our Savior had instructed him in a vision (Acts 9:6), he was told by the Lord's servants to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away his sins." (Acts 22:16).

It was the same in the case of the Philippian jailer. Falling down before Paul and Silas,

¹Matthew27:52-53

²1Thessalonians 4:14-18, 1Corinthians 15:51-58

upon seeing the great destruction wrought by the power of God, he imploringly inquired, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He was told first to believe on the Lord Jesus, after which "he was baptized, he and all his, straightway." (Acts 16:33)

Again, when Philip went down into Samaria to preach Christ, a great many became convinced of the truth, and "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (Acts 8:12).

And so it was in all cases where people were brought into the church- it was through the door of baptism.

Jesus had instructed his disciples that in going out to preach they must also baptize- "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19).

Undoubtedly this was water baptism, because no earthly person has any power to baptize with anything else than a water baptism. The Spirit baptism is to be administered by God himself. "I indeed baptize you with water," said John, and so did Philip, for in baptizing the eunuch "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." (Acts 8:38).

Last, but not least, our Lord, to illustrate what he meant when he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," traveled a long distance to meet with John that he might be baptized. John at first hesitated, thinking that our Lord was good enough without it, but Jesus corrected him by saying, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3:15). Whereupon he was baptized. After this came the baptism of the Spirit.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him,"- Matthew 3:16.

Thus was the birth of the water and the Spirit shown forth in our Lord's baptism.

There was not other way of entering the kingdom of God, for if any enter not by "the

door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

No one can be justified who refuses to be baptized in water. They tried it in Jesus' day and brought upon themselves his condemnation: "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." (Luke 7:29, 30).

The Mode of Baptism

An ordinance of such importance will clearly display the manner of its administration.

It is of such magnitude that all will see it.

Taking then our position on the pinnacle of scriptural truth, the whole ceremony comes to view. No theological telescopes are required. The natural vision, unimpaired by prejudice and unblemished by bigotry, will afford us the cleared conception. Commentaries and catechisms stand aside.

"And were all baptized of him in the river Jordan."- Mark 1:5.

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there."- John 3:23.

"And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."- Acts 8:38.

"And when they were come up out of the water."- Acts 8:39.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."- Matthew 3:16.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism."- Romans 6:4.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him."- Colossians 2:12.

Gleaned from the foregoing field, the following facts are submitted.

1. That the Bible baptism requires **water**.
2. That it takes "**much water**."
3. That it necessitates a going "**down into the water**."
4. That the candidate must be "**buried in baptism**."
5. That succeeding the burial he is "**risen again**."

6. That there is a coming up out of the water.

Now take this baptismal measuring rod, which as it metaphorically appears, is just six feet long, and apply it to the modern methods of baptism, and we may easily discover any discrepancy.

Let us apply it sprinkling. How will it measure up?

1. Does it require water? Yes.
2. Does it require **much water**? _____.
3. Does the candidate go **down in the water**? _____.
4. Is the candidate **buried by baptism**? _____.
5. Is the candidate **risen again**? _____.
6. Does the candidate **come up out of the water**? _____.

Thus by actual measurement the ceremony of springling is found to be right in only one point. Instead of being the regulation height of six feet, it is but one. Who will accept such a stunted dwarf?

Measure now immersion:

1. Does it require water? Yes.
2. Does it require **much water**? Yes.
3. Does the candidate go **down into the water**? Yes.
4. Is the candidate **buried in baptism**? Yes.
5. Is the candidate **risen again**? Yes.
6. Does the candidate **come up out of the water**? Yes.

The most recent innovation respecting the administration of baptism is that of performing it in any style the applicant may choose.

The policy prompting such a sickly compromise is obvious. It would never do to lose a prospective contributor to the ministerial stipend. Such "an insignificant thin as baptism" must not be permitted to stand in the way of swelling congregational membership. And so they take them in through any mode of baptism; yes, with or without baptism.

What a disrespectful reversal of that unalterable injunction, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them." (Matthew 28:19, 20). Instead of teaching the public how they should be baptized, the modern minters, prostituting the very elementary principles of a heaven-sent man of God, are calling upon the public to teach them as to what manner they would like to have the ordinance of baptism

administered.

Will do they fulfill the prophetic forecast?

"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.

It will not do to presume upon the unconcernedness of the Almighty in this matter. In ancient days his work forever stood at par and it will not do to discount it now.

