



Reachout Trust is an international Christian ministry that upholds biblical truth and builds bridges to people in the cults, occult and new age. We aim to:

Examine and reconcile with the Christian gospel the beliefs and spirituality of people within the cults, occult, new age and all not upholding biblical truth.

Train and equip Christians to explain the Christian gospel in a relevant way.

Provide a complete service of counselling and help to all enquirers.

Present the Christian gospel.

Work with organisations who will help achieve these aims.

A detailed information pack that shows how you can be involved in this ministry is available from head office.

All unassigned articles are the responsibility of Doug Harris, Director of Reachout Trust.

Other articles may not necessarily represent the Trustees' belief in every small detail.

Requests to reprint articles, in any form, must be made in writing to the Richmond Office.

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Reachout Quarterly

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Back and Forth

When most read this it will be March or April but I am writing it early January still with thoughts of the New Year. Thoughts of accomplishments in 1996 and expectations for 1997.

There are some encouragements that you will read about further in this issue. A decrease in the numbers of the Watchtower Society and the TV documentary on them. Internal encouragements too, such as the ongoing daily provision of the Lord in finances, health and safety. We can add to this the expected March publication of Mike and Anne's definitive book on British Mormonism, *Mormonism, A Gold Plated Religion*. [See the enclosed flyer for details]

Encouragements too came at our annual convention in November at the Pioneer Centre near Kidderminster. *Great teaching, encouraging fellowship, powerful testimonies and terrific facilities*, were some of the reactions. We were very pleased to have Tom Poulson with us

and his workshop on *Spiritual Forces at work in the World Today* was very well received. On the Saturday night, testimonies from Gordon Barley [see details of his book in the enclosed leaflet] and Lynda Burt, a former Jehovah's Witness who took part in the TV program, were a blessing, showing what the work of Reachout Trust is all about. For those of you who missed the weekend full details of tapes and videos are in the enclosed leaflet.

The following is an extract from the Trustees report which sums up 1996.

The beginning of 1996 was a very difficult time financially and this is reflected in the accounts to 31 May 1996. Receipts have improved greatly as we have gone through the year and as we have also rescheduled one of the loans, the financial basis is firm in terms of day to day running. We were encouraged to see that our income rose by some £13,000 in this financial year,

approximately £9,000 from extra giving and the rest in sales of resources. We hope that there will be a further increase in the next financial year. At our Trustees Meeting on 20 January, John White presented a management review. A year on we believe we have achieved some success as a result of that review. We estimate that in the first nine months of 1996 we reached a minimum, through all our activities, some 30,000 people. We have undertaken a critical look at our Products and have scheduled in the production of a number of items that will fill gaps in our inventory. The overview notes on *Martial Arts* and *Roman Catholicism*, part of that work are already nearly completed. [See enclosed leaflet for full details]. Part of the reason why we can reach more people than ever before is the pages that we have placed on the Worldwide

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The Upside-Down World of " A Course Of Miracles "

by Paul Architetto

This article was first published in the *Christian Sentinel*, PO.Box 11322, Philadelphia, PA 1913, USA, Spring 1995 and is reproduced with their permission.

"Together we are as one, we are the Messiah," the woman said to me on the phone. "It is about God. You're scared (blank) of God. The Course teaches that the miracle is the correction of error. We have the illusion that the guy over there is a (blankety blank), but that's our problem. That guy is the Messiah!"

Thus began my indoctrination into *A Course in Miracles* last spring. I had phoned Karen hoping to learn more about the people and practices of this strange New Age religion that has been creeping its way into the Christian church. An invitation to attend the Course meetings in lower Bucks County Pennsylvania was listed in *New Frontier* magazine, a leading New Age publication.

A Course in Miracles' origins are clearly outlined in the Course book, published in 1976 by the California-based Foundation for Inner Peace. It was written via occult channelling by Helen Schucman, a Columbia University atheist psychologist over the span of seven years. Channelling is the process by which one hears an inner dictation (demonic) in this case described by Schucman as the 'Voice'. She goes on to state that this Voice made no sound, but gave her a rapid, inner dictation which was written down in a shorthand notebook, later being typed by her collaborator Bill. It was, as she described, an attempt to find "another way" to deal with "the angry and aggressive feeling our attitudes reflected," meaning herself and Bill, the head of her department at Columbia. "Apparently this Course is the other way," she claimed.

The 1,200 page book is laid out in chapter and verse and is divided into three parts, the *Text*, the *Workbook for Students*, and the *Manual For Teachers*.

There are over 1 million copies in print.

With its royal blue cover with gold lettering, the \$25 book (available at bookstores) is suggestive of a Bible. It even has its own concordance. Its followers believe that the voice dictating it was Jesus Christ through the process of channelling. The Course's popularity is soaring with the help of its chief guru Marianne Williamson. She is the influential speaker (and frequent television talk-show guest) and author of the best-selling book, *A Return of Love* which expounds upon the principles presented in *A Course of Miracles*.

The writing style of *A Course in Miracles* is noticeably alluring and poetic, seeking to draw the reader in deeper (it "illuminates the concepts presented," says Schucman). Topics include The Forgiveness of Illusions (Text 16), What is Christ?, What is the Real World?, What am I? (Workbook pp. 6,8,14), How Do God's Teachers Deal with Magic Thoughts?, and Is Reincarnation So? (Manual pp.17, 24). Each page is intense, with strange new concepts presented to radically change the way one thinks and perceives the world. Other related material available from the Foundation are cassettes, lesson cards, videos, and channelled prayer, poetry, and psychotherapy (by Schucman).

I soon discovered *A Course in Miracles* to be a combination of New Age philosophy, psychology, and religion combined. For the first hour of the first meeting I attended there was a lot of talk about ego, fear, God, judging, love and illusion (e.g. anything that is not love is an illusion). Christian terminology was thrown in for good measure although it was wholly insincere, deviating from sound doctrine. The Christian guise is so extensive that one must wonder whether Schucman truly channelled the book, or simply perverted God's word using the New Testament as her resource. The book is a supreme attempt to explain what the Bible is really saying. Diverse terms and ideas were served up, thrown together, and tossed around like some philosophical salad. Jesus was mentioned once or

twice in passing, as well as the Holy Spirit.

