

THE EDIFIER

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CHURCH OF GOD 7TH DAY

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Throughout the gospels we read some 90 references to the “Kingdom of Heaven” or “the Kingdom of God”. It seems everything Jesus said and did was related to this singular mission and purpose.

Pilate’s tone when he asked Jesus, *“Are you a king then?”* (John 18:33,37) was along the satirical lines of, *“You poor, worn, tear-stained outcast forsaken by every friend in this hour of need – are you a king?”* (F. B. Meyer). And yet, throughout his ministry, Jesus constantly related everything he said and did to this Kingdom reality.

Jesus urged everyone to seek first the Kingdom. His numerous parables all likened the Kingdom to some easily understood agricultural or domestic story. He spoke of how difficult entrance to the Kingdom would be for the worldly rich. He praised Kingdom faith. Everything Jesus said was measured in terms of this Kingdom reality.

Shortly after Jesus was resurrected, he commissioned his disciples into the work of evangelism and discipleship on the basis of, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,”* (Matthew 28:18). Who could say that but the KING of heaven and earth!

In teaching his disciples to pray, Jesus modelled the famous words, *“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* The Kingdom of God has always existed, but for us in this age, it’s fulness is still yet to arrive. Throughout the scriptures, we are given glimpses of this Kingdom

glory. For example, the connection and relationship between heaven and earth was apparent to Jacob when he dreamt in vision of a flight of stairs connecting heaven and earth (Genesis 28:10-17). Jacob sensed the profundity of what he saw – heavenly angels were ministering assignments for those on earth!

Do we, today, sense the relationship and connection between the two realities – heaven and earth? Further insight is gained from Paul’s statement in his letter to the Romans where he states that, *“all creation longs for the revealing of the sons of God.”* John tells us that we are God’s children now! In

John chapter 17, Jesus prayed for his disciples who were *“in the world but not of the world”*. Another prime example was that of Abraham, living as a sojourner, *“looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer*

and builder in God” (Hebrews 11:10). So, the question for us is: Do we live according to the principles of Jesus’ Kingdom, as opposed to those in this world?

Paul reminded the faithful in Philippi that *“our citizenship is in heaven...”* (Philippians 3:20). Jesus was more specific. He said, *“In my Father’s house are many rooms... I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also”* (John 14:2-3). Just as Jacob saw in vision, there’s a coming and going between heaven and earth, but one day, as scripture foretells, God’s Kingdom will exist universally for “ever and ever”.

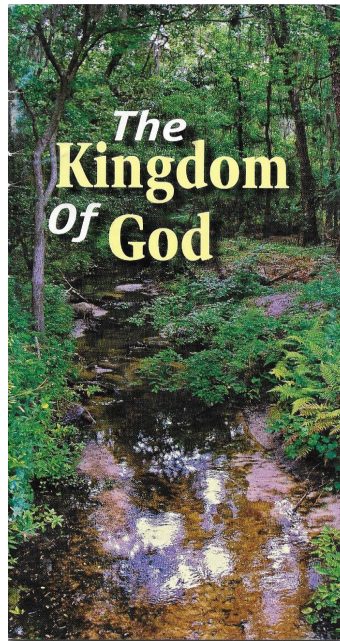


For us today, these scriptures ought to speak deeply into our hearts, they should define our identity, anchor our soul, and point us in the only direction towards the Kingdom of God. The author of Hebrews noted this journey and highlighted the way there when he wrote, “... *let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

We are, along with those who have preceded us, pioneers in this age of a coming reality, born from above, equipped by the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ Name into work of evangelism and discipleship, as well as witness to the imminent awaiting Kingdom glory – while still living in a world today so foreign from this reality. No wonder John concluded Revelation with his plea, “*Even so, Come Lord Jesus!*”

Jesus is coming. The Kingdom of God is near. Jesus said, “*And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to everyone for what he has done*” (Revelation 22:12). When that occurs, at that moment, heaven and earth will forever intersect and meld, and Edenic paradise lost will be Kingdom Glory regained. (Scriptures ESV)

Written by Elder John Klassek



The kingdom of God is realized in three phases.

Phase 1

The present kingdom: The spiritual kingdom of grace exists now as God rules in the lives of obedient believers.

Phase 2

The millennial kingdom of Christ: Jesus will return to Earth in power and glory as King to resurrect the righteous dead.

Phase 3

God’s eternal kingdom will begin when Jesus Christ, having put all enemies under His feet, turns the kingdom over to the Father.

