

Focus on the Kingdom

Vol. 19 No. 5

Anthony Buzzard, editor

February, 2017

26th Theological Conference

May 18-21, 2017

Calvin Center, Hampton, GA

Do please consider joining a unique group of One God, Messiah and Kingdom believers for those 4 days! You and your story, if you choose, will be an encouraging blessing to others who are emerging from various backgrounds. Our belief is that teaching the truths of the Bible is life-energizing!

Conference rates per person—inc. 3 nights, 9 meals

	Single	Double (per person)
Hotel-style room (2 beds with private bath, sheets/towels)	\$415	\$260
Bunkbed room (6 per room with bath) <i>We can assign roommates</i>	\$185 per person +\$15 for sheets and towels or bring your own	

Please note that there are **only 24 hotel-style rooms available**, so please register early. First come, first served! There are also hotels 15 minutes away by car (see list at theologicalconference.org). If not staying at Calvin Center, the conference price including meals (except breakfasts) is **\$85 per person**.

Three ways to register:

1. Online at theologicalconference.org
2. Mail the form on the back page
3. Call Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261

Registration deadline: April 21, 2017

Airport Transportation

We will provide transportation between Atlanta airport and Calvin Center for \$25 round-trip or \$15 one-way, at the following times:

Airport to Calvin Center		
Thurs. May 18	2:00 pm	4:00 pm
Calvin Center to Airport		
Sun. May 21	1:00 pm	

Please arrange your arrival time on Thursday early enough to catch one of the two shuttle runs. On Sunday, May 21 we will provide **only 1** shuttle run. In order to allow you enough time to catch your return flight, we suggest you not book your return flight prior to 3:30 pm.

The conference begins with registration at 4 pm on Thursday and ends with lunch on Sunday. Driving directions to Calvin Center are at calvincenter.org. The address is 13550 Woolsey Rd., Hampton, GA 30228.

The Enigma of the End of Enoch and Elijah

by Alane Rozelle, Michigan

As children in Sunday School class or Vacation Bible School, we are often told the marvelous story of Elijah and Elisha. 2 Kings 2 relates the history of Elisha, the heir-apparent to the ministry of Elijah, following his mentor from Gilgal to the River Jordan, repeatedly refusing to stay behind. Near the end of the long journey, Elisha requested and received a “double portion of your spirit” from Elijah. Then as they continued their walk, “there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven” (v. 11; cf. 2:1). Typically, we are told the story ended there. We are left to believe that Elijah was taken up into heaven, to where God lives, and he never died.

In a similar fashion, we also learn of Enoch, a man who “walked with God, and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:25). The Sunday School teachers, the pastors, the translators’ footnotes in our Bibles all would have us believe that these two men — Enoch and Elijah — got to go “straight to heaven without dying.” This is taught as a fantastic mystery.

However, doesn’t this “mystery” flatly contradict the Scriptures which say that “the wages of sin is **death**, but the gift of God is eternal life **through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (Rom. 6:23)? Someone might say, “Enoch walked with God, meaning he didn’t sin; therefore God could take him directly to heaven.” Again, Romans 3:23 clearly states: “For **all** have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” The word “all” must include every man, woman and child, without exception. **All** have sinned; therefore **all** must die (unless Jesus returns first). Would it be fair that God would allow these two sinful men — no matter how “good” their lives might have been — to receive immortality without experiencing the wages of their sin?

Or are we being duped? Hebrews 11 gives us a lengthy list of faithful men and women approved by God (v. 1). The list even includes the story of Enoch: “By faith Enoch was taken up, so that he should not **see** death; and he was **not found because God took him up**; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God” (v. 5). That certainly seems to support the notion that Enoch didn’t die. Yet notice verse 13: “All these [meaning all the great men and women of faith who have thus far been mentioned in verses 1-12, including

Enoch!] **died** in faith, **without receiving the promises** [without receiving the life of the age to come!], but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance [they saw the promise of the life of the age to come on earth as being in the future yet].” So according to Hebrews 11:13, Enoch did indeed die. After that, the writer of Hebrews names over a dozen more faithful people who still “having gained approval through their faith, **did not receive what was promised**, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect” (vv. 39-40). In other words, nobody was allowed to receive the promises ahead of anybody else. They had to wait for us. We all get to receive the promises involved with the life of the age to come together, at the same time, when Jesus returns to earth.