Once upon a time he gave commandment that the incense used at the altar of service should be made of a certain compound, but Nadab and Abihu thought it didn't matter. In an hour of urgency they used another prescription, when a bolt of fire streaking forth from an insulted altar struck them bot dead. (Leviticus 10:1, 2).

And God has said that in the latter days when the iniquity of presumption would again spread upon the face of the earth; mankind would "**change the ordinance**" and so bring upon themselves universal ruin:

"The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." - Isaiah 24:5, 6.

It must not be overlooked that immersion was recognized as the scriptural form of baptism by the leading lights of those churches who today have reverted to the sprinkling service.⁴

Laying on of Hands

Following the administration of baptism we meet with the ordinance of the laying on of hands; a part of the great gospel plan induction souls into the church and kingdom of God.

Its place and purpose is clearly stated in the narratives covering the missionary effort at Samaria:

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that

they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." -Acts 8:14-19

Again we find this same service performed by Saint Paul.

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him. We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

And all the men were about twelve." -Acts 19:1-7

Saint Paul elsewhere assures us that he was taught the gospel "by the revelation of Jesus Christ," and that if any many should 'preach any other gospel' he would "be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-12), all of which only emphasizes the unalterable importance of that gospel which he both preached and practiced—the laying on of hands thereby included.

Other uses of the laying on of hands were those of blessing little children, the healing of the sick, and the ordination of the ministry, as the following will show:

"And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." -Mark 10:16.

"Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid hands on them, and departed thence." -Matthew 19:14, 15.

"And, putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that

though mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." - Acts 9:17.

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." -Mark 16:18.

"And he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them." -Luke 4:40.

"And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people." - Acts 5:12.

"To whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him." -Acts 28:8.

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." -James 5:14, 15.

"Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by putting on of my hands." -2 Timothy 1:6.

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." -1 Timothy 4:14.

The ordinance of the laying on of hands served an excellent purpose in the church. The blessing and consecrating of little children, the healing of the sick, the conferring of the Holy Ghost, and the ordination of the ministry were each and all of essential service. Indeed, there is no other field of usefulness so extensive as that occupied by the laying on of hands.

It's use was absolutely indispensable, for how else were the ministry to be ordained? And without a ministry, how shall the gospel be preached? "How shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14).

Moreover, how else were the people to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? Is there any other way suggested in the Scriptures? If not, why part with the known and scriptural way, for some untried and unapproved system?

Did God err in setting up the ordinance of the laying on of hands? If not, is it not an error on our part to refuse to honor that which God has so unmistakably approved?

But they tell us that the ordinance of the laying on of hands has been done away. Yes; but **who** tells us? And by whom was it taken away? Not by them who were sent by Jesus Christ at all events, for God would not contradict himself in that way. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to

it, nor any thing taken from it.” (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

It is commonly understood that a statute is in force until it has been repealed; and no repeal is possible until the body enacting that statute shall have taken action. In this case it was Christ who set up the ordinance of the laying on of hands, and until that same authority shall order a nullification, no man or set of men have the right to declare inoperative that which God has established.

The religious world holds to one of the uses of the laying on of hands, the ordination of the ministry. This, however, is palpably inconsistent, for if God has done away with the ordinance, it is but presumption to retain it in any of its forms. Moreover, the retention of but one particular feature of the laying on of hands, that wherein the ministry is involved, is, to say the least, an unusual specimen of aristocratic conduct.

The reservation of the laying on of hands exclusively for the ministry smacks of class legislation and is on a par with the performance of the priest who, ministering the emblems of the holy sacrament, passes the tasteless wafer to his congregation, but drinks to himself the appetizing wine.

We are told that the days of miracles are past, therefore, the laying on of hands may no longer be beneficial in its operations, hence has passed away.

Nonsense! The days of miracles will always be, so long as there is an atom of infinitude unexplored by mortal man. What is it that constitutes a miracle? Is it not the occurrence of something outside the realm of human comprehension? And are not such occurrences happening every day?

What about that long predicted turning of the sun into darkness and the moon into blood? And that wonderful transformation of the earth, “when every island shall flee away, every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low?” We read that at the coming of Christ “the mount of Olives shall cleave in twain” and “all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.”⁵

Miracles are these, of overpowering pro-

portions, and all of them still in the future.

As a final objection to the laying on of hands, it is urged that the Holy Ghost is received without it.

If so, why did the apostles, the Samaritans, and the Ephesians concern themselves with it?

