

# TIME TO AWAKE

CALLING THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST TO WATCH & BE ALERT

Spring 2024

## PREPARING FOR THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

PREPARED  
AND  
READY

WALKING  
IN THE  
SPIRIT





Christian  
Ministerial  
Fellowship  
International

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*"And do this, knowing the  
time, that now it is high time to  
awake out of sleep; for now our  
salvation is nearer than when we  
first believed."* Rom. 13:11

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## FROM THE EDITOR



**Paul Sherbird**  
*Secretary, CMFI*

**A**re you ready for the marriage  
supper of the Lamb? That is the  
question posed by the theme of our  
annual conference, and explored in the  
articles in this edition of our magazine.

It is a vital topic for our times, and it is  
essential that we understand what the  
Lord requires of His people in these last  
days. Our desire should be to stand fast,  
maintaining faith and good conduct,  
giving faithful witness to the King who  
may come for His bride at any time.  
Remembering too that the Lord warned  
that in these days, "the love of many will  
grow cold" (Mt. 24:11), and Paul also  
warning that, "many will depart from the  
faith" (1Tim. 4:1).

We trust the following articles help  
promote understanding and readiness for  
the marriage supper, and that our readers  
may be ready, and so on that day receive  
the Lord's commendation, "Well done  
good and faithful servant ... enter into the  
joy of your Lord" (Mt. 25:21). ■

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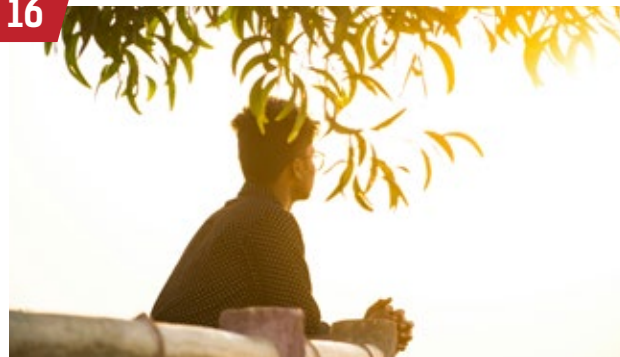


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# WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS?

2 PETER 3:11



Pastor Paul Sherbird  
Secretary, CMFI

“  
IT IS IN OUR  
HEARTS THAT WE  
MAKE OURSELVES  
READY FOR THE LORD.  
”

**S**ome years ago now, as I was entering my final period of study at Bible college, and looking forward to taking up a ministry position in the north of England, the news came one morning that the man who was my pastor and spiritual mentor, and who was overseeing my progress into ministry, had died in a plane crash while on a ministry trip in America. It was a profound loss for me, and with just a few weeks to finishing at Bible college, plans put in place were suddenly no longer viable. I felt lost in a void, and could not find clear guidance from the Lord about the way forward. I confided with a mature pastor who was visiting the college, and while he had no word of clear guidance for me, he shared some words which, while seeming simple, are in fact quite profound, “The Lord is not so concerned with what you do, as to what you are!” I have in the nearly 30 years since, never forgotten those words.

In 2 Peter chapter 3, in writing about the times of the end, and with eternity in view, Peter asks us to consider what manner of persons we are in holy conduct and godliness. At that Bible college there was a popular tract written by a previous principle entitled, “Purity Before Power”, perhaps aimed at the students, it reminded that the months of study and learning did not make one suitable for ministry unless one was also sanctified and a vessel of honour, a pure and holy vessel fit for the Master, worthy of being put to service by Him (2Tim. 2:21). Peter confronts us with similar: Am I living a life that is holy in thought and

deed, cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus, and keeping myself from the taints of the world and the flesh? We need to understand that being ready for the return of Jesus, is not purely a matter of doing and learning, or of looking out for the signs, but it is more about living a life that is holy, pure and good in His sight, His bride is to be sanctified, cleansed, holy, without spot, wrinkle and blemish (Eph. 5:26,27).

