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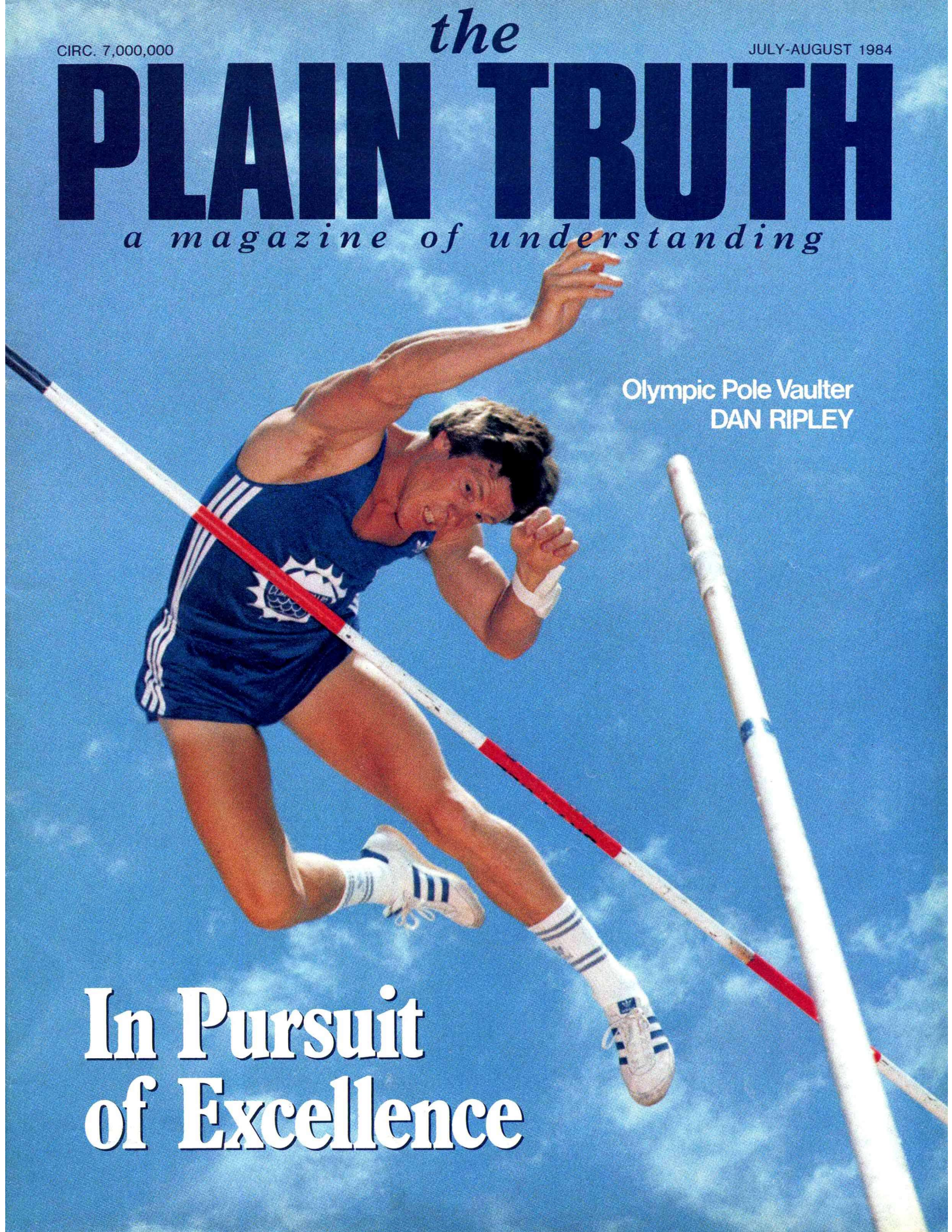
JULY-AUGUST 1984

# PLAIN TRUTH

*a magazine of understanding*

Olympic Pole Vaulter  
**DAN RIPLEY**

**In Pursuit  
of Excellence**



# PERSONAL FROM



## An Overview from Higher Up

**R**IGHT NOW the world has its mind focused on the Olympic Games. Suppose we take an overview of Olympic history, down to its present nationalism, as seen from higher up—from the vantage point of the Almighty Creator—and understand what God thinks of this spectacular pageant, and of sports in general.

Let's view the whole thing from the higher-up "camera-setting."

Bear in mind, first, that the government of God had once been administered earthwide. The first human, Adam, had the opportunity to accept for himself, and to administer, that divine government worldwide. But he rebelled and rejected the principle of outflowing love, turning, instead, to the principle of "get" instead of the outgoing "give" principle.

Few know Adam accepted the philosophic way of Satan—self-centeredness, exemplified by vanity, lust and greed, jealousy and envy, competition, rebellion and destruction.