Please send for the free booklet



Amazing Bible Facts

The Geneva Bible is the first Bible to use numbered verses.

The Gutenberg Bible was the first book to be printed using movable metal type.

The Bible is the best-selling book in history, with total sales exceeding 5 billion copies.

The Bible takes place across three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe.

There are 93 women who speak in the Bible, 49 of whom are named. They speak a total of 14,056 words, or about 1.1% of the Bible. There are a total of 188 named women in the Bible.

The shortest book in the Bible is Psalm 117, with just 2 verses.

The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9.

Nearly all of the villains in the Bible have red hair.



The Traditional View of Hell Under Fire

Imagine someone committing a crime against you and the judge giving them a sentence that doesn't deter their re-offending, but instead provokes them to immediately do it again. Would anyone be happy with such a justice system? I think not.

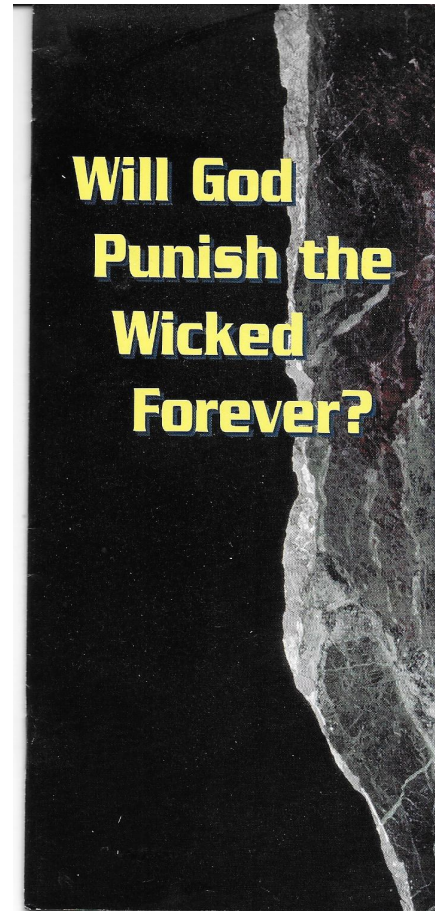
I don't believe God would be either. However, according to the traditional view of *hell*, sinners are sent there for sinning against God. God then begins their everlasting torment. Unless they gain self-control in *hell* (unlikely) surely they'll curse God all the more. God would have failed to prevent people sinning against Him. Rather, he would have provoked and perpetuated for eternity a most terrible sin – cursing Him.

More and more Christians think the scriptures about *hell* have been misinterpreted partly because of the false idea of humans possessing an immortal soul. They believe Jesus' sums the issue up well when he said *fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Hell is therefore instead seen as a terrifying place of destruction by fire, or a second death, as Revelation 21:8 describes it, a most terrible fate for anyone, but an eternal punishment more compatible with God's compassionate nature and more consistent with verses saying the wages of sin is death.

Remember also, God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son that whoever believes in him *shall not perish*, but have everlasting life.

*Written by Elder David Kidd
New Zealand*



In this tract it will examine verses often used to support the doctrine of an everlasting hell and hopefully show that they fail to prove it.

This tract will also offer for your consideration three biblical reasons why the fate of sinners will not involve endless agony in a burning hell.

Please send for this free tract



The Reliability of the Bible

If your faith has been undermined by attacks on the Bible's reliability it's helpful to remember the following.

It's fantastic we have both Old and New Testaments because the NT confirms the amazing accuracy and Divine inspiration of the OT by reporting incredible fulfillments of its prophecies. The fulfilled NT prophecies Jesus made about Jerusalem's downfall, confirmed by contemporary historians, also provide powerful confirmation of the NT.

The common *Chinese Whispers* argument alleging NT accounts got distorted just as a report can be distorted as it passes from one person to another is a favourite attack. However, such clearly does not apply to the NT because the writers were commonly eye witnesses or able to talk directly to such. Eye witness evidence is crucial in court.

