

Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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Whatever Happened to Biblical Christianity?

Gentile Christianity does not deal fairly with the Jewishness of Jesus and the Apostles and of the whole Bible. The following observations from leading experts in the field of biblical studies and church history point to the fact that traditional Christianity departed in the early centuries from the original Apostolic faith. What we know as Christianity today is a mixture of Apostolic truth with a measure of paganism. This should prompt a widespread cry for reform and restoration of true Christian teaching:

For most of Christian history Paul has been misunderstood:

“The first task of exegesis [explaining the Bible] is to penetrate as far as possible inside the historical context(s) of the author and of those for whom he wrote. So much of this involves the taken-for-granted of both author and addressees. Where a modern reader is unaware of (or unsympathetic to) these shared assumptions and concerns, it will be impossible to hear the text as the author intended it to be heard (and assumed it would be heard). *In this case, a major part of that context is the self-understanding of Jews and Judaism in the first century and of Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism. Since most of Christian history and scholarship, regrettably, has been unsympathetic to that self-understanding, if not downright hostile to it, a proper appreciation of Paul in his interaction with that self-understanding has been virtually impossible*” (James Dunn, *Commentary on Romans 1-8, Word Biblical Commentary*, Dallas: Word Books, 1988, pp xiv, xv).

In regard to scriptural teaching about the destiny of man, original Biblical concepts have been replaced by ideas from Hellenism and Gnosticism:

“The hope of the early church centered on the resurrection of the Last Day. It is this which first calls the dead into eternal life (1 Cor. 15; Phil. 3:21). This resurrection happens to the man and not only to the body. Paul speaks of the resurrection not ‘of the body’ but ‘of the dead.’ This understanding of the resurrection implicitly understands death as also affecting the whole man...*Thus [in traditional Christian teaching] the original Biblical concepts have been replaced by ideas from Hellenistic Gnostic dualism. The New Testament idea of*

the resurrection which affects the whole man has had to give way to the immortality of the soul. The Last Day also loses its significance, for souls have received all that is decisively important long before this. Eschatological [forward-looking] tension is no longer strongly directed to the day of Jesus’ Coming. *The difference between this and the hope of the New Testament is very great*” (Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966, pp. 413-414).

Christian teaching was transformed; Messianic hopes were forgotten; the notion of the Kingdom of God on earth disappeared. Immortality at death took the place of the resurrection into the Kingdom on earth:

“Like all concepts the meaning of religious terms is changed with a changing experience and a changing world-view. Transplanted into the Greek world view, inevitably *the Christian teaching was modified — indeed transformed*. Questions which had never been asked came into the foreground and the Jewish presuppositions tended to disappear. Especially were *the Messianic hopes forgotten or transferred to a transcendent sphere beyond death*. When the empire became Christian in the fourth century, *the notion of a Kingdom of Christ on earth to be introduced by a great struggle all but disappeared, remaining only as the faith of obscure groups*. Immortality — the philosophical conception — took the place of the resurrection of the body. Nevertheless, the latter continues because of its presence in the primary sources, but it is no longer a determining factor, since its presupposition — *the Messianic Kingdom on earth — has been obscured*. As thus the background is changed from Jewish to Greek, so are the fundamental religious conceptions...We have thus a peculiar combination — *the religious doctrines of the Bible run through the forms of an alien philosophy*” (G.W. Knox, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Philosophy and the History of Religion, Union Theological Seminary, New York, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Vol. 6, p. 284).

Our creeds teach us to think in Gentile terms contrary to the New Testament:

“The primary kinship of the New Testament is not with the Gentile environment, but rather with the *Jewish heritage and environment...We are often led by our traditional creeds and theology to think in terms of Gentile and especially Greek concepts*. We know that

not later than the second century there began the systematic effort of the Apologists to show that the Christian faith perfected the best in Greek philosophy...A careful study of the New Testament must block any trend to regard the New Testament as a group of documents expressive of the Gentile mind. This book's kinship is primarily and overwhelmingly with Judaism and the Old Testament...*The New Testament speaks always of disapproval and usually with blunt denunciation of Gentile cults and philosophies.* It agrees essentially with the Jewish indictment of the pagan world...The modern Church often misunderstands its relation to the Old Testament and Israel, and often inclines to prefer the Greek attitude to the New Testament view" (F.V. Filson, *The New Testament Against Its Environment*, SCM Press, 1956, pp. 26, 27, 43).