Few know that God then barred mankind, until Christ, from his Holy Spirit—which is the attitude of God-centeredness, of "give," serve, cooperate, share. This world has been based ever since on the "get" or competitive philosophy.

Few know that in barring humanity from God's

Spirit, the Creator of all said, in effect, "Go form your own governments, develop your own way of life, based on your competitive principle."

So nations are competitive. Society is competitive. Sports are competitive.

As God Almighty looks down upon this world, he sees the governments of man and society's sports following the self-centered competitive principle. See this Olympic situation *as God sees it!*

### All Sports Not Wrong

Competition, not cooperation, is the attitude with which Satan inoculates human minds. But that does not mean all sports are wrong or to be banned.

The law of God is the way of righteousness. Sin is the transgression of the law. The law of God is given us in the broadest principle and also magnified into the Ten Commandments, and even into many further specific points that are magnifications of the principles of the Ten Commandments. God expects us to apply



**Dwight Stones, Olympic bronze medalist, greets Herbert Armstrong. In background, personal coach Harry Sneider, nominated Olympic coach for track and field.**

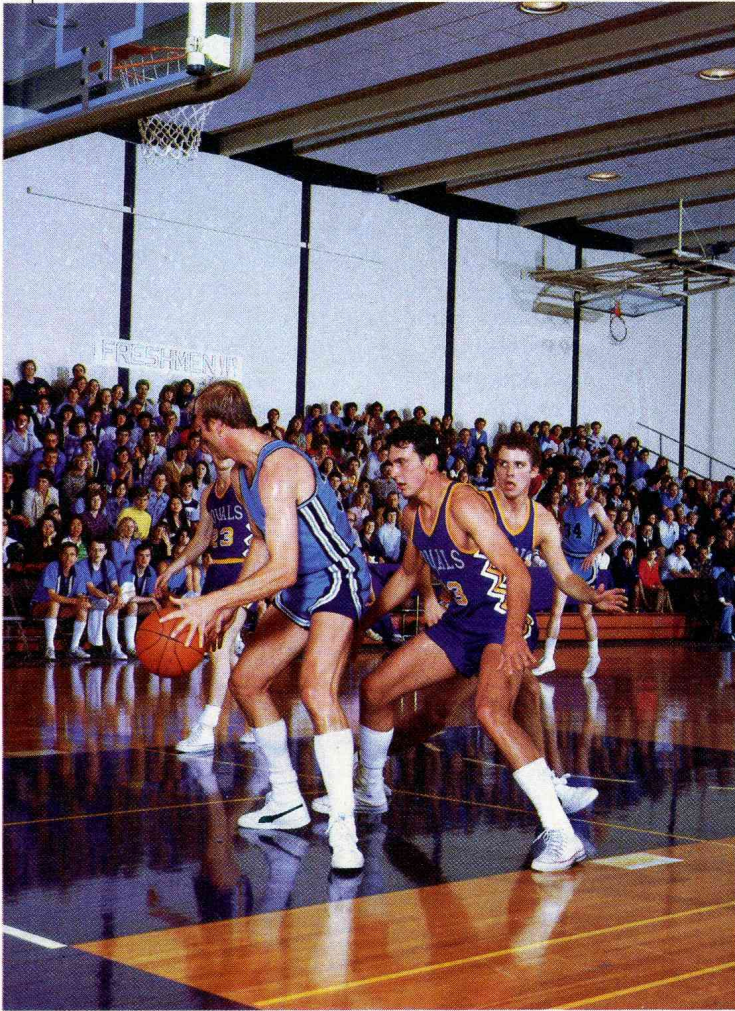
these principles of his law to specific actions.

The basic law is love, outflowing toward God above all else, and secondarily, "Thou shalt love thy

neighbor as thyself.”

To harm the other fellow and to gain by so doing for self is a kind of competition that is wrong. Hostility toward the other is sin. To get the best of another in a deal for one's own benefit is wrong.

At golf the one who wins is not the one who gets



PT PHOTO

**Intramural basketball, Ambassador College. Team cooperation, quick judgment and a right attitude are emphasized.**

the most by taking it away from the other. In golf the player does not prevent the other from doing his or her best. The architect who designs and lays out the plans for building a golf course is not breaking God's law when he designs sand traps, small lakes or pools or leaves certain trees to help the player to increase his skill. These hazards hurt no one, but are an incentive and help to develop skill.

Two men or women—or several—in a race are not harming the other runners if they run according to the rules.

So, golf is not a wrong competition—nor is any race at any distance, or hurdle race, or long jump, high jump, pole vault or other field competition in a track-and-field meet. At Ambassador College, with campuses in Pasadena, California, and Big Sandy, Texas, we have not included the hammer throw because it might endanger others—but not because it is unfair competition.