The sad irony is that here was a group gathered around discussing how 'holy' they were, not realising that their definition of holiness came from the pit of hell, not heaven. I found it all to be very disturbing, but most of all confusing. Geri, one of the regular attendees of the gathering, seemed to be struggling as well. She expressed still having trouble understanding the Course material even after several years of study. Nancy took this opportunity to say that she believed the entire Course could be summarised into one page, one main theme. She then went on about angles, and right angles, and whatever. She tried to encourage Geri, saying that the understanding would just come to her eventually.

After about an hour of reading and discussion, Karen excused herself and brought back a small box from upstairs. The box was labelled *Sayings From A Course In Miracles* and contained a few hundred cards with sayings on them. She passed it and we each randomly picked a card and read it aloud. Then Karen asked everyone to "share the miracles that happened during the week." Miracles, as the Course defines them, can happen every day. During this time of sharing, Geri talked about her son Tommy, who died a few years ago. She claimed to hear his voice in her head, very clearly. He is with her all the time now, she said adding that she is at peace and functions better now because he is with her. After bringing this subject up again during my second visit, Karen finally asked Geri a very pointed question. "When you're speaking with Tommy, and the phone rings, do you go to pick up the phone?" Geri seemed startled by this question, and simply replied "Well that's just never happened." For the record, Karen said that she was not judging, and that anything that was OK with Geri was OK with her. But it was evident that Karen had great reservations about this matter, as well as everyone else, based on their silence.

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ULF AND MORE

We received a few letters concerning our articles on Ulf Ekman. The main concern was whether we were misquoting him. The books that we had at the time, used for research, clearly showed the conclusions drawn were true from the evidence published under his name.

One reader however has taken the trouble to send us a new book, published in 1996, entitled, *Doctrine*. This book gives a different picture on the person of Jesus. We want to quote a little to show Ulf Ekman's present position.

Jesus is the second Person of the god-head. He is the Son of God and He Is God!...There are many reasons why it is important to realize that Jesus is God...Jesus, is true God and true man...Jesus was an ordinary man, yet He was different. Why? Because He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary. Both the immaculate conception and the supernatural birth are cornerstones of the Christian faith - pp.69-74.

Another area we mentioned was the 'deification of man'. In the light of this we also want to quote the following,

Now, as newborn believers, we are definitively not God nor even a part of the Deity. However, by receiving His Holy Spirit, we are privileged to become part-takers of His nature. - p.124.

One person also brought up the fact that we should make contact with each person we talk about before saying anything. In some cases this might be right and helpful but I am not convinced it is necessary. What has been published and consumed by 100's or 1,000's of people will not be 'corrected' or 'another side' given by simply talking to the source. The information is in the public domain and therefore the rebuttal must be also. The way we say it and the attitude we take is vital but the 'other side' must be made known as wide as possible so that all can take it on board and consider it.

This thought was in my mind when reading an article by Gerald Coates. [First published in *Evangelicals Now*, July 1996 and reprinted in *Jesus Life No.38*] The heart of what he was saying I would not disagree with at all

Bible teaching that fails to produce living, radical followers of Jesus actually hinders revival

But on the way one or two warning bells sounded. The fact that Bible teaching is not producing radical disciples is not the fault of the Scriptures. Therefore to say the answer, which the article certainly seems to indicate, is that we should not give Bible teaching the central place it has in many churches seems to me to be false.

It is no more the primary purpose of the church to teach Scriptures, than it is for British Rail to promote timetables. Without timetables the rail system would collapse, trains would be wrecked and passengers injured. So we should thank God that he has preserved the Scriptures...But we make the great mistake in assuming that the primary role of leadership is to teach and exegete the Scriptures.

This seems to go against the exhortation of Paul [1 Timothy 4:13]. The Bible is the living guide to the way we should live. If we reach out and love people what are we giving them? A humanistic way of living which sees little separation between the church and the world or a practical application of the Scripture to show that they speak of the Lord who is the One to change lives. It was the Word of God that the Psalmist hid in his heart so that he would not sin?

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LEADER

Web, the super information highway on the Internet. The work was initiated by Joel Harris before he left us for University this September. However he is continuing to work for us as he has time and will be completely updating our pages by the beginning of January 1997.

Some of the interesting figures that we collected for the full year of 1996 were

Doug took 92 seminars and participated in 27 major radio and TV interviews. This is apart from the casual requests and those other members of the team take part in. Over 1,000 information packs sent out. 67 major counselling situations were arranged and over 1,000 other specific requests for information were received in the 10,503 letters, calls, faxes etc., sent to Head Office. When all these figures are collated we estimate that around 44,500 people were reached in some way or another by the work of Reachout Trust during 1996. These statistics may not mean too much on their own but are both an indication of the way things are going and also a benchmark for future years.

(end of article)

Doug's Diary

Doug Harris will be involved in training at the following seminars. Others may have also been added since publication. If you are interested in attending please ring Head Office for further details. Those marked * may have a restricted attendance.

If there is not one near you but you feel that your area would benefit from one, why not talk with us about organising it. Contact Head Office for our information leaflet on seminars.

APRIL

- 1-11 SPRING HARVEST
- 20 Redhill
- 26-27 Kendal
- 29-30 Portree Isle of Skye

MAY

- 1 Thurso Caithness
- 2 Bower Caithness
- 3 Golspie Sutherland

- 4 Alness Sutherland
- 17 Grimsby
- 18 Middlesborough
- 20-23 CRE - SANDOWN PARK

JUNE

- 1 Dagenham
- 8 Buckhurst Hill Essex
- 13 Wolverhampton
- 14 WARLEY TRAINING DAY
- 17 Sudbury
- 28 Southampton

CHRISTADELPHIAN COMMENTS

The following two articles have been submitted about Christadelphians. The first is by Adrian Miles

Introduction to the Community

It happens all the time. Two Bible-believing Christians have opposing viewpoints on a certain passage or teaching of Scripture. Both claim solid supporting evidence in terms of context, cross references and consistency of teaching. Both make what they think are reasonable and logical arguments for their interpretations. Church divisions, sects and cults are often the direct result of someone (or a group of people) dogmatically assuming that their view is the only correct one. So how can it be determined which viewpoint is right? And does it really matter?

Using elementary logic, there are just four possibilities regarding accuracy -

- Viewpoint 1 is 100% right and the other totally wrong,
- Viewpoint 2 is 100% right and the first is completely wrong,
- Both are partly correct
- Both are 100% wrong!

Based on probability, it is likely that both are partly right. With the exception of central Biblical teaching (such as does God exist? Or was Jesus resurrected?) *nobody* has the full, complete, all-encompassing answer.

For example, a sincere Bible scholar may be 100% accurate in his interpretation of the known evidence, but what about the unknown? Scripture is so deep and richly interwoven that a discovery of another aspect, or realisation of another line of inquiry, is often just around the corner. Even an extremely avid, knowledgeable and methodical Bible student never stops learning. Which means there is always something more and no human understands everything.

If we are growing spiritually as disciples of Christ, we will also be growing in both our knowledge and understanding of God's Word. God's message to us requires investigation. So when we encounter a different viewpoint, we should seize the opportunity to understand the evidence provided, even if we cannot fully accept it. Often we will find that

Scripture will 'fall into place' unexpectedly, particularly after much prayer, study and meditation. Over the years, many of our views change, to some extent or other. Try looking back to how you saw things when you were, say, ten years younger, and I think you will readily accept this.

So what has this to do with Christadelphians? Quite a lot.....

The name Christadelphian was given to a community of Christians by a man called Robert Roberts. It is the Anglicised Greek for 'Brethren of Christ'. Initially, many of the community were loathe to accept the necessity for a denominational name, as they had always regarded themselves simply as members of the Body of Christ and, therefore brethren in fellowship with one another.

What do they believe?

It is difficult to know where to start, but I will endeavour to briefly summarise some of their key beliefs

- They are monotheists. In other words, they do not believe in the concept of a trinity.
- As a result they do not believe in the deity of Christ. They recognise him as their Lord and master, but not their God.
- They believe in resurrection but do not believe in heaven-going. Rather a future literal, physical Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.
- The Bible is their one and only foundation, in contrast to the Bible itself, which tells us Christ is ultimately our only true foundation.
- They believe the Bible is the wholly inspired Word of God but in general do not believe the Holy Spirit is available to Christians today. There are a few exceptions.
- They are the only body of Christians to hold 'the truth'. Indeed, their gospel is regularly referred to as The Truth.
- They do not allow non-members to partake in their church activities, with the exception of Sunday Schools and youth groups. Commu-

nion or the breaking of bread, is only offered to full members.

- Most are quite formal and legalistic. Often very dogmatic and unyielding. They tend to be very strict about divorce and remarriage and most divisions within their community are either a direct or indirect result of strong views in this area.

This is a generalisation of the community, because there is a small minority who privately (and a few openly) express dissent at a number of their Church's doctrines. Most Christadelphians accept that they do not have all the answers, but still rigidly hold to a fixed set of beliefs laid down by their founders.

The second contribution is by David Brassington.

When I first became a Christadelphian it was because I was attracted to the good Bible teaching on the second coming of Christ, a doctrine sadly not being taught in many other churches. Initially I found the fellowship and friendship a big plus, something which was to come back to haunt me when I began to question if they had 'The Truth'.

The zeal with which the Bible is studied is something more orthodox Christians should ponder. But my first big query over the rigidity of the Christadelphian's system was when our youth group attended a Billy Graham rally at Earls Court. Here was this man quoting from the Bible and proclaiming among other things the second coming of Christ! Why then should not Christadelphians have fellowship with like minded Christian believers?

I remember how disappointed I was when despite all the endeavour of the youth group, those in charge publicly stated they could not have fellowship with other Christians, due to there being too many errors in the teaching of the orthodox church.

Reading Christian books by non Christadelphians and a close study of Church History was another eye opener. According to Christadelphian doctrine, 'The Truth' had died out with the pass

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ASTRAL PROJECTION

Ian Milton

This is the conclusion of the article from Quarterly 46.

The teaching of these occult scholars is that the astral body, soul and spirit are different, discrete components of an individual and yet collectively as humans we comprise god. It is taught that because the astral body is of a physical nature, it may survive the death of the body for a short time but eventually perishes also.

AUTHENTICATION?

Later in his book, Anthony Martin again attempts to authenticate his case with quotations from a doctor, although it is not evident what type of doctor he is quoting. This quotation is 'laced' with scripture to give it some sort of acceptability. He says,

... on the whole the definitions of the occult anatomy used by doctor Robert Crookhall are to be recommended. Each person, according to Doctor Crookhall's view, has a physical body and a soul. These are the two poles of his total body constitution. In addition there is a finer body called the astral body associated with the astral planes. Between the physical body and the astral body is an atmosphere or aura, then an interspace and then an astral atmosphere. The first or physical atmosphere is also called the vehicle of vitality and is analogous to the scriptural breath of life. Genesis 2:7 and 6:17.

Genesis 2:7 - Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (NASB)

Genesis 6:17 - And behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. (NASB)

Allied to this concept of the 'vehicle of vitality' or breath of life is what astral projectors call the 'silver cord'. This is

supposedly like an umbilical that links the astral body to the material body. When engaged in astral travel, this cord stretches for a fantastic distance like an enormous rubber band, eventually though there comes a point where it cannot stretch any more and it breaks. This leaves the physical body devoid of the astral body which then cannot return. Anthony Martin says in his book under the heading 'The Silver Cord',

... the astral body is not always free floating, in many cases it cannot go where it will. It is connected to the physical system by a cord capable of stretching vast distances but nevertheless an ever present link with the material body. The existence of the cord is testified to by many astral travellers and appears in the earliest accounts. The classic reference is in the Bible Ecclesiastes 12:6, "The silver chain will snap, and the golden lamp, will fall and break, and the water jar will be shattered" - GNB. The cord is essentially an extension of the astral body and the connection with the physical body is such as to enable the latter's vital processes to continue. It could with propriety be called a life-line and has been compared on many occasions to the umbilical cord that supports the life processes of the unborn child. Severance of the astral cord like the disconnection of the umbilical link makes the re-entry of the double into the physical body impossible. This, as one astral projector said, is what death means.

Here as we can see again Satan is misusing scripture to try and authenticate the lies about astral projection.

ANCIENT TEXTS

Some ancient yoga texts mention the eight 'siddhis' or super normal powers that can be achieved by a certain type of yoga. One of these is known as 'flying in the sky' which seems to refer to astral travel and this firmly roots the practice in eastern mysticism and the occult which exposes the practice for what it actually is - an evil satanic device.

Astral travel or astral projection is inextricably linked in with many other occult practices and beliefs via the new age movement, eastern mysticism and so on. One such aspect is the belief that the soul is surrounded by a shining garment which is interposed between the physical body and the soul. This second body or garment is said to be composed of 'stellar material' and hence is susceptible to astrological influences.

In order to engage in astral travel it is recommended by the teachers of the practice that one empties ones mind of everything but the desire to move beyond the physical body.

It would seem that the grand plan of Satan is to cajole people into firstly vacating the mind and then secondly vacating the body. One can assume with a degree of certainty that this would lead to an invasion of evil spirits which would seek to enter the vacant 'shell' if indeed one's essential life giving spirit can ever totally vacate the body.

(end of article)

"Quotation"

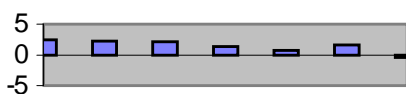
One of the most authoritative spokesmen of the Catholic Church has raised eyebrows among the faithful by declaring it believes in the feasibility of communication with the dead. His remarks have stirred interest in Italy, where mediums, astrologers and Tarot readers do a roaring trade despite the Church's longstanding disapproval. Father Gino Concetti... said the Church remained opposed to the raising of spirits but added: 'Communication is possible between those who live on this Earth and those who live in a state of eternal repose, in Heaven or purgatory...' - The Observer, 5 January 1997.

WATCH THE OWER

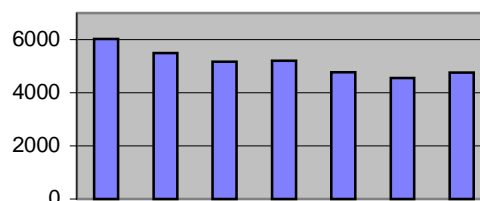
First this issue we reproduce some statistics for the Society covering the last 6 years.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS FIGURES							
1990 to 1996							
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
<u>BRITAIN</u>							
Peak Publishers	120611	125836	126173	127395	129582	132,440	132516
Average Publishers	115511	118100	120648	122245	123194	125138	124623
% Increase	2.45	2.24	2.15	1.32	0.78	1.58	-0.41
Number Baptised	6014	5491	5162	5200	4764	4546	4758
Av. Pioneers	12851	12692	13322	12803	11849	11573	10532
Total Hours	23304903	23549120	24418753	23859624	22967537	22992785	21284251
Av. Bible Studies	57235	58277	60920	61946	60912	57386	52482
Memorial Attend.	222802	222125	224654	226924	226298	224507	220128
<u>WORLD</u>							
Peak Publishers	4017213	4278820	4472787	4709889	4914094	5199895	5413769
Average Publishers	3846311	4071954	4289865	4483900	4695111	4950344	5167258
% Increase	6.1	5.9	5.4	4.5	4.7	5.4	4.4
Number Baptised	301518	300945	301002	296004	314818	338491	366579
Av. Pioneers	536508	558514	605610	623006	636202	663521	645509
Av. Bible Studies	3624091	3947261	4278086	4515587	4701357	4865060	4855030
Memorial Attend.	9950058	10650158	11431171	11865765	12288917	13147201	12921933
Memorial Partakers	8869	8850	8683	8693	8617	8645	8757

% Growth in Britain 1990-1996



Number Baptised 1990 -1996



COMMENTS

Of course you can do anything with numbers but I believe that there are some interesting facts that come out of these statistics.

NEGATIVE GROWTH

For the first time since the mid seventies there was negative growth in the Watchtower Society in Britain. Although the official publication rounds it up to 0% it is actually -0.41%. There is something else we should also note. Overall 515 people left the Society, but as around 4,500 people were baptised it means 5,000 people left. It will be interested to see what happens now because apart from 1995 the trend has been for smaller growth over the last 7 years. This is also shown in the World figures.

MISSING PUBLISHERS

There are some other statistics that show missing numbers too. Starting with the 1990 Peak Publisher figure we add those baptised between 1991 and 1995 and compare this with Peak Publishers in 1996. The British figures show over 13,000 missing

from the numbers and the World figures over 150,000.

PEAKED?

I am sure pressure will be put upon Witnesses to perform better because in most departments these figures peaked in 1992/3 and it has been downhill since. This goes for hours on the work, average Bible Studies, Average Pioneers and the attendance at the Memorial Meal. The one significant number that has increased this year is the one that should be less, the number of the 'anointed' left on the earth. These increased in 1996 by 112 to 8757. In the six years since 1990 the number has only dropped by the same number 112 or 1.26%. They must be a hardy lot who do not want to leave the earth to enter into their rest!

TV PROGRAMME

We must congratulate BBC for their documentary on the Jehovah's Witnesses. We were privileged to be involved in it from the beginning and a number of our folk took part. It certainly stirred up a great deal of interest and we know of several who have left the Society and become Christians as a result. One Witness phoned up Ed Roberts and asked him to watch the programme with him. As a result he left! May there be further opportunities and next time nation-wide and not just in the South.

144,000

The Society teach that only 144,000 go to heaven and the rest will live on paradise earth. But a clear look at the Society shows that this teaching was not always the same as it is now.

Charles Taze Russell wrote in *What Pastor Russell Said*, 1917.

[Question] Does the Great Company receive life direct from God on the spirit plane?

[Answer] Yes, they receive life direct in that they have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and when they are begotten they are just the same as the little flock, because we are all called in the one hope of our calling. They do not make their calling and election sure, but not being worthy of second death, they therefore receive life on the spirit plane. - p.297.

[Question] Do you anticipate an outward separation of the great company from the little flock, or merely a separation in

spirit, and a general affiliation of both classes in one assembly to the end of the harvest period?

[Answer] I know of nothing to indicate that the Lord will make a separation between the Little Flock and the Great Company, as far as separating them into parties is concerned. - p.305

Their second president, Rutherford, changed their teaching to say that in 1935, there would be two classes of Christians, Heavenly & Earthly.

These flashes of prophetic light prepared the ground for the historic discourse on 'The Great Multitude', given 31 May 1935, by President J F Rutherford, at the Washington D.C. convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. What a revelation of divine truth that was! - The Watchtower, March 1 1935, p.14

The heavenly hope was held out, highlighted and stresses until about the year 1935. Then as 'light flashed up' to reveal clearly the identity of the 'great crowd' of Revelation 7:9, the emphasis began to be placed on the earthly hope. - The Watchtower, February 1 1982, p.28.

But what does the Bible teach about the Great Multitude?

Rev.7:9 according to the Watchtower is the earthly class. But this scripture does not teach that they are exempt from heaven. The term earth is not mentioned with the Great Multitude.

This Great Multitude which no man could number are standing before the throne, and before the Lamb. - Rev.7:9

According to the Bible this Great Multitude are in heaven because they are standing, before the throne.

The Society says that this phrase, before the throne, does not necessarily indicate a location but 'an approved condition', or in sight of God's throne.

The Bible shows this explanation to be false because of the fact that the angels stood before the throne - Rev.7:11.

Even the 144,000 are before the throne - Rev.14:3.

What must our conclusion be?

The angels, 144,000 and the Great Multitude are all standing before the throne, because they are all in heaven.

Rev.7:15 also tells us that the Great

Multitude are before the throne and serve Him day and night in His temple.

Scripture shows that God's temple is in Heaven. See Rev.11:19 & 14:17.

What more proof do we need? The Great Multitude cannot be on the earth. Rev.7:16 shows their destiny cannot be on the earth because, "the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat."

In John 10:16 Jesus taught that all believers will be together in "one flock and one shepherd", which disproves the false teaching of two classes of Christians, one heavenly and one earthly.

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society are as guilty as the scribes and Pharisees when Jesus said to them,

But woe to you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. - Matthew 23:13.

President Rutherford set forth the challenge to investigate and expose the error of Jehovah's Witness theology when he proclaimed,

If the message the Jehovah's Witnesses are bringing to the people is true, then it is of greatest importance to mankind. If it is false, then it is the duty of clergyman and others who support them to come boldly forward and plainly tell people wherein the message is false. - The Golden Age, 18 Jan. 1933, p.252.

The Society also said,

It is not a form of religious persecution for anyone to say and to show that another religion is false... To make a public exposure of false religion is certainly of more value than exposing a news report as being untrue; it is a public service instead of a religious persecution and it has to do with the eternal life and happiness of the public. Still it leaves the public free to choose. - The Watchtower, 15 Nov. 1963, p.688.

Exposing a false religion is a "public service." We have that "public service" to show that what the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society teach concerning the 144,000 is not what the Bible teaches.

(end of article)

TRUTH RESTORED - 10

by Mike & Ann Thomas

Origins

Anyone who has expressed doubts about the story of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon will probably have been met with the question, "well if Joseph didn't get it from the angel how do you explain the Book of Mormon?" Today the Book of Mormon does seem an unusual book appearing to spring from nowhere. Certainly the Church likes to present it as such, insisting that it could only have the history claimed for it, no other explanation fits. So our missionary friends will look at us expectantly, confident we will not be able to meet the challenge of where it came from. The Book of Mormon, however, is very much a product of its age and fits neatly into the background of the early 19th Century.

Joseph Smith, ignorant farm boy?

Legrand Richards, in his book *A Marvellous Work And A Wonder*, after listing 42 great truths revealed through Joseph Smith, makes this comment:

Joseph Smith, or any other man, could not have obtained all this information by reading the Bible or studying all the books that have ever been written. It came from God. (p.411)

Joseph is often cast in the role of ignorant farm boy, incapable of writing the Book of Mormon. True, Joseph had little formal schooling, but intelligence is not dependent upon education. His personal letters show his depth of thought and grasp of language and he was most eloquent in his writing and speech.

At the beginning of his book Legrand Richards quotes Jesus' words about putting new wine into new wineskins (Mark 2:21-22) to explain why God would choose an uneducated lad. He could teach him the way He wanted, without traditions or prejudices to get in the way. In fact, many of Joseph's ideas can be traced to the people around him and the speculations of the day:

His father believed in dreams and visions and as early as 1811, when Joseph was only 6, contended for a return to the original church established by Jesus

Christ and His apostles. Both parents were independent religious thinkers. His mother believed that all the Christian creeds were wrong - **as did many people of the day**. In fact, in 1809, Alexander Campbell had come out against all Christian creeds and began his own sect (the Disciples of Christ), attempting to return to the early church. Also known as the Campbellites, they were prevalent along that part of the frontier and many later became Mormons because of the similarity of their beliefs.

Even the account of Joseph's First Vision is remarkably similar to accounts of spectacular conversion stories published in that period. In 1816 Elias Smith, a minister, claimed to have seen "The Lamb once slain" in a vision in the woods. Joseph's local newspaper published a similar story in October 1823. Alexander Campbell himself wrote in 1824 about a revival in New York during which people had visions including seeing the Saviour descending to the tops of the trees.

To people today, the idea of the Urim and Thummim stones, which enabled Joseph to translate the golden plates, is strange, but peep stones were common in Joseph's time. In March 1826 Joseph was found guilty of being "a disorderly person and an impostor." He admitted in court that he used a peep stone to discover hidden treasures in the earth. He actually had several, including a dark stone he looked at in his hat, and a clear stone he held up to a candle or the sun.

Joseph's mother testified to the inventive nature of his mind:

During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of travelling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. this he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had

spent his whole life with them. - Quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, Fawn Brodie, p.35.

The Book of Mormon - couldn't have been written by a man?

In view of the above quote, it would seem that Joseph had plenty of material on which to draw for such a book. Added to which, local speculation was rife about a highly civilised race that had been wiped out in a great battle and buried in mounds.

Another story that was prevalent was that the Indians were descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. A local pastor, Ethan Smith, published a book in 1823 called *View of the Hebrews; or The Ten Tribes of Israel in America*. There is no proof that Joseph saw this book before writing the Book of Mormon, but the parallels are striking.

The Mormon church asserts that he could not have written such a complete book in the 60 days in which the translation took place. Yet those who acted as his scribes never actually saw him translate. There was always a curtain between them and Joseph, and they never saw the plates. They also testify that his translation was fluent and never corrected. Since even the best linguists occasionally rephrase their translation, Joseph must have been inspired by God. Another possibility, of course, is that he was reading from a previously prepared manuscript! In addition, almost one third of the Book of Mormon is lifted from the Bible.

It is impossible to consider the origin of the Book of Mormon without considering the background in which Joseph lived. The book can be explained by Joseph's fertile mind, mastery of language, and responsiveness to opinions around him.

An Ancient Document?

In 1831 Alexander Campbell wrote:

This prophet Smith... wrote... in his Book of Mormon every error and almost every truth discussed in New York for

the last ten years. He decides all the great controversies; infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of free masonry [sic], republican government, and the rights of man. - Millennial Harbinger, Feb.1831, p.93.

Not only does Joseph tackle these great nineteenth century controversies, but uses material from publications not in existence at the time of the Nephites. There are marked parallels with the Westminster Confession & Catechisms. Joseph also appears to have drawn from popular books of his day, and even the local newspaper, to create his theological masterpiece. Even Shakespeare is quoted by Lehi, the father of Nephi,

hear the words of a trembling parent, whose limbs you must soon lay down in the cold and silent grave, from whence no traveller can return - 2 Nephi 1:14.

Hamlet, act 3, scene 1, contains the words "from whose bourn no traveller returns..." Famously, the last word in the Book of Jacob is not 'Reformed Egyptian' but French,

I bid farewell, hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. Brethren adieu. - Jacob 7:27

By far the greatest influence in the writing of the Book of Mormon, however, was the King James Bible. Large sections are quoted in the Book of Mormon, including over eighteen chapters of Isaiah. Even the Apocrypha is pressed into service, providing names, concepts and story lines. Nephi, for instance, is perhaps the most important name in the Book of Mormon, found hundreds of times. Four major characters have that name, it is the name of four books, a city, a land, and a people. Mormon scholars have been to great lengths to explain the 'Egyptian' origin of this very unusual name. It can be found in the Apocrypha (2 Maccabees 1:36).

An extensive list of parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Bible with Apocrypha has been produced by Jerald and Sandra Tanner in their book *Mormonism, Shadow or Reality*. Perhaps one of the most remarkable errors is

the use of the titles Alpha and Omega. In 3 Nephi Jesus makes a post resurrection appearance in America and, in introducing Himself, quotes Rev.21:6, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End (3 Nephi 9:18). Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Since Greek was used extensively throughout the Roman Empire, the New Testament was written in Greek. The Nephites, however, had left the Old World in 600 BC and would have had no knowledge of Greek. As the Book of Mormon was supposed to have been written in 'Reformed Egyptian', Jesus' words would not have been understood.

It appears that Joseph Smith did not know that these were Greek words. When he was challenged for using Greek he wrote, in 1843,

The error I speak of is the definition of the word **mormon**. It has been stated that this word was derived from the Greek word *mormo*. This is not the case. There was **no Greek** or Latin upon the plates from which I... translated the Book of Mormon.

Temple

Unconfirmed reports say that the completion and dedication of the new Mormon Temple has been put back to 1998. We are seeking confirmation and will let you know.

Among the Noble and Great?

The Mission Guide, published by the Mormon church in 1988, prepares and trains missionaries for meeting you on your doorstep. In the introduction we read the following:

Your preparation began long before your mission - before your birth, in fact. Most likely, you were "among the noble and great ones who were chosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God. - Missionary Guide, Pub. LDS Church, 1988, p.4

This is a reference to the Mormon pre-existence where, it is claimed, we all once lived with God before being sent to earth to pass through a period of testing and preparation for godhood. During the pre-existence there was a war in heaven in which Lucifer rebelled and was cast out. The "noble and great ones" were those who fought most valiantly for the cause of heaven. There were, of course, those who fought less

valiantly, and the least valiant amongst these were penalised for their lack of courage and commitment. Their penalty was to be born as descendants of Cain and to carry the mark of Cain - a dark skin. This is the Mormon explanation for the Negro.

As a result of his rebellion, Cain was cursed with a dark skin; he became the father of the Negroes, and those spirits who were not worthy to receive the priesthood are born through this lineage. - Mormon Doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie, 1958, p.102.

Until 1978 Negroes were barred from any office in the Mormon Church because they carried the mark of Cain and were cursed because of their performance in that heavenly conflict. In 1978 the then prophet, Spencer W Kimball, announced a change in policy and from that time all worthy males in the church have been allowed to hold office - and serve missions. The point?

How do you tell a Negro missionary, who carries the mark of Cain, who clearly did not fight valiantly, who was born into this world already 'unworthy', that he was "Most likely 'among the noble and great ones who were chosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God'"? How can you hand him a training manual which contains such a stark generalisation?

The Mormon teaching on the pre-existence remains intact on the issue of the Negro. The black skin is still the mark of Cain according to Mormon scripture. The Book of Mormon still teaches that a dark skin is a sign of God's dis-favour. Colour and race are still looked upon as indications of rewards and punishments for choices in a pre-existent life.

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COURSE MIRACLES

The Course is spiritually dangerous. The teacher is given power to make things up, and will go unchallenged due to the willingness of the student. During my second session with the group, I heard Karen exclaim, "As Jesus said, 'Grab hold of your humanity,'" and the group accepted it at face value. Obviously, Jesus never said this in the Bible.

Apparently the way is cleared for such flagitious use of authority. The Course exhorts the student to use the ideas presented even though they "will be hard to believe," while others may be "quite startling" (Preface ix). It unashamedly admits that "it cannot be too strongly emphasized that this course aims at a complete reversal of thought" (Manual 24). It reinforces this with an entire lesson devoted to releasing the student from all he or she currently believes. This lesson is entitled "My thoughts do not mean anything" (Workbook, 10). What other fictions would the teacher feed these hungry students who are willing to be brainwashed? Moreover, how was Karen, a grade school teacher, influencing the minds of the teenagers that she educates?

To be concluded in next Quarterly

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ULF AND MORE

Do we need the multimedia presentations to enable Christians to respond to the Gospel and live the disciplined life? What happened to the conviction of the Holy Spirit when the Word of God is preached?

This is the other side of the coin which is being left out too often today and I just want to put that aspect into people's thinking as they read such articles.

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CHRISTADELPHIAN

ing of the apostles until rediscovered by Dr. Thomas in the middle of the last century! If this had been true, the Bible would never have come down to us. The fact is that however in error the Church has been, God has always had His saints.

My final parting was very unpleasant, due to going to communion at a local Parish Church where I committed 'the sin' of sharing the Lord's Table with those 'not of the truth', plus courting a lady who went there (we have now been married over 25 years), but for this I was made to feel a leper. When I left, it took me years to find happy Christian fellowship. It made me feel rather quizzical that I had not had such unhappy experiences with my now Christian friends in Football and Country music!

Why do people stay? Simple, in many cases Christadelphians do not know any other Christians! Many genuinely believe they are the last bastions of God's truth. For instance many believe such fundamental Christian doctrines like the second coming of Christ are no longer believed by other Christians. Any public church figure pronouncing doubt or denial, such as the former Bishop of Durham is eagerly pounced on to justify staying separate and 'defending the faith'.

It is also made more difficult when those like myself who began to doubt that Christadelphians had the 'whole truth' come to the conclusion that in some respects Christadelphians do have certain things correct, particularly over Bible prophecy. In the latter part of the last Century, Dr Thomas said there was one important thing that had to happen before Christ returned according to the Bible, Israel had to be re-gathered! Doubtless he would have been surprised had this actually came to pass in 1948 after the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. This particular doctrine has now become an accepted fact from Bible believing Christians, in fact Billy Graham has even quoted Dr. Thomas!

The fact that Christadelphians do not bear arms is also very appealing. I submit that the involvement of the Church in war is a blot on Christendom that puts many off the Christian faith. The late Historian A.T.P. Taylor would of-

ten query who's side was God on? To his dying day he remained an Atheist.

Finally my late Father became a Christadelphian after asking his curate in his local Parish Church 'Did he believe in the second coming of Christ', to which he got the non committal reply, 'he thought most people did!'

(end of article)



The following was a typical day in our life as Hare Krisnas.

2:30-3:00 a.m. Devotees wake up and wash, then mark their bodies in thirteen places with tilaka, a light creamy clay brought in from India. This is accompanied by a prayer. The temple priest and a helper wake up about half an hour earlier. They wake the temple deities (statues) with a conch shell and then wash and dress them. If the helper is a woman she cannot touch the deities. Statues must be washed in cows urine, but some places use rose water with a drop of lemon juice, some rose and carnation petals are mixed in also. This mixture is drunk by the devotees at a later stage, even if it is the cow's urine!. The helper makes the food for the deities, usually bananas and cream or pears and oranges. The temple priest alone offers the food to the deities. The temple workers must wash and put on special clothes before entering. They

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Pilgrims of a Common Life

With many cults encouraging or even demanding that their members live in community, this book review and comments by Lyn Robson on Trevor Saxby's book is very timely.

This is a book that is well laid out and would appear to be well researched. We are given a century by century account of community living with relevant historical background, which is very informative. But if you are looking for an unbiased book on community living, I'm afraid this book will not give you that. He admits in the preface that he has discarded writing anything about what he calls the lunatic fringe, therefore not quite giving the balanced view that we should be entitled to. But having said that I must applaud his honesty for he explains how and why many communities failed.

As I read through the preface the words salt and light kept repeating in my mind. How can you be salt and light if you are hidden away in a community?

I will start by listing what he considers the marks of true Christian community.

- Love, divine and human.
- Holiness.
- Discipleship.
- Sharing.
- Proper structure.
- Authority.
- Prophetic Leadership.
- Witness.

A pretty comprehensive list which I totally agree with and believe every church should have or at least be aiming for!

I was struck by the liberal sprinkling of scriptures throughout to substantiate his own view point of community living. Whilst obviously you should have scripture backing, it is all too easy to pick a subject, look up all the verses pertaining to it and really be one minded about its meaning to persuade other people to think likewise. That's not guiding or leading, unless guided by the Holy Spirit, that's manipulation with the emphasis on man!

John 17 is particularly emphasised to show that Jesus' ministry is to the church and not the world and that is why we should be out of the world in community living. Yes this passage does say that all Christians should be united, but not to the exclusion of the world. In fact John 17 v 15 says

I am not asking you to take them out of this world but to keep them safe from Satan's power,

and in verse 18 Jesus says to his Father

As you sent me into the world I am sending them into the world.

One statement in his book I wholeheartedly agree with is,

enclosed monastic orders are not in the perfect will of God.

But by contrast the most puzzling statement in the book is,

other communities have sought to aid the poor, the aged and the handicapped, laudable though this may seem, and true to the compassion of Jesus, it has often ruined communities by taking over.

Community living normally insists that members give up everything that they have for the communal use of everyone. But Jesus in His Word doesn't ask us to give up everything we have, but what he does ask is that we should be prepared to do so if asked, there is a difference. For instance in Matthew 19:21-22 it shows that the rich young ruler loved money more than God. It was not a commandment to sell everything and go and live in a community.

We are called to be in the world but not of this world. That doesn't mean secluding ourselves away in a holy huddle, where we haven't the ability to reach everyone with the message and love of God. Okay so they go out and DO evangelism but everyone knows friendship evangelism is the most powerful way to bring people into the King-

dom.

I can understand that the community living Christians would look at non-community living Christians and see that we are trying to be too integrated with society. Especially when the established church waters down biblical truths and veers towards materialism. And talking of materialism, how does community living sit with the prosperity message! I think that here we have two extremes and while each may have its good points (I'm not so sure that the prosperity message has any!) the way ahead does not lay with either of them.

But I do think that we should be taking on board the good parts of community living. The fellowship, the building up of each other, the spiritual input and the resultant power of God in our lives. We would also do well to try living a more simplistic lifestyle, which would release more money to help the underprivileged in society.

He puts the blame of communities diminishing in the 80's on the charismatic movement and the way they emphasised the personal relationship with Jesus. He also blames celebration camps and bible weeks for portraying Christian togetherness as a "shot in the arm" and community living as an occasional and temporary affair rather than a way of life.

But we do have to move with the times. I'm sure if Jesus came back today, he would be relevant and relate to today's generation. One has only to look at the Amish and Mennonite communities in America, they are well known for dressing old fashionably and distrusting modern inventions as the work of the devil. Communities like that are so insular and are regarded by Christians and non-Christians as weird. How can they reach the world or add to their number?

I can compare their opting out of society like that of a Christian, who says that I don't have a T.V., read magazines or listen to pop music because there is so much wrong with them. Basically what you are doing is opting out of your responsibility as a Christian to be able to

make an impact on society. If we don't know what is going on in the world or refuse to have anything to do with it, how on earth can we try and do something about it! Rough as it can get at times and as nice as it can be to live in a holy huddle, I'm afraid we are called to live in the real world. Jesus did! I believe that our own families are the communities that God wants us to live in. Jesus lived with his family for thirty of his thirty three years on the earth.

Before I embark on the authors list of reasons for why communities don't always work, let me add two of my own thoughts from the Bible. In the Old Testament there was a rather large community or God's people led by Moses. Were they happy, contented, satisfied and continually praising the Lord? Then in the New Testament we have Ananias and Sapphira, who when they had sold their property instead of giving all the money for the use of the community they kept some back for themselves and then lied about it. Their reward for that was instant death.

The author's reasons for why some communities fail.

- Loss of first love.
- Over organisation.
- Failure to oppose the flesh.
- Financial mismanagement.
- Lack of discipline and prophetic leadership.
- Dissatisfaction and pride in leaders. All these could lead to the downfall of the local church as well. The rest of the list is unique to communities.
- Excessive time spent writing to defend their communities position.
- Rejection of marriage.
- Worldly involvement's.
- Over enclosedness.
- Excessive evangelism!!!

I must admit he puts over a very good and persuasive argument for community living and I believe if you were searching for something you though was missing in your Christian life, you could easily be persuaded that this is the answer. But I believe that we will always feel that there is something missing in our Christian life until we get to heaven!

In conclusion we as Christian would do well to remember something the author quotes from the Bible,

The earth is the Lords and everything in it.

The people living in communities would do well to remember John 3:16

For God so loved the WORLD.

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LETTERS

must disrobe and wash again when they leave.

4:00 Greeting the deities, a mixture of chanting, dancing and singing. This kind of worship is called san-kra-tan. The temple priest offers the deities a flower (lotus leaves if available), rose water, wind (they are fanned), and fire. Fire is made from a small flat candle holder with ghee (clarified butter). Dipped cotton wool balls ignite it.

4:30-5:00 Each devotee chants the mantra. This is usually the first time in the day the mantra is recited. It is done like a rosary on a chain of 108 japa beads. This mantra must be recited 16 times a day, or 32 times on feast days.

5:00 Second service. Chanting, dancing and singing to deities. (10 mins.).

5:10-6:30 Class Studies in Sanskrit, Bhagavad Gita. Here the teacher teaches the pupils a verse from the Bhagavad Gita like a Christian learns a Bible verse. Each word is written in Sanskrit with the English equivalent below. The pupils are taught to sing the verse, and then questioned on each word at random.

6:30-7:00 Individual chanting of the mantra.

7:00-7:30 Third service. Singing dancing chanting and some offerings that were offered to the deities at 4:00 are now given to photographs of Prabhupad (the founder), and whoever is the current leader of the country.

7:30-8:00 As 6:30

8:00 Morning prasad (breakfast). Porridge, brown bread, apple, orange, banana and a bowl of warm milk or herbal tea.

9:00 Individual duties. Some go onto the streets to get money, others clean up after the mornings activities. Some mind the children and the temple secretary would read and answer mail.

9:00-2:00 Those in town would be told to elicit funds. They would have records, stickers, books or 'spiritual sky' incense, all to be given away for a generous donation, as selling on the streets is banned. The devotee believes "the end justifies the means" and so telling lies about what the money is for is okay. The person in the street is humorously nicknamed a 'Karmie' after their bad karma and are usually seen as nothing more than an animal.

2:00p.m. Return to temple and shower, to wash off the contamination of the world. Dinner is served, mostly curry and rice with vegetables, or lentil pie, occasionally there could be a pizza! Hare Krisnas are vegetarians not vegans. Men get served first and eat separately from the women. Usually the meal is eaten quickly so devotees can chant a few more mantras.

3:30-6:00 Return to the streets.

6:00-7:00 Get showered and count what has been collected. The money is given to the temple secretary and any problems encountered are reported at this time. Devotee stocks up on goods for tomorrow's outing. Any spare time is utilised for chanting or studying.

7:00-7:30 Temple priest dresses the deities for bed. The devotees are chanting, singing and dancing. The service ends when the door to the deities room is closed for the night.

7:30-8:00 Class, reciting and singing verses of the Bhagavad Gita.

8:00-8:30 Hot milk and bedtime.

- Shaun & Jackie Aisbitt

(end of article)