Original Christianity was submerged under Greco-Roman culture resulting in a perversion of the original faith:

"Although the acute form of the secularization of Christianity in Gnosticism was rejected, yet *the Church...continued to lose more and more its primitive character and to be conformed to its environment in the Greco-Roman culture.* The process was advanced by the Apologists [spokesmen for the faith in the second century], seemed to suffer a check in the influence of Irenaeus, but was stimulated in the Alexandrian school of theology...This development brought about the definite transformation of the rule of faith into the compendium of a Greek philosophical system...*We cannot assume that the faith as delivered to the saints was adequately and finally expressed in these Greco-Roman intellectual forms...*That the faith was expressed in ecclesiastical dogma always without obscuration or distortion cannot be maintained...That the Christian organism could not escape being affected by, in adapting itself to, its Greco-Roman environment must be conceded; that this action and reaction were not only necessary but a condition of progress may be conjectured...This does not however exclude the frank recognition of the fact that there were characteristics of the Greek speculative genius and the practical Roman ethos not altogether harmonious with the distinctive character of the Gospel, so that *there was perversion amidst the progress in the subsequent development.* The salt in seasoning did lose some of its savour. Greek metaphysic and Law *misrepresented* as well as expressed the Gospel" (A.E. Garvie, "Christianity," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1910, Vol. 3, p. 588).

Christians do not understand the meaning of "Messiah" nor the vision of his Kingdom:

"[Christians] have largely lost the sense of Jesus' Messiahship. *And they have, largely also, lost the Messianic vision.* The Greek name *Christos* means 'anointed' and is the literal translation of the Hebrew *Meschiah*. Now the idea of the Anointed is a specifically Jewish idea...Christians who think or speak of Christ almost always forget the Semitic word and ideas which this name translates; in fact, they forget that Jesus is primarily the Messiah. The very idea of Jesus' Messiahship has passed away from their minds...Having lost the original sense of the word 'Christ,' Christians (or, to be exact, most of them) have also lost the Messianic vision, i.e., the expectation of the divine future, the orientation towards '*what is coming*'" (Lev Gillet, *Communion in the Messiah*, p. 104-105).

"Heaven" is not what Jesus promised his followers, though Christians today constantly say it is:

William Strawson, a tutor in Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Religion, made a detailed study of *Jesus and the Future Life* (Epworth Press, 1959), and dedicated 23 pages to an examination of the word "heaven" in Matthew, Mark and Luke. He concluded:

"In few, if any, instances of the use of the word 'heaven' is there any parallel with modern usage. The gospel records of our Lord's life and teaching *do not speak of going to heaven*, as a modern believer so naturally does. Rather the emphasis is on that which is 'heavenly' coming down to man...Our modern way of speaking of life with God as being life 'in heaven' is not the way the gospels speak of the matter. *Especially is there no suggestion that Jesus is offering to his disciples the certainty of 'heaven' after this life*" (p. 38).

Editor: What Jesus did offer his followers was the restored earth: "Blessed are the meek for they will have the land (earth) as their inheritance" (Matt. 5:5).

A disaster occurred when, after the death of the Apostles, the Jewish element in original Christianity was ousted in favor of a new Gentile religion:

"The creation of the Christian religion necessarily involved a retreat from the teaching of Moses, the Prophets and Jesus, which more and more became a rout...As one Protestant Christian wrote: 'The great people of God's choice [the Jews] were soon the least adequately represented in the Catholic Church. That was a disaster to the Church itself. It meant that the Church as a whole failed to understand the Old Testament and that *the Greek mind and the Roman mind in turn, instead of the Hebrew mind, came to dominate its outlook: from that disaster the Church has never recovered either in doctrine or in practice*'...If today another great age of

evangelization is to dawn we need the Jews again...Christianity is a synthesis of Judaism and paganism. As such, it is a corruption of as much significance as the ancient Israelite deflection in blending their religion with the cults of the Canaanites. Therefore, it is not for the Jews to embrace orthodox Christianity, but for the Christians, if they are to be Israelites indeed as the People of God, to review and purify their beliefs, and to recapture what basically they have in common with the Jews, the Messianic vision" (H.J. Schonfield, *The Politics of God*, Hutchinson, 1970, pp. 98-99, citing Canon Goudge, *Essays on Judaism and Christianity*).