Now take basketball. Guarding on defense is, *if* within the rules, the same in principle as the sand trap, clump of trees or pond on a golf course. The rules make it a foul if a defensive player prevents a shot by actual bodily contact or holding. If basketball is played according to the rules—in a right attitude—it can be a very invigorating, enjoyable game, *not violating* God's law. All depends on the attitude of the players.

In interschool or intercollegiate competition, or the pro game, the attitude too often is bad. When it is—when there is a spirit of hostility toward the other side—then it does break God's law. Therefore, at Ambassador College intercollegiate competition is prohibited.

But intramural games between our own classes occur.

Boxing at Ambassador College is definitely banned. God did not design and create the human brain and head to be pummeled and knocked senseless by an antagonist.

Wherever a game in sports involves antagonists—in hostile attitude to harm the other and/or to “get” from the other—to get the best of the other—then a harmful, satanic and evil attitude enters in, and the sport is evil, not good.

Sometimes there is a fine line between what is within and what is outside God's law.

Football (American football) is a violent body-contact sport. It too often is played in an attitude of hostility and is dangerous and fraught with physical injury. Therefore it is not played, but we do play American flag football at Ambassador.

Soccer does not embody the same evils. Baseball, softball, volleyball, while competitive, do not necessarily involve hostility, harm to others or trying to prevent the opponent from doing his best. When played in God's attitude toward others these are acceptable and not prohibited.

This is sufficient to illustrate the application of the principle of God's law to sports. That sport participated in with an attitude of hostility toward the opponent is evil. *That which harms mentally or physically an opponent is evil.*

Satan is the author of competition based on hostility, harm to the opponent, getting by taking from an opponent—to his harm or loss.

God's way is love toward neighbor equal to love of self.

Competition in business that takes from or harms the competitor is evil competition. Competition that helps the opponent by stimulating him to do his best or to do better, but does not harm—rather benefits—the opponent, is healthy competition. So competition can be evil, or good, depending primarily on the attitude in which it is participated.

The very name *Satan* means “adversary.” Satan is an evil adversary, who desires to harm—who has a spirit of hostility. *If it has God's spirit of “give”—help, encourage, cooperate, stimulate for good, based on an attitude of love—it is right, not wrong.* □

# WHERE Is the True Church?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Jesus Christ said, "I will build my church." He did not say "churches."  
Somewhere that original true Church exists today. But where?  
Which? What is the Church? Why is it? Here is the eye-opening plain truth!

**W**HAT about this whole church question—as it concerns *YOU*?

WHERE IS the original *true* Church that Jesus Christ founded—the one the *living* Jesus Christ *STILL HEADS* today? That is the question that haunted me, back in 1926 and early 1927.

I had been reared, like many of our readers, in one of the respected and older Protestant denominations. From infancy I was taken to Sunday school and church. I was told that I was "saved" because I had a "birth-right membership" in the church. I didn't know much about what my church believed—but I don't remember worrying about that.

But by age 18 I lost interest, and seldom attended after that. On leaving school I entered the advertising profession. I was ambitious. I craved *STATUS*. So I worked hard,

studied continually to improve my abilities, drove myself relentlessly toward that goal of *STATUS*!

Then, after nationwide occurrences beyond my control had twice taken businesses I had started, I was *angered* into an intensive study of the Bible for the first time in my life. So far as the Bible was concerned, I had always said, "I just can't *UNDERSTAND* the Bible."

Strange—I had always *craved* understanding, but about other things. The Bible seemed to me a dry, dull, dead book that *NOBODY* could understand. I assumed that the churches had received all their beliefs, teachings and customs from the Bible—but then, I just had no interest in religion.

But finally, early fall of 1926, I was challenged! I was *doubly* challenged! My wife had taken up with "*religious fanaticism*"—that is, it seemed fanaticism to *me*! She claimed she found it *IN THE BIBLE*—but I knew well that was impossible, because it was a belief and practice utterly *CONTRARY* to the churches.

"All these churches can't be

wrong," I said. "They get their teaching from the Bible, and this fanaticism of yours is *contrary* to what they teach."

"Well, maybe they teach *contrary* to the Bible, then," my wife insisted, "because I got *THIS* out of the *BIBLE*!"

Argument was no use. She said if I'd show her where the Bible taught differently, she'd give it up, but not otherwise.

At the same time a sister-in-law challenged me in regard to the theory of evolution. I had never happened to study evolution in school or college. She said I was just plain *IGNORANT* if I didn't believe in evolution! This stung my pride! *Me IGNORANT*? What an *INSULT*!

"All right," I answered, "I'll study into the evolutionary theory thoroughly, and if you're wrong, as I know you are, I'll *PROVE IT* to you, and make you *eat those words*!"

