

Will Britain Be Better Off in 100 Years' Time?

One author definitely thought so, basing his predictions on what man can and will do. God was left out of the picture altogether. We ask: What does our Creator reveal about a new dawn for Britain?

We forecast that in 100 years' time Britons will most likely be much better off than we currently are now. And so will the whole world. Our thoughts, however, are not based on the skills, fast-expanding knowledge and technology of humanity, but instead on what God says in His word, the Bible.

But before we open the pages of this often misunderstood book, let's take a brief look at Britain as it is in 2010.

How are we doing today?

A recent article in *Prospect* magazine evaluated our progress since 1997. The results were mixed. 'Richer, fatter, living longer, indebted, drunker, better connected, politically disillusioned . . . policy and spending have brought down smoking, road accidents, cancer and infant mortality, but obesity, diabetes and sexually transmitted diseases have risen' (Tom Chatfield and David Lowe, 'How We Changed Under Labour,' May 2010).

However we may judge the true state of the nation presently, there is a general consensus that Britain does in fact need some rebuilding. *The Daily*

Telegraph recently published a series of articles about how Britain could improve its prospects for the future.

Prospect asked: 'Is Britain becoming a broken nation?' The reply from the two writers remains a mixed verdict. 'Political disillusionment and fear of crime have increased, yet crime itself is down almost across the board, while spending on education and health are at record highs. Internationally we have engaged in two distant wars [Iraq and Afghanistan] while diminishing as a global powerhouse . . . The Britain of 2010 has an ageing population, and the gulf between young and old has never been greater' (emphasis added throughout).

Britain's true historic identity emerges

Yet in spite of an overall ageing population, high levels of immigration have in fact counteracted this trend somewhat. Still, as the *Prospect* article observed, 'The net gain of more than three million non-British has also fuelled an *anxious debate over national identity*'.

Many Britons are largely unaware of

their true identity. The biblical and historical evidence strongly indicates that the British and American people as a whole have descended from the patriarch Joseph. The proofs for this bold assertion are set out in our 110-page booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*, freely available upon request.

The historic indications are that, in the main, Britons are descended from Joseph's son Ephraim, while the United States basically came from his other son Manasseh. Of course, as in the UK, immigration in this case from Mexico and other countries is gradually altering the relative ethnic content of America.

Ephraim in the book of Jeremiah

Our free booklet explains how the northern ten tribes of Israel (including Ephraim) were taken into Assyrian captivity during the latter part of the eighth century B.C. While warning the errant southern nation of Judah that God would also send them into captivity, the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah referred back to what had happened to the House of Israel. 'And I will cast you

[Judah] out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, *the whole posterity of Ephraim*' (Jeremiah 7:15).

This booklet about Britain and America shows how the Ephraimites eventually made their way to the British Isles (see pages 58-72). Projecting British fortunes into the future when God will deliver His own peoples from a future end-time captivity, Jeremiah gives us an overview of key occurrences in the 31st chapter of his book.

The context clearly indicates that this will happen at the time of the end. Notice Jeremiah 30:24, the last verse of the chapter: *'In the latter days you will consider it.'*

A loving God delivers Ephraim

The first verse of chapter 31 blends into the last verse of chapter 30. 'At the same time,' says the Lord, 'I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people' (Jeremiah 31:1). The Creator says of Israel in general: 'I have loved you with an everlasting love: Therefore with loving kindness I have drawn you. Again I will

build you and you shall be rebuilt' (verse 6) – similar to the expression used in *The Daily Telegraph* series.

Notice what verse 6 forecasts: 'For there shall be a day when the watchmen will cry on Mount Ephraim, "Arise, and go up to Zion, to the LORD our God."' Verse 8 shows how He will gather the Israelites 'from the ends of the earth.' Then God interjects into the narrative: 'For I am a Father to Israel, and *Ephraim is my firstborn*' (verse 9).

Verses 12 through 19 show how millennial conditions will then develop. These will come about after the second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth (Acts 3:19-21). Just prior to that time, verses 18 and 19 relate Ephraim's repentance. 'I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself. You [God] have chastised me, and I was chastised . . . surely after my turning I repented.'

Then God responds to Ephraim's change of attitude: 'Is Ephraim My dear Son? Is he a pleasant child? Though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still; therefore My heart yearns

for him. I will surely have mercy on him, says the Lord' (verse 20). It is interesting to note how many times Ephraim emerges by name in this crucial chapter of Jeremiah.