We now have acquired some information about Enoch, but what about Elijah? He was not mentioned in the roll of the faithful dead in Hebrews 11. Perhaps he did after all elude death. 2 Kings 2:15-18 recounts that “fifty strong men” fruitlessly searched for Elijah for three days. Surely that is proof? Yet oddly enough we find in 2 Chronicles 21:12 that Jehoram (Joram), king of Judah, received a letter from Elijah ten years (approx. 843 BC) after his supposed “translation to heaven” (approx. 852 BC). Was the mail service so bad in those days that it took ten years for Elijah’s letter to be delivered? Or did he float it down from heaven? Maybe he had an angel act as postman? Barring such fantastic notions, we must admit that Elijah the prophet was still alive and working ten years after the whirlwind incident.

In light of this, we ought to rethink what we have been taught. The Scriptures never say that Enoch or Elijah did not die. They say that Enoch was “taken up by God so that he should not **see** death” (Heb. 11:5) and that Elijah “couldn’t be found” (2 Kings 2:17). Both of those phrases are quite different from saying that someone did not die, or that someone went up to heaven to live with God. We have made a grand assumption based on these phrases. We have assumed that if someone was “taken up by God” then the person had to go to heaven and still be there. We have assumed that if a person couldn’t be found, he must still be alive thousands of years later, whereas in fact, Genesis 5:23 gives Enoch’s lifespan: 365 years, and not a day more.

Could it be that the phrase “taken up by God” or “taken up to heaven” could have a different meaning than that which we have long assumed? In Acts 8:39, we see that after Philip successfully evangelized and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, the Spirit of the Lord “snatched Philip away and the eunuch **saw** him no more.” This is very similar to what happened to Enoch and to Elijah, yet we do not assume that Philip was taken up to heaven, never to die, because in the very next verse we are told that

Philip “found himself at Azotus.” We don’t make the baseless assumption about Philip because we are told where he ended up. On the other hand, because we are not told where God dropped Enoch and Elijah, we assume that they are still in heaven. We must make our beliefs align with **all** of scripture. Since Romans 6:23 and Hebrews 11:13 tell us that **all** die, no matter how faithful they are, we must believe that Enoch and Elijah also died.

The more plausible explanation, therefore, for the end of Enoch is that all the others in Enoch’s lineage were buried by their families, but in Enoch’s case, as in Moses’ (Deut. 34:6), God took him and buried him where nobody knows. He “was,” and then he “was not.” He was never seen again by anyone on earth, just as the eunuch never saw Philip again. Enoch died, and so did, eventually, Elijah. Yes, Elijah was caught up into “heaven” by God, but that doesn’t mean he is still there.

Additionally, we need to examine the meaning of “heaven” as used in Scripture. According to *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*, the Jews claimed there were three heavens: the firmament where birds fly (Gen. 2:19), the starry heavens (Deut. 17:3), and the heaven of heavens or third heaven (Deut. 10:14). Various words which are rendered “heaven” in some verses can also mean heights, elevations, high places, sky, or clouds. And quite curiously, since we are thinking of Elijah, the Hebrew word *galgal*, literally “wheel,” is translated as “heaven” in Psalm 77:18, or “whirlwind” in the RSV! We cannot know how high or into which “heaven” Elijah may have been taken. We can know for certain, however, that he did not remain there. He was heard from again on earth ten years after being caught up, and because Jesus did not establish his Kingdom on the earth during Elijah’s lifetime, we can also be sure that Elijah died (Heb. 11:32 says that the prophets died), just as everyone before and after him sleeps the sleep of death (Ps. 13:3) He sleeps “with the fathers,” in the grave, awaiting the second coming of Jesus, when the dead in Christ shall rise first. As Hebrews 11:39-40 assures us, the faithful will be made perfect together with us. What a marvelous plan!✧

In answer to a letter forwarded to me which was interesting and typical and painful!