The entire Christian system, both Catholic and Protestant, is flawed by the mixing of the Bible with alien Greek ideas:

"Our position is that the re-interpretation of Biblical theology in terms of the Greek philosophers has been both widespread throughout the centuries and everywhere destructive to the essence of the Christian faith...There have always been Jews who sought to make terms with the Gentile world, and it has in time meant the death of Judaism for all such. There have been Christians from the beginning who have sought to do this...*Neither Catholic nor Protestant theology is based on Biblical theology. In each case we have a domination of Christian theology by Greek thought*" (N.H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament*, London; Epworth Press, 1955, p. 187, 188).

The Church as it developed after Bible times was poisoned by elements of Gnosticism:

"Who can maintain that the Church ever overcame the Gnostic doctrine of the two natures or the Valentinian Docetism? Even the later councils of the Church which discussed the Christological problems in complicated, nowadays hardly intelligible definitions, did not manage to do this; *the unity of the Church foundered precisely on this*" (Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, Harper and Row, 1983, p. 372).

While Protestants claim that the Bible is their authority, they have in fact accepted a Greek-influenced version of Christianity which abandons the Bible:

"The difference is obvious between the mental patterns of the New Testament and most of our accustomed Christian thinking...This explanation of this contrast lies in the fact that *historic Christian thought in this regard, as in others, has been Greek rather than Hebrew*. Claiming to be founded on the Scripture, it has, as a matter of fact, *completely surrendered many scriptural frameworks of thinking* and has accepted the

Greek counterparts instead" (H.E. Fosdick, *A Guide to Understanding the Bible*, Harper, 1938, p. 93).

The Church says one thing and does another:

"The Church has not usually in practice (whatever it may have claimed to be doing in theory) based its Christology [understanding of who Jesus is] exclusively on the witness of the New Testament" (Maurice Wiles, *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, SCM Press, 1974, p. 54-55).

From the second century a new form of Christianity was beginning to replace the faith of the Bible:

"Developed Gentile Christianity of the sort which was beginning to take shape towards the end of the first century has very little to do with Jesus or the faith of the first generation. *It is a new religion developed to replace the original faith*" (Dr. Don Cupitt, *The Debate About Christ*, SCM Press, 1979, p. 69). ✧

Satan, the Devil

A kind correspondent in the UK asked me to comment on the Devil, the Satan. He writes, "If there is a wicked personal supernatural Devil, where did he originate? Is he an angel, a fallen spirit? Can angels fall from grace? Where is his abode? Would God parley with an evil being as recorded in the Book of Job?"

I start by pointing out that the method of inquiry by this correspondent is so very strange! I suspect, with respect, that it is evasive, avoiding the real issue. Let me respond with this: Do you believe there are Pharisees in the New Testament? Why would you think of saying "I don't know, because I don't know how they originated. I don't know where they all lived. Would Jesus speak to a hostile Pharisee?"

The Pharisees exist because the inspired text says they do. Christians are supposed to believe Scripture. Not to believe what God reveals is unbelief.

The Christadelphians are known for their fair and realistic treatment of Holy Scripture, until it comes to the issue of Satan and demons. Then they abandon their own excellent, essential grammatical and logical method! One first has to believe the text of Scripture which says that demons do exist! In Luke 4:41 the demons cried out. The demons recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus replied to the demons. "The demons believe in God and tremble" (James 2:19).

Jesus granted the request of the demons (Matt. 8:31-32). A demon is indeed an evil supernatural spirit. That is simply what it means in the Greek language. The NT is written in the Greek language. It is plain, good communication and instruction. If there are no such things as demons, it is postposterous, contrary to plain

ordinary common sense, to imagine that the Bible historians and writers would tell us so much about demons, what they do and what they say!

We must all beware of trying to get rid of what our particular group does not approve! It is the text of Scripture by which we are to be judged (John 12:48; 6:63).

