



Antichrist and The Comforter



ANTI-CHRIST

While there have been many different ideas as to who this antichrist might be, there have also been many ideas as to what is the main principle involved in his teaching. In his epistles, the apostle John addresses this underlying principle and this is what we want to examine in this article. We want to do a careful, honest examination of John's statements concerning this antichrist to see if we can arrive at a truthful conclusion as to what are the essential elements of his doctrine.

First of all we should notice that the word, "antichrist," is a compound of the word, "anti," and the word, "Christ." Literally it means, "against Christ." The essence of the antichrist is that his work and his teaching are opposed to Christ's work and his teaching. There have been many enemies of the cause of Christ all through the ages, but apparently this antichrist and his teachings are of such a nature that they attack the very foundational principles of what Christ is, and stands for. This is why the label, "antichrist," is applied to this person in this special and unique way. His teaching above all others strikes at the foundation of Christian beliefs and experience.

ANTICHRIST IS A "CHRISTIAN"

It is very interesting that this antichrist is not somebody who is a heathen, he is not somebody who is a completely secular person, he is not an atheist or someone from a religion other than Christianity. The Bible makes it clear that antichrist is a professing Christian, somebody who works from the inside

to pervert the Christian faith and in this way to do the greatest damage of all. The apostle Paul says,

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (2Thess 2:4)

Here he makes it clear that antichrist sits in the temple of God, that is in the Christian church. John tells us,

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (1John 4:1-3)

John refers to those having the spirit of antichrist, and teaching the doctrine of antichrist as, "false prophets." If they are false prophets than it is clear that they profess to be true prophets, or true representatives of God. They profess to be Christians, but their message demonstrates that they are antichrist, or at the very least that they

There is a word in the Bible, which has caught the imagination of people over the centuries, it is the word, "antichrist." Even today the word still holds fascination for people in all walks of life, Christians and non-Christians alike. The antichrist has even become the central theme of movies and novels.

In the minds of most people the word, "antichrist," is associated with some strange, mysterious end-time figure, an evil person who brings great tribulation upon the planet. From a biblical perspective there is some justification for this idea of a very powerful, charismatic, but evil person who sets himself up in opposition against Christ at the end of time. Most of the interest in antichrist is focused on this understanding, but a careful examination of the word as used in the Bible, reveals that there are some very important aspects of this person which have been overlooked and completely ignored.

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

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are carrying the antichrist's message. The work of antichrist is extremely harmful because it is not in open enmity against Christ and his message, but is a subtle perversion, a dangerous distortion with great power to deceive the unwary.

This is what John saw manifested in the Christian church during the later years of his life, this is the fearsome deception which sprang up after the death of most of the early Christians. This was John's great concern as he wrote his epistles and his gospel.

WHY ONLY JOHN?

The word, "antichrist," appears only in the writings of the apostle John. While there are others who speak of a person who stands against God and his truth in the last days, John is the only one who labels this person as, "antichrist." He also gives us some very interesting insights into the characteristics of this person and the principles underlying his work and teaching. It is reasonable

to conclude that if we desire to have a good understanding of the work of antichrist, we need to examine what John has to say on the subject. There are other books written by Peter, James and Paul, in addition to the Gospels written by Matthew Mark and Luke, yet John is the only person who mentions the word, "antichrist." Is there a reason for this? There is.

John was an old man when he wrote his books, he lived longer than all the other apostles and was actually close to a hundred years when he wrote his epistles. Of all the books which are included in the Bible his books are the last which were written and by the time he wrote, most of the early believers were dead. John was the last one left standing and as a result he saw what others did not live to see. The apostle Paul had warned that shortly after his time, evil elements would emerge in the church and would do great damage:

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20:29-30)

This apostasy had become full blown by the time John wrote his epistles, and in two of these short letters, John spends some time speaking of it. With regards to those who teach this doctrine of the antichrist, John gives us the following amazing counsel:

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, (the doctrine of Christ) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. (2John 1:10-11)

While Christians are encouraged to be hospitable, kind and generous, an exception is made in the case of these who teach the doctrine of antichrist, they are not to be received or treated with courtesy! This gives us an idea of how dangerous this doctrine is! What was it that John saw which caused him such concern? What principle was it, what false teaching had arisen in the Christian

church which was so deadly that John saw it necessary to speak against it in such strong terms?

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Since this doctrine is referred to as the doctrine of antichrist, we may reasonably conclude that it is opposed to the doctrine of Christ, or in other words, it is opposed to the central message of Christianity. John makes this clear in his second letter:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. (2John 1:7-9)

So what is this doctrine of Christ? What is the greatest, most significant, most important element of Christianity? Christians in general will point to the sacrifice of Christ in dying on the cross as the center of the Christian faith. Nobody should deny the importance of Calvary, it is one of the greatest events in the history of the universe and it is the foundation of the plan of salvation, but as far as the practical experience of Christianity is concerned, Calvary is not the most significant event! The most significant event – the element which sets Christianity apart from every other religion – is the coming of Christ and the Father to dwell in Christians! This is one of the most important themes of the New Testament and it is clear that the apostles regarded this experience as the central element of the Christian faith. The apostle Paul refers to it in the following passage:

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (Col 1:26-27)

In several passages Paul speaks of this mystery, some great secret which had been hidden for ages, but which had been revealed with the coming of Christ. He says that this secret plan which had been hidden in the mind of God, this wonderful method that God had for restoring humans to himself, consisted of Christ living in his people – "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

This is the same great message that Jesus spent his entire ministry emphasizing. His message was, the gospel of the kingdom. It was the same message taught by John the Baptist and it was the same message which Jesus instructed his disciples to preach. Of course many of those who preached this message including John the Baptist did not understand what it really meant. John himself as well as the disciples of Jesus believed that it referred to the setting up of a physical kingdom on earth. Jesus proclaimed that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and so there was great expectation that Christ had come to immediately overthrow the Roman empire and to establish the nation of Israel as the greatest kingdom on earth. But this understanding was incorrect. Jesus identified the true nature of this kingdom of God when he was interrogated by the Pharisees about his message:

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

In other words, the doctrine of Christ is the truth that through, and in Jesus Christ, God has fulfilled the plan which was hidden in his heart from ancient times. This plan was that God's people would become one with him, by means of Him coming to dwell inside of them! This purpose was accomplished through Jesus Christ. This is what the new covenant is about, this is the good news of the kingdom, it is God coming to live inside his people, it is heaven and earth being united, it is God's people dwelling in heavenly places in Christ

Jesus! This is the doctrine of Christ, this is what it means to be a Christian, this is what makes the Christian life the greatest experience that a human being can enter into. This is what brings joy, and peace, and assurance, and eternal life into the experience of God's people. This is the doctrine of Christ and it is clear that the doctrine of antichrist is the teaching which denies this reality! This becomes obvious when we examine the statements of John referring to the antichrist.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:2-4)

CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH

There are several different ideas as to what John means when he speaks of Christ coming, "in the flesh." The most popular understanding is that it refers to Jesus Christ actually becoming a real human being, possessing our fallen nature. According to this thinking, the antichrist teaching is that Jesus was not a real human being but that he was really a spirit being, disguised as a human, or that though he was a real human, he did not possess the same fallen nature as other men. In other words he was not subject to the same weaknesses and limitations as other human beings. However this is a wrong interpretation of what John is saying and this interpretation should be rejected. The evidence does not support this idea. Let us look again at the passage just quoted above, but this time let us examine also the verses which come immediately before the passage.

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he

hath given us. (1 John 3:24)

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:1-4)

John says that the Spirit of antichrist denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, but look at what he says immediately before making that statement: he says, "hereby we know that he abideth in us by the SPIRIT which he hath given us!" He is referring to the teaching and experience which comes from his spirit, the spirit which he has given us. His spirit teaches us that he abides, or lives in us! Then immediately after speaking of that spirit, he speaks of ANOTHER spirit which contradicts the teaching of his spirit. While the spirit we have been given makes us know that he lives in us, the other spirit, the spirit of antichrist, denies that truth! That spirit denies that Jesus lives "in the flesh," or rather, lives in our bodies. John also concludes his warning by repeating this reality that since Christ lives in us, we can overcome this antichrist spirit, because "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

It is clear that what John is focusing on is the issue of Christ dwelling in his people. It is in this context that he says that antichrist denies that Christ is come in the flesh. Notice that he does not say, "Christ did come," or that, "Christ came." He is speaking of the present tense, "Christ is come." He is speaking of the presence of Christ in the believer, the present coming of Christ to live in the Christian.

It is not just in this passage that we

clearly see that this is what John was focusing on. The epistles of John are full of this emphasis that we have literal and true fellowship with God by Christ living inside of us. Let us examine a couple of other verses.

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. (1John 1:3-4)

Here John states very clearly his reason for writing this letter. His purpose is that he wants the believers to enjoy the same fellowship that he enjoys with God and with his son. He emphasizes the reality of this experience by saying, "truly Our fellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ." This is the whole purpose behind this first epistle of John, his aim is that the people he is writing to may come to realize and to experience this fellowship with the Father and the son.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. (2 John 1:9)

When we have come to understand the true meaning of the doctrine of Christ, this verse makes perfect sense! What does it mean to have God? What does it mean to have both the father and the son? To have something means to possess it, it does not mean simply to believe that God exists, it does not mean simply to believe that God loves us, it does not mean simply to believe that God gave his son for us. To have God means what it says, that is to possess him, to have him living inside of us! The doctrine of Christ is simply the truth that Jesus Christ is living inside the believer. Through Jesus Christ, the Father also lives inside the believer, so the person who denies the doctrine of Christ, he has neither the father nor the son. Of course not!

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath

the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (1John 5:11-12)

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (1John 3:24)

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. (1John 4:13)



JOHN'S COMFORTER

The teaching concerning antichrist is not the only emphasis which is unique to the apostle John. His writings have a very different focus from the rest of the New Testament and from the emphasis of the other apostles, with the possible exception of the apostle Paul. Paul covers the same ideas as John, but usually using different terminology and from a different perspective.

For example, John is the only person who records Jesus' statements about the comforter. While the other gospel writers speak of the coming of the Spirit, John's record is unique in that he speaks of this coming spirit as, "the comforter," clearly identifying this coming Holy Spirit as a real person with all the attributes of personality. There is no mistaking the fact that this comforter is a person, it is impossible to interpret it in any other way. So clear is the evidence that some of those who deny that Christ actually lives inside his people feel compelled to interpret this com-

forter as being a special angel! Let us just look at some of these striking statements concerning the comforter:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John 14:16-18)

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (John 16:13)

first we see John's reference to this comforter as, "he." In every other place that the Holy Spirit is referred to by a pronoun in the Bible, the word used should always be translated as, "it." "Spirit" is a neuter word, it is neither masculine nor feminine and so references to the Holy Spirit should always be translated as, "it." This is not always done because there is bias among the translators where they sometimes change the word to, "he," when according to the Greek or the Hebrew language it should be, "it." However in this passage where he speaks of the comforter, John clearly identifies the Holy Spirit as, "he." This is not a mistake in translation, this is John's careful and deliberate choice to identify the Holy Spirit as a person.

Secondly, we see that Jesus identifies this Holy Spirit as being himself, although in another form, because he says, "he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." John himself testifies that at that time, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given (John 7:39)," so what did Jesus mean by saying, "he dwelleth with you?" The answer is very clear, it was Jesus himself who was dwelling with them at that time and he goes on to make it clear that in the future this person (himself) would be dwelling in them. Then he removes all questions when he says in verse 18, "I will come to you."

Again, see how clear the words of Jesus

are in the following verses:

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (John 14:19-20)

Here Jesus explains the reason why he refers to himself as another person. When he comes back again in this different form there are two different groups of people who will be impacted by his coming; first of all there is the world, and of the world he says, "*the world sees me no more.*" But of his people he says, "*but you see me,*" or, "you will see me." So clearly Jesus is speaking of returning in such a form that he will be unrecognized by those who are not his disciples. This is why he speaks of this new identity as, "*another comforter.*" But will his people know that it is he himself? Absolutely! To his people he says, "*at that day (that is when he returns as the comforter) you shall know that I am in my father, and you in me, and I in you.*"

This is the whole point of what Jesus was saying, and it is the whole point of what John is focusing on! It is Christ himself along with the Father who lives in believers. It is a real, literal person who dwells in them as opposed to the teaching of antichrist which seeks to overthrow this reality. In other words the promised Holy Spirit is not just an influence, not just power bestowed on God's people, not just new thoughts, new ideas, new attitudes, but the literal, personal presence of both the father and the son! This is the most amazing truth in all the Bible and it is the center of the doctrine of Christ.

Again we are faced with the question, why is John so forceful, so strong in emphasizing that this comforter is literally a person? When we understand the timing of these writings of John, all being produced when the doctrine of antichrist had taken root in the Christian church, then it becomes clear why this strong emphasis is evident in his writings. His gospel as well as his epistles are written in this way to directly coun-

ter the influence of this doctrine.

WHY SO DANGEROUS?

The greatest tragedy which ever occurred on planet Earth was the separation and the alienation which sin introduced in the relationship between God and man. God's great purpose over the ages has been the restoration of this relationship. The plan of salvation is the story of this restoration in the most amazing way possible!

When God gave the law to Israel at Mount Sinai, he instructed Moses, "*let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.*" Here we see that in this first demonstration of how he wants to relate to his people, God set up his dwelling place, "*among them.*" That is, he established a meeting place, a location on planet Earth where he would manifest his presence, and where people could come and have some kind of interaction with him in a literal and meaningful way. But this is absolutely not God's ideal, what he truly wanted was something much greater!

Sixteen hundred years later God initiated the next phase of his great plan to re-establish his relationship with humanity, he sent his only begotten son to become a member of the human race, and to unite divinity with humanity forever! In speaking of this event the word of God says,

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matt 1:23)

God's plan moved one step closer to His heart's desire. In the Mosaic sanctuary, God came to dwell AMONG men, but now in the person of his Son, he came to dwell WITH men. Jesus referred to himself as the temple of God (God's dwelling place) when he told the Jews, "*destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.*" (John 3:19)

But the highest and greatest purpose which God had for man in this life, was finally fulfilled when the Comforter came to his people! Jesus explained the amazing privilege which would belong

to us when he said, "*he dwelleth with you (God with us) and shall be IN you!*" (John 14:16). First it was God **AMONG** us, then God **WITH** us, and finally, God **IN** us! This is the truth of what God gave us in Jesus Christ, it is the Comforter, the gift above all gifts, the living presence of the Father and the Son to be among, with, and in us forever! This is the New Covenant, this is the doctrine of Christ, this is the great truth which antichrist will seek to overthrow, and which those who embrace his philosophy also promote!

This is why, although John the Baptist was the greatest of all who lived from creation to his time, yet God's people who lived after him, in the time of the kingdom are greater! (Matt 11:11) John experienced "God with us," and was privileged to put his hands on him when he baptized Jesus. But John NEVER experienced the kingdom, he never had the Father and the Son living in him, he did not know the Comforter dwelling within. His experience was inferior to that of those who experience the kingdom, God and his Son dwelling within! Truly, this is the greatest news that man has ever heard or experienced!

Beloved, let us cherish this amazing reality and keep our eyes focused on what we have so that no man may be able to move us from this doctrine of Christ. Today, there are many false prophets gone out into the world who promote this doctrine of antichrist as fully as they did in the time of John. I am afraid that the same spurious teaching has invaded the ranks of those who teach the doctrine of the one true God. Amazingly, men professing to be Christians deny the very foundational truth of what it means to have Christ. The word of God tells us to not receive such into your homes nor bid them God speed.

We live in a fearsome time, but how comforting to have the assurance,

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (1John 4:4)



European Meetings, 2019

Our trip to Europe this year took us through four countries; Germany, Romania, Hungary and Serbia. It was a tiring trip which lasted for four weeks, but as always it was filled with blessings and in fact I have hardly ever been so fulfilled and satisfied in all my trips to Europe.

GERMANY

We started with Germany. Even before we got to Europe there was uncertainty hanging over the German camp meeting. The work in Germany has suffered badly over the years because of internal conflicts, indiscretions on the part of those who led out and opposition from enemies of the message. The latest challenge arose because there were some leading brethren who were in disagreement with the message of righteousness as understood and taught by our ministry. After having meetings these brethren decided to pull away and to form an alternative group and to hold other meetings during the time when we were having our camp meeting.

So of course we knew that this development would cause some to not attend our meetings and we had no idea how many to expect. We were pleasantly surprised when nearly 50 people turned up and our meeting room was filled to capacity! There was very deep interest in the message of righteousness by faith – especially in relationship to the law. There were many questions, many areas that needed clarification, but as the camp meeting progressed we had greater and greater harmony as people came to see the beauty of the gospel and to understand the deeper implications of the grace of God.

People came from all over Germany to attend, and in fact we had visitors from as far away as Holland! It is wonderful to see that the eyes of people are being opened everywhere, in all countries, and honest people are coming to understand the truth about the one God. What made me even more happy on this trip,

however, was the clear indication that these brethren were following on into a greater understanding of the implications of this truth. They are understanding the relationship between the truth about God and the good news of Christ and his righteousness. This is one of the things that made me most happy during this trip to Europe. Whereas in many places around the world, one true God believers are stuck on simply focusing on the mechanics of the doctrine of God, these believers that we met with on this trip to Europe are totally absorbed in the message of righteousness by faith! The fruit of the message was to be seen on the faces and in the loving, happy behaviour of the brethren who attended these meetings.

BAPTISMS

There were baptisms in all the countries where we had meetings, with the exception of Hungary. There were four Baptized in Germany, five in Romania and eleven in Serbia. The baptism in Romania was especially interesting as two of the candidates were ex Jehovah's Witnesses! It was wonderful to meet these two lovely ladies who had been delivered from their former bondage and were now rejoicing in their newfound freedom in finding the true gospel. After the baptism brother Howard stood in the water and made one final appeal. At the end of it one brother came forward with tears in his eyes and asked to be baptized as well, so he was baptized into Christ right there, unprepared, but surrendered in heart just as it was in the days of John the Baptist and Jesus, many years ago.

ROMANIA

This year our journey from Germany to Romania was by plane, so it was much more restful than in former years when we had to make the journey tightly packed in a car, bursting at the seams with luggage. But when we arrived we still had a fairly long drive to get to the meeting place and though we landed

in Romania before noon, it was very close to night when we finally arrived.

The meetings were held at a nice little all-in-one facility. We all ate, slept and had our meetings at the same place. These meetings were really packed, Vlad, our host, had prepared a packed schedule and on more than one day I had to preach three times! It was a blessed camp meeting, but I have to confess that at times I was tired and it felt a bit stressful.

One of the most encouraging things about these meetings, and especially the Romanian meeting, was the presence of several persons who had no connection with Seventh-day Adventism. I already mentioned the two ladies who had been Jehovah's Witnesses, but I also met Pentecostals and people of other faiths who had been attracted by the beauty of the truth about God and the wonder of the message of Christ and his righteousness.

My book on the good news was translated into Romanian several years ago and is now in its third printing! Hundreds of copies have been distributed all over Romania and I met a Pentecostal couple at the camp meeting who were there as a result of having read the book. This man who was a customs officer (and his wife, a doctor), said that he had read the book through several times. He had found it to be such a blessing that he had made a request at the largest Pentecostal church in Romania that they should invite me to speak there, but he was still awaiting an answer.

One of the things which gives me the greatest satisfaction in preaching the message of righteousness by faith as I now understand it, is the evidence that finally, the gospel is doing what I always felt it should do, that is, breaking down all denominational barriers and reaching the hearts of people everywhere, from all groups and all denominations! When the truth of God's love

and grace is connected with the message of the righteousness of Christ and set in the context of the message of the one true God, there is a great power associated with it and I saw the results of it on this trip to Europe.

HUNGARY

After Romania our next stop was Hungary. This time our meetings were in a small hotel in a town called, Eger. This group in Hungary started many years ago in the living room of brother Janos Santa. I remember on my earlier trips to Hungary there were sometimes just a handful of people, on occasion just a dozen or so. But it is encouraging to see how this group has grown, there were close to 50 people in attendance at the meetings but it has also become a very stable group with strong bonds of brotherhood holding the people together. They have meetings every other Sabbath and this has contributed to the strength of this group.

Hungary is one of the countries where our opponents have not been able to penetrate and as far as I know, there are no other independent groups embracing the one true God message, anywhere else in Hungary. This is noteworthy because in all the other countries there have been opposing groups established some of which have been very vocal in warning people not to attend our meetings and in frightening people with tales of how dangerous our message is! These enemies of our message stand against us on doctrines such as, the nature of Christ, the nature of sin, the nature of salvation and the place of the law in the Christian's experience. In most cases this strong opposition has been created and nurtured by leaders in the one true God movement who have visited these countries from the United States and Australia, but in spite of their labels and their fears the truth continues to multiply and grow and to prove itself unstoppable.

Hungarians on the whole tend to be more reserved than people in places such as Romania and Serbia. However the warmth and the love which flowed from these brethren in Hungary was

uninhibited and a joy to experience. There was no inhibition as some wept with joy as they listened to messages focused on the amazing love of our heavenly father.

SERBIA

Our next stop was Serbia and in some ways this was the most memorable stop of the entire journey. It was our first time in Serbia but this is not the only reason why this meeting stands out in my mind. First of all the country itself is very beautiful and the place where the meetings were held was like something out of a postcard. It was in the midst of green mountains on the edge of a lovely small lake – well more like a large pond with a river flowing through, but very beautiful.

I was amazed by these people, their appreciation of the message was overwhelming and it extended to the way they treated Howard and me. I was almost embarrassed by the efforts they made to make us feel comfortable and appreciated. The people present at the meetings were not only from Serbia, but they came from Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia and I believe, Bosnia. These are the countries of former Yugoslavia which was divided up into several different countries. The people more or less speak the same language and share the same culture. They are some of the most warm and hospitable people I have met.

Here, as in most of the other countries the enemies of our message preceded us. There were testimonies from people who stated that they had believed that I was an evil person, a messenger of Satan to be feared. Some testified to being afraid to even watch a video of any of my presentations because of the way they had been warned by people from Australia and America. But what a joy to see them present in these meetings rejoicing in the message of righteousness by faith, free and now fully enlightened as to the false teachings of those who warned them against us! In most cases all it had taken to open the eyes of these brethren was simply listening to one of our videos. Hearing

the message for themselves had been enough to set them free. The devil will do all in his power to shut the light away from the people, but it has been demonstrated over and over again that when people are sincere in their hearts, when they truly desire to serve the Lord, the chains of darkness cannot keep them. Somehow, somehow they are exposed to the truth even once, and it is enough, the darkness is removed, the light breaks and they are free forever.

I was amazed at the work being done by these people. Brother Zdravko Vucinic has emerged as one of the leaders in the work here in Ex Yugoslavia (as they refer to it). He, along with others has been prolific in translating our messages into their language. I was amazed to find my book about the good news printed in hardcover and beautifully bound! I also found another book in my name which I knew nothing about. Brother Zdravko has taken all my articles relating to feast keeping and affiliated topics and compiled them into a large book which they have also had printed in hardcover with this beautiful binding. They have also printed my book, "The Mystery Demystified," as well as brother Howard's book, "How I became Free." In addition to this they also have books from the ministry of brothers Nader and Imad. I also learned that many of our videos have had Serbian subtitles added to them.

God is blessing these people and although they face opposition from others whose minds have been poisoned by these brethren from overseas, there is a unity and a purpose manifested among these brethren who were present at these meetings which is irresistible.

Our departure from the meeting in Serbia was an emotional one. The people came out to stand on the roadside waving as long as we were in sight. It really felt as if we were leaving family behind. Truly, our hearts were greatly warmed by our fellowship in Serbia and we look forward to seeing these dear brethren again in God's time.



GERMANY



Intent faces in Gottingen, Germany

ROMANIA



Gathering in Romania



Gathered for baptism



Pool baptism in Romania



The newly-baptized, with Brother Howard



Those who stayed till the last day

Hungary



Faithful believers in Eger, Hungary



With Sister Agi at her home in Hungary



We spent two days with Lajos and family

Serbia



Meeting in Jastrebek, Serbia



River baptism in Serbia



With brethren from Montenegro

Our Aging Eyes

Lenworth Frankson



As we age our hair turns gray, our skin wrinkles and sags and our eyes undergo a number of changes. Although many of these changes are part of the normal aging process some set the stage for more serious eye problems.

As our eyes age, eyelid muscles weaken, and skin becomes thinner and more flaccid. This can cause the upper lid to droop or the lower lid to sag. Eye-lashes and eyebrows may lose their lushness and thin out considerably. Our tear glands produce less tears, and the oily film that tears provide decreases as lubricating glands fail. These changes can lead to a buildup of mucus, resulting in stickiness, or make the cornea dry. The conjunctiva becomes more fragile and takes on a yellowish tinge, the white of the eye (sclera) also assumes a yellow hue from a collection of lipid, or fat deposits. Calcium may deposit in the sclera, leading to patches of grayish translucency. The exposed conjunctiva between the lids begins to degenerate, and the cornea can develop an opaque white ring around its edge. The retina thins and may grow less sensitive because of cell loss. With time, the lens hardens and loses its elasticity, making it more difficult to focus on near objects, a common condition called presbyopia. You might also find that night vision grows poorer.

CATARACT & GLAUCOMA

Clouding of the lens, which is called cataract, usually develops slowly over many years. It may go unnoticed until the cloudiness blocks the central line of sight and impairs vision. Over time, the frontal chamber in each eye may become shallower in some people, for example those who have small eyes and are farsighted. This raises the risk of blockage of the aqueous humor drainage system near the iris. The resulting fluid backup may lead to higher pressure inside the eye that damages the optic nerve, a condition known as glaucoma. Left untreated, it can cause blindness. Because glaucoma can silently steal sight before symptoms develop, it is important to have routine eye exams.

EYE CONDITIONS AND DISEASES

Research from a recent study has shown a link between common eye conditions and the risk of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. One of the possible explanations that scientists are looking at is that these three, eye diseases, Alzheimer's and dementia, have a joined common causative factor. That common factor is that they are linked to cardiovascular disease.

Glaucoma has been linked to high blood pressure, diabetes, and poor blood circulation.

Age related macular degeneration involves breakdown of the macula, the part of the retina responsible for sharp central vision. It has also been linked to heart disease.

Diabetic retinopathy occurs in people with diabetes when high levels of blood sugar damage blood vessels in the retina. There are strong links between diabetes and cardiovascular problems.

Cataracts are the clouding of the lenses of the eyes and are more likely to develop as we age. They don't however;

appear to increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's disease, or other types of dementia.

ALZHEIMER'S

A study focused on the changes in thoughts for adults began in 1994 and included 5,400 dementia free adults. The participants were followed until they decided to leave the study, died, or developed dementia. The researchers found that people with age-related macular degeneration were 20% more likely to develop dementia compared with people who did not have the eye disease. People with diabetic retinopathy were 44% more likely to develop dementia than those without. The participants in the study with a recent glaucoma diagnosis, but not participants with established disease, had a 44% higher rate of dementia.

EYE EXAMS

Can eye exams tell us if we are destined to develop dementia in the future and can it help to prevent it? The answer to this question hopefully, will be yes for the future but not for now. Eye exams are valuable in detecting eye disease early so it can be treated but they can't at this time give predictive information about your brain's future health. There are some things we can take from the study when it comes to avoiding Alzheimer's disease. Presently the only known way to prevent Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia is to prevent cardiovascular disease. So if we do all the things that we can do to prevent heart attack and stroke it will help in preventing Alzheimer's disease. This means treating high blood pressure and cholesterol, eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and maintaining a regular exercise program.

If you have a family history of cardiovascular disease or a history of cardiovascular related eye diseases, you may want to be even more attentive in con-

trolling your personal risk factors.

NATURAL APPLICATIONS

Youthful looking healthy eyes often express how we feel as well as help us to defy our age. Our eyes and the area surrounding our eyes often act as windows to our wellness. Our eyes need about eight hours of sound sleep as well as a well-balanced organic diet with lots of dark green leafy vegetables. However, there are some natural applications that can help to regain the youthful vitality of our eyes, with many of the ingredients easily available.

GRAPES

Grapes are a rich source of antioxidants and are very useful in eliminating wrinkles and fine lines around eyes very effectively. Crush a handful of grapes and strain out the juice. Dip a clean cotton ball into this juice and apply it over the eyelids and skin areas surrounding your eyes. The fruit juice gives peeling effect to the skin and fends off wrinkles around eyes with regular use.

HONEY

Honey is another very valuable home treatment for aging eyes. Regular application of warm organic honey on the delicate skin around eyes will help in retaining the suppleness of skin. Fine lines can be effectively fended off with regular honey massage. Try to select the best quality bee's honey in order to get the desired results. Unfiltered raw honey is a good choice. Antioxidants in honey do the trick of rejuvenating the skin around the eyes.

POTATO

Using potatoes is a simple yet effective way that can work wonders in getting rid of tired looking and aging eyes. Juice from freshly grated raw potato can be applied around the eye areas to combat aging signs. You can even mix potato juice with organic honey to get increased benefits. The anti-aging properties of potatoes are great in removing dark under eye circles.

VIRGIN COCONUT OIL

Extra virgin coconut oil is well known for its skin nourishing benefits and has

been used for hundreds of years in many cultures. Wrinkle prevention can be done effectively by gently massaging the areas surrounding eyes with warm coconut oil. You can massage the eye area for 10 to 5 minutes. Virgin olive oil and almond oil can also be used to get the same benefits.

CUCUMBER

Placing cucumber slices above eyelids is a very simple and popular home application for keeping aging away. The juice of the cucumber is excellent in preventing wrinkles and fine lines around the eye area. If your eyes are tired and puffy, this vegetable with its soothing properties when applied can bring relief.

TEA BAGS

Tea bags can be refrigerated for a few minutes and then pressed on the eyelids to get a rejuvenating feeling. Pressing the cooled herbal tea bags will give the added benefit of removing wrinkles around the eyes. Eye bags can also be effectively prevented with this home remedy.

EGG WHITES

Egg whites are considered to be another effective home treatment for aging eyes. Properly beaten egg whites can be applied all over skin to enhance tightness and suppleness of skin. It can enhance the youthful look of the skin around the eyes by bringing back the lost skin elasticity. Reducing puffy eyes by applying tiny amount of frothy egg white above eyelids can also help. This can be rinsed off after 15 minutes. Egg white can also be mixed with lemon juice when applying.

AVOCADOS

Avocados are rich creamy fruits that do a wonderful job in removing fine lines and creases around eyes. The crushed pulp of the fruit can be liberally applied on the skin to reduce under eye wrinkles. Soft skin under and around eyes is guaranteed with regular application of fresh avocado mash. This creamy eye treatment is sure to deliver the desired results.

GRAPE SEED OIL

Grape seed oil is enriched with many skin nutritious elements that can help in maintaining youthful appearance of skin around your eyes. Potent antioxidants contained in this home therapy are beneficial in undoing skin damage and in mending skin flaws around the eyes.

MINT

Mashed mint leaves and mint juice are great in retaining youthful looking eyes. Mint juice can be applied on the skin surrounding the eyes. The antioxidants in mint are excellent in removing wrinkles around eyes. There are many herbal creams available with mint extract that work to reduce the appearance of dark under-eye circles and wrinkles. Buying expensive beauty products is unnecessary when you can get the same results using home treatments. Since our eyes and the area around our eyes are delicate we need to use safe and natural ingredients.

VISION CARE TIPS

Everyone should have a regular dilated exam every year or two years and a dilated exam annually after age 60, according to the American Optometric Association (AOA). Between routine visits, you can take these essential steps, which may maintain or improve your vision:

- Eat at least 5 servings daily of fruits and vegetables (dark green leafy vegetables)
- Don't smoke.
- Take regular breaks while doing computer work and other tasks that mostly involve your eyes.
- Wear your glasses. This sounds obvious, but many people with low to moderate vision loss leave their glasses at home or tucked in a pocket or purse because of vanity or forgetfulness.
- Wear sunglasses that protect your eyes 100% from UVA and UVB rays. Wear them even on cloudy days.
- Closely follow the recommended

schedule for cleaning and wearing contact lenses.

- Know your family's eye history and share this information with your healthcare providers.
- If you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, make sure these conditions are under control.

DEVICES AND BLUE LIGHT

You are probably using digital devices for hours each day at work and at home. These devices are exposing your eyes to high-energy blue light. It is called blue light because the wavelengths emitted are near the bluer part of the spectrum. Lutein & Zeaxanthin are eye nutrients that are concentrated in the macula and help filter blue light. Our bodies on their own cannot produce these two nutrients, so they must be obtained through diet and/or supplements.

Here are some other tips to help when you're on your computer:

- Keep your computer screen within 20"-24" of your eye.
- Keep the top of your computer screen slightly below eye level.
- Adjust lighting to minimize glare on the screen.
- Blink frequently.
- Take a break every 20 minutes to focus on an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Use lubricating eye drops to soothe irritated, dry eyes.

People with vision problems are more likely than those with good vision to have diabetes, poor hearing, heart problems, high blood pressure, lower back pain and stroke, as well as have increased risk for falls, injury and depression. 52 percent of people age 65 and

older who are blind and 41.7 percent of those with impaired vision have overall fair to poor health. Ageing does not mean the end of the road for our eyes.

In Genesis chapter 48:10 we read: "*Now the eyes of Israel (Jacob) were dim for age, so that he could not see.*" Like Jacob, our eyes age and become weak, but with proper care, nutrition and adequate rest we might be able to experience clearer or improved vision, an important part of our overall health and functionality. Our eyes along with the rest of our bodies are slowly deteriorating but there are things we can do to minimize this. David's prayer in psalm 17 expresses one of my deepest desires and goals. I trust it is equally yours!

"As for me, I will see your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in your likeness. Ps: 17:15



Open Face

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