The laying on of hands was either necessary or mockery, and if the latter it would never have commanded the patronage of apostles.

But where is the guarantee that the Holy Ghost may be received outside of the laying on of hands? Shall we take any risk in view of the plain and written word pointing so unmistakably to that ordinance? “Ye have us for an example (Philemon 3:17), said the apostle, and as such we shall follow their well-beaten course rather than some by-trail of creedal creation.

The case of Cornelius and household who, although unconverted and unbaptized, were permitted to exercise the gift of unknown tongues, was an exception and not the rule, and was allowed only to convince Saint Peter and the leaders of the church, who were the Jews, that the time had come for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles:

“Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I, could withstand God? When they (the council at Jerusalem) heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” -Acts 11:17, 18.

Prior to this the gospel had been preached exclusively to the Jews. The church had not yet got over its traditional error, that the Jews were the only people entitled to salvation, hence it became necessary to convince the church that it must broaden out and extend the great salvation unto all. This was done by a vision to Peter on the housetop, wherein he was told, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” “While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.” (Acts 10:19, 20). Immediately certain messengers from Cornelius, the Gentile, arrived, conveying Cornelius’ request that Peter go unto him.

Still hesitating, Peter waited till the next day before responding to the request of Cornelius; and it required one more miraculous experience to convince Peter and the church that everything was all right. This was given while Peter was preaching; the Holy Spirit in unknown tongues fell upon Cornelius and household. It was enough. Peter was convinced, and immediately he opened the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles, commanding them to be baptized.

Thus we see that in order to get the church out of the rut of narrow nationalism, it required, first, a vision to Peter; second, the voice of the Spirit; third, a request for Peter's services from a leading Gentile; and finally, an outpouring of the gift of tongues on that Gentile family.

As already stated, this extraordinary outpouring of the gift of tongues was the exception and not the rule. It was an unprecedented expedient and was never intended to do away with the laying on of hands, a fundamental "principle of the doctrine of Christ." (Hebrews 6:1, 2).

We are to be guided by principles rather than expedients; by rules rather than exceptions.

The feeding of the five thousand upon a dew loaves was an exception, not the rule, and was never intended to govern us in the securing of our daily bread.

As to why the laying on of hands was established as the means of imparting the heavenly gift, we are unable to explain.

The destruction of the walls of Jericho by an encircling of the city seven times, or the healing of Naaman the leper in the waters of Jordan, may not reconcile themselves with the methods pursued by the modern soldier and physician, but it worked just the same.

And so it was with the laying on of hands: we know what it has done. It has blessed little children, it has healed the sick, it has conferred the Holy Ghost, and what **it has done, it can do.**

Officers of the Kingdom of God

"Seek first the kingdom of God," said Christ; but how can we unless we first know

what constitutes the kingdom? There is little use of going in search of an article unless we have a description of that articles.

The organic structure of the kingdom of God, or The Church of Christ is thus described in holy writ:

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." -1 Corinthians 12:28.

It will be observed that the leading features of the kingdom or the church as herein described are those of **apostles and prophets.**

The particular work assigned to these officers of inspirational renown was of a very important character:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." -Ephesians 4:11, 12.

The presence of these men within the church gave assurance of protection against the ever assailing curse of heresy. Indeed, this was one of the purposes of their appointment: "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine." (Verse 14)

The crown of twelve stars encircling the head of the sun-clad woman of Revelation was none other than the quorum of the twelve apostles whom Christ first selected and placed at the head of the church.

Thus was the church constructed in the New Testament times, and as such, was a power in the land, whose influence was sensed by all nations of the world.

To question the divine purpose in the continuance of this apostolic quorum is preposterous, unless it can be shown that a mistake was made in their appointment. As an elementary part of the organization itself, their continuance was decreed with the setting up of that church of which they were a conspicuous and essential part. And so it is written they were intended to remain "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of

Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13).

But we are told that “apostles and prophets have ceased.” Yes, but who made them cease? God did not. At least we have no account of it. The fact that numbers were called to the apostolic office to succeed the original twelve would suggest the purpose of the Lord to continue the quorum. The Bible speaks of at least twenty-two. (See Matthew 10:1-4; Acts 1:23-26; 13:2; 14:14; Galatians 1:118, 19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 4:6-9; Romans 16:7).

Only twelve apostles could occupy at any one time, that being the full quorum instituted by our Lord. (Luke 6:13; Acts 1:16-26; Revelations 12:1; Matthew 19:28; 26:20). Therefore Mathias, Paul, Barnabas, and others not of the first twelve were called to the apostleship from time to time as vacancies occurred. This is proof positive that God intended these officers to continue in the church indefinitely.