“Demon” in the Greek language is not a demonized *human*, in the same way that an employee is not the same as an employer! Demon does not mean a disease. There are perfectly good words in Greek for madness and for diseases, but those words are not demon. So one might as well claim that the Pharisees or, say, angels do not exist. The demons, angels and Pharisees *do* exist. If you say they do not, you risk being guilty of refusal to believe Scripture, and no one wants to be guilty of that.

I want to know from our correspondent, what does he say “demon” means? Then the problem is solved. If he says that a demon is not a human, not a good angel, and not GOD, then what category remains? The only honest answer is the category supported by all dictionaries of the Biblical Greek words: an evil, non-human, supernatural personality with supernatural powers, even the knowledge to know that Jesus was the Messiah (hidden from many humans, Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34).

The Devil is a supernatural fallen angel who “fell into condemnation” (1 Tim 3:6). That he fell into condemnation means of course that he went astray. He became evil. Man (Adam) became evil. Satan did too. He was punished for his lie (Gen. 3:13-15). Jewish literature (which is not canonical scripture) says that the Devil became jealous and envious of the pinnacle of God’s creation — man.

Since a demon never means a disease or a mentally ill human, there is only one category left — an evil spiritual personality. By a process of elimination, quite apart from the obvious and actual lexical meaning of demon, and with full and unanimous support from lexicons, we arrive at our conclusion.

The demons inhabit the sublunar space (Eph. 2:2; 6:12) and some others are incarcerated in Tartarus which is an abode for fallen spirits. The Devil is the prince and leader of the demons. They are his angels/messengers.

My hope is that all readers of Scripture will now give up their unreasoned refusal to believe the facts presented by the writers of the Bible. And give up disagreeing with Jesus who obviously believed in the existence of evil, non-human spirits. “The demons believe in the One God and tremble,” James said (2:19). The idea in the mind of James is patent. He knew that demons exist. So should all readers of Scripture. It is a part of revealed truth.

The Satan who is the prince of the demons approached Jesus in the wilderness. It is amazing to see some Christadelphians resist the easy meaning of

Matthew 4 by saying that “the Satan” means evil thoughts *arising internally in the mind of Jesus!* Language should never be so recklessly manipulated or turned on its head. In Greek *proselthon* means “came up to, approached” (Matt. 4:3), never ever the onset of thoughts within! In the very same context angels “came up to” Jesus (4:11), and no one tries to wrestle that word out of its very obvious meaning.

Some Christadelphians saw my point here about the approach of the Satan from outside Jesus. They then claimed that the High Priest must have been the opponent Jesus faced in the wilderness! But this was a rather desperate effort to avoid the obvious.

There are certainly facts about Satan and demons which are not revealed in the Bible, but it is very unwise and methodologically flawed to refuse the plain text on their existence, on the pretext of other questions which do not affect their existence.

It is quite frustrating to be told by one correspondent (not the one who prompted this article) that “demon” means “a non-existent being.” So then in Luke 4:41, “non-existent beings cried out and recognized Jesus as Messiah”! I trust that this very unhealthy way to treat Scripture will be renounced. We are to be judged by our intelligent treatment of holy Scripture. ✧

The Jewish Jesus Is Trying to Get Our Attention!

It is **standard information** in all the big dictionaries and encyclopedias that Judaism, based on its Scriptures, summarized in the great Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4, believed God to be a single Person, a single undifferentiated Self. That is what I and many others call unitary monotheism or unipersonal monotheism. It is often referred to as strict monotheism, although I see this last phrase could be ambiguous.

The Bible is turned into chaos if one superimposes philosophical language onto its simple realism. God is said to be a single Self. He calls Himself I, Me, etc. thousands and thousands of times. This is the massive, pervasive and obvious evidence to be dealt with.

The Shema (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29; 1 Cor. 8:4-6, etc.) and Scripture convinced Judaism always to believe in unitary monotheism. Thus at Oxford, the Regius Professor of Theology lecturing on the Trinity said, “Judaism was always unitarian.”