I wrote:

“I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) is not remotely to do with the Trinity. The “one” here is neuter, “one thing,” and every schooled Trinitarian knows that this does not mean that the Father and Son are one *essence*! After all, in John 17:11, 22 the disciples are to “**be one as**” Jesus and God are one (*en*). So that would prove that the disciples are all God too!

In Colossians 2:9 the fullness of Deity dwells in Messiah, but why did Ephesians 3:19 not get cited? It

says that the fullness of God dwells in true Christians too.

As to “Let us make...” in Genesis 2:26. Let us hear some real scholarship from the *Word Biblical Commentary*, agreeing with the NIV study Bible:

“From the Epistle of Barnabas and Justin Martyr who saw the plural ending on *Elohim* as a reference to Christ, Christians have traditionally seen Genesis 1:26 as foreshadowing the Trinity. **It is now universally admitted** that this is not what the plural meant to the original author.”¹

The holy spirit is certainly a person, as “advocate” in John 14 and 16 (cp. 1 John 2:1). Then also: “The Lord is the spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Cor. 3:17). But the spirit is never a *third* Person. The spirit is thus sometimes Jesus who returned as the spirit-Advocate (1 John 2:1; 1 Cor. 15:45).

The holy spirit is never a third Person, never prayed to, never worshiped and never sends greetings!

Even in 325 AD the “fathers” did not define the spirit with certainty!

The spirit in the Bible is the invisible personal presence of God or Jesus, very personal, but certainly not a third Person.

Why not start the examination of who God is with Mark 12:29, the creed of Jesus, in which he agrees with a Jew on the unitarian creed of Israel? (Deut. 6:4). Are we listening carefully to Jesus in the greatest of all the commandments?

Then look at John 17:3 where Jesus said that “the Father is the **only** one who is true God.” Not so hard. The word “God” in the NT means the Father 1300 times! And Malachi 2:10 sums it all up: One Father = one God.

Jesus was a Jew and his definition of God is based on his Hebrew heritage (Mark 12:29; Deut. 6:4). But are we willing to follow him? To claim to be a Christian, and then to refuse to believe and obey Jesus’ words/teachings is an obvious inconsistency and contradiction. ✧

“It’s Just War: Should Christians Fight?”

Debate between David Bercot, Dean Taylor and Dr. Peter Kreeft, Dr. J. Daryl Charles

<https://youtu.be/K4xQaDDKY7k>

Shocking Truth about the Destiny of Jesus and the Saints

In the *International Commentary* on Daniel, there is a frank statement of truth concerning the future function of Jesus and the faithful of all the ages: “At the end of 3 ½ years the power will be taken away [from the Antichrist] and the persecuted saints will receive the Kingdom of the entire world. ‘And the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them’ (CEB, CJB, GWN, JPS, NJB, NRS, RSV, TNK).

The professor of Hebrew explains: “The pronouns, as the context shows, must refer to ‘the people,’ not the Most High. In this verse, even more than in vv. 18, 22, the universal and never-ending dominion, which in v. 14 is given to ‘one like a Son of Man’ seems to be conferred on the people of the saints. For the same idea, compare Rev. 5:10, 11:15, 12:10, 22:5 and also 20:4-6.”

Note also Wisdom 3:5-8: “Their sufferings were minor compared with the blessings they will receive. God has tested them, like gold in a furnace [cp. exactly 1 Peter 1:7], and found them worthy to be with him. He has accepted them, just as he accepts the sacrifices which his worshipers burn on the altar. When God comes to reward the righteous, they will blaze out against the wicked like fire in dry straw. They **will rule over nations** [cp. Rev. 2:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:2] and peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever.” ✧

Run the Race

by Kenneth LaPrade, Texas

The group of runners carefully approached the starting blocks, doing last-minute stretches before placing their feet in the blocks. They each knew that it was a privilege to participate in such an experience. No activities up until now had even come close to such an opportunity. They breathlessly awaited the start of the race.

“On your marks; get set.” Everyone was crouched in perfect readiness. “Pow!” went the pistol. All bolted forward simultaneously; they were off!