The New Covenant made with both Israel and Judah

Verses 31 through 34 of Jeremiah chapter 31 reveal that God will make a New Covenant with both Israel and Judah by putting His laws into their hearts and minds and forgiving their sins. This covenant has already been made with God's true Church (the first-fruits of His salvation). But it is yet to be implemented and applied to entire nations as a whole.

Our sincere hope is that by the time 100 years has elapsed, the events described in Jeremiah will be an established reality. Under the guiding hand of God the Father and Jesus Christ, life for the British peoples will certainly be much better than now.

John Ross Schroeder

Christian Education on the Wane

A lead editorial in The Sunday Telegraph summed up the current state of Christian education in the United Kingdom.

'The Christian religion is the foundation of most of Britain's culture and traditions. The history of our nation is incomprehensible without some knowledge of it. *Yet . . . the rudiments of Christianity are frequently poorly taught – if, indeed they are taught at all.* A report by Ofsted [the education watchdog] has found that, although nominally required by the national curriculum, in many schools instruction is "superficial," and *is treated less seriously than the study of other religions*' (June 6). This is particularly true in secondary schools.

In a separate *Sunday Telegraph* feature article, Education Correspondent Julie Henry wrote: *'In non-faith state schools, Christian assemblies are being dropped in favour of multi-faith worship, despite a legal requirement for Christian collective worship, and children are no longer taught the Lord's Prayer'* (June 6). Certainly it was right to advise that 'getting to grips with the key teachings of Jesus Christ and other core elements of Christianity are building blocks that will help our young people analyse and interpret the society they are growing up in.'

Of course, Britain is far from being the only European country afflicted with religious difficulties and ignorance. For

instance, Christian writer Philip Yancey has described the decline of Christianity in Holland. 'Dutch Christians told me that a century ago, 98 percent of Dutch people attended church regularly; within two generations the percentage fell into the low teens. Today [2002], it's under 10 percent. Almost half the church buildings in Holland have been destroyed or converted into restaurants, art galleries or condominiums . . . *For a majority of Europeans, the church seems wholly irrelevant*' (*Christianity Today*, 2002, quoted in *The Sacred Cosmos*, 2003, page 7). Today many, if not most, in secular Europe do not pray or worship.

The *Sunday Telegraph* editorial also stated: 'There is, as Ofsted euphemistically puts it, *"uncertainty" about what the teachings of Christianity should involve.*' This is the crux of the problem. Even traditional mainstream Christianity has missed out on truly understanding the basic teachings of Christ given in the four gospel accounts. These are fleshed out in the rest of the New Testament and solidly based on the fundamentals of the Old Testament (see 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). To learn much more, request our free booklets *The Church Jesus Built* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*.

Why Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem?

Peter and Sonja Hawkins recently travelled to Israel with a number of colleagues, visiting key archaeological sites and getting an appreciation of current events in this small, prosperous, but deeply unsettled nation. What does the Bible show will be the outcome of events in that area?

While most of us may live quite peaceful lives, disturbing news reports bring into our personal space the tensions and troubles at home and abroad.

After returning from a visit to Israel – where the nation is continually on guard against terrorist attacks or possible invasion – my wife Sonja and I expected to settle back to relative calm in Britain. Barely a week passed by, however, before the tranquillity of Cumbria and the Lake District was shattered by mass murder.

Known for its beauty and as home to several past authors and poets, Cumbria has also become an area of tragedy. This time Derrick Bird, a quiet taxi driver, ‘snapped’. His day of rage left families and villagers mourning as he fatally shot 12 people and another 12 were seriously wounded, in addition to his own suicide.

Israel’s tensions and troubles

At the same time news from the Middle East told of another conflict brewing when a flotilla of ships bound for Gaza was intercepted by Israeli security forces. There were casualties, and the international community was quick to condemn Israel. The security forces are on the alert to prevent additional weapons and jihadists reaching the nation’s enemies.

Our group had been travelling around the northern and central parts of the beleaguered land of Israel.

We felt safe in both Israeli and

Palestinian areas in spite of the fact that Israel is surrounded by nations that would be glad to see it removed from the map. Vigilance has subdued the spate of bombings that claimed the lives of both Palestinians and Jews a few years ago. Having been close to a small bomb blast in the 1970s in Johannesburg, South Africa, I know it is a terrifying experience.