The major point to be taken in is that **Jesus affirmed that very same unitary monotheism of Judaism** (Mark 12:28-34). The Jew who agreed with Jesus showed that Jesus was entirely orthodox in his Jewish description of who God is: one single self. The Jew echoed back Jesus words by saying “there is no other except **Him**.” It takes no special learning to know that Him is **one who! One**

self. Some would urge that the Shema makes no proposition one way or the other about how many Persons God is! This is not true at all. What good is a creed if it is so unclear? It really impugns the integrity of Holy Scripture (and Jesus said that “salvation is from the Jews”) if we are unable to give a clear meaning to the Shema. People have died, both Jews and Christians, for the conviction that YHWH is one single divine Person.

I need only quote four sources which are echoed by many:

“Abraham, Moses and Elijah were all equally zealous monotheists and in none of their successors was there any retrogression from the highest and purest form of **unitarian belief**” (*Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, “Judaism”).

“The monotheism of the Jews was then, as it is still, **unitarian**” (Leonard Hodgson D.D., Regius Professor at Oxford, *Christian Faith and Practice*, 1952, p. 74).

“Judaism has always been rigorously **unitarian**” (“Deism,” *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906).

“Judaism [is] **unitarian**” (Emil Brunner, *Dogmatics*, Vol. 1. p. 205).

Jesus agreed with the Jews in Mark 12:29, and as Dr. Dennis Nineham says in his commentary on Mark, this passage is meant to demonstrate that Jesus was thoroughly orthodox in his description of God.

These non-complicated facts should settle our discussion, since we are all agreed that our Christian task is to follow the teaching of Jesus.

Some Trinitarians suggest that in John 10:30 Jesus introduced something *new*. In this case Jesus was less than honest in his reply to the friendly Jew! (Mark 12:29). But who today in commentary advances John 10:30 as any sort of Trinitarian proof? So the argument is defeated. Jesus did not change his mind on the definition of “God.” Nor did Paul when he affirms the same Shema in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6: “There is one God, the Father, and no other except Him.” Jesus is the one lord *Messiah* who was born in Luke 2:11. ✧

Revelation 13:8: “All who live on earth whose names have not been written in the Book of Life will worship the beast. The Book of Life belongs to the Lamb whose death **was planned before the world** was created” (New International Reader’s Version).

Compare John 17:5.

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I think the public has little idea of some of the prodigious language lies offered on the internet. A prime example is *echad*, the Hebrew word for **one**. *Echad* always means one, and not two or more! It never **means** more than one. *Echad*, like the English “one,” can of course **describe** any noun in the universe, but that does not tell you that *echad* **means** more than one!

“One cluster of grapes” means one and **not more than one** cluster! One married couple as “one flesh” does not mean that one *means* two! “One flesh is not two fleshes”! “One zebra” does not tell you that one means black and white! “One centipede” does not tell you that one means a hundred.

The public is remarkably gullible in matters of ordinary language. They will “buy” anything which sounds good! Scripture says: “The Lord God is one Person.” He is the Father and He is never two or more. YHVH is one single Person (*echad*) thousands of times. He is defined as the Father, i.e. one single divine Person (Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Mal. 2:10). YHVH is never two Persons. Jesus believed this cardinal truth as a Jew agreeing with another Jew in Mark 12:29. Christians who claim to be following Jesus surely need to pay close attention to Jesus and his definition of God. Is Jesus not our rabbi and will we not be judged by what he taught? (John 12:44-50).

What if?

by Nelvan Evans, California

What if I told you that Jesus is a man?

What if I told you that the “word of God” is what God spoke?

What if I told you that people have been exiled for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ?

What if I told you that others have been killed for the word of God and more will be killed?

What if I told you that Jesus is the first person ever to be resurrected to immortality?

What if I told you that Jesus is God’s Lamb?

What if I told you that the one called “who is, and who was, and who is to come” is God Almighty, not Jesus?

What if I told you that God will avenge those who have been killed for His word as well as those yet to be killed?

What if I told you that God will execute judgment through Jesus?

What if I told you that Jesus is coming again and every eye will see him?

What if I told you that Jesus will reward overcomers by making them pillars in the temple of his God?

What if I told you Jesus has a God?

What if I told you Jesus' God will establish a new heaven and earth?

What if I told you that Jesus' God will eventually come to dwell with His people?