## Proving God Exists

I had always believed in *GOD*—though I knew little about him, and just was not concerned about "reli-

gion.” Of course, I had never researched the question deeply and thoroughly, to PROVE whether God exists, or whether evolution is true. Few ever have. I just took God for granted, and *supposed* evolution was a false theory. Nearly all who believe either in God or evolution have *assumed* their belief WITHOUT PROOF!

But that was no longer good enough for ME! Now I had to KNOW!

It became an almost night-and-day study of the Bible, and of in-depth research in books on evolution, geology, paleontology, biology, physics. I delved into the writings of Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Vogt, Chamberlin. I did research into radioactivity. That proved there had been no past eternity of matter, but CREATION! I *studied* the creation account in Genesis. It was a six months’ intensive research, which often involved studying until 1 or 2 a.m. But in the end I PROVED the existence of GOD and the infallible inspiration of the Bible; I *disproved* the evolutionary theory and *did* make the sister-in-law “eat those words”!

But in the argument with my wife, I LOST! She was right. I was wrong. It was by far the bitterest pill to swallow that had ever confronted me.

You see, it meant not only confessing I was wrong. That is hard enough for the carnal mind. But I now learned HOW wrong I was, not only what I had believed through assumption, but what I had done and what I *was*. I had thought I was *pretty good!* Human nature always thinks that. I learned human nature is just plain BAD and EVIL.

I thought immediately: If I accept Bible teaching, and begin to LIVE by it—if I give in to accept Christ, become converted, live a Christian life, what will all my former business associates and friends say?

In my mind, it meant GIVING THEM ALL UP—for good!

It meant conversion! And that is something I don’t believe happens *really*, and *fully*, without an inner struggle. It certainly didn’t in my case. It meant GIVING UP! It meant giving up everything my

heart had been set on—my life goal. It meant forsaking my way of life—a total about-face! Actually it meant giving up my IDOL, though I didn’t see it that way, then. It meant UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER to God. It meant giving up MY LIFE, actually, and GIVING IT TO GOD!

In the end, I did it!

But now I faced a NEW CHALLENGE! In this intensive study, I had found that “all these churches” CAN BE WRONG! I found that, so far as I knew of what the church I was reared in believed, it taught what was diametrically contrary to the Bible.

#### Where Is the True Church?

Now the question came, WHERE is the TRUE Church—the one Jesus Christ founded—the one he HEADS today—the one that carries out his MISSION—the one he said he would never leave or forsake?

I had been shockingly disillusioned! It had been virtually a traumatic six months.

When I read Romans 6:23, I stared at that verse in my Bible in shocked, incredulous disbelief! It said, “For the wages of sin is DEATH; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” I had always believed the wages we earn for SIN was *just the opposite of* DEATH. I had been taught that what we get paid for SIN was ETERNAL life—in hell fire! This verse says eternal life is something we can only receive AS A GIFT from GOD.

But NO! Surely no! We already *have* eternal life—so I supposed—we are immortal souls! I learned that many theologians INTERPRET that verse—that is, they PUT A DIFFERENT MEANING INTO IT. They *change* the meaning of the words to make them conform to their belief instead of letting God’s Word *change their belief* to conform with God’s truth. They manufacture a new definition of the word *death*. They define *death* to mean “separation from God.” I looked at this verse again. On the one hand, for sin, we get *death*. On the other hand, the *opposite* of that penalty is ETERNAL LIFE. Now, it certainly was clear, if ETERNAL LIFE is the very

*opposite* of DEATH, then DEATH cannot mean eternal life!

I was shocked to find that in many—if not most—teachings of Jesus Christ and the New Testament, the churches now teach the very opposite, and follow opposite customs and practices! I was confused! My head was swimming!

But there it was, in plain language. I read that SOULS can die! “The soul that sinneth, it shall die”! (Ezek. 18:4, 20). It was important enough to be stated twice. Then my startled eyes read, in Revelation 16:3: “And every living *soul* DIED in the sea.” That said SOULS can DIE. Then I saw where Jesus said souls can be DESTROYED! “. . . But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [Gehenna]” (Matt. 10:28).

It began to look like the churches *were* wrong, after all! But did not Jesus Christ found his CHURCH? He surely did, and I found where he said the gates of the grave would never prevail against it—IT COULD NOT BE DESTROYED! I found where Jesus Christ said he would never leave nor forsake it—he would always be “in the midst” of it. I found where he was the living HEAD of it! Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave. HE IS STILL ALIVE!

So WHERE was the Church he was guiding, directing and using?

I was perplexed. But I kept searching. I continued studying. I found this discovery of new—to me—truth the most fascinating and interesting pursuit of my life. It was like finding new gold nuggets—new riches—only these were spiritual riches.

But I was not to learn for some time WHERE, and WHICH, is the one true Church Christ founded. I learned that Jesus called his disciples, who were to become the foundation of the Church, to come out of the world and “be ye separate” (II Cor. 6:17-18). Also Jesus said to God his Father that he did not even pray for the world (John 17:9). In Matthew 24:1-3 he was talking about the END of the world. I found the world spoken of in the Bible as “this evil world.”