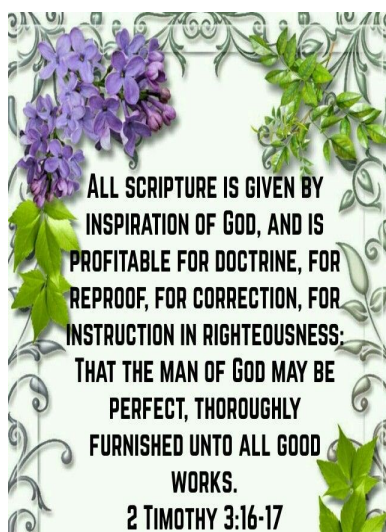
It's also very important there are over 5000 surviving ancient copies, in whole or in part, of NT writings. This is a massive amount of copies compared to other ancient books. This is very

important for verifying the NT's original content.

The authenticity of the NT is also enhanced by the honest tendency of its writers not to hide embarrassing facts about themselves. Further, people point to contradictions in the four gospels. However, in a court of law, if four witnesses gave exactly the same testimony, the judge would suspect collusion, because people reporting events usually see them from different angles. Small apparent contradictions can therefore be easily explained and actually are more suggestive of authenticity than identical accounts.

Hence the Bible has far more going for it than the critics say, so take another look, especially at Christ, the only Saviour of the world.

*Written by Elder David Kidd
New Zealand*



Two-Year Daily Bible Reading Schedule



Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalm 119: 105

This two-year Bible reading plan has been designed with today's busy schedules in mind. The daily readings are shorter than most other plans, so if you fall behind it's easier to catch up without becoming discouraged and dropping out.

To read the entire Bible through in the two years. You only have to set aside 5 to 7 minutes each day.

Please make the decision today, to send for this free booklet.

The Eyewitness Of Many



Throughout history there have been many great eyewitness events recorded. The most important eyewitness event ever recorded must be the post-resurrection testimony pertaining to Jesus. Hundreds of people had witnessed Jesus alive and walking amongst them in numerous places, preaching and teaching for a period of 40 days.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 NKJV

Eyewitness testimony is important to investigators who try to provide crucial and accurate insights into what had happened. Today if the investigators interviewed the 500 plus eyewitnesses for just six minutes each, they would have over 50 hours of firsthand testimony of Jesus being alive and well. I am certain that there were many other witnesses that are not mentioned and unnamed in whom the investigators could have spoken to.

The significance of Jesus Christ's physical appearance in that 40 day period to the disciples and multitudes cemented for all time the authenticity that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah, the first of the resurrection.

It also clearly showed that Jesus had the ultimate power and victory over death.

"but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" 2 Timothy 1:10 NKJV

By Jesus' appearance, the disciples' faith would have been greatly strengthened and they would have been emboldened as believers in proclaiming a risen Messiah and the resurrection of eternal life.

The Apostle Paul later in scripture reminds us that:

"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." 1 Corinthians 15:20 NKJV

From the days prior to Jesus' appearance the disciples only experienced pain, suffering and the loss of their Lord and Master. But now an extreme joy and happiness overshadowed those terrible days. A new life had started for the followers of Jesus and they had a message of the gospel to share, which spread throughout the known world and beyond.

Written By Elder Phil Kordahi

Bible Quiz

- Question 1. True
2. False
 3. True
 4. True
 5. True
 6. True
 7. False



Clear Direction

Sometimes in life we may feel unsure
Of what God would have us do
What is His will for our lives right now
When faced with two paths to choose?

We need to come before the Lord
When we have to make a choice;
We need to have ears that will hear
The Lord's still, quiet voice

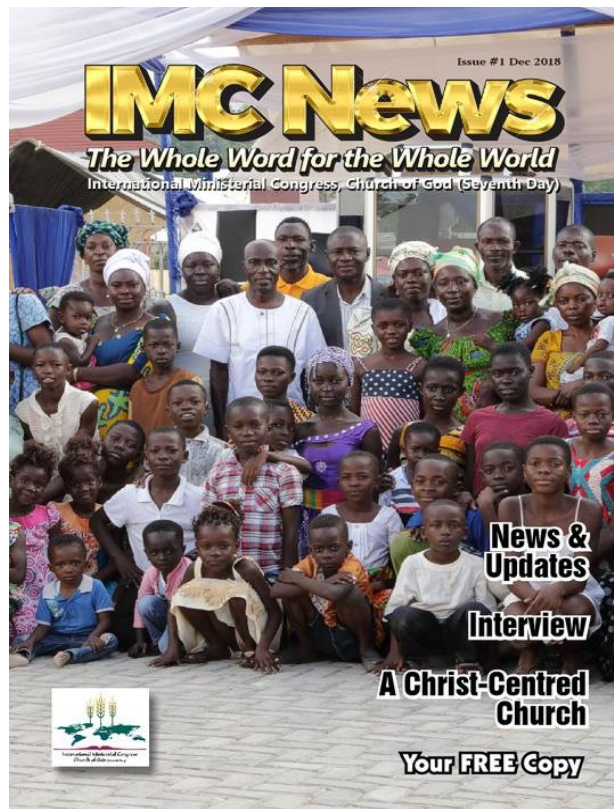
For God will gladly show the way
And open the doors to go through,
With clear direction from our Lord,
He'll show us what we should do