What if I told you that our God, the God of Christians, is the same God that Jesus has?

What if I told you that this same God Himself will wipe away all tears?

And what if I told you that God revealed all this to Jesus?

You can find these truths in the book of Revelation. ✧

***The One: In Defense of God*
by Pastor Dan Gill**

This exciting new book is a persuasive call to return to the genuine monotheism of Jesus and Scripture.
Available at Amazon.com

I wanted all our readers to see an example of an excellent sermon delivered as a class assignment in my Kingdom of God as Gospel class at Atlanta Bible College. Nathan Massie explained very effectively our citizenship as Christian believers. We do not belong to the kingdoms of this present world system. Nathan expounded Luke 19 where Rabbi Jesus was at his most brilliant in laying out the whole story of salvation. We encourage all to watch Nathan's 20-minute presentation at <https://youtu.be/kAyqqt2ltec> He will help to prepare us all to speak of the faith everywhere.

Comments

• "I really love and appreciate the logical approach to this Trinity contradiction. The major issue is that believers in the Trinity have such a deep emotional attachment to their belief that logic is irrelevant. Do keep up the good work and God bless." — *YouTube*

• "I wanted you to know how much you have impacted my life. I was born into the Jehovah's Witnesses and as a late teen retracted myself from the presence of the Kingdom Hall. Later I would return, attempting to become close to Almighty God and his Son Jesus Christ our Savior and Messiah. However I soon found on my own the nonsense of ministry and pioneering services, as well as their stance on blood (excessive and not entirely scripturally based). But most of all the Organization as a whole and how they belittle Jesus Christ and the belief that he and Michael are the same. So I left and researched on my own for many months and became involved with other ministries. Some made sense but I always felt that the Sabbath, Feast days, etc. are not required as proved in Galatians, Romans, and through Jesus Christ. Anyway I had prayed many times and

struggled to follow Torah and keep the New Covenant in my heart and mind. I found your videos on Youtube and wow! You literally answered all my questions as a true Christian. A rarity these days. Thank you so very much for confirming your beliefs with Scripture. I am looking forward to reading your books and studying more of your online videos." — *Mexico*

• "I was raised up in two different churches, Southern Baptist and Independent Baptist. I went to two different Southern Baptist colleges. I started seeing red flags, things the denomination taught that were different from what the Bible said. When I brought this to my professors I was informed that I should not question the doctrines of the Southern Baptist Convention. Years later on my own, with a Strongs, lexicon, interlinear Bible and NASB (I found a few errors in there), I found that the doctrine of the Trinity, eternal burning in the lake of fire, and souls going to heaven or hell at death are all errors." — *North Carolina*

• "Thank you so much for your newsletter. It is a great blessing to my family and me. I have also just finished reading your excellent book about the *Coming Kingdom of the Messiah*. It clarified a lot for me." — *Australia*

• "I was raised in a normal Christian family and taught like a normal Evangelical Christian. The Protestant Churches here are more or less very open to almost everything. They don't care much about their sheep when they are done with their confirmation. I started a 'normal' teenager life, with very much all there is to see and to do. Nonetheless, when I look back into the past I can say that our heavenly Father protected me in that time from the most sins and troubles. I was a rocker and I visited many concerts. This went on for about 10 years until I was around 28. In that 10 years, I had a wonderful 4-year relationship, but without any spiritual or any beliefs. I always thought of myself as a Christian, as that was the way the Protestant Churches taught me. So at the age of 28, my relationship had been over for some years, and I felt really bad and exhausted. I wasn't satisfied with society and everything that was going on. One day I sat down, opened the Bible and knew deep inside of me: 'You are back at home.' From this time on I studied more and more of the Bible, and saw a mismatch between what the Bible said and what the churches were doing, so there was no way back into the church for me before I sorted those things out.

"Four years of studying passed. I saw the gap between me and the churches getting bigger and bigger. JHWH taught me very much over this 4 years. He led me through meetings with other people, to show me right and wrong. It's amazing, looking back at that right now. But I was lonely, asking myself, are there other people thinking

the same way? My mother also studied much and saw the same things as me.