If the discontinuance of the ruling officers of apostles and prophets has obtained, it must be that other and graver conditions simultaneously arose. Obliterate the office of the First Magistrate of England and away goes kingship, signaling the passing of Britain from the institution of a kingdom to that of some other government.

Continue this work of “ceasing” a little further and abolish the offices held by the Commons and the Lords, and what is the result? Why, no government at all! Disorder will ensue, anarchy will reign, and the battlements of Britain will become prey to the foreign invader.

What other results to the church could be executed in the removing her foremost officials?

But if we allow the discontinuance of apostles and prophets, we must for the selfsame reason proclaim the discontinuance of the other officers entering into the organic structure. That would mean no more evangelists, no more pastors, teachers, etc. Thus the whole ministerial organization would go, and who would be left to shepherd the sheep?

Its must not be forgotten that the same scripture which records the appointment of an evangelists or a pastor, records also the ap-

pointment of apostles and prophets. Consequently, if one goes, they all go; for all came from the same God.

In our search, therefore, for the kingdom of God, we will not fail to look for that church having within it living apostles and living prophets.

³Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19, 20; Mark 1:4, 5; 16:15, 16; Luke 7:29, 30; Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:1-6; 1 John 5:7, 8.

⁴“Calvin: ‘The word *baptizo* signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church.’”- Institutes, lib. V, chap. XV, par. 2. Hinton’s History of Baptism, p. 52.

“Luther: ‘*Baptism* is a Greek word, and may be translated *immersion*, as when we immerse something in water, that it may be wholly covered. And although it is almost wholly abolished, (for they do not dip the whole children, but only pour a little water on them,) they ought nevertheless to be wholly immersed, and then immediately drawn out; for that the etymology of the word seems to demand.’”- Luth. Op. , vol. 1, p. 336 Hinton’s History of Baptism, p. 52.

Mosheim says: “Baptism was publicly administered... The candidates for it were immersed wholly in water.”- Book 1, cent. 2, pt. 2, ch. 4.

John Wesley: “We are buried with him.” Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion. Again: “Which he wrought in you, when ye were as it were buried with him in baptism. The ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.”- Notes on Colossians 2:12, p.520.

Bishop Bossuet, a Roman Catholic: “In fine, we read not in the Scriptures that baptism was otherwise administered, (than by immersion;) and we are able to make it appear by the acts of councils, and by the ancient rituals, that for thirteen hundred years baptism was thus administered throughout the whole church.” – Tri-lemma, p. 98, published in 1883.

Archbishop Tillotson, an Episcopalian: “Anciently those who were baptized were immersed, and buried in the water, to represent, their death to sin, and then did rise up out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life, and to those the apostles allude, Romans 6:4-6.” -Sermons, vol. 8, p.179.

⁵Acts 2:19, 20; Revelation 16:20; Isaiah4:4; Zechariah 14:4; John 5:28, 29.

Thanksgiving

Matthew Thompson, reprint

Thanksgiving is not a once a year event for The Christian. Thanksgiving should be a daily, and a moment to moment event, and a ‘Way of Life’ for The Christian.

Psalm 50:14-15, “Offer unto God thanks-

giving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15. And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

A Sacrifice is a form of Worship and Thanksgiving is also. Thanksgiving gives Honor to God. When we look to God to meet our needs, He does not Disappoint us, and we in turn Thank Him; thereby, giving Honor and Glory to Him.

Psalm 50:23, “Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.”

When we do that which is Right, God Provides for our needs, and we in turn Glorify Him, by Offering Praises, that is by giving Thanks to Him. Therefore, if we do that which is Right, we will Honor God, by Thanking Him from The Heart.

Psalm 69:30, “I will Praise The Name of God with a Song, and will Magnify Him with Thanksgiving.”

Thanksgiving Magnifies God, because it gives Him Credit for all that He has done and will do.

Psalm 95:2, “Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.”

Whenever we Approach God, we should do so with Thanksgiving. Furthermore, True Thanksgiving will include Songs within our Heart and upon our Lips.

Psalm 100:4-5, “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

5. For The LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.”

When we Approach God, we should always do so with Thanksgiving. We should not only give Him Thanks for all that He has done for us, but we should Thank Him and Praise Him for who He Is, because He is Always Good, Loving, Kind, and Faithful to all. He is Worthy of Thanksgiving.