For He longs for us to know His will
And know the plans for our lives,
So we'll accomplish the work of the Lord,
As His Spirit in us daily guides

For He will walk with us each day
And help us with each decision
As our hearts are open to the Lord,
He'll impart to us His wisdom

We just need to ask of the Lord
For the direction that we need,
He will answer and speak to our hearts
As we trust in His name and believe.

By M.S. Lowndes



We're excited to announce the launch of the inaugural edition of "IMC News", a quarterly newsletter sharing news of the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day) around the world. In it you'll find not only items of news, but also feature interviews, articles and helpful information.

English and Spanish translations can be downloaded in high resolution (printable) and low resolution versions, or just read it on-line.



IMC Zone 5 Africa Convention

"Becoming a Christ-Centered Church" was the theme of the 2018 IMC Zone 5 Africa Convention in Oshana, Angola, Africa, held August 8-13.

Representatives of 16 African countries participated with international visitors from Australia, Brazil, Germany, UK, USA, and Canada. The convention featured inspiring sermons, presentations, devotionals, song and dance, fellowship meals and various workshops.

Participating leaders plan to share what they learned with members of their respective regions. More photos and videos are being shared on the IMC website at imc.org.



"The IMC Zone 5 Africa convention has helped me as a pastor. It has been such a blessing. In fact, it has changed forever the emphasis of what I'll be preaching - I understand better what it means to be more Christ-centered."

Print copies of IMC News are your privilege and share with your loved ones.

<http://imc.cog7.org/>

Youth Vibe



The Armour of God

Body armour throughout history has been worn by soldiers to protect their bodies against their enemies' deadly weapons. Today we have an invisible enemy (Satan) who would like to harm us with his devious or cunning stratagems, (wiles) which he employs to manipulate and mislead us away from the path of righteousness through Christ. We need to put on the armour of God described in Ephesians, so we can stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:10-18

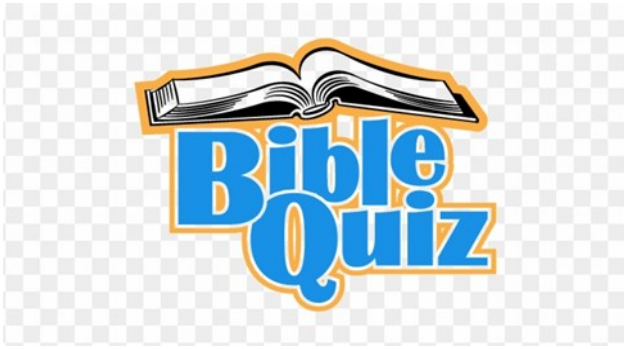
Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

*14 Stand firm then, with the of buckled around your waist, with the of in place, 15 and with your fitted with the readiness that comes from the of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the of, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the of and the of the, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. **NIV***

Please try to fill in the blanks of these bible verses with the words below. Then confirm them in the Bible.

belt - breastplate - faith - gospel - helmet - salvation

Spirit - sword - feet - righteousness - shield - truth



1. The Ten Commandments were kept in the Ark of the Covenant . True or False

2. The book of Isaiah follows on after Ecclesiastes. True or False

3. Samson carried the city gates to the top of a hill. True or False

4. Joshua instructed that 12 stones were taken with them across the Jordan.

True or False

5. Isaiah's wife was called a prophetess

True or False

6. Jesus healed people on the Sabbath Day.

True or False

7. The disciples were given milk to drink at the last supper. True or False



Christmas and Pagan Customs

Many Christians have inquired, “Is this celebration taught in the Bible?” To their surprise, Christmas is neither taught by the Bible, nor was it ever celebrated by the New Testament Church. If this is true, then what is its origin? What about the date of December 25? What about the Christmas tree, lights, decorations and Santa Claus? Where did these traditions come from? Who authorized them and for what reason?

Please send for the free booklet

“Christmas and Pagan Customs”

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