Yet in many countries, not only Israel, people live their lives with violence and indiscriminate destruction



Modern Jerusalem with Mount of Olives in background, where Messiah returns to rule.



Religious indifference changed after Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel.

all around them. It is not only a suicide bomber or an IED (improvised explosive device) that is a danger to the ‘man in the street’, or woman, or child. Missiles are also a constant threat in border regions – transported by land and

sea to those with a similar political agenda, or just to destabilise the region for personal gain.

Israel threatened by rockets and missiles

While we were visiting Israel, local news reported the delivery of longer-ranged Scud missiles to Lebanese-based

troops. So while diplomats talk, the next round of the Middle East conflict is always just that far from erupting. Residents of towns like Haifa and Tel Aviv live with the expectation of sirens that will trigger a

rush to the safety of a shelter.

Londoners who survived World War 2 will remember the V2 rockets overhead: when the engine stopped, the bomb was on its way down. Today, there is little time to warn residents of incoming missiles. It must be emotionally draining to live with that expectation.

There is little doubt the Israelis would be willing to strike at the nuclear facilities of Iran before nuclear bombs travel skyward towards their own cities



Good news prophesied for Israel and the Middle East

As we see Bible prophecy marching on towards the return of the Messiah (whom Jews

David. The holy of holies and the ark were possibly positioned above the rock presently enclosed by the Dome of the Rock, where Isaac was to have been killed. After Abraham passed the divine test, God intervened and delivered Isaac.

Descended from David, Jesus Christ had travelled the same countryside, villages and towns we visited on our tour. When He returns to the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:11), Jesus will restore peace to both the House of Judah, many of whom live in the state of Israel today, and the House of Israel, who



Clockwise from above; *Temple Mount*: near this spot the temple stood on Mount Moriah; *Nazareth synagogue*: as Jesus taught, we will guide a humbled humanity to peace; *Sea of Galilee*: Jesus taught in cities round its shore; *Nazareth village*: Jesus' trade was as a carpenter and stonemason.

moved north-west into Europe after their Assyrian captivity ended. (See our free booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy.*)

believe is coming for the first time), it is good to know that God's eyes are continually on that land (Zechariah 2:7-8). He will bring about the eventual return of the House of



Israel to join with the House of Judah in their original homeland. The resurrected King David will rule over these nations with Jesus Christ reigning on earth as King of kings for 1,000 years and more (Jeremiah 30:9, Hosea 3:5; Revelation 20:1-6).

'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem'

King David encouraged his contemporaries, and all of us down through the ages, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

'It made me glad to hear them say, "Let's go to the house of the LORD!" Jerusalem, we are standing inside your gates. Jerusalem, what a strong and beautiful city you are! Every tribe of the LORD obeys Him and comes to you to praise His name. David's royal throne is here where justice rules. Jerusalem, we pray that you will have peace, and that all will go well for those who love you' (Psalm 122:1-6, Contemporary English Version).

This time of tranquility and prosperity will finally come when the resurrected saints are there with the returned Messiah, working together to bring peace to the whole world (Revelation 5:10; 20:4; Isaiah 2:1-4; 11:1-4).

Peter Hawkins

We stood in the excavated City of David in what was probably the foundations and broken walls of the palace of King David of Israel. It is two hundred yards from the steps leading up to the Temple Mount.

In David's day this hilly area, where the patriarch Abraham had prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac, was known as Mount Moriah. David's son Solomon

later built the first Temple there (see photographs), with steps leading up from the City of



and installations. Even if the rest of the world dithers as to how to handle the situation, Israel knows that without a pre-emptive strike it would have only a few minutes to react to a nuclear attack.

The common greeting in Israel is 'Shalom' or 'Peace', but the reality for inhabitants is that war is an ever-present threat.



Garden tomb: Christ's death and resurrection foreshadowed our resurrection.; *Empty tomb*: prepared by Joseph of Arimathea, possibly the one in which Jesus' body rested for three days and three nights.



Why the Bible Is the Word of God

Today a vital ingredient is sorely missing in our modern lives. We simply are not coping with all the stresses of the times. Our human mechanism – brain and body – is breaking down under the strain. Even in an overcrowded world, a sense of loneliness can engulf us.

Perhaps the most damaging casualty has been to our relationships with each other, not to mention our wholesale estrangement from God. Trust has become a thing of the past.

Men and women encounter tremendous difficulty keeping standards of truth intact in a climate where morality is fading fast and films influence us to ‘succumb to our darker side.’ As one newspaper columnist wrote, ‘We live in an age which has tried excessively hard to eliminate absolute rules.’