Psalm 107:22, “And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing.”

When we Worship God with Thanksgiving. We should do so by making mention of The Great Works with Joyful Singing. *A Joyful and*

Thankful Heart is True Worship.

Psalm 116:17, “I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon The name of the Lord.”

When we ask God to meet our need we should also give Thanks; Prayer without Thanksgiving is Prayer without Faith. If you Truly Believe that God will Answer your Prayer, you will give Thanks with every request.

Psalm 147:7-9, 14, “Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving: sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

8. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

14. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.”

We should give thanks to God because He supplies the earth with all that it needs to produce life. Every creature is dependent upon Him for life and survival. The fruitfulness of the earth is from The Lord. We are all dependent upon Him to supply all our needs and He does not fail us when we trust in Him to supply. ***Thanksgiving is a sign of our Faith and Trust in God.***

Jonah 2:7-10, “When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: And my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

8. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

9. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.

10. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.”

While Jonah was under discipline from The Lord, Jonah Repented and Declared that he would again offer The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, because he Believed in The Grace and Faithfulness of God. True Thanksgiving must be from The Heart, with Faith: therefore, when we experience the trials of discipline, we can be sure that we will again give Thanks to The Lord when we Respond to His Discipline with Repentance.

2 Corinthians 9:10-11, “Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread

for our food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11. Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God;”

God not only Supplies all our physical needs, but He also Supplies all that we need in our Service to Him. When we Recognize that all our Spiritual Gifts and Abilities Come from Him, and that they are all of Grace, we will give Thanks to Him for all our Work of Service to Him.

Philippians 4:6, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.”

We should never be anxious for anything, but we should always look to God to Supply all our needs, both physical and Spiritual. Furthermore, The Prayer of Faith will always be Accompanied with Thanksgiving. ***Thanksgiving is The Result of True Faith.***

Colossians 4:2, “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

Prayer with Thanksgiving is Prayer with Faith. True Faith will Result in Prayer with Thanksgiving, and when Prayer is Offered with Thanksgiving, God will Honor that Prayer.

Revelation 7:11-12, “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

All True Prayer and Worship includes ‘Thanksgiving’. We Honor God with Thanks - giving. All of Creation will someday give Thanks to God. !’

CHRISTMAS TIME

William A. Draves, reprint

Galatians 4:4, ‘But when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son...’

Christmas time - a Special Time of the year

– all over the world.

It is peculiar, in a way, to see the Christmas decorations in the stores in Tokyo, as well as in many other nations. One hundred fifty three Flags will wave one day over Christian nations.

Decorations are there, even though some are not yet Christian nations.

Each year, when November is over, much of the world gears up to or for the festival of Jesus' Birthday Celebration. He was Born the 25th of the month in the warm growing season climate of Palestine. Eight days hence He was taken to The Temple to be registered as all other Hebrew babies were accustomed too. And some there gave Prophecy to His Position in the world. Thus, Render to Ceasar the things that are Caesar's and to God The Things which are God's. So this became the first day, first month, first year of date and time after Christ. We count it (B.C.) before Christ and (A.D.) after. Thus our calendar registers time from The Birth Registration of Christ. So each year, beginning at the start of the month in which He was Born we begin The Celebration of His Birth. *That is Christmas.*

He came in the Meridian of time, four thousand years after Adam, and nearly 2000 years will pass ere the folding in of The Millennium Reign. The Day of Rest from the toil and sin tried time of mankind.

We like The Time and Season because we all sail into The Celebration and Respect of *Good Will Towards All Mankind*, in a Greater Love than at most times of the year. All alike we Respect The Christ, as well as Recognize His death and Resurrection in keeping Sunday as our Day of Rest and Sabbath.

All men's natures are alike; it is their habits that carry them far apart.

Isaiah 9:6, “For unto us a Child is Born... and His Name shall be Called... Everlasting Father... The Prince of Peace.”

Gift bearing, heart touching, joy bring-ing Christmas Day of grand memories, King of the year. He Teaches us to forget our own heart-aches and ease others.

The fact that most of us celebrate Christmas like this, even some who do not consider themselves Christ's followers, show how much

we are Creatures of Love. We all sail cheerfully into Christmas Time appreciating Good Will towards all men. It is time when families get together. We need Christmas Time to get reacquainted with our families, with mankind. Goodwill: Our attitude and actions speak louder than words. Life would be pretty dull without Christmas Time, seeing Loved Ones again in reunion, families, home, and Church members.