“I found the website of Stephan Gerber and was amazed that I found someone who thought almost the same way: One God, and one Messiah, not three or two in one. I contacted him, and also Aleksandar Vuksanovic. I found a little community to begin with. I was very happy. There are some more people here and we are getting stronger slowly, but it’s happening! Aleksandar gave me your wonderful book, and also the books from Brother Joel Hemphill. They are real eye-openers and once understood, so clear. It’s a pleasure to read the Bible so free and without any ‘not-to-understand-theory.’ Some are meeting up via Skype every Wednesday and Sunday, studying and talking. We try to see each other for real once a month, if possible. Finally some companionship. This is my little story. As I said, nothing special, and it doesn't have to be. I’m a small cog in God’s Plan, always ready to bend my knees before Jesus and JHWH. Glory to Jesus, and perpetual adoration to our one and only God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” — *Germany*

- “Dear brothers, I pray that the good news of the Kingdom be widespread. We must study more and more till the day of God be present. I am in Brazil and I have the opportunity to talk with some Brazilians, British and American friends about Bible truths.” — *Brazil*

- “I was raised in a Oneness Pentecostal Church. Even though I didn’t understand everything I just accepted it. My dad was a pill addict and very abusive and he would keep us from going to Church for long periods of time. At the age of 13 I tried to commit suicide by overdosing on pills. Miraculously God pulled me through it and healed me. I never went to a doctor or the hospital for that so that's how I know it was God who healed me. My father died about 8 months later from the same thing. When my father died my family went downhill very fast. Within 3 months after my father dying I was put in foster care because my mother couldn't handle me any more. I had many problems with depression, self-hatred, anger, and bitterness. I abused alcohol, pills and marijuana. I went to prison at 17 for some mistakes that I made. During my incarceration I struggled with the existence of God and thought about exploring other religions. I read a book by Lee Strobel called *The Case for Christ* and I realized that God is real. I then became a Trinitarian because I thought it made more sense than the Oneness concept. One day I met a pastor who was talking to someone about the falsehood of the doctrine of the Trinity, so I asked him why he didn't believe in the Trinity and he showed me in the scripture the reason why. He also gave me a booklet by Sir Anthony Buzzard called *Who Is Jesus? A Plea for a Return to the Creed of the Messiah*. I read the book and

asked God to show me the truth. God was faithful and He did show me the truth. That pastor and I have since become very close friends. I look at him as my father. Now when I read Scripture it's all so clear. Where there was once confusion now it makes perfect sense. I want to testify about God’s grace and mercy. The Lord has been so patient with me and so loving. I’m now a born again Christian and a Bible unitarian looking forward to the coming Kingdom of God to serve Yahveh and His Son King Jesus. Yahveh has been so good to me. I had the blessing of leading my mother to the Lord Jesus recently and then 2 Sundays later we both got baptized in the name of Jesus in accordance with Scripture. Praise God for all that he has done in my life and my family’s life. Please keep my whole family in your prayers. God bless you all and always remember that God is faithful through all seasons of life, and He is unchanging.” — *North Carolina*

Oklahoma!

The Church of God General Conference, in partnership with Anthony Buzzard and the Restoration Fellowship, are launching a new congregation in Oklahoma City. The first meeting will take place on Sunday, July 17th at the Oklahoma City Elks Lodge, 5550 NW 72nd Street, starting at 10:00 a.m. Leading the new congregation will be Pastor Scott Perciful. For more details he can be reached by phone or email. Phone is (918) 863-5656; email is sp@scottperciful.com We look forward to seeing you there as we share our common faith in the coming Kingdom of God and the things concerning the Messiah Jesus.

The Western Washington Church of God meets at the following locations once each month:

2nd Sunday: Columbian Hall, 6794 Martin Way, Olympia; 10:00 a.m.

3rd Sunday: YWCA, 3609 Main St., Vancouver; 10:00 a.m.

4th Sunday: Columbian Hall, 6794 Martin Way, Olympia; 10:00 a.m.

For more information contact Pastor Robin Todd at robinsings4u@comcast.net, or call him in Olympia at (360) 701-9219.

Robin also has information about others around the U.S. looking for contact with other believers. You can see a list of those contact cities/towns by going to www.scatteredbrethren.org and then clicking on the appropriate “region,” or by emailing him at the above address.