### KNOW MY HEART

Following my months of learning and study at college, and before heading out into ministry, the Lord needed to teach me a valuable lesson: Before He could put me to use, He wanted me to be pure in heart, thought, motive and deed, a vessel of honour for His glory alone. He requires the same for all who seek to serve Him, and Peter’s question is very relevant for us who live in these closing days. Jesus Himself taught that as we see the end drawing near, we must, “Take heed to yourselves lest your *hearts* be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the cares of this life” (Lk. 21:34). It is in our *hearts* that we make ourselves ready for the Lord, and our cry, as we wait expectantly for Him, must be, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Ps. 139:23,24).

Keep your vessel pure and holy by the blood of Jesus, and then, and then only, will He find you worthy to serve Him, and grant you the fine linen without which you cannot attend the marriage supper. ■

# REJOICING

## IN HIS FAITHFULNESS

LIMERICK NEW  
TESTAMENT CHURCH,  
IRELAND



Pastor Garrett O'Regan  
*Limerick New Testament  
Church, Ireland*







*FACING MY OWN CHALLENGES, I TURNED TO CHRIST FOR SOLACE, ECHOING THE APOSTLE PAUL'S PLEA FOR MERCY IN ROMANS 10. THUS BEGAN MY OWN JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION, MARKED BY GOD'S FAITHFULNESS OVER THE YEARS.*



**GARRETT & JACKIE O'REGAN**

**H**ailing from Bandon in West Cork, Southern Ireland, I belong to a family of six - five boys and one girl. We were brought up in a typical Catholic household, though not particularly devout. My father worked as a bus conductor before retiring in the late 70s. With some of his retirement savings, he bought a pub with living quarters above it. Thus, our family became immersed in the diverse lives of people, encountering various characters and stories within the social hub of the local pub, where alcohol consumption was common.

Being brought up in a pub we got used to seeing the negative effects of excessive drinking - financial ruin, broken families, and other hardships and it cast a shadow over our family. Yet, a significant transformation occurred when my eldest brother embraced Christianity. Despite initial resistance, his steadfast faith and personal change left a lasting impact on us. Another brother, experienced a divine intervention that led him to pray for mercy and salvation on the main road outside Bandon. His dramatic conversion, shared with me over a phone call in 1987, stirred a mix of emotions within me.

Facing my own challenges, I turned to Christ for solace, echoing the apostle Paul's plea for mercy in Romans 10. Thus began my own journey of transformation, marked by God's faithfulness over the years. Over 30 years all of my siblings came to be saved including one brother just days before he lost his life to cancer.

I met Jackie at the local church I attended, and she came into my life like a ray of sunshine. She became my wife, and together we've been blessed with four wonderful children. For nearly 30 years now, she has stood faithfully by my side, bringing immense blessing into my life.

### **CALLED TO LIMERICK**

Eighteen years ago, my family and I felt called to Limerick, where we sought to serve a local church and provide Christian education for our children.

Having been raised with the vision for revival in our island I was saddened to see that the modern contemporary churches have often departed from the simplicity and foundational doctrines of the New Testament Church. In the early church, the focus was on four essential pillars: the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). However, many contemporary churches have shifted their emphasis towards entertainment, prosperity preaching, and personal fulfilment, rather than adhering to these core principles.

The apostles emphasised the importance of teaching sound doctrine (Titus 2:1), yet today, shallow teaching and doctrinal compromise are prevalent. Fellowship, which entails community, mutual

support, and accountability, has been overshadowed by individualism and superficial relationships. The breaking of bread, symbolising communion and unity among believers, has become ritualistic rather than a profound spiritual practice (1Cor. 10:16). Moreover, the priority of prayer has been diminished in favor of programs and activities.