We are also losing our sense of security. Describing one prominent Western nation, a newspaper article said, ‘If the country had a therapist, the complaint could be defined as a virulent strain of unease, perhaps of national insecurity.’

Our children are truly worried about tomorrow – and rightfully so. Jobs don’t appear to last all that long, and many marriages end in the divorce courts.

Crisis on the world scene

We live from crisis to crisis! The Middle East threatens to explode at almost any time. Although the Cold War may be history, many of the former USSR’s nuclear weapons still exist in its often unstable daughter states. Diplomats and other government officials remind us that Russia itself still possesses thousands of nuclear weapons.

The deadly spread of weapons of mass destruction is an all-pervasive problem. Terrorist groups – generally armed to the teeth with modern weapons and living as a law to themselves – threaten the stability of many nations.

It is in just such a threatened, confused and crisis-charged age that the Church is called upon to do its work.

Sensitive to its responsibility to spread and teach the true gospel message

(Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20), the United Church of God, an International Association, offers a free

12-lesson *Bible Study Course* – fulfilling a most important need in today’s troubled world.

For many millions, God’s Word is unexplored and uncharted territory. Yet the Bible is not only designed to help us cope in a world caught up in all kinds of crises. It contains the good news of the coming Kingdom of God – showing how God will solve the many problems of our world, which edges ever closer to catastrophe.

Learning to appreciate the Bible

Today’s alarming conditions cause many men and women to feel a deep sense of unease. Yet at the same time many experience a real spiritual hunger. Clearly, as one person described it, they feel there is something outside the box of time and space in which they find themselves.

They wonder about the reality of God

and the Bible. Could it just be that there are some workable answers after all?

This unique course is designed to address some of the most fundamental questions about our almost never-ending quest for God. It also seeks to explore the inevitable implications for our personal behavior.

The first lesson consists of an overview of several basic biblical

themes that later lessons

will cover in much greater detail. First it addresses questions we all contemplate: Does God exist? What makes the Bible different from other books? Why did God create men and women? Is there

something much greater than this life in store for us?

What is our destiny?

This course will walk you through some of the most intriguing and inspiring portions of the Bible, helping you to discover the real purpose for your life – and how you can have a fulfilling life while accomplishing that great purpose. Jesus Christ said: ‘I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly’ (John 10:10). The Bible reveals great truths that, when we comprehend and respond, can transform our life in ways we never imagined.

Why not enrol today in our free *Bible Study Course*? Also request our two companion booklets *Is the Bible True?* and *How to Understand the Bible*. This literature will help you set your sights on the ultimate destiny of humanity (Titus 2:11-14).



Questions & Answers

Q How can I overcome temptation, and be free from sin? What are the religious factors?

D A, Hounslow

A Some of our readers are aware of the annual Holy Days and festivals of God. Their purpose is to teach us how we can receive salvation and eternal life in God's Kingdom. Each year in the spring, the Passover reminds us of the forgiveness of sin when we truly accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread then teach us of the need to imitate the sinless life of our Saviour.

Removing leaven from our homes and refraining from eating it for that period of time teaches us to leave sinful behaviour behind, and eating unleavened bread shows the need to allow Christ to live in us (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). (Request or download our free booklet *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for all Mankind*.)

Guard against sin

We should be constantly on our guard against temptation – it leads to sin! The apostle Paul often refers to putting off sinful or evil practices and putting on righteousness as we model ourselves on the righteous example of Jesus Christ (see Romans 13:12; Colossians 3:5-14).

But Paul explains that we need help to combat sin (Romans 7:14-25; 8:14). We must cry out to God for His help, remembering that it is Christ who saves us. The Day of Pentecost and the receipt of the Holy Spirit picture Christ in us (Galatians 2:20), helping with this battle. Without question, this is the most important aspect of handling temptation and avoiding sin.

Our own vital role

However, there is another element –

the effort we ourselves must make. Paul instructs Christians to 'lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us' (Hebrews 12:1), so there is clearly work to be done by each of us.

Wrote the apostle Paul: 'Therefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*' (Philippians 2:12, emphasis added throughout).

In his letter, James describes how sin progresses, from a mere wrongful thought which a person may allow to take root in the mind, into unrighteous acts. He writes: 'But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death' (James 1:14-15; compare Romans 6:23).