Then an amazing thing happened. Within a step or two of the starting line, everyone stopped running! There had been no false start indicated; nevertheless, everyone pulled up from a resolute running posture to relax while walking around slowly! Gigantic grins of satisfaction spread across each of their faces.

A multitude of excited spectators watched in consternation as these fully equipped, top-notch athletes began to produce gold medals on bright ribbons and hang

¹Dr. Gordon Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, *Genesis*, Vol. 1. p. 27.

them around one another's necks! Triumphant music was in the air as casual victory laps were engaged with colorful flag waving. A few in the crowd, people familiar with nineteenth-century literary nonsense, might have been reminded of the "Caucus-race" in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In this ridiculous episode, a Dodo had announced a free-for-all exercise of undetermined "running around in circles," after which everyone got prizes. That fictional absurdity is reminiscent of this modern **non-race** — now starkly displayed before open-mouthed crowds, all bewildered by such meaningless futility!

It must be true that nothing like the above scenario has ever occurred, or has it? Surely, no runners have ever collectively started a race only to casually give it up within a few steps, have they? As preposterous as such a sight would be, this is exactly what multitudes of modern observers have witnessed in the example of many who profess to be serious Christians, followers of Jesus!

Sadly, along the lines of the above model, the runners have been trained (according to distinct approaches, systems, and styles) to sincerely believe they are doing the right thing by **not running the race**. They are all truly and undoubtedly aware of the momentous honor involved in being invited to participate. Nevertheless, for different personal, cultural, and theological, mindless, traditional reasons, they were all persuaded that their role in the race is to stand around, proclaiming that it's already won (without running it), or to assume that it is incapable of being run!

They **do** know that one man (Jesus) has already successfully initiated and completed this race. Nevertheless, due to tremendously faulty training, the practical application of this truth keeps eluding their understanding. Tragically, this whole misguided disaster (as illustrated by the absurd analogy) serves as an extremely shoddy example to flabbergasted fellow runners on the track, as well as to puzzled onlookers who were not yet motivated to begin this race!

The good news is that it is **not** too late for living and breathing participants (and also for skeptical observers) to reconsider the nature of the race, the invitation from Jesus to participate, and the all-important stakes! Yahweh, the One who is merciful to deliver anyone from even the most complex web of misunderstandings, beckons all to **change** and simply **run the race**.

Upon considering the Scriptural usage of symbolic "running" within various contexts, certain truths might be wise to consider. Though Biblically-minded Christians know they are "saved by grace," "works" should not be seen as a "dirty word," as if "good works" were a polar opposite to the concept of salvation by grace! Such a perverse misunderstanding is often behind the travesty portrayed above — the imaginary non-race that no one

tried to run! Though we know that having been offered salvation (through the Messiah's accomplishments and teachings) has nothing to do with having *earned* such a privilege (through one's previous actions), Christians are repeatedly asked to be constantly "zealous for good works" (as in chapters 2 and 3 of Titus). The New Testament is replete with commands to make continuous, diligent efforts concerning necessary "good works." James 2:18-26 outlines the futility of relying on a so-called "faith" that is not held in proper correspondence with active "works."

For example, constant, repentant efforts to "put off" previous sinful patterns of behavior, along with proactive "work" to do good, helpful deeds (as enabled through Christ) are **never** for a moment discouraged in any New Covenant writings! Such efforts are never scolded as if they were "carnal" attempts to **earn** one's salvation "by works." In fact, such obedient "works" are exhibited as essential to "running the race." In that future day when the king sits on his glorious throne (as seen in Matt. 25) to separate the "sheep" from the "goats," **no one** will be judged as a "goat" for doing too many kind, loving things from a heart overflowing with God's love! No one will be condemned for exaggerating in efforts to "put off" the flesh of past selfish behavior!

The "work" efforts that **are** definitely discouraged, and even reprimanded, are the inappropriate use of "works of the law." A perusal of Colossians, Galatians, Acts 15, Hebrews, and other Scriptures makes it all very clear. In light of Messiah's completed **works**, continued insistence on previously required circumcision, old covenant food laws, the Mosaic system of calendar observances, the system of animal sacrifices, etc., is to be sternly rejected! (Col. 2:16-17; Rom. 14:14, 20). The apostle Paul took a firm stand on this truth, not yielding to any opponents who wanted to wrongly sabotage believers!

"I went up because of a revelation. I laid before them the gospel which I announce among the Gentiles (I did this privately, in the presence of the key people), in case somehow I might be running, or might have run, to no good effect. But even the Greek, Titus, who was with me, was not forced to get circumcised...You were running well. Who got in your way and stopped you being persuaded by the truth? This persuasion didn't come from the one who called you!" (Gal. 2:2-3; 5:7-8, KNT).

Another "running" truth might be stated this way: "Do the right things for the right reasons." As a fellow believer essentially taught recently in my presence: don't forgive others merely because it is of benefit to **you!** (Don't do it just so you can breathe deeply and feel a sense of relief.) Honor God and forgive others to benefit **them!** Don't practice **giving** in order to **get** material benefits from God. (Don't follow a misguided "prosperity

gospel” with an eye to your personal gain.) Honor God, be unselfish, and give to help **others!** Don’t seek recognition or applause. Remember, Yahweh has been far more generous and loving than all of us put together — since before any of us existed! (He certainly takes care of us.) We love and give, not to extract anything from Him, as if we were applying a set of “Biblical principles” for **our** profit. We are free to love, not in order to **get** love, but because He has always had our best interests at heart — in His unfathomably vast, loving intentions. Not putting the cart before the horse is vital! We truly benefit when we win the race, but our focus is to be on loving God in first place — and secondly, on loving others.

“Don’t you know that when people run on the racetrack everybody runs, but only one person gets the prize? Run in such a way that you’ll win it. Everyone who goes in for athletics exercises self-discipline in everything. They do it to gain a crown that perishes; we do it for an imperishable one. Well then: I don’t run in an aimless fashion! I don’t box like someone punching the air! No: I give my body rough treatment, and make it my slave, in case, after announcing the message to others, I myself should end up being disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:24-27, KNT).

In the setting of striking models of selfless service in Philippians, one can view the particular context of encouragement that believers humbly and seriously **work** to bring about their own salvation, while trusting God Himself to be at **work** within them, providing the will and the energy to do what pleases Him. Another use of the apostle Paul’s “run” symbolism caps off some relevant exhortations. Even if his life would have been totally poured out as a drink-offering, he would not have **run** in vain; this fact was a motive, not for sadness or loss, but for rejoicing to celebrate with these people.

“There must be no grumbling and disputing in anything you do. That way, nobody will be able to fault you, and you’ll be pure and spotless children of God in the middle of a twisted and depraved generation. You are to shine among them like lights in the world, clinging to the word of life. That’s what I will be proud of on the day of the Messiah. It will prove that I didn’t run a useless race, or work to no purpose” (Phil. 2:14-16, KNT).

Thus, several metaphorical uses of **running** involve fearless, faithful, proactive **work** to stand on the truth, while being self-disciplined to live according to the message we proclaim. Our loving priority before God means selflessly regarding others’ needs as more important than our own (as seen in Phil. 2:3-4). Jesus, Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus were willing to live this way, with this mindset, even to the point of extreme suffering. Other believers, before the first coming of the Messiah, were willing to risk all to be faithful before Yahweh, persevering in the hope which He provided.

Some of these believers are listed in Hebrews chapter 11; clearly, we are to emulate their recorded examples which provide a “great cloud of witnesses.” We do so while **running the race**, looking to Jesus.

What about us then? “We have such a great cloud of witnesses all around us! What we must do is this: we must put aside each heavy weight and the sin which gets in the way so easily. We must run the race that lies in front of us, and we must run it patiently. We must look ahead, to Jesus. He is the one who carved out the path for faith, and he’s the one who brought it to completion. He knew that there was joy spread out and waiting for him. That’s why he endured the cross, making light of its shame, and has now taken his seat at the right hand of God’s throne. He put up with enormous opposition from sinners. Weigh up in your minds just how severe it was; then you won’t find yourselves getting weary and worn out. You have been struggling against sin, but your resistance hasn’t yet cost you any blood” (Heb. 12:1-4, KNT]. ✧

Defining the Gospel for Your Friends

Following the interesting and truth-imparting words of Kenneth LaPrade above, let us confirm what he said straight from the words of Jesus. The Devil has one major trick: it is to **separate Jesus from his own words!** You can be asked “to accept Jesus” or “ask him into your heart” in a very vague and undefined way, but that sort of language does not sound like Jesus! Jesus, brilliant teacher that he was and is, is much clearer on the issue of salvation. We invite you to ponder at length the famous parable of the seed and the sower. First note from Matthew 13:19 that the central message to be believed and obeyed is the **Gospel/word about the Kingdom of God**. Without defining the Kingdom of God, how can anyone believe and act on it? Luke 8:12 is an astonishingly instructive verse. There Jesus says that people must **hear the Gospel about the Kingdom** (cp. Matt. 13:19) and understand it. Only then do they begin on the race that leads to the Kingdom destiny promised to all believers. But Jesus knows nothing about the false idea of “once saved always saved”! No race is won and no medal is gained when the starting gun goes off! Listen most carefully to Jesus: “Some people **believe for a while**, temporarily.” Then they fall away (Luke 8:13). They started on salvation, but they did not gain it.

Jesus was so impassioned about the Gospel of the Kingdom that having given the parable (comparison) of the **seed and the soil**, he would customarily raise his voice, shout: “If you have ears to hear, by all means listen to this” (Luke 8:8). Your immortality depends on it! Luke 8:12 is a power packed verse: Whenever someone is exposed to the Gospel word of the Kingdom (cp. Matt

13:19), the Devil, the external Satan, “comes and snatches away that word sown in his heart, so that a person **cannot believe that word of the Kingdom AND BE SAVED.**”

Observe how clear Jesus is. He does not speak in indistinct language about “asking him into your heart” or “accepting him as Savior.” He requires understanding and belief of the Gospel about the Kingdom. The Devil knows this theology better than many Bible readers, and the Devil does his utmost to keep you away from the Gospel of the Kingdom, and thus from repentance and final salvation, immortality when Jesus comes back. (The same truth exactly is in Mark 1:14-15; 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 1:22-25.)✧

Scholars Against Jesus!

Moltmann: “Once **strict monotheism** is introduced into the doctrine and worship of the Christian church, faith in Christ is threatened...The strict notion of the One God really makes theological Christology impossible, for the One can neither be parted or imparted...The Christian Church was therefore right to see **monotheism** as the severest inner danger...Trinitarian dogma maintains the unity of essence between Christ and God...If we are to perceive this, we not only have to reject the Arian heresy; the Sabellian heresy must be dismissed with equal emphasis.”

But note carefully that in this tangled process of turning one into three the creed of Jesus (Mark 12:29) was dismissed also! Many churchgoers seem completely oblivious of the easy fact that Jesus was a strict unitarian in Mark 12:29 followed by Psalm 110:1 where the second lord is **non-Deity, adoni**, lord, not Lord!✧

Comments

“Moltmann’s attitude [above] is sick. As a result of this type of thinking, I had to go around with my head down low, thinking there must be something really wrong with me. I just didn’t ‘get it.’ I wanted to be a Christian, but just didn’t think I was a real one. That’s because I had read the New Testament with an open mind and understood what it said. I unsuccessfully tried to fit in with some denominations like Unity, where anything goes, and the Quakers, who believe in peace at any cost.”
— *Oklahoma*

“As an ex-JW, I am really engrossed in my Bible study which gives my great joy, and for the first time in many years, has real meaning. I am deeply saddened by the attitude of most of my family towards me and the scriptural evidence. JW’s have hijacked Christianity so well that its members are so confident in it that no examination of scripture outside of WT is considered. In

fact it is a gross act of disloyalty to God, Christ and his earthly organisation which will likely be rewarded in death. What is sobering it’s that only a short time ago I was just like them. I feel like I should try and at least highlight issues they should seriously consider. I have so far been unable to help them to be reasonable. What is so incredibly dangerous is the teaching which for the vast majority of non-anointed means they are not saved or mediated for by Jesus directly. Only through loyalty to the ‘organisation’ are they saved. True sonship, being born again, ruling in heaven with Jesus, salvation through Jesus is only available to the 144,000. This false teaching is accepted because almost all of the members have no desire to go to heaven, which is what the hope of the 144,000 is! So this, for many, fits well and it’s totally accepted. I feel moved to do something effective to be a help. I am unsure how to do and what to say.

“The understanding of much Scripture is tainted with the JW false teaching of the 1914 invisible enthronement of Jesus in the heavens, who then, JW’s taught, appointed Rutherford and his associates in 1919 to be the faithful and discreet slave — an appointment which gives the governing body absolute authority to discipline and tell its members what truth is, how they get saved, the two distinct hopes. The governing body builds in a fail-safe, that they are men and make mistakes, just like God’s representatives of old who all erred and sinned but were still used. Jehovah sheds more light in time — just stay loyal to the organization! It is these statements which disturb me so much. There are many good things JW’s believe and do. They think that their growth in numbers and prospering is evidence of God’s blessing. The members are protected by a large extent from the evil of the world. Many find a measure of joy and contentment within the Watchtower’s rules. They are the only ones preaching the Kingdom earth-wide (so they believe, and look down on the efforts of others). These things are considered absolute proofs to support the governing body’s claims, despite many being personally uneasy over some policies and doctrines. I pray for help and guidance in how I should proceed with evangelising. I feel like a babe, odd after so long a supposed Bible student. Do you have any suggestions as to how I may proceed? I am able to talk freely to non-JW’s about Jesus and the Kingdom but am unsure how to direct them other than read the Bible, look at these websites for further help. As for JW’s, some I have spoken to do see problems, but it seems without some very powerful personal reason to change, they are able to disregard, deflect or flatly refuse to examine anything which challenges the governing body’s false doctrine. I am deeply appreciative of your and others work to further scriptural truth and Kingdom gospel.” — *England*

Editor: Each person can work with anyone who shows evidence of questioning and seeking. One can direct them to the various websites listed at our site. These have a mass of teaching on all the main topics. One can use the search engine at our restorationfellowship.org

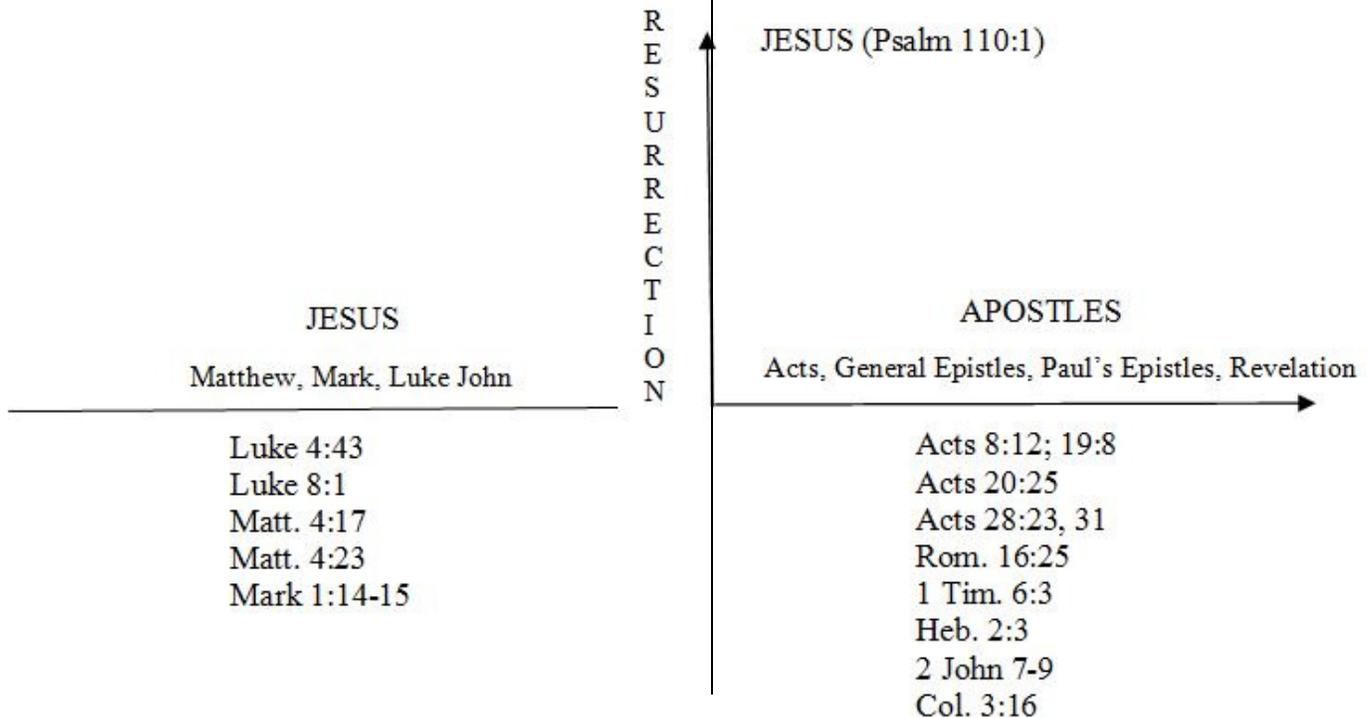
“Permit me to express my thanks to you for your steady movement ahead in sharing the biblical unitarian truth. Although I am a 60-year-old man I am so young in the unitarian truth. I have made friends with three other men [in prison]. Their excitement for the truth is expressed in their worship, singing and praying and, yes, ‘preaching.’ I’m a part of this group. I’ve read your *Aims and Claims* book and Greg Deuble’s book as well.” — *North Carolina*

“Over the past 3 years I have seriously been studying and praying for truth, understanding, wisdom and knowledge. I have purposely stayed away from others’ opinions but relied on God to show me. Lo and behold, I now find myself a non trinitarian, non hell believer, non heaven goer, non immortal soul and a supposed heretic. I accidentally stumbled across your site on youtube which led me to others. Thank God I’m not alone in my new belief system. I now find myself in a quandary. I find I cannot attend any church and engage in their worship service because it is centered around Jesus as God and I feel it is false worship. Also, the theology is so off truth I ask myself are they really my brothers and sisters in Christ?” — *Illinois*

Pastor Brian K. Wright has relocated to Kentucky and is available for in-home visits and Bible studies anywhere in the state.
Interested persons may contact Brian at (404) 909-6009 (cell); (502) 286-6131 (home); or by email at brianwright@bardstowncable.net

The Church of God General Conference in partnership with Anthony Buzzard and the Restoration Fellowship, is making plans to plant new churches starting this year in the following locations:
CA — Los Angeles; Hayward (Bay area)
TX — Dallas; Ft. Worth; Houston
CO — Denver; Colorado Springs
FL — Miami; Tampa; Orlando
Please get in touch with Robin Todd, U.S. Mission Coordinator, if you would like more information or would like to be a part of the core membership and/or leadership in these communities. His email address is robinsings4u@comcast.net. Phone number is 360-701-9219.

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM



Focus on the Kingdom
PO Box 2950
McDonough, GA 30253
USA

Focus on the Kingdom
February, 2017

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 46
MCDONOUGH, GA

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Theological Conference • May 18-21, 2017 • Calvin Center, Hampton, Georgia

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone-Home _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____

Conference rates:

Single: \$415 Double: \$260 per person Bunkbed: \$185 per person Commuter: \$85 per person

Room type: **HOTEL-STYLE** Single ___ Double ___

BUNKBED ___ Sheets and towels for \$15 ___

Roommate's names (or we can assign for bunkbed rooms): _____

Transportation to/from Atlanta airport? Round-trip (\$25) ___ One-way (\$15) From airport ___ To airport ___

If so, Date & Time of Arrival _____ Departure _____

Airline & Flight Number _____

Shuttle on Thurs. to Calvin Center (Circle one) 2:00 pm 4:00 pm

Please send with non-refundable deposit of \$50 per person by **April 21** to:
Atlanta Bible College, PO Box 2950, McDonough, GA 30253