Thus all of us are affected by Christmas, by arranging our lives, or rearranging our attitudes toward mankind. Christ Like, Love one another, bear each others burdens. If it is not *The Qualities of Jesus* which compel us to engage in this annual round of Love, fun and games, it must be the sheer pressure of The Time of the year itself. Yes, that must be it. The time itself has its own significance. And, when The Time rolls around once more for us to get the Christmas Spirit, few of us can resist. That is not far wrong, actually, it is good. There is something very Special about Christmas Time, *God's Time of Remembrance, Praise and Love*.

There are different kinds of time. Sometimes, when one of our children come home after an evening out we say, 'Did you have a good time?' They may have only been gone for two or three hours and we know that those two or three hours could have been a good time, a bad time, or just a so-so time. Often, time can be a drag, and one has to be busy to get the time to move along. A factory worker on an assembly line may have to do that. A jogger who is determined to run for 30 minutes may find that 30 minutes is a mini-eternity.

Christ Time, Point of Determination has its own Special Quality, a Quality that builds up hundreds of elements get funneled into The Christmas Season.

For some of us it is the nip in the air and snow flurries. For others, it is decorations, giving of gifts, or working harder to do good for some family: clothing them, or helping.

There are Scenes of Christ's Nativity that get placed in the oddest place's where we stumble over them. There are The Carols that trigger memories and emotions. There are disgusting things that crop up too... like the fran-

tic sales that run wild of unwanted gifts, exchange, but we care not for the unpleasant subject. It is enough to note how *The Time of Christmas* affects us all, how it works its way beneath our skin and finds its way into our hearts, our beliefs in God, The Christ and His Purpose of Coming about to Redeem and Ransom mankind. *Thus Christmas is something we must understand what it really is*, that is a big thing: The Time itself. It is not just The Festival of Jesus Birth; it is a Profound Effect on our schedules and on our Spirits, on everything. If Christmas was just a one day affair, we would not make so much preparation for it. Remember it is an entire month of planning and programming.

Many other things center around the thought of Christmas, it is The Celebration of something that happened to Time.

Perhaps you do not think that much about Time, though, it is *the flow of our lives, the flow of history*, and it just seems to go on and on and on. Some people have described the continuation of time as a circular thing so that *The Flow of Time* never ceases. We may not know or be able to explain it, but we do know that The Scriptures say, '**the day comes, when TIME shall be no more, when Eternity breaks forth**'.

It is the very best thing that has happened for all of us, we are living in Time. We are experiencing pulsating movement and we are propelled along with it. Time is the great overriding element in our common environment. We swim through Time as a fish swims through water. Occasionally Time can be indescribably bad. Some Times can be very pleasant.

Christmas is about Time. It is The Celebration of something that happened to Time. A Special Time, we talk about war time, spring time, our own time, the company's time – now there is Christmas Time, too, and it is *The Best Time of all*.

It does not just endure only throughout the month of December, it is The Celebration of the existing fact that because of The Birth of Jesus Christ all time, all centering, has become

Christmas Time.

Galatians 4:4, "But when The Fullness of Time to come, God sent forth His Son..."

To some this may appear as a simple, off-hand statement is in fact very profound, and *The Fullness of Time* is a phrase like that. It is worth considering closely, because when we do, we can begin to understand how all of Time has become Christ, Christmas Time through Jesus' Birth, and because all Time has been affected by Christmas there is HOPE for all of us.

Young Adults

Karen Wilkin

When you were born you came into this world perfect. You had no sin or blemish whatsoever. A newborn infant is pure and free from any sinful thoughts or deeds. Then as you grow and get older, you begin to develop into an adolescent and you become accountable for your sins before God. You begin to know and understand right from wrong and you learn to seek forgiveness for your sins.

Psa. 86:5, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."

Alma 12:34, "Therefore, whosoever repenteth, and hardeneth not his heart, he shall have claim on mercy through mine only begotten Son, unto a remission of their sins; and thee shall enter into my rest."

Sometimes we are like a "Diamond in the Rough." Diamonds must go through tremendous "pressure" to become a diamond. A raw diamond is not pretty at all. It has no shine to it; it is dirty and very rough looking. However, when they take that "rock" and begin to work on it, putting it through rigorous pressure, it begins to look different and starts to look like something much nicer.

Diamonds were formed over 3 billion years ago when the Earth's crust, under conditions of intense heat and pressure, causes carbon atoms to crystallize into diamonds. The expansion causes the magma to erupt, forcing it to the Earth's surface and taking along with it diamond bearing rocks. Diamonds are only made up of one element, carbon. When carbon diox-

ide is buried 100 miles under the Earth's surface and heated to a temperature of 3300 degree Fahrenheit, and then squeezed to a pressure of 725,000 lbs per square inch, a diamond is formed.

The point I'm trying to make is that it takes a lot of effort to make a diamond beautiful. It goes through so much to become a thing of beauty. It is the same with you. You do not become a person with high morals, high standards, strong Christian values, a strong Believer, filled with love, kindness, tenderhearted, lovely, and beauty (in the spirit and heart) without first going through many Trials, Overcoming temptations and walking through the fire.

Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

1 Peter 4:12-13, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Just like that diamond in the rough has to go through the fire, literally, to become something beautiful, so do we as Christians. What can you do when these trials or temptations hit you hard?

Deuteronomy 4:30-31, "**When thou are in tribulation, (trials) and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;**

31. (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will NOT forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them."

What a hopeful promise that He gives us. It may not feel like He is with us as we struggle through the trial or problem and it may not feel like He cares, but I assure you He does very much.

If we never go through trials and problems in life then we can't grow in the Lord. You can't make a good grade if you don't study, right? You can't run a good race unless you do a lot of running, right? You can't achieve anything if you don't put forth an effort, right? The trials and problems you go through while growing up prepares you for the bigger challenges in life as you go out on your own. The little challenges in life prepares you for the bigger ones.

James 1:2-3 says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:

3. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

Patience is a hard attribute to achieve in one's life. Patience does not come easy. But, if we can have Patience while going through a trial or temptation, it is much easier to process the best way to handle the situation. We can experience joy because we know through God's help we can be victorious and rejoice.

Sometimes it can be very challenging just attending school each day only to face; seeing, listening to, hearing and experiencing bad language, bad attitudes, indiscreet or immoral conversations, seeing and hearing bad drama going on and disrespect for one another and/or teachers. It is a continual uphill battle to just maintain peace through it all. This is where keeping your heart in tune with the Holy Spirit comes in though.

Message 41:5, "You have seen that man is continually evil unless he is filled with the Spirit and goodness that cometh from God. Have no part with those that are full of contention..."

Message 57:6, "...Man's mind is continually evil unless he is filled with the Spirit of God."

Satan tries hard to cause you to think bad thoughts, say something that isn't good or just, do some act that can hurt or offend another and just throw out those fiery darts at you to make you trip and stumble. That's why it is vital that you keep a close relationship with Christ and study His word so you can fight back and have victory over the oppressor.

Romans 12:12, "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."

During these challenges you face, it is so reassuring that you can just whisper a prayer in your mind to the Lord and you know He is listening and loves it when you trust Him enough to come before Him in even very simple things as well as the big ones.

God sees you as one of His jewels (diamonds) being transformed into a lovely, spiritual being. He is the potter, you are the clay and He works on you within your heart and mind to develop you into the person He wants you to be, the way you were born to be. You are a diamond in the rough right now, but as you go through life that diamond will sparkle and shine if you live your life for Christ and follow in His footsteps.

John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

May the Lord bless you in your daily walk with Him. Keep your eyes upon Jesus and look full to His wonderful face because He cares for you. He is making a Masterpiece out of you and one day you will have a crown full of beautiful jewels with precious stones in them according to your relationship with Christ and the works you have done here on earth.

Message 103:8, "Know you this, the Lord has been and will be with His People by His Spirit, and His Peace shall long linger with the faithful until they become the JEWELS of God."

So give your best to the Master, give Him the best that you have and let your light shine forth unto Him and for Him. Amen.

May the Lord bless you this month of Thanksgiving. There is so much to be thankful for isn't there? Think upon those things and be sure to tell God how much you love Him and Thank Him for all His Gifts and Blessings. Then as the month of December comes, we think upon the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a special time to pay tribute to Him for coming to this earth to save us from sin and redeem us so that we might have eternal life with Him. The best gift you can give to Jesus is Give Him your Heart!! Give Him acknowledgement for all He has blessed you with. Give Him your time in study and prayer. Give

Him the very best that you have. Merry Christmas and may you be abundantly blessed with Joy, Peace, much Love and Good Health in the New Year!!