Be proactive against sin

In the Old Testament, as Israel left Egypt, there are two reasons recorded as to why their dough failed to rise: the Israelites did not have the time to allow it to rise, and it was squashed in their clothing, which meant it did not have the space to rise (Exodus 12:34, 37-39).

These two principles can be extrapolated into practical suggestions for overcoming sin. That is, we should not give sin either the time or the space to take root and flourish.

In practice this means being pro-active to prevent sin establishing itself in our thinking, and dealing with it promptly if it does. Paul also tells us to bring all our thoughts 'into captivity to the obedience of Christ' (II Corinthians 10:5).

How sin begins

Sin starts in the mind. For example, a trigger might be watching inappropriate films. Soap operas which show lustful

The Bible's Concepts of Sin

The Hebrew and Greek words translated 'sin' throughout the Bible focus largely on two concepts.

The first is transgression. To transgress means 'to step across' or 'to go beyond a set boundary or limit.' This concept can be compared to an athletic playing field with lines delineating the boundaries within which the game is played. When a player crosses over those boundary lines, he has committed a 'transgression' and gone out of bounds. Limits are set that define the playing area, and the players are to stay within the limits of that area.

Most of the other words translated 'sin' in the Bible involve a second concept: 'to miss the mark.' Again, to use a sports analogy, if a player aims for the goal and misses, how many goals does he or she get? None! The goal was missed.

This view of sin includes the concept of our going in one direction but straying off course and not continuing in the intended direction. The result is that we don't score the goal. We miss it.

This concept also encompasses the idea of failing to measure up to a standard. For example, most academic courses and tests are graded according to a minimum standard. If we don't meet that standard, we fail that test or course. By not meeting that standard we 'miss the mark' and don't pass.

Both of these concepts, transgressing and missing the mark, involve basic requirements. If we transgress, if we cross set boundaries or limits, then there must be boundaries or limits that God has given. If we miss the mark we must have a mark, target or standard to miss. Sin, then, is to transgress the boundaries God has set for us, to miss the target He has established (1 John 3:4).

images, or witnessing violent imagery can prove very harmful. Even listening to music where the words are suggestive of sinful actions could lead to breaking God's laws.

Again, we can avoid giving sin time and space, by being proactive and hitting the 'off' button, before improper thoughts can implant themselves. Steering clear of what prompts these thoughts in the first place is, in the end, far simpler than having to struggle with them later on.

Consider what triggers wrong feelings, situations and actions. Why do we want to drink, gamble, spend more than we should, or have wrong relationships? Why watch violent or sexually explicit films? Why continue with whatever the problem might be?

Writing down what happens can help us to catch the triggers sooner in future, so sin has less time and space to develop. Ask God for help before the skirmish becomes a major battle or we fail and commit the sin.

We should actively plan to keep away from sin in all its forms. As an example, if our problem is drinking too much, we should determine to avoid the places where we would be exposed to overindulgence. Similarly, avoid betting shops if we have a gambling issue. If irresponsible spending is a weakness, limit shopping to definite times, follow a budget, and perhaps shop with a friend who has conservative spending habits.

Recognise where we slip up and where our weaknesses are. We might designate a different route, even around a supermarket, keeping away from areas and situations where we know

we could fall prey to temptation.

If we do need to go into those areas, then devise a plan. Perhaps make a list and stick to it, not taking more money than necessary. Maybe leave our credit cards at home. The lesson is: Do not give irresponsibility an opportunity to take root and grow.

If friends lead us astray, then maybe we should consider changing companions. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:33: 'Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."'

Changing our thought patterns

Wrongful thoughts can be harder to analyse and control than sinful physical activities. Maybe we lose our tempers, become aggressive or plot evil against others. Maybe we are vain, seeking honour and praise from those around us. Maybe we are covetous, envious of other's possessions.

Aim to notice the thoughts, feelings or emotions that start the process before they become engrained – before desire has conceived, as the apostle James put it (James 1:14-15).

If sinful thoughts trouble you, try replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. Paul wrote: 'Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things' (Philippians 4:8).

Never forget to cry out to our great High Priest for His help. (See pages 66 and 67 of the booklet *Who Is God?*)

A friend can help

The apostle Paul mentions that Christians should 'bear one another's burdens' (Galatians 6:2). One way to do this is to find a trusted friend, brother or sister who can be on hand to offer support through a serious difficulty.