Returning to the simplicity and depth of the early church requires a recommitment to these foundational principles. By prioritising biblical teaching, fostering genuine fellowship, celebrating communion with reverence, and dedicating ourselves to fervent prayer, contemporary churches can realign with the timeless model set forth by the apostles, ensuring spiritual vitality and authenticity in their congregations. The Lord laid a burden in my heart to see this simplicity again and that was what birthed Limerick New Testament Church. What started as a small gathering in our home grew into a thriving community. Without any formal Bible college training and despite our lack of experience and with great trepidation, we felt a deep desire to bring the message of peace to the people of Limerick. This journey led us to several re-locations until we settled in a premises in Limerick city centre - a place where fellowship, honesty, and care for God's people thrive.

### **A BEACON OF HOPE**

In our journey from Bandon to Limerick, we are humbled that the Lord has chosen to use the church as a beacon of hope for many. We've witnessed countless lives saved from addiction, as individuals found freedom in Christ and were set on a path



of restoration. Students, drawn to our church community, have encountered the Lord and embraced faith, finding purpose and direction for their lives. Families, once fragmented by the trials of the world, have been united and saved by the grace of God.

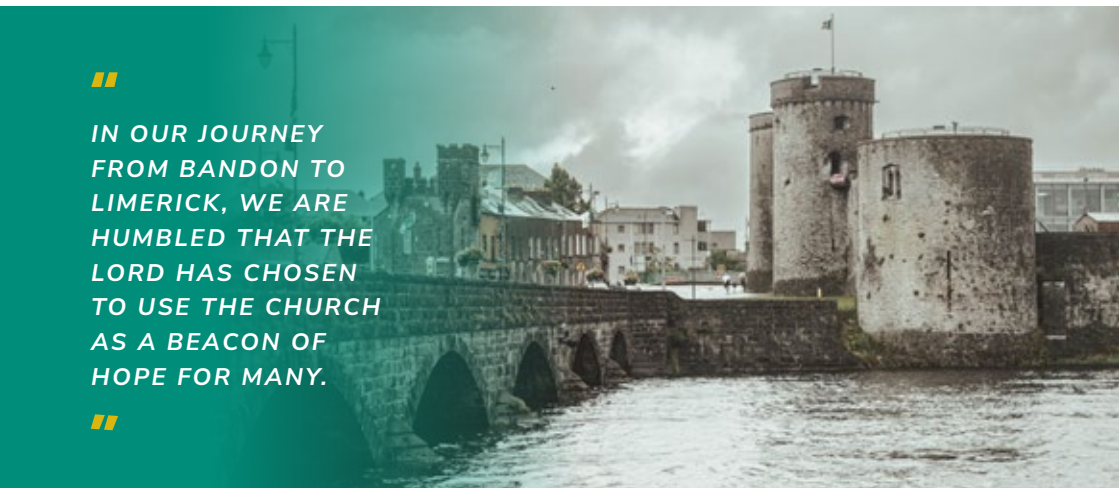
Being situated in a bustling city, our church sees a constant influx of people - students, professionals, and families - who come seeking solace and spiritual guidance. We liken it to being like foster parents! We embrace these lives for however long they're with us, knowing that we may not always see the long-term benefits for us as the local church. Yet, it brings us joy to witness them serving the Lord in other countries and churches, carrying the light of Christ wherever they go. Even after they move on, whether to other cities or countries, many still keep in touch. It's a testament to the bonds formed within the church family to see the lasting impact of God's love. Years may pass, but the connection remains, reminding us of the enduring fellowship we share as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Throughout the years, we've faced trials, and experienced betrayal. Yet, witnessing the Lord's saving grace has made every challenge worthwhile. In recent weeks, we've seen some lives being drawn to Jesus including a young couple from the Bahá'í faith embracing Christianity, a mother and daughter finding salvation, and others being drawn to the truth of God's word. Our midweek meetings, which often in the past saw less commitment, have been filled with eager souls hungry for spiritual nourishment.

