

The Newsletter of the Churches of God, UK

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providing
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Matthew 28:19-20

representing



Churches Of God Outreach Ministries

Has God Gone Away?

Two ten-year-old friends go missing - brutally murdered. It's a story repeated all too often in our so-called 'civilized societies'. Floods sweep Europe and China, with thousands homeless and many deaths. Drought strikes America and southern Africa, and a 'brown cloud' hovers over ten million square miles of Asia. Illness and premature death is universal. And millions pray for deliverance. But, apparently, silence. *Where is God?*

When in desperate straits, billions turn to God. Even atheists reportedly cry out to Him when upside down in a deep well! God loves mankind, says the Bible. So why are the heavens as brass - no divine intervention, no reply? Has He gone away?

I'm writing this newsletter on a computer given to *COGUK* by my son. It's a good one - though now largely obsolete! Before I could effectively use it I had to plough through endless pages of the accompanying manual. And when I misuse it the thing 'crashes'.

Life's like that. Contrary to our evolutionary friends, God made man perfect - 'very good'. We were designed to work perfectly - as long as we follow the 'manufacturer's manual'. An adequate summary of that manual is preserved in the Scriptures. But it was once known to all mankind. Throw a spanner in the works, ignore the manual, and we 'crash'.

Our first parents did that, and corrupted the original programme which was designed to guide us safely and securely through life. We

are now stuck with that corruption ('sin'), and can no more expect perfection. Sin distorts our vision. Like Adam and Eve we think our own reasoning surpasses God's wisdom.

The result? Our governments allow child molesters and foul murderers to roam free. Greed dominates business. Our legal system is a tangled web of deceitful practice. We assault our bodies with known killers and pollutants. We pollute our minds with all kinds of perverted filth.

Then we wonder why we are in trouble! We blame God for His non-intervention. *Yet we ignore the Manual.* The Manual - the Bible - explains how to deal with rapists, kidnappers, murderers, thieves, perverted sex, the young and the elderly, the environment. It enlightens us about marriage and warns against our meddling with it.

Says one inspired Bible writer, King Solomon: "*Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*" (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

And having ignored the Manual, we wonder why we are in trouble!

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T.O.D.A.Y.

This *CGOM* youth quarterly will in future be available on the *CGOM* web-site (www.cgom.org). The paper copy has been withdrawn for lack of funding. However if you do not have access to the internet, please request a photocopy from our office.

AUTUMN FESTIVALS

They are almost upon us! Bible students have long understood the spiritual value of the Biblical festivals. Despised by most Christians as mere 'Old Testament stuff' - and therefore deemed almost 'valueless' - they provide life-giving insight into God's plan for us. More - Jesus Christ is present in type in all of them.

Not only do the festivals hold theoretical lessons for us - they are *meant to be observed* by Christians. Certainly they were observed by the apostles and by the early church, both Jew and Gentile. They are today a vital part of Christian observance. Unlike Christmas, Easter *etc* they have clear Biblical roots and reflect the present will of God for all His people.

The *Day of Trumpets*, for example (September 7 this year - the dates on our calendar vary from year to year) enlightens us about the awesome end-time planet-shaking events preceding the return of Jesus. Much of the mayhem of those days is the culmination of human mismanagement - but in control of events is Jesus Christ, as detailed in the Book of Revelation.

Following Trumpets (September 16) comes the *Day of Atonement*. It's a day of fasting, and represents 'corporate' reconciliation to God - of Israel and of the church - through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah. Many believe it is, too, a picture of the 'binding of Satan' by Jesus prior to his thousand year banishment (Revelation 20) .

At the end of the year (on the calendar used in Bible times) is the *Festival of Tabernacles* - seven days of celebration, worship and fellowship. Around the world it will this year be observed by the churches September 21 - 27. Tabernacles - 'temporary dwellings' - is a snap-shot of our temporary material life, especially under the direct rule of Messiah. It is immediately followed (September 28) by an eighth day - 'closing day' - representative of eternity.

Days the Lord Has Made

Brethren make every effort to take part in these 'holy convocations' which God has appointed for the festival days. They are a time to worship Him, to fellowship, to hear and study God's Word, to enjoy good food. But central to the celebrations is *The Word*. The festivals - especially the week-long Tabernacles - are not holidays! Nor are they a time for self-indulgent excess and endless entertainment. At heart the festivals are spiritual - a 'meeting with God' on the days He has appointed in the context of joyous loving fellowship and sharing of our resources.

In our taking active part in these God-ordained festivals, Christians more readily understand the divine plan - and draw ever closer to our Saviour, who is central to all of them. ﷻ

Request - free:
God's Holy Days
The Day To Remember

GOD GONE?...cont'd

Product Guarantee

A manufacturer sells you his product, provides instructions for its proper use - and then goes about his business. If it breaks down you can send for an engineer or contact a technical adviser. But if you have not followed the instructions then you pay for the repair!

We - mankind - are paying the price. A damaged planet. AIDS. Rampant disease from basic neglect of sanitation. Savage dictatorships. Personal tragedy. Only with Jesus Christ at the heart of human affairs can our woes be rectified. That day may come soon.

Christian Nations?

The West is, supposedly, Christian. Love, the heart of the Judaeo-Christian faith - motivates all of us. We have no need for law, especially divine Law. Or so we appear to think! Instead, governments fiddle with political correctness, 'rehabilitation', community service orders, soft sentences, abhorrence of physical and capital punishment, tolerance of perverse sexual practice. Man knows better than God?

The true Christian does not indeed need to be concerned about man's law. For we are obedient to it in so far as it doesn't conflict with divine Law - which has priority. But how many are truly Christian? Mere church attendance is not a qualification.

It's a gross misunderstanding of the divine plan to imagine - as does much of Christianity - that God is now 'trying to save the world'. *Not so*. An understanding of the Biblical festivals (see accompanying article) explains. But a handful are now being groomed to reign with Christ in the coming millennium.

In the meantime, human governments are delegated to maintain law and order. How they do that - collectively and as individuals - will be weighed in the balance of divine justice. ﷻ

The *CGOM* web site has recently been updated with much new material. Be sure to take a look:

www.cgom.org

The July/August New Horizons has still to be mailed to a substantial number of readers. As funds permit we will rectify this. Our apologies for the delay