Junior

Thresa Ray

Dear Youth,

I hope you are looking forward to Christmas this year – looking forward to celebrating Christ’s birth. Jesus is indeed, the “Reason for the Season.”

We have such a loving God that would manifest Himself in the flesh, be born of woman, live a life example on this earth for us to follow, suffer and die for you and me. Died for our sins, that through belief in Him, we many receive eternal life! How blessed we are!

You can read from the Bible all about Christ’s birth in the first and second chapters of both Matthew and Luke.

Even as the people in Israel awaited the birth of their Savior, there were people in North America awaiting the birth of that same Savior. The Record of the Nephites, Helaman 14: 2-8 tells us of Samuel the Lamanite’s prophecy about Jesus’ birth. This took place 6 years before Christ’s birth.

2. “And behold, he said unto them: Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those shall believe on His name.

3. And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of His coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before He cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day.

4. Therefore, there shall be one day and a night, and a day, as if it were one day, and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun, and also of its setting; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before He is born.

5. And behold, there shall a new star arise, such as one ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you.

6. And behold this is not all, there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven.

7. And it shall come to pass that ye shall be amazed, and wonder, insomuch that ye shall fall to the earth.

8. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall believe on the Son of God, the same shall have everlasting life.”

3 Nephi 1:12-21 tells of what happened here in North America when Christ was born:

12. “...the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying;

13. Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I unto the world, to shew unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets.

14. Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfill all things which I have made known unto the children of men, from the foundations of the world, and do the will, both of the Father, and of the Son- of the Father because of me; and of the Son because of my flesh. And behold, the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given.

15. And it came to pass that the words which came unto Nephi was fulfilled, according as they had been spoken; for behold at the going down of the sun, there was no darkness; and the people began to be astonished because there was no darkness when the night came.

16. And there were many, which had not believed the words of the prophets, who fell to the earth and became as if they were dead, for they knew that the great plan of destruction which they had laid for those who believed in the word of the prophets, had been frustrated; for the sign which had been given was already at hand.

17. And they began to know that the Son of God must shortly appear; yea, in fine, all the people upon the face of the whole earth from the west to the east, both in the land north and in the land south, were so exceedingly astonished, that they fell to the earth;

18. For they knew that the prophets had testified of these things for many years, and

that sign which had been given was already at hand; and they began to fear because of their iniquity and their unbelief.

19. And it came to pass that there was no darkness in all that night, but it was as light though it was mid-day. And it came to pass that the sun did rise in the morning again, according to its proper order; and they knew that it was the day that the Lord should be born, because of the sign which had been given.

20. And it came to pass, yea, all things, every whit, according to the words of the prophets.

21. And it came to pass also, that a new star did appear according to the word.”

The Articles of Faith and Practice, number 9 says, “...in the Bible is contained the Word of God; that The Record of the Nephites is an added witness for Christ, and that these contain the ‘fullness of the gospel.’”

These scriptures you have just read is an added witness to the birth of Christ.

We indeed have much to celebrate this holiday season! May your heart be filled with joy as you reflect on Christ’s birth and what it means to all mankind. Have a wonderful and blessed Christmas as you remember the “Real Reason for the Season.”

Love in Christ,
Sister Thresa Ray

Primary

Joy Ellen Draves

Christmas has taken on so many other things over the years. We have the story of Santa. We have the gift giving. These things aren’t bad in themselves, as the gift giving started with *The Wise Men*. But it can take away from The Real Meaning of Christmas.

What happened that First Christmas? Why do we celebrate it? The Bible answers all these questions in Luke 2:6-18, “And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7. And she brought forth her Firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a Manger; because there was no

room for them in the inn.

8. And there were in the same country Shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9. And, lo, The Angel of The Lord came upon them, and The Glory of The Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, Behold, I bring you Good Tidings of Great Joy, which shall be to all people.

11. For unto you is Born this day in The City of David a Savior, which is Christ The Lord.

12. And this shall be a Sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the Heavenly Host praising God, and saying,

14. Glory to God in The Highest, and on earth Peace, Good Will toward men.

15. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”

As we read here, Jesus, The Savior of the world, was born. He came as a baby, then grew to be a man that gave His Life for you and me, so we could Live with Him forever when we die. We Celebrate His Birth because of our Faith in Him, and His Birth was The Beginning of a Life-changing Event - The Cross. So let us Celebrate Jesus’ Birthday together, and remember why He Came.

**Happy Thanksgiving,
Merry Christmas &
A Wonderful New Year!**