Just as I write this article we now find ourselves in a time of uncertainty as our church building has been sold. We're entering a new chapter that requires faith and prayer for what the future holds. Despite the challenges ahead, we trust in God's providence and His plan for our congregation. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated as we navigate this transition and continue to spread the message of God's love and salvation. ■




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Pastor John Angliss  
*Chairman, CMFI*

# PREPARING FOR THE MARRIAGE SUPPER



“LET US BE GLAD AND REJOICE, AND GIVE HONOUR TO HIM; FOR THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB IS COME, AND HIS WIFE HAS MADE HERSELF READY. AND TO HER WAS GRANTED THAT SHE SHOULD BE ARRAYED IN FINE LINEN, CLEAN AND WHITE; FOR THE FINE LINEN IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SAINTS.”

**S**o reads the challenging title of the forthcoming CMFI conference in Northern Ireland. For the real Christian three important events lie ahead:

1. The rapture of the true church.
2. The judgment seat of Christ (*bema* in Scripture).
3. The marriage of the Lamb, linked of course with the best banquet the world has ever seen - the marriage supper.

Scripture is very clear about these three appointments and like any good student, we are 'preparing now for final exams!' What we do now is of utmost importance and bearing! These events are also typified in a Jewish wedding with its betrothal, marriage, and honeymoon, and a careful examination of such yields great understanding for the believer.

In Genesis 49:1 we read, "Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather

together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days.' " This has been called 'Jacob's judgment seat' as he speaks to each one of his sons. It is private and personal. It involves review, rebuke and reward. The first three sons suffered loss due to unconfessed sin. Jacob had much to say about Judah, and even more about Joseph, as Jacob saw Christ in these two lives - that's the important thing when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Revelation 19:7 states,

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife [*the church*] has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness [*righteousnesses, plural*] of saints (Rev. 19:8).

This is followed by a clear call to the marriage supper and those called are blessed. We are also told, "These are the true sayings of God." Many so called Christians sadly dispute the simple truths stated above. Please notice that if Revelation is chronological (which I believe it is with some subsequent sections merely 'filling out' what has gone before), then this precedes the coming in glory of Jesus on a white horse (Rev. 19:11-14), and the subsequent verses giving details of Armageddon which precedes the setting up of His millennial kingdom in Jerusalem (chapter 20). We cannot comment on that for this message, except to say that this would make a post tribulation rapture a fallacy.

This writer believes in a pre-tribulation rapture.

## THE BEMA SEAT

There are seven judgments in Scripture and three deal with believers. Judgment is also closely linked with resurrection. The type of seat clarifies which judgment.

The *bema* was a seat used by the Roman Emperor or deputy to hear and pronounce judgment (Matt. 27:19; John 19:13; Acts 12:21; Acts 18:1-17; Acts 25:6,10,17). This is the name of the seat used in the judgment seat of Christ where the believers *works* and *character* are judged and the key scriptures are Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10. The subjects are believers, the place is heaven (in the air), and the basis is *works* both good and bad. The result is either *reward* or *loss* of reward. Not the loss of one's soul, for any wrong doings properly confessed are forgiven. The subjects "we" occurs 26 times in 2 Corinthians 5 and always means the believer. The epistle is addressed to church and saints. The time is "the day of Christ" (1 Cor 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6,10, 2:16); "that day" (2 Tim. 4:8; 1:12), and "at His coming" (2 Tim. 4:8), and is in contradistinction to the "Day of the Lord" which is something different. This is before the setting up of the visible kingdom of glory, and so before the millennial kingdom (Revelation 20). We must distinguish this from the judgment at the beginning of the millennial kingdom (the "throne of His glory," - see *Matthew 25:31-47, dealing particularly with how people treat the brothers of Jesus, i.e. the Jewish*





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people), and with the judgment of the living nations after the return of Christ (Rev. 20:4), and with the judgment of the dead at the end of the 1000 years at the great white throne (Rev. 20:11-15), we cannot expand on this here.

The severity of the judgment seat of Christ is 'damage' and "loss" (1 Cor. 3:15; 2 John 8), a 'burning up' of some things, "saved yet, so as by fire" (1Cor. 3:13-15), each one's work "made manifest" (1Cor. 3:13), receiving for the things done in our body, good or bad (2Cor. 5:10); we can be "ashamed before Him at His coming," i.e. a shrinking with shame from Him (1John 2:28); He that does wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he has done (Col. 3:24,25). Therefore we are "to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Our works will be judged to assess the reward due to them.