Stewing over a matter at home alone is no way to battle sin. Humanly we tend to dwell on whatever has upset us or created a wrong desire in us. Alone, there is ample time and space for sin to flourish. Having someone on the end of a phone, or who can text and offer email support can be a huge help, giving us time to regain our equilibrium.

However, choose the friend with caution; be sure they can keep a confidence and that they understand what the battle is. In addition, we should be aware that they have lives too and strive not to overburden them.

As with all coping strategies, some work for some people and not others. And some work better than others. Some work in combination with others.

But none of these strategies can replace the help that Jesus Christ and God the Father can and will give us. '*For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*' (Philippians 2:13).

*David Fenney
Adapted from a sermon*

Recommended Reading

For further understanding about salvation and obtaining God's help in overcoming sin, request or download our free booklets *The Road to Eternal Life* and *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion*.

How our literature is funded

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Letters From Our Readers

Renewing *The Good News*

I thank you for your reminder inviting me to renew my subscription. I do recall your original letter, but had mislaid it and overlooked responding. In consequence I enclose a voluntary donation and request to receive future copies of your excellent magazine.

B B, Steyning

Are there any subscription or renewal charges for *The Good News*? And why do we have to renew our subscriptions?

R M, Peterhead

• *Although we welcome voluntary contributions, there is no subscription price on The Good News or any of our booklets. Christ said: 'Freely you have received, freely give' (Matthew 10:8). Also: 'Buy the truth, and do not sell it' (Proverbs 23:23). In managing the financial resources God does give us, our renewal programme helps us to be sure that each reader really wants to continue receiving The Good News.*

Bible Study Course

First of all, I would like to thank God for people like you. And also I want to thank you for the love, time and effort you have been giving in order to spread the Word of God. This world really needs people like you. The *Bible Study Course* you have been sending me helps me to grow more spiritually in Christ. I am really looking forward to finishing the course.

M R, Sutton, Surrey

The *Bible Study Course* has opened the Bible to me. It is a lifeline to my life. For years I had turned away from my faith, but when I started studying your course it brought me back to my faith in God more solidly.

E W, Elland, W Yorkshire

Teaching about the Sabbath

How wonderful it is that you preach the Sabbath. I am a Seventh-Day Adventist and am overjoyed that you know and present truth. I would like to receive all your magazines, anything you have to offer. I am taking your booklet *The Ten Commandments* to church on this coming Sabbath.

D R, Newport, South Wales

Various views on the church

I really enjoy your magazine. It covers areas that I have never read about anywhere else. Your beliefs are slightly different to those of my church, but the topics you cover are very relevant.

J H, Guernsey

I've been a Christian for 17 years and have been held up by God's grace, like a man unable to stand without support. I have experienced the paradox of knowing the truth of Christ and yet remaining 'feeling lost' and finding no home in any church teaching. *The Good News* has lifted my spirits.

M T, Manchester

Thank you for another chance to do the *Bible Study Course*. It has made me realise that modern-day Christianity, in the form of the two big institutional, state intertwined churches, has very little in common with the teachings of Jesus. And if He were to return tomorrow, He would not recognise them as the religion He founded in the first century.

G B, Darlington

I am a Methodist. I gave my life to Jesus in 1955 and have since served in every lay position. But I am depressed and disillusioned by the Methodist Church. It has turned its back on founder John Wesley. Ministers and

local preachers no longer believe in their responsibility to win souls for Jesus. I have just completed Lesson One of your *Bible Study Course*. I just can't wait to get on with Lesson Two.

D S, Bradford

I am a spiritual Baptist. How do I recognise that their teachings are as Jesus Christ taught? How can I identify false doctrines, false religions and teachings when each religion claims to be true to the Bible?

J C, London

• *You need to do what the Bereans did in response to the apostle Paul's teaching. 'These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they . . . searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so' (Acts 17:11). In reply to the previous five letters, we recommend that readers request and read our free booklets The Church Jesus Built, The Gospel of the Kingdom and The Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God. Then if you any have questions, we would be happy to answer them.*

Spreading the true gospel

Thank you for the magazine, and to the people who donate, and for opening my eyes and ears.

Mrs S S, Whitton, N. Lincolnshire

Please find enclosed a small donation. Your publications along with your Supplements are so very much appreciated.

R J B, Camberley

I am very grateful to you for sending me your *Good News* magazine. I really look forward to it. Enclosed is a cheque for the good work done by *The Good News*

I S, Newtownards, Northern Ireland