In due time I came to realize that even though the world, especially in this 20th century, has made AWE-SOME progress and advancement, yet

it is shot through and through with APPALLING EVILS. And the evils are multiplying. WHY this paradox of good and evil?

I was not to learn the PURPOSE of the Church—the reason why Jesus started it—until I learned the truth about the very foundation of the world itself.

### Who, What Is God?

I had to learn, first, not only proof that God exists, but WHO, and WHAT, God is. Many of the churches of traditional Christianity believe God is a trinity—God in three persons. The religion of Judaism believes God is one person. Some believe God is mere “principle”—or a better something within each human.

But I found God reveals himself in the Bible. In John 1:1-5, we read of “the Word.” Verse 14 says the Word was made flesh and became Jesus Christ. The Word was with God, and the Word also was God. How can that be? It was as if there was John, and John was with Smith, and John also was Smith. John might be Smith’s son, and Smith is the family name.

I learned that in Genesis 1:1, it is revealed that God created the heavens and the earth. But Moses wrote that verse, and the English word “God” is translated from the Hebrew *Elohim* as Moses wrote it. *Elohim* is a PLURAL word—more than one person. In verse 26 of that chapter, *Elohim* said: “Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness.” The word *God*, then, is the FAMILY name of the GOD FAMILY. And although cattle were made after the cattle kind (verse 25), man was made after the GOD kind.

In the New Testament we learn that God’s Spirit in us witnesses with our spirit that we are the begotten sons of God. Jesus is the Son of God, and the Church is to be married to him (Matt. 25:1-13; Rev. 19:7). So God is actually a FAMILY, into which, through Christ, we may be born. Romans 8:29 states that Jesus was the first to be born of God “by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4).

Since the first man, Adam, was of the GOD kind, could he possibly have been made GOD?

### What Man IS

God is composed of Spirit—he IS Spirit (John 4:24). But he made MAN of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man (dust) became a soul—the dust of the ground became a soul. The man had only a temporary existence, kept alive by the breath of air, and circulation of blood—and continually refueled by food and water out of the ground.

But God is revealed as IMMORTAL—having self-containing and inherent life.

Yet we see God offered Adam immortal life, through the “tree of life” in the garden of Eden.

But God did not purpose to give this inherent immortal life to the man unless and until the man received the very holy, righteous, spiritual and perfect character of God. And this the man had to choose for himself—else it would not be righteous character. The other special symbolic tree was that of “the knowledge of good and evil.” God commanded Adam not to eat of that tree, lest he die. That was therefore a tree of death. But the tree of LIFE also was a tree of knowledge—that is, of spiritual knowledge as imparted from God.

When Adam chose the tree of death, he took to himself the knowledge of good and evil.

Let me explain at this point that other scriptures reveal that God created man with a human spirit in the man. Job 32:8 says “there is a spirit in man,” and verse 18 says this spirit in man constrains him—suggests, sparks, impels. I Corinthians 2:11 says one could not possess human knowledge save by the spirit of man that is in him. Man is wholly matter—not spirit. The soul is matter from the ground, but there is a spirit IN that soul, howbeit only human spirit. This spirit imparts the power of intellect to the human brain.

Let me explain at this point that the recent science of brain research has shown that human brain is very similar to animal brain. But animal brain is governed by instinct and cannot think, reason, plan or devise as man can. Animal brain cannot know good from evil—cannot have

appreciation of music, art and literature. The human spirit adds the psyche to human brain.

WHY, then, did God place the human spirit within humans, and not in animals? The answer is a profound TRUTH! The human spirit within man is the only real value of a human life—for it is the means by which a human may be united with God. On repentance and belief those called by God may be BEGOTTEN of God, to be BORN as children of God—very God—part of the GOD FAMILY. God’s Holy Spirit may thus unite with the human spirit. Thus, as in Romans 8:16, God’s Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God—now begotten of God and to be born at the resurrection as spirit beings.

As God was later to reveal in this intensive open-minded study of his Word, the human FAMILY, started by Adam, was potentially the GOD FAMILY through which God purposed to reproduce himself. And human reproduction is the very type of God’s divine reproduction. But this has been revealed knowledge too profound for a sinning and Satan-deceived rationality to comprehend—except to those God has called and who have been begotten by him through his Holy Spirit. This tremendous TRUTH leads to understanding of WHY the Church, and WHICH IS the one true Church of God!

Now back to the garden of Eden and FOUNDATION of this world.

### The Foundation of This World

The first human, the man Adam, was led by his wife Eve to disobey God, and reject the tree of LIFE. The tree of life would have united him with God. But upon his choice, God CLOSED OFF the tree of LIFE from Adam and his family—UNTIL God would send Jesus, the SECOND ADAM, to make possible the reconciliation of humankind with God. Actually the PURPOSE of God’s Church is to reconcile man—unite man—with God.

Eve had believed Satan. He said she would not die—she was an immortal soul. She believed that, and her children have believed that lie ever since. Adam followed her

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payments are only a little better off. They have some equity. But in hard times they can lose their land through foreclosure. Even those who own land free and clear can still lose it if they are ever unable to find the cash to pay the property taxes on it.

#### More Help

The biblical plan given to ancient Israel contains numerous additional guidelines for dealing with personal economic situations.

If a person leased out his land, then needed to buy it back but did not have the money to do so, he could appeal to his relatives for help in repurchasing it (Lev. 25:25).

Any money that is loaned to those in need, as opposed to that which is loaned for investment purposes, was to be interest free (Lev. 25:36-37).

God's program specified a seven-year statute of limitations on all short-term debts incurred by those within the jurisdiction of God's laws (Deut. 15:1-2).

Think what that would mean in today's world when consumers, encouraged to go into debt and to buy on credit, are often led into financial disaster. Few lenders would be willing to extend credit to seduced buyers for luxuries and nonnecessities, if they thought they would not get their money back before the seventh year of release! Society would quickly adopt as basic a cash-as-you-go policy.

If a person, for one reason or another, fell on really hard times, or if he did not feel capable of managing his own affairs, he would not, under God's plan, face living on skid row as a useless derelict. For a seven-year period he could lease out his own inheritance and hire himself out to someone who is pros-

pering. At the end of that period the boss is expected to be generous to him in remuneration. He could begin a fresh, independent start.

But, if the servant wished, he could continue the arrangement for however many years remain until the Jubilee year, at which time he would be free and would regain possession of his inherited land (Lev. 25:39-54; Deut. 15:12-18).

God's program for taking care of the needy has sufficient flexibility to provide various means of solving individual problems, all with the involvement of relatives, neighbors and employers rather than faceless bureaucratic government agencies. There are, however, occasions where help is needed beyond the person-to-person level.

Situations may arise where someone in need has no relatives to help or resources to draw upon. God's program also provides for such eventualities. Every third year that the land was cultivated and harvested (which is the same as saying every third and sixth year out of a seven-year cycle, for the land was to rest on the seventh year—Lev. 25:1-7), a special tithe or 10 percent of income was to be collected. Its purpose was to provide for whoever "has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow . . . [that they] may come and eat and be satisfied . . ." (Deut. 14:28-29; 26:12-15).

That law is still in effect and those who observe it today can testify how liberally God renders his blessings in return.

Under God's system the whole attitude toward sharing the wealth of the earth is far different from the greed expressed in the world today. The corners of the harvested fields are to be left unreaped and hard-to-reach ripened fruit is to be

left ungathered, so that any near neighbors who are needy might find something to eat (Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19-21).

There is to be no oppressing one another (Lev. 25:14). "You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. . . . You shall not defraud your neighbor, nor rob him" (Lev. 19:11, 13).

What a world! Everyone seeking to help one another, looking out for each other's interests—that's what God wants to see. Love and concern expressed person to person, neighbor to neighbor, friend to friend. That's the attitude that shall prevail when Jesus Christ reestablishes the government of God over the earth.

You might say at this point, if you are one of the poor or the needy struggling to get by on meager sustenance, That's all well and good, but what do I do under today's system?

First, it should be pointed out that it is not wrong, living as we do in today's system of things, to accept whatever aid is needed and available from government agencies. Since the world is not living God's way, we can be glad that many of the needy at least have that option in certain countries.

In addition, realize that you do not have to be defeated by poverty or want! Seek to better your contact and relationship with God. Put God's ways into practice in your life. Pay God his tithe. If you are willing to work hard at whatever God provides, the One to whom all wealth belongs will intervene to take care of your needs. He will "supply all you need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

That is both a challenge and a promise. Why don't you take him up on it? □

## True Church?

*(Continued from page 17)*

in choosing SELF-knowledge of good and evil, rather than GOD-REVEALED knowledge—following the human spirit, rather than receiving and being led by God's divine Spirit.

Stated another way, they were kidnapped by Satan, and followed

the WAY OF LIFE, knowledge and understanding of the kidnapper rather than their potential Father, whom they disbelieved.

But—GOD'S PURPOSE SHALL STAND! God will yet ransom back his kidnapped potential family.

But since the human family in Adam had chosen the way of SIN, and since sin brought upon them suffering, anguish, unhappiness

and death, God shut off the tree of LIFE lest they gain eternal life in pain, sorrow, misery and suffering. But the eternal life of happiness and fulfillment that God wants us to have would, through Christ, be yet made possible for all who later would make the right choice, through the SECOND Adam.

So, it was then decreed, at the very FOUNDATION of this present

human world and civilization (Rev. 13:8), that Christ, the "Lamb of God," should come and be sacrificed to redeem the lost. At the same foundation of this world that started from Adam, it was decreed that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). But how could a man be judged after he had died?

That is described in I Corinthians 15:22-24: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all [the same all] be made alive"—by a resurrection. This is described in Revelation 20:11-12 as the Great White Throne Judgment. The "book of life" is opened in that judgment. Those judged guilty, as all will be, shall learn that Christ the second Adam had come and paid their death penalty in their stead. And if they then repent, the tree of LIFE will be open to them. They may yet be begotten and then born as sons of God, converted into the GOD FAMILY.

However, in the meantime all have died and remain dead until the resurrections.

#### The Second Adam

In God's due time, some 4,000 years after Adam's sin and the foundation of this world, God sent his Son, Jesus, born of the human Mary, and sired by God. He came as the second Adam. Unlike the first Adam, he chose the tree of LIFE.

Jesus was born through the Holy Spirit of God. He was filled, without measure, by God's Spirit. He had the close relationship with God that THE FIRST Adam rejected. He was begotten and humanly born of God. He said: "I have kept my Father's commandments" (John 15:10), whereas the first Adam rejected them and chose instead his own human good, as well as evil. Jesus thus chose the tree of LIFE.

Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). This is the first place in all the Bible the word *church* is used. If we are to answer the question of the title of this article, Where is the true Church? we must pause here to ask, What IS a church? Just what did Jesus build? WHY should there be a church? Is the Church divided into many denominations and sects? Or is

there only the ONE original true Church that Jesus built?

#### Why the Church?

The New Testament of the Bible originally was written in the Greek language. The English word *church* is translated from the original Greek word *ekklesia*. It means "called-out ones"—from *ek* (out), and *klesia* (called). The Greek word means "a calling out," to meet together, especially as a religious congregation. It does not mean a building with sharply sloping roof, with a steeple atop pointing to heaven, with a cross on its facade.

Symbolically the Church is referred to as the household (or family) of God (Eph. 2:19-21), and a building that grows into the holy TEMPLE to which Christ shall come at his return to earth as King of kings, ruling all nations.

But WHY the Church? WHY call its members out from those of this world? That is answered by another question. What's wrong with this world? It was founded on a faulty foundation. It is shot through and through with evils, causing suffering, anguish, frustration and death.

In traditional Christianity there seems to be the concept that God created Adam a perfect immortal spiritual being—that Satan came along and wrecked this perfect spiritual mechanism—and that Christianity is God's attempt to repair the damage, and make man as good as Adam was before Satan wrecked him. That is TOTALLY FALSE and contrary to biblical revelation.

It has been shown that God created man MORTAL, with only a temporary animal existence, kept alive by the breath of air, the circulation of blood and continually refueled by food and water from the ground. Man rejected the tree of LIFE, which was freely offered him. Man never obtained immortal self-containing life. Instead man embarked on the way of life that results in pain, suffering, discontent, unhappiness, anguish and death. A civilization of organized society was built on that foundation. I compare this civilization to the structure of a building, built of faulty materials, on a rotten and crumbling foundation.

God is NOT trying to repair this

decaying and rotting superstructure we call civilization. God sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, as the SECOND ADAM, to START ANEW a totally different new structure of civilization.

#### A World Held Captive

Let me picture it yet another way. God said: "Let us [God and the Word] make man in our image, after our likeness." God made man after God's own kind, just as he made cattle after the cattle kind, and every animal after its own kind. But God formed man of the DUST OF THE GROUND (Gen. 2:7), having temporary existence by the breath of air. God told the mortal man that if he sinned he would SURELY DIE. Man was not and is not an immortal soul, but a temporarily existing soul. But he could have become a child of God. Had Adam taken of the tree of LIFE, he would have received the immortal LIFE of God injected into him. God's Spirit would have entered him, joining with his human spirit, uniting him to GOD as God's SON—an actual member of the GOD FAMILY.

Therefore Adam and all his children were the potential children of God. Then Satan came along, and through mother Eve induced Adam to submit to being kidnapped. Satan had kidnapped God's own POTENTIAL children. But by their deliberate disobedience of God, rejection of God's offer of sonship and turning to the WAY of Satan, man not only chose the way of life and type of civilization of the kidnapper, he brought upon himself and his family the penalty of sin—DEATH.

#### THINK WHAT THIS MEANT!

Man was allowed to make his own decision—either LIFE eternal by obeying God and taking of the tree of LIFE—OR, DEATH by disobedience and taking of the tree of death. Adam disobeyed.

God could not suspend the penalty he had said plainly would follow disobedience. So what did God do? How would God even yet rescue his potential children from the kidnapper? Not by compromising with HIS LAW and suspending the penalty. BUT, by decreeing at that very foundation of the world that he would send his own Son, Jesus Christ, to live without sin and then,



not having brought the penalty of death on himself, Jesus would pay the penalty of human sin—DEATH—in man's stead.

So, thereupon, God also decreed at the very foundation of the earth that, as in Adam all humans would die—because all humans have sinned—so IN CHRIST, the SAME ALL might be made alive by a resurrection from the dead, AFTER their penalty had been paid for them by Jesus Christ.

So humanity's only HOPE is through the RESURRECTION from the dead and due to the fact Jesus paid their death penalty in their stead.

BUT—AND THIS IS IMPORTANT!—God could not reopen the TREE OF LIFE to humans in general UNTIL after Jesus had come and paid the death penalty for humans—all of whom have sinned.

God did not send Jesus to pay this penalty for some 4,000 years—now nearly 2,000 years ago. Meanwhile, multiple millions of people had lived and died. So the PLAN of God (God's MASTER PLAN) for fulfilling his PURPOSE of reproducing himself through humans, had to begin with Jesus, the second Adam. God had allowed this world to be founded by the first Adam. He started the very foundation of God's world through Christ, the second Adam. He started it by the one man—Jesus. Jesus said he would build his Church. The Church is the embryonic beginning of God's new civilization.

Just as God established his government on earth through the cherub whom we call Lucifer, whom God set on the throne of the earth, so God's new civilization will be the government of God reestablished on earth through Christ and the Church. So God started the NEW civilization—or government—through Jesus, with the 12 apostles Jesus selected, called and chose out of the generation then living, in the first century A.D.

But the Church had to start small and grow. It started with the 12 apostles and the 120 baptized the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, the day the Church was founded.

Jesus said: "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). In Ephesians 2:21, the Church is called a building—actually the spiritual

temple of God. It had a FOUNDATION (verse 20). Its foundation is Jesus Christ, along with the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:19-22).

Now consider this teaching of Jesus: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt. 7:24-27). Jesus was referring to the Church, built upon the FOUNDATION of Christ ("and that Rock was Christ"—I Cor. 10:4); also to this world built upon the "sand" of Satan the devil and Satan's ways of vanity, self-centeredness, lust, competition and strife—the way Adam chose—the WAY on which this world was FOUNDED. Jesus was going back to the FOUNDATIONS of the world, and of the Church. He likened them to buildings.

The building that is the world and its society and civilization—its systems, customs, governments and ways—is a superstructure, as mentioned before, shot through and through with faulty materials and workmanship. And God is going to let that building (the world built on MAN'S concepts of good and evil) FALL—and GREAT IS GOING TO BE THE FALL THEREOF!

God says, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1).

SATAN, not God, built this house. Jesus did not come to REPAIR the improperly constructed building that is this world. He is not trying to save the superstructure built on the foundation of Satan.

Instead, Jesus said: "Come out from among them [of this world], and be ye separate" (II Cor. 6:17-18).

#### Coming—A New Civilization!

Jesus chose his 12 apostles to be part, with him, of the foundation of AN ENTIRELY new building—a NEW WORLD ALTOGETHER.

What was Jesus' gospel—his MESSAGE? What did he teach? Not about himself and himself only—but about the KINGDOM OF GOD—which is the born FAMILY of God, which will rule all nations with the government of God, at Christ's return and Satan's removal.

The process of human birth is the precise type of being spiritually born of God. Each human might be called, by analogy, an ovum. To be born of God, the divine sperm—which is the Holy Spirit of God, from his very person—must enter into us, impregnate us. We are then begotten—a divine embryo. We are begotten within our spiritual mother—the Church of God. The Church is "Jerusalem . . . above . . . which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26). Then we are fed spiritually through the mother, the Church, on the spiritual food of the Word of God. But we are only begotten—not born until we "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18). It is all clearly explained in our free booklet *Just What Do You Mean . . . Born Again?*

Jesus explained to the Pharisee Nicodemus (John 3:3-6) that to enter the kingdom of God we must be BORN again. Born of GOD. And what IS God? God is a divine FAMILY. But, as Creator of the universe, God also is RULER over his creation. God RULES with GOVERNMENT. All government is based on a foundational law. A law is a code of rules of conduct—regulating the relationships between individuals or groups. God's law is God's way of life, and that way is LOVE. It is outflowing love toward and in relation to others. For the conduct of human life, it is love toward God, and love toward man. That is the basis for the spiritual CHARACTER of God.

What was Jesus' gospel? The word *gospel* means "good news." Jesus' gospel was the good news of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD—and that kingdom is the GOD FAMILY RULING OVER THE EARTH AND THE UNIVERSE. The free booklet *What Is the True Gospel?* makes this misunderstood subject plain. Write for your copy today. □