The standards & principles applied will be the ability to stand the test of fire and *quality* will be better than *quantity* (Rev. 1:14,15). Before His eyes all that

is valueless will be consumed. All else refined and purified. Three areas will be subjected to His scrutiny:


- A. Motives.
- B. Obedience
- C. Power.

Believers will be judged concerning:

1. Doctrine (Rom. 2:14-16 and chapter 14).
2. Conduct to others (Matt. 18; Rom.14).
3. Carnal traits (Col. 3; Romans chapters 1 and 2; 8:1-13; 14:1-23).

The standard is faithfulness, this set forth in 2 parables:

1. Matt. 25: 14-3, parables of the talents.
2. Luke 19:11- 27, the parable of the pounds, "Well done good and faithful servant." Omission of good is as bad as commission of evil (James 4:17). Misguided activity earns no reward, although may indicate faith for salvation.



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*Bema* was also used in Grecian games. Runners, wrestlers and successful contestants assembled and winners received a “corruptible crown” of laurel

leaves. Some had no reward, they lost the victor’s crown. One person said the New Testament likens the *bema* to seven things:



1. The winning of a prize.
2. The testing of a fire.
3. The passing of an examination.
4. The reporting on a job.
5. The studying of a bank statement.
6. The inheriting of an estate.
7. The gaining of a crown.

## CROWNS AND REWARDS

Concerning rewards, there are five crowns which constitute these. Crowns may be won or lost (Rev. 3:11). Rewards are not gifts (Rev. 22:12), they are “prizes” (1Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:13,14):

1. Crown of life (the ‘martyr’s crown’): For enduring trials and temptations (James 1:12), even unto death (Rev. 2:10) .
2. Crown of glory: The elder’s or pastor’s crown; the faithful shepherds and teachers crown (1Pet. 5:2-4).
3. Crown of rejoicing: The soul winners crown (1Thess 2:19,20; Prov. 11:30; Phil. 4:1; Dan. 12:3).
4. Crown of righteousness: For those who love His appearing (2Tim. 4:8).
5. An incorruptible crown (1Cor. 9:25-27): The victor’s crown. A steadfast racer. Temperate in all things. Mastery of the old nature. Our work will be either gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, hay, stubble (1Cor. 3:12).

Finally, and perhaps the most important things, the areas in which God is interested in our lives:

1. How we treat other believers (Heb. 6:10; Matt. 10:41-42).
2. How we exercise our authority over

others (Heb. 13:17; James 3:11).

3. How we employ our God given abilities (1Pet. 4:10; Matt. 23:14-29; Luke 19:11-26).
4. How we use our money (1Tim. 6:17-19; 2 Cor. 9:6,7).
5. How much we suffer for the Lord (Matt. 5:11,12; 1Pet. 4:12-13; Mark 10:29,30; Rom 8:8; 2 Cor. 4:17).
6. How we run that particular race which God has chosen for us (1Cor. 9:24; Phil 3:13,14; 2:16).
7. How effectively we control the old nature. (1Cor. 9:25-27).
8. Our attitude to soul winning (Dan. 12:3; 1Thess. 2:19,20).
9. Our reaction to temptation (Rev. 2:10).
10. Our attitude to the second coming/ rapture (2Tim. 4:8 )
11. Our faithfulness to the flock of God and the Word of God (1Pet. 5:2-4; Acts 20:26-28).
12. How we spend our time (Eph. 5:16; 1Pet. 1:17).

In writing this article I have come to 2 conclusions:

1. There are a number of things I must *personally* hone and deal with.
2. The remnant church (true church) must deal with a number of things, particularly in dealing with relationships with other believers and not blaming third parties for things they have never tried to sort out.

‘Take off’ time (the rapture) is very close at hand (examine the signs), I hope to see all readers at the wedding and the great reception which will follow! ■



“

MANY  
PROFESSING  
BELIEVERS TODAY  
ARE NOT READY...  
READY OR NOT,  
HE IS COMING!

”



# PREPARED AND READY



Pastor Tim McIlwrath

*New Testament Pentecostal Church, Ballynahinch*

**A**s we look forward to hosting our CMFI Conference 2024 here in Ballynahinch, Northern Ireland, we pray it will be a time of great encouragement, precious fellowship, and challenge concerning these last of the last days, to which we have now come.

## GET READY

Northern Ireland has been known throughout the world for the 30 years of

troubles she went through. Thousands of lives were lost and tens of thousands maimed and injured. Many areas of Belfast and other surrounding cities and towns were marked out territories, with flags and paramilitary murals on gable walls. One infamous slogan had a bold statement that included two vital words “prepared” and “ready”! These people were fighting for a different cause to ours. Ours is The Gospel of Jesus Christ, however it is these two words that I believe that we, possibly the final generation before the rapture of the

church, must understand from Scripture what it is to be prepared and ready.

“Only the unprepared are overcome by the pressure” (Lou Holtz).

A famous American football coach said, “Only the unprepared are overcome by the pressure.” We are living in a world increasing in spiritual pressure. Pressure is when force is exerted on an object. That object is the people upon whom the ends (*the conclusion*) of the world have come.

Increase in famines, increase in pestilences, increase in earthquakes, increase in natural disasters and climatic reactions, increase in iniquity, increase in deception, increase in false teachers and prophets, increase in knowledge, increase in wars, increase in tremblings concerning Jerusalem, increase in spiritual groanings within the body, increase in the spirit of antichrist. We

could go on, but it is enough to say that with this increase we see a great pressure upon the face of the earth, and in particular to all those who are born of the Spirit of God and desire to live Godly in this wicked world.

The pressure that the earth is under is primarily a spiritual pressure as we day by day approach the Lord’s return for His bride. Most alarming is the total collapse of the moral standards of society. The foundation stone of any society is the institution of the family as God created it. The pressure has risen to such heights and we have plummeted to unimaginable vile depths. When babies are murdered in their millions within the womb, homosexuality has risen to unprecedented levels worldwide, the biblical identities of man and women are corrupted, lying spirits overcome the minds of the young so that they mutilate their bodies seeking identity. We have the indoctrination of our young through



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our education systems by militant LGBTQ agendas, and now proposals and practices to euthanise the old or infirmed all in the name of health and choice. We are at the end.

The truth of it is this: many professing believers today are not ready, and so we see too many giving in to the pressure and conforming to this world. Even entire church dominations are capitulating under the pressure. So it is with care and concern that we turn to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and search His word for instruction and insight as to how we can be prepared and ready for His coming. Ready or not, He is coming!

### LOINS GIRDED

Look with me at this one verse, “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning” (Luke 12:25).

The first instruction “Let your loins be girded about.” The act to ‘gird up’ was to gather the long tunic worn in Biblical days and tuck it into their girdle so they would not be prevented or hindered in any way from the task before them. The things that hinder - the cares and weights and distractions. How easily we become distracted, over-focused on politics, events on the earth, consumed with vain babblings and oppositions of science. Avoid and shun, because many have become entangled in these matters and even some erred from the faith (1Tim. 6:20-21, 2Tim. 2:16).

We find men like Elijah (1Kings 18:46) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:17) girded up their loins. Paul and Peter instruct the saints to, “have your loins girt with truth”

(Eph. 6:14) and, “gird up the loins of your mind” (1Pet. 1:13). The children of Israel on the eve of leaving Egypt, when keeping the Lord’s Passover were instructed, “And thus shall ye eat it; *with your loins girded*, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD’s passover” (Ex. 12:11).

This all points to a prepared people ready to leave. They were about to depart Egypt and we are about to depart our Egypt - this world. Get prepared, let us untangle ourselves from the affairs of this life, gird up your loins.

### LIGHTS BURNING

Secondly, “your lights burning” (Luke 12:35); A perpetual burning light for Jesus. The Baptist preacher, Vance Havner, once preached a powerful message entitled “Getting used to the Dark.” We so easily can become accustomed to the depravity. Darkness is simply the absence of light. We are instructed by Paul,

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, *among whom ye shine as lights in the world* (Phil. 2:15).

Jesus said in Matthew 5:14-16,

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may



“  
TO SHINE WE NEED OIL. THAT OIL  
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HE NEEDS TO BE A LIVING REALITY IN  
OUR LIVES.  
”

see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Yet to shine we need oil. That oil is the Holy Spirit. The greatest neglect in this hour is the neglect of the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit. It will be the Holy Spirit that will lead, guide, direct, teach, fill, endue, reveal, help, comfort, show us the things to come, and conform us and transform us. He will convict of sin, righteousness and judgment to come. We all acknowledge our fundamental beliefs in the trinity and issue statements of faith concerning the Holy Spirit. Yet somehow the living reality of lives filled with Holy Ghost seems to be left to the pages of the book or our doctrinal statements. Not only is it right to have sound doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit, He needs to be a living reality in our lives.

The Bible tells us of Jesus, He was “led by the Spirit” and “full of the Spirit” (Luke 4:1). How could we ever come to the place in the history of the church to think that we can make this without the Holy Spirit. Leanord Ravenhill once said, “If the Holy Spirit removed Himself from

the earth including the church of Jesus Christ, 95% of the church would carry on not even realising He (the Holy Spirit) was not there.” An alarming thought. Surely, we need another ‘upper room’ experience, not for feel good factor, but to shine for Jesus. To preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down, to rescue souls that are perishing, to be a lighthouse, a rescue shop within a yard of Hell. Also, to glorify the second person of the Godhead which is our chief aim, to glorify Jesus Christ. That’s what He will do through us.

For there to be light, we need as followers of Christ, to be filled with, and refilled with the power of the Holy Spirit continuously. Then will our lights shine. One great chorus that was sang in the great Welsh revival,

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me  
burning, Give me oil in my lamp I  
pray, Give me oil in my lamp keep  
me burning, Keep me burning till the  
break of day!

Jesus is coming. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning. ■





Pastor Ian Huxham

# WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

**W**hen I think back, I remember my wedding day as being one of the best days of my life. It was the most marvellous, joyous occasion from start to finish. A time I shall never forget. Sadly, neither my parents, nor my parents-in-law are with

us any longer and only now, after my own daughter has been married, do I fully understand how much work they put in to making our wedding day so wonderful. In particular the fine wedding reception they arranged for us and selflessly paid for.

Remembering just how wonderful my wedding day was, and how much pleasure we took in being surrounded by our loved ones at the reception, fills me with excitement at the prospect of that which awaits. It was a time when all our friends and family came together to celebrate with us. And yet wonderful as it was, it was just a foretaste of that which is to come. However, one thing I am mindful of is this. That although our parents prepared our marriage supper for us, my bride prepared herself. Not only did she prepare herself, but as I discovered in the instance of my own wedding, and also that of my daughter, she had been preparing for it for much of her life. Those, it appears, who look forward much to being married and who long to one day be brides, already have a good idea of how they wish to adorn themselves on the big day. Hair, make up, accessories, colour themes, bouquet, and of course, the all-important dress. Therefore, I think it is fair to say, that the woman who became my wife, had been preparing herself for her marriage, even before she had met me, and certainly before any future date had been set.

### **A BRIDE FOR ISAAC**

Whilst reflecting on this thought, it brings to my mind Rebekah, she who would eventually marry Isaac, the son of Abraham. Even before her marriage, Rebekah demonstrated her preparedness and all the qualities necessary to be a good and faithful wife. She was even ready to leave her family, her home, and her country before ever meeting the man she so willingly became betrothed to. Therefore, a brief study of Rebekah



**REBEKAH DEMONSTRATED HER PREPAREDNESS AND ALL THE QUALITIES NECESSARY TO BE A GOOD AND FAITHFUL WIFE. THEREFORE, A BRIEF STUDY OF REBEKAH REVEALS MUCH THAT THOSE OF US WHO LONG TO BE THE LAMB'S WIFE, CAN LEARN FROM.**



reveals much that those of us who long to be the Lamb's wife, can learn from.

The account of how Rebekah was sought to become the wife of Isaac can be found in Genesis 24. Interestingly, as we read from the beginning of the chapter, it is not Isaac who chooses a bride for himself. And although it is the desire of Abraham his father, that his son should have a bride, neither is it he who chooses a bride for his son. No, that particular job is given to the oldest servant of Abraham's house, a man whose name most importantly, is not written in Genesis 24, but which is revealed to us in Genesis 15:2 as being Eliezer. However, in Genesis 24:2, Abraham's servant is described as the man who "ruled over" all that Abraham had. It is by design that Eliezer is not named as an individual separate from Abraham. In this chapter, he is to be seen as an extension of Abraham the bridegroom's father, his trusted servant who speaks for him.

I trust dear reader, that you are familiar with the account of how Eliezer became acquainted with Rebekah. How he swore to his master that he would not take a wife for his master's son from among the daughters of the Canaanites among whom he dwelt, but from back in the 'old country' from whence he had come. From Ur, the land of the Chaldees. Of how, having set off with ten of his master's camels, he eventually came upon a well at the time of evening when the young women went out to draw water. And of how it was, that there he sat down and prayed to God, asking the Lord for a sign in order that he might know which of the young women visiting the well, the Lord had appointed to be the wife of his master's son, Isaac.

If you are familiar with the account, you will no doubt recall how it was that Rebekah met the terms of the sign Eliezer had prayed for. This she did by giving him a drink and watering his ten camels also, until they had all finished drinking. However, did you take careful note of how the word of God takes the opportunity to describe her in verse 16. It says that she was very beautiful to behold, a virgin whom no man had known. And thus, by this description, we might understand that Rebekah, the bride to be, is a 'type' of the faithful church, soon to be the Lamb's wife:

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ (2Cor. 11:2).

This being the case, we gain insight into who the other major characters of Genesis 24 are typically representative of. If Rebekah is typical of the 'bride', then Isaac, is typical of Christ, the Bridegroom (*as shown by scripture references in Genesis 22 which foreshadow similar events in the life of Christ*). Both were the only beloved sons of righteous fathers (Gen. 22:2). Both were offered in sacrifice (Gen. 22:2) Both carried the wood for their own sacrifice (Gen. 22:6) Both were bound and placed on top of the wood (Gen. 22:9) Both willingly allowed themselves to be offered in sacrifice (Gen. 22:7-8). Both were given back to their respective fathers on the third day (Gen. 22:4). Thus, if Isaac is a type of Christ, then Abraham, the father of Isaac, here typifies God the Father. Abraham is the lead patriarch, a spiritual father to us all, the father of faith - "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4:11). And so, having established who it is in Genesis 24 that Abraham, Isaac, and Rebekah are each typically representative of, what of Eliezer?

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

Eliezer is a type of God the Holy Spirit. Just as Abraham sent out his oldest servant to find a bride for his son, so too has Father God sent His Holy Spirit to the world, to find a bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus. Just as Eliezer gave Rebekah precious gifts, so too the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts. Just as Rebekah told Eliezer that he was welcome to lodge in her father's home (Gen. 24:25), so too I trust, you have welcomed the Holy Spirit into your life and now enjoy His indwelling presence. Just as it was given



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WHOM WE HAVE NOT YET MET IN PERSON,  
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AS WE ARE LED AND GUIDED BY THE SPIRIT,  
WE WALK 'IN' THE SPIRIT. WHEN WE DO, HE  
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to Eliezer to approach Rebