

Bible Study - Restored Truth #7 - The True Gospel
June 15, 2013

How has this world gotten into the mess it finds itself in today? If one wants to know why something is the way it is, a study of origins is necessary. To set the stage for this study, a study of origins is necessary. This study of origins will encompass a review of previous material covered in recent studies. A review of this material helps to better understand the work God is doing on this Earth.

John 1:1 This is the beginning of the Bible. *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God...*[John is speaking of two beings, God and the Word] *He...[the Word] was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.* In the beginning there were two being God the Father and the Word, Jesus Christ. God, through the Word, made the physical universe, in which earth spins around sun in. Before God created this physical universe, He created angels.

Eze. 28:14 This verse specifically speaks about Lucifer, archangel, who became Satan the devil. Notice, what it says about this great angelic being. *You were the anointed cherub who covers...*[He was right at God's throne, which covered by the wings of the cherubim] *I established you. You were on the holy mountain of God. You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. (vs 15) You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created.* This angelic being was created. What proof does the Bible provide proving God created angels before He created the physical universe?

Job 38:4 In correcting Job. God ask: *Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. (vs 7) When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* When God created the Earth, and the physical universe we live in, angels were already in existence. The angels could not have rejoiced over God's physical creation had they not been in existence first.

Luke 4:5 Lucifer, who became Satan, was given authority over this earth. Notice his words to Christ during His 40 days fasting. *Then the devil taking him on a high mountain showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time...*[Notice, it says the kingdoms of the world. These were all the world governments present at that time] (vs 6) *And the devil said to him all this authority I will give you and their glory: for it has been delivered to me; and I will give it to whomever I wish.* This clearly shows Satan is in charge of this world. He was given his authority over the earth by God.

Isa.14:12 *How you are fallen from heaven, oh Lucifer, son of the morning. How you are cut to the ground, you who weaken the nations...*[This is what happens to nations who reject God. Once Satan himself rebelled and rejected God, he weakened the nations which would develop in a world cut off from God] (vs 13) *For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...*[Where is Satan's throne? It is here on the

earth.] *I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, on the farther side of the north. (vs 14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High.* This is the reason Lucifer rebelled against God. He wanted to be God. He wanted to occupy the top seat. He wanted to be in complete control. This is the same attitude dictators down through the course of human history display. It's the attitude of Satan the devil, who says, I want to be boss. I want to be the top boss. Lucifer was not satisfied with his rulership position had been given. He tried to take God's throne. The result of his rebellion can be found in Genesis 1.

Gen.1:2 *The earth was without form...*[better translated, became.] *The earth became without form and void...*['form' in the Hebrew means to lie waste. It can refer to a desolation of surface, a desert, or a worthless thing. It can also mean in vain. The word 'void' in Hebrew means to be empty. It can refer to a vacuity, which is simply empty space. Superficially, it can refer to an undistinguishable ruin. Notice in this verse, the earth has already in existence. Would the angels have shouted for joy, if God had first created the earth waste and empty? No! God's actions are always done decently and in order] *The earth became without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* The earth was in a mess. It had already been created; but not in a condition of waste and emptiness. This was not the earth the angels shouted for joy over.

1 Cor. 14:33 It's important to understand how God operates. It would be nice if human beings operated this way in their lives. Read only the first half of the verse. *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...* Understand the condition of the earth in Genesis 1:2 is a state of confusion. It's in waste; it's empty; it's worthless. God does not create things in this kind of condition. The earth had been put in that condition. The earth's condition found in Genesis 1:2, was the result of Satan and his demons rebelling against God. Remember, Christ said He saw Satan fall from heaven as lightening. God did not initially create the earth as a desolate ruin. It was something beautiful to behold. It was a creation over which the angels shouted for joy.

In order for the earth to be profitable, it had to be re-created. After six days of re-creating notice God's opinion concerning the work He had done. Gen. 1:31 *Then God saw everything that he had made and indeed it was very good...*[The creation was very good when God initially created it. It was very good when He had to re-create it. Part of the re-creation was the creation of man] (vs 26) *Then God said...*[Elohim] *let us make man in our image...*[What does God and the Word of John 1:1 look like? Like man. Man was created to look like God; God looks like man] *according to our likeness. (vs 27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female He created them...*[Men and women are created in the image of God] (vs 28) *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.* Adam and Eve were taught specifically about two trees in the Garden of Eden. One was the tree of life and the other was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was instructed to eat from every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was not to eat. The result for doing so would be death.

Like all human beings, Adam and Eve refused to heed God's instruction and partook of the tree of death, but notice something else happened.

Gen. 3:24 *So he...[God] drove out the man and he placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden and a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.* Adam and Eve's decision to disobey God had great ramifications for the earth, just like Satan's rebellion had great ramifications the universe. The decision of mankind's human parents caused God to cut off access to Him and the giving of His Holy Spirit.

Gen. 6:5 Notice the condition mankind after 1,500 years of living cut off from God. In a world committed to defining good and evil for itself causes everything to become evil. This is the outcome of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.. *Then the Eternal saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* (vs 6) *And the Eternal was sorry that he had made man on the earth and he was grieved in his Spirit...*[God was not sorry He created man, but over the evils human beings were committing against each other] (vs 7) *The Eternal said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and birds of the air for I am sorry I have made them.* Society had dwindled to such a point that it could not be turned around. Only one man, Noah, living in the midst of this society was righteous. He obeyed God, which resulted in the protection him and his family from the flood.

It is important to realize the nature of man did not change after the flood. Christ's description of society before His 2nd Coming mirrors the society of Noah's time. Matt. 24:37 Christ told His disciples: *As the days of Noah were, so also, will the coming of the Son of Man be...*[As it was in the days leading up to the flood] (vs 38) *For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark...*[An accurate understanding of society leading to Christ's 2nd Coming combines Christ's description in Matthew 24 with the description found in Genesis 6] (vs 39) *and did not know...*[Did not realize what was coming] *until the flood came, and took them all away; so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* Realize this is not referring to the 7th trumpet and events associated with it. Christ is referring to the days prior to the start of Great Tribulation. When Great Tribulation is over, the 7th trumpet will sound and Christ will descend on the clouds over Jerusalem. Understand that society today is living in a time period just like the days of Noah.

God is not going to send a flood to deal with this corrupt society, but a storm of fire called Great Tribulation. It is the message of what God is going to do after Great Tribulation which is the focus of Restored Truth #7.

Rev. 11:15 describes what immediately occurs after Great Tribulation. *Then the seventh angel sounded and there were loud voices in heaven saying, the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever...*[Of God the Father] (vs 16) *And the twenty four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God* (vs 17) *saying, we give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty,*

the one who is, and who was, and who is to come; because you have taken your great power and reigned. (vs 18) And the nations were angry and your wrath has come. Nations aren't going to be very happy when God takes over rulership of this earth.

After Great Tribulation, God is going to remove Satan from having authority over the earth. Once Satan is removed, God will establish His authority over all nations on earth. The establishment of God's rule on the earth is the central theme of Christ's message brought to this earth nearly 2000 years ago.

When Jesus Christ came as a human being, He brought a message from God the Father in heaven. Delivering this message was one of five responsibilities Christ had during His 1st Coming.

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong listed these 5 responsibilities on page 216 of his book titled, "Mystery of the Ages":

- #1 To qualify and replace Satan as ruler of the earth.
- #2 To announce the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth.
- #3 To pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind.
- #4 To be resurrected making possible eternal life to all mankind.
- #5 To establish God's Church, which is to train teachers and rulers for the Wonderful World Tomorrow.

This Restored Truth study deals with Christ's 2nd responsibility, which was, Christ's announcement about the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth. This message marks the very beginning of Christ's ministry. Mark 1:12 *Immediately the spirit drove him into the wilderness. (vs 13) And He was there in the wilderness 40 days tempted and tested by Satan; and was with the wild beasts and the angels ministered to him...*[Mark doesn't provide the kind of detail found in Matthew and Luke concerning Christ's temptation] (vs 14) *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee...*[These two events had to occur first before Christ's ministry could begin. Christ had to take on Satan to replace him as ruler over the earth. And John the Baptist had to be put into prison signaling the end of his commission. John prepared the way for Christ's earthly ministry. Once these events were over, Jesus came to Galilee to begin His earthy ministry] *preaching the gospel the kingdom of God.* The word 'preached' is the Greek word *keruso*, which means to proclaim as a herald.

Notice carefully the message Christ proclaimed was the gospel of the Kingdom of God. What does the word 'gospel' mean? In the Greek it simply means a good message, or good news. Christ came into Galilee proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. This is the gospel message Christ proclaimed. It is important to understand the emphasis of Christ's message. Christ was responsible for delivering was the good news of the Kingdom of God. He didn't come into Galilee preaching the gospel, or the good news about Himself. The depth of this statement will be realized toward the end of this study.

Matt. 4:17 also speaks of the start of Christ's ministry. This is after going through the temptation and John being put in prison. *From that time Jesus began to preach...[proclaim] and say, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* It is important to understand the 'Kingdom of God' and the 'Kingdom of heaven' are really the same thing. The Kingdom of God describes who the Kingdom belongs to, whereas, the phrase 'the kingdom of heaven' describes where God's Kingdom currently resides.

In Matt. 6:9 Christ instructs His disciples how to pray. This is an outline of prayer, not a monotonous repetition. *In this manner therefore pray: Our father in heaven...[This is where God the Father currently resides] Hallowed be your name. (vs 10) Your kingdom come...[The Kingdom of God] Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Which is where the Kingdom of heaven currently is right now.

The Kingdom of God is not currently on this earth. God's Kingdom is confined right now to the third heaven where He resides. His will is done where His Kingdom is; not done on this earth amongst the majority of mankind. Christ was very specific about the need to pray for God's Kingdom to come.

Christ did not bring His own message to the earth. Christ had a specific message He was told to deliver by God the Father. John 12:49 *For I have not spoken of my own authority but the Father who sent me gave me a command what I should say and what I should speak...[Which was the gospel of the Kingdom of God] (vs 50) And I know that his command is everlasting life...[It is God's intent for all human beings to receive eternal life] Therefore whatever I speak, just as the father has told me so, I speak.*

It is very important to keep this thought in mind while studying what Christ says in the Bible. He didn't speak His own perspective. He didn't speak His own thinking. God the Father gave Him a responsibility to speak a certain message. He obeyed His Father and delivered the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

John 14:24 *and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.* Christ's message came directly from God the Father. Christ was the messenger. He delivered the message. The message He delivered was the good news of the Kingdom of God. Ironically though, Christ's message was not a message to be responded to by the vast majority of the world.

Matt.13:10 The purpose of Christ's 1st Coming must be understood in the context of God's plan and what God is working out here on the earth at this time. *The disciples came to Christ and said to him, why do you speak to them in parables?...[Why do you speak to your audience in parables hard to understand?] (vs 11) He answered and said to them, because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven...[Christ is referring to a body of knowledge only His disciples were privy to know and understand. Many of those who heard Christ speak were not*

privileged to understand] *but to them it has not been given...* [Christ did not speak parables so people could understand the gospel. He spoke parables to keep the meaning of the gospel concealed] (vs 13) *Therefore I speak to them in parables: because seeing they do not see: and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand...*[People could see and hear what Christ was saying, but could not understand His words. They could not put it together for understanding the incredible purpose for why the Son of God was on the earth] (vs 14) *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled which says, hearing you will hear and shall not understand; and seeing you will see and not perceive.* (vs 15) *For the hearts of this people have grown dull, their ears are hard of hearing, their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand and with their hearts turn, so that I should heal them.* Isaiah's prophecy describes what happens to people cut off from the tree of life. Those cut off cannot see, hear and understand God's Truth. It makes no sense to people.

Matt. 13:16 Notice it was God's intent for Christ's disciples to understand the gospel. *But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears for they hear.* (vs 17) *For assuredly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men...*[Old Testament servants of God] *desired to see what you see and did not see it and to hear what you hear and did not hear it.* God concealed certain aspects of His plan from Old Testament servants. Daniel asked the question 'What does all this mean?' God said, Daniel it's closed and sealed until the time of the end. When Christ began to work with the disciples, they learned things God's servants of the past wanted to know. These servants went to their graves not knowing certain elements of God's truth.

Mark 1:14 is very specific the message Christ delivered was about the Kingdom of God. A study of Christ's parables deal with the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of heaven. He spoke these parables to conceal information from the general public, but not from His disciples. The message Christ proclaimed had several elements to it, which included, God's Kingdom being established on the earth, how one can be part of that Kingdom, and the benefits God's Kingdom will bring to the world.

Dan. 2:28 refers to the kingdom Christ was speaking of. This occurs in regards to Daniel's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. In this dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a huge image made of various metals. This image was destroyed by a rock made without hands. Only Daniel was capable of interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream: *But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days...*[What are the latter days? The same days leading up to the return of Jesus Christ and all the events encompassed within them. First, Daniel tells the king what he dreamed because Nebuchadnezzar wouldn't tell anybody what he saw] (vs 31) *You, O king, were watching and behold a great image. This great image whose splendor was excellent stood before you and its form was awesome...*[This was an impressive image Nebuchadnezzar was seeing] (vs 32) *This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze (vs 33) its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay...*[This image was composed of five different metals to this image] (vs 34) *You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, struck the image on its feet of iron and clay,*

and broke them in pieces. (vs 35) Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found...[No longer any trace of these metals] and the stone that struck the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Daniel articulated with great detail the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Yet, Nebuchadnezzar still needed an interpretation, which Daniel provided in great detail.

Dan. 2:37 *You, O king, are king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength and glory...[Men in positions of great leadership need to recognize where their authority comes from. While Satan is in charge of this world; nothing is done that gets in the way of God's plan] (vs 38) Wherever the children of men dwell with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, he has given them into your hand and has made you ruler over them all. You are this head of gold. (vs 39) But after you shall rise another kingdom inferior to yours, then another, a third kingdom of bronze which shall rule over all the earth. (vs 40) And a fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.* All other national governments that exist.

Dan. 2:41 *Whereas you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. (vs 42) And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. (vs 43) As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another; just as iron does not mix with clay...[The image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream pictures five different world empires down through the course of human history. The gold represented the Babylonian empire, the silver, the empire of the Medes and Persians, the bronze pictured the empire of the Greeks, the iron, the Roman Empire. The iron and clay represents an end-time empire which has its roots in the Roman Empire] (vs 44) and in the days of these kings...[In the days of the iron and clay] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (vs 45) Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands...[Without human origin] and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this: the dream is certain and the interpretation is sure.*

God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar how and when His kingdom would be established on the earth. The stone which smashes the image represents Jesus Christ at His 2nd Coming. His return will occur in the days of the empire of clay and iron. The complete destruction of the image pictures the end of all the satanic influences of the previous empires. Nebuchadnezzar's dream occurred over 2500 years ago, showing how God reveals His plan in advance for establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. This is the same kingdom Christ's gospel message is about.

Mark 4:30 Notice one parable Christ gave in regard to God's Kingdom and how it will encompass the whole earth. *Then He said, to what shall we like in the Kingdom of God?...[To what shall it liken to? What can be compared to the kingdom of God?]...Or with what parable shall we picture it? (vs 31) It is like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown on the ground is smaller than all the seeds of the earth. (vs 32) When it is sown it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.* Christ compares God's Kingdom to a very, very tiny mustard seed. Once it takes root and grows; it expands all over the place. That is what the stone which struck the image will do. The stone, representative of God's Kingdom, will encompass the whole earth. Kingdoms and governments of this earth under the influence of Satan the Devil will be crushed and destroyed. God's Kingdom will encompass rulership over the whole earth. This what the dream of Nebuchadnezzar was about; and it is what the message of the gospel of the Kingdom of God is about.

Understand some details about how God's Kingdom will be set up. The events leading to Christ's rule over the earth will occur during the Day of the Lord. Those who are part of the 1st resurrection will then be spirit beings. These events will not threaten the 144,000 firstfruits. Zec.14:1 *Behold the Day of the Lord is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. (vs 2) For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem...[All nations] The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished; half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (vs 3) Then the Eternal will go forth and fight against those nations as he fought in the day of battle (vs 4) and on that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which faces Jerusalem on the east...[This is the same Mount of Olives from which Christ taught His disciples in Matthew 24] The Mount of Olives shall be split in two from East to West making a large valley. Half of the mountain shall move to the north, and half of it toward the south.*

Zec. 14:12 *And this shall be the plague with which the Eternal will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. (vs 13) And it shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the Eternal will be among them; everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand. (vs 14) Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together; gold; silver; and apparel in great abundance. (vs 15) Such also shall be the plague on the horse, on the mule, on the camel and the donkey, and on all the cattle that shall be in those camps. (vs 16) So shall this plague be. [Zechariah provides the details of the stone striking the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream] Afterwards, and it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King...[Jesus Christ] the Lord of hosts and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. God's Law and Holy Days will be established on earth in God's Kingdom.*

Another set of scriptures which point to the stone striking the image and God's Kingdom being established is found in Revelation 19. (vs 11) *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he who sat on him was called*

Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war...[This precedes the events of Zechariah 14] (vs 12) *His eyes were like a flame of fire and on his head were many crowns and he had a name written that no one knew except himself ...* [Christ came as a human being the first time. The second time, He comes as a spirit being] (vs 13) *He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God...* [This goes right back to the start of this study in John 1:1] (vs 14) *And the armies of heaven clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed him on white horses.* (vs 15) *Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should strike the nations; and he himself will rule them with a rod of iron...* [Christ's rule will be with firmness. It will be direct and consistent] *and he himself will rule with a rod of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God* (vs 16) *And he has on his robe and on his thigh a name written King of kings, and Lord of lords.* Christ is going to return riding a white horse; the 144,000 firstfruits with Him will be dressed in white, riding white horses too. White symbolizes righteousness.

These are the details of how God's Kingdom will be established on the earth when Jesus Christ actually sets His feet down on the earth again.

Matt. 18:1 Christ's gospel message also included how to become part of God's Kingdom. Notice what Christ said to His disciples. *At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?...*[This reflects the attitude of Satan in Isaiah 14, when he said: I will be like the most High.' Human beings want to be in charge. Human beings want the top spot and they don't care how they get it just as long as they get it. That same disease of wanting the top spot was part of the disciples' thinking] (vs 2) *Christ called a little child to him and set it in the midst of them* (vs 3) *and said, surely I say to you, unless you are converted, and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven...*[Christ is saying a person can become part of God's Kingdom; but to do so requires becoming converted and developing the attitude of a little child. There is no need to worry about who's going to be the greatest in the Kingdom] (vs 4) *Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* (vs 5) *Whoever receives one little child like this in my name receives me.* Remember, Christ is talking to His disciples who would eventually become the first ministers of God's Church.

John 6:65 This is the starting point for becoming part of God's Kingdom. *Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by my Father.* In order for one to truly come to Christ, to really be able to know what He taught, to follow what He taught, one must be called by God the Father. It's so ridiculous for church signs to say "Come to Christ;" "Come as you are." In God's Church a person can come as they are, but can't stay as they are. A significant change must be made. One has to become converted, which is a different thought process than the carnal self. This is what conversion is about. The starting point for becoming a part of God's Kingdom begins with God the Father calling a person. The proper response to His call is found in Mark 1.

Mark 1:15 Christ came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom of God saying: *The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel.* Repent, change one's ways, believe in the good news of the Kingdom of God and all that it encompasses. This is the proper response to the good news of the Kingdom of God. But this is not all, there are other actions which are important.

Acts 2:36 Peter, speaking on the Feast of Pentecost, the day God's Church was established, was concluding his sermon and said *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.* [Notice the immediate reaction to his words] (vs 37) *Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart...*[His audience was deeply affected by what they heard] *and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?* (vs 38) *Then Peter said to them, repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission...[forgiveness] of sins, and you shall receive the gift of Holy Spirit...*[The tree of life was now available to these people] (vs 39) *For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call...*[It is God who calls people. It's not up to the individual to call themselves. God has to call first. Once God calls, then a choice must be made; respond or not respond. This applies to Matthew 13, the parable of the sower] (vs 40) *and with many other words Peter testified and exhorted them saying, be saved from this perverse...[crooked] generation.* (vs 41) *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized: and that day about 3000 people were added to them.* (vs 42) *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayer.* These are only the initial steps of conversion. Going forward a person continue to grow in God's knowledge, overcome their personal carnalities and hold fast to God's Truth through multiple trials and testing.

Rev. 21:7 Take note of the importance for the need to overcome. *He who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.* What must be overcome? The influences and pressures of society. Satan the Devil who is always trying to deceive God's people And last, is the need to overcome self.

John 16:33 Overcoming is a very hard process; but notice Christ's words of encouragement. *These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. But in the world you will have tribulation: be of good cheer I have overcome the world.* God's people must stick with the process of conversion it to the very end of their lives as Christ said in Matthew 24:13. It is a lifelong process to become part of the Kingdom of God. One must prove their dedication and commitment to God before becoming part of His Kingdom.

Matt. 24:13 Christ says: *He who endures to the end shall be saved.* What is the end? The end is your physical life, or if you're alive, the seventh trumpet. That is the end.

John 18:33 Matthew 6 shows God's Kingdom is not yet on this Earth. Christ is not yet ruling over the earth. Prior to His crucifixion, Christ had a very fascinating exchange with Pilate about His position as a King. *Then Pilate entered the*

Praetorium again, called Jesus to him and said, are you the King of the Jews? (vs 34) Jesus answered, are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning me? (vs 35) Pilate answered, am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you to me. What have you done? (vs 36) Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from here. (vs 37) Pilate said to him, are you a king then? Jesus answered, you say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I've come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice. (vs 38) Pilate said to him what is truth? And when he said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, I find no fault in him at all.

1 Cor.15:50 Remember, no flesh and blood human being can become part of God's Kingdom. This was covered in Bible study #6. *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...[Yet in the world of traditional Christianity it is believed the Kingdom of God is on earth today. Paul could not be any clearer that human beings cannot be part of the Kingdom of God] nor does corruption inherit incorruption. (vs 51) Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. (vs 52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed...[This is referring to those who members of the 1st resurrection] (vs 53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.*

Isa. 9:6 What will be the benefits of God's Kingdom ruling over the earth? Notice a prophecy about the King of that Kingdom. This prophecy was given before Christ came to the Earth as a human being. However, this is not speaking about Christ's time here on the earth as a human being. It is speaking about after His return to earth. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulders: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (vs 7) Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end...[This goes back Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2] upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and justice...[With true judgment and justice] from that time forward even forever. The zeal of the Eternal of hosts will perform this.* It is a done deal. This is going to happen.

Luke 1:30 Notice what Mary is told concerning Christ's future before she becomes pregnant with Christ. *Then the angel said to her, do not be afraid, Mary: for you have found favor with God. (vs 31) And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. (vs 32) He will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David...[This prophecy says the same as Isaiah 9] (vs 33) And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; end of his kingdom there will be no end.*

Rev. 14:1 Christ will not do all the work the needs to be done in God's Kingdom by Himself. He will have help. This is the purpose of the Church of God today. *Now I looked, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, having his Father's name written on their foreheads...[These are the children of God the Father. They are*

not the children of Jesus Christ] (vs 4) *These are the ones who were not defiled with women... [Not encumbered with false doctrine] for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.* How were they redeemed? Through the gospel message Christ brought to this earth. They responded to it and they stuck with it to the very end of their lives] (vs 5) *And in their mouth was found no deceit: for they are without fault before the throne of God.* These are perfect spirit beings dressed in white, riding on white horses.

Joel 3:9 *Proclaim this among the nations; prepare for war...[The Day of the Lord] wake up the mighty men. let all the men of war draw near; let them come up.* (vs 10) *Beat their plowshares into swords and their pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say I am strong.* (vs 11) *Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather together all around; cause your mighty ones to come down there, O Eternal.* (vs 12) *Let the nations be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.* (vs 13) *Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, go down; for the wine press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great...[The nations of this world]* (vs 14) *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the Day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.* (vs 15) *The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness...[This happens immediately after Great Tribulation is over]* (vs 16) *The Eternal also will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and the earth will shake.* (vs 17) *So you shall know that I am the Eternal your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; then Jerusalem shall be holy, and no alien shall ever pass through her again.* God is going to bring back the captives of modern Israel to the Promised Land.

Joel 3:1 *Behold in those days and at that time I will bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem.* (vs 2) *I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of my people, my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations. They have also divided up my land.* (vs 3) *They cast lots for my people; and have given a boy as payment for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine that they may drink.* This illustrates the kind of treatment modern Israelites will experience during Great Tribulation.

Understand that God is always consistent. It doesn't matter that His plan has been thrown off track for 6000 years. It doesn't matter the ancient Israelites did not fulfill their purpose the first time around. God's purpose will be fulfilled. His plan is going to take place.

Joel 2:28 Notice what else will occur when God's Kingdom is established on the earth. *And it shall come to pass afterward...[After Great Tribulation, after the Day of the Lord] that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.* (vs 29) *And also on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my spirit in those days.* The tree of life will again be made available to people in God's Kingdom, an availability not possible for the vast majority of people today.

It's going to be a hard slog before access to the tree of life is possible again. Zechariah 13 show how it all unfolds. *It shall come to pass, in all the land, says the Eternal, that two thirds of it shall be cut off and die; but one third shall be left in it...*[Two thirds of the modern nations of Israel are going to be killed in Great Tribulation] (vs 9) *I will bring the one third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined; and test them as gold is tested: and they will call on my name, and I will answer them: I will say, this is my people and each one will say, the Eternal is my God.* Because of repentance God will pour out His Spirit when His Kingdom is established on the earth. Lasting peace and prosperity will follow the establishment of God's Kingdom.

Joel 3:18 *It will come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drip with new wine, the hills shall flow with milk and all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water...*[There will be abundant prosperity in God's Kingdom. There will be an abundance of agricultural goods. There will be plenty of water] *A fountain shall flow from the house of the Eternal, and water the valley of Acacia.* (vs 18) *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of the violence against the people of Judah, for they have shed innocent blood in their land...*[The Arab world should take note of what God is going to do for their heinous and barbaric behavior toward His people] (vs 20) *But Judah shall abide forever in Jerusalem from generation to generation.* (vs 21) *For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed whom I had not acquitted: for the Eternal dwells in Zion.*

Matt. 24:14 This prophecy shows the message of the gospel of the Kingdom going out to the world as a witness before the end times begin. *And this gospel of the kingdom of God will be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.* The nations of this earth will have no excuse for saying, "God you didn't tell us." "You didn't tell us You were going to establish Your Kingdom on the earth." "You didn't tell us we needed to repent." "Oh yes I did" and will point to Matthew 24:14.

Very few realize this prophecy has already been fulfilled; it's a done deal; it's over with; it's past history. This prophecy was fulfilled through a man God used named Herbert W Armstrong. God used him to first restore biblical truth back into His Church. Second, He used Mr. Armstrong to take the gospel message of God's Kingdom to the world as a witness. Mr. Armstrong proclaimed to the world that God would soon establish His Kingdom to rule all nations on the earth. This prophecy given by Christ over 1,900 years ago was fulfilled on January 16, 1986 when Mr. Armstrong died. Because God's Church has failed to recognize this, the spiritual condition of God's Church has deteriorated into a terrible lukewarm condition before Christ returns.

Rev. 3:17 *Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing...*[Spiritually God's Church thinks it is in fine shape] *and do not know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* This is the spiritual condition of God's Church today right before Jesus Christ returns.

This condition has developed because God's Church fails to acknowledge the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. The fulfillment of this prophecy means the way for Christ's 2nd Coming is now open. The stage is now set for end-time prophecy to explode into reality. Are you preparing for this certain reality? Realize, the world, Modern Israel (United States and Britain and brothers) and God's Church are in a deep slumber unaware of the close proximity of God's Kingdom being established. Soon everyone will awaken to the most horrific time mankind has ever known. When this terrible time is over the whole world will find itself under the leadership and direction of God's Kingdom. This is the true gospel, or good news Christ proclaimed in the 1st century. It is the same gospel Herbert W Armstrong proclaimed in the 20th century. It is the reality for those holding fast to God's truth.

Now that what the gospel is has been explained, it is time to understand what the gospel is not. Here are some quotes from sections of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church concerning its understanding of the gospel. Remember Catholic teaching is the basis for all teaching in traditional Christianity.

Section 1846 defines the gospel as:

The Gospel is the revelation of Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners. The angel announced to Joseph, you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. The same is true of the Eucharist, the sacrament of redemption. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Section 571 expands on the definition of the gospel:

The paschal mystery of Christ's cross and resurrection stands at the center of the good news that the apostles and the church following them are to proclaim to the world. God's saving plan was accomplished once for all by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ.

Finally in section 3:

Those who with God's help have welcomed Christ's call, and freely responded to it, are urged on by love of Christ to proclaim the good news everywhere in the world. This treasure received from the apostles has been faithfully guarded by their successors. All Christ's faithful are called to hand it on from generation to generation by professing the faith, by living by it in fraternal sharing, and by celebrating it in liturgy and prayer.

The Catholic Church has by no means "faithfully guarded" the gospel message of Jesus Christ. These quotations demonstrate a different gospel, which is not consistent with God's Word, the Holy Bible.

Gal.1:6 Notice what Paul says approximately 20 years after the Church of God had been established by Jesus Christ. *I marvel that you are turning away so soon from him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel...*[Who

does the calling? God the Father] (vs 7) *This different gospel is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert...[distort] the gospel of Christ...*[These false teachers wanted to distort the gospel of the Kingdom of God] (vs 8) *But if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached, let him be accursed.*(vs 9) *As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.*

It's vitally important to be able to distinguish between the true gospel of the Kingdom of God and a false gospel. Traditional Christianity teaches a gospel about the person of Jesus Christ, as witnessed in the quotes from the Catechism. Notice how this false teaching infiltrated God's Church after Mr. Armstrong's death.

In a Pastor General's Report dated August 4, 1992, Pastor General Joseph W Tkach wrote the following to the ministry of God's Church:

Why has the Church been preaching so much about Jesus Christ? Because Jesus Christ is what the gospel is all about. That is why the Church is preaching about Jesus Christ so much, and that is precisely what the Church is going to continue to do.

Mr. Tkach clearly rejected Christ's message about the Kingdom of God and embraced a gospel about the person, Jesus Christ.

From the Worldwide News dated August 11, 1992, in the Personal, Mr Tkach wrote:

I am occasionally criticized by certain ones who think we are not preaching the gospel; but much to their chagrin, I don't listen. I listen to the true gospel, the real good news, Jesus Christ and Him crucified, which is the gospel of the Kingdom of God. [Is this what the Bible says?] But what about the gospel of the Kingdom of God? For the sake of answering our scripturally confused dissident friends, let me digress a moment. It is sheer nonsense to say that one of these is the gospel and the other is a false gospel.

Mr. Tkach's comments are in direct conflict with what Mr. Armstrong taught concerning the meaning of the gospel. Mr. Tkach was very clear in his belief that the gospel is about Jesus Christ.

From another Personal in the Worldwide News dated June 30, 1992, Mr. Tkach wrote:

Our message is not simply to warn people about God's judgment and leave it in God's hands. Our message is to be designed to lead people to Jesus Christ, to make disciples of them.

"The Portfolio," a campus newspaper published by Ambassador College, dated March 4, 1993, quotes Ronald Kelly minimizing the importance of Matthew 24:14:

Mr. Ronald Kelly also noted that the church was not always accurate in its understanding of prophecy. The Church's commission is based on Matthew 28:19-20, which says to go to all the world, not Matthew 24:14 continued Mr. Kelly. We have refocused on the main crux of Christianity, the message of Jesus Christ.

False doctrine entered into the Worldwide Church of God through the ministry. False teachers down through history have always plagued God's Church. Their teaching again fracture and splintered God's Church. This forced the brethren to distinguish biblical truth from error, which the brethren must be able to do.

1 John 4:1 *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone into the world.* It is important to know what the Bible says. The individual Church member is responsible for their own salvation as Paul clearly states in Philippians.

Phil. 2:12 *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.*

Mr. Armstrong is dead. Those who relied on Herbert W Armstrong to help get them into the Kingdom of God found themselves in trouble. Paul's comments tell every member of God's Church to stand on their own two feet. God's people know how to distinguish God's truth from Satan's error. It is important to understand the methods by which Satan is able to corrupt God's truth and be able to stand against such corruption. The example of the Bereans is to be followed.

Acts 17:10 *Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived they went into the synagogue of the Jews. (vs 11) These are more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily, to find out whether these things were so.*

This is the only way to know God's Truth, study it daily. This series of Restore Truth Bible Studies is designed to help people understand the truths of the Bible. They are prepared to enable God's Church to stand on its own two feet spiritually speaking. God's people have to be sharp! As sharp as a two-edged sword, to cut through any false doctrine or biblical error in a matter of seconds.

Understanding the full scope of the gospel message Christ proclaimed cannot be covered in one study. It is a vast topic to cover. Mr. Armstrong understood what it took to comprehend the meaning of the true gospel. On page 15 of his book *The Incredible Human Potential* he writes:

I must call the reader's attention again to this point: To the fact that a full and complete understanding of the message sent by God to all mankind, by his divine messenger Jesus Christ, involves a vast comprehension of God's purpose, and events prehistoric, historic, present and future. I might say it means an overall understanding of everything.

This series of studies is designed to provide an overall understanding of God's word and the gospel message Jesus Christ brought to this earth.

From his sermon "The Mission of the Philadelphia Church Era" dated December 17, 1983 Mr. Armstrong said the following concerning the restored truth of the true gospel:

The world had lost the gospel. They didn't know what the true gospel was. I came among the true Church of God of the Sardis Era. They didn't know what the gospel really was. They thought it was what they called a Third Angel's Message. God revealed it to me, and through me, to the Church, that the gospel is the Kingdom of God. That is the gospel Jesus preached. That's the gospel Paul preached to the Gentiles. That's the gospel Peter and John preached. You'll find when Jesus sent them out, sent out the 70, they preached the Kingdom of God. That is the only gospel. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The world has a gospel about Christ. Now the first thing to be restored to the Church is the true gospel.

This is the true gospel God's Church must continue to hold fast to, until that seventh trumpet sounds. At that time the 144,000 firstfruits will join Jesus Christ in establishing the Kingdom of God on this earth.

May God's Kingdom come, may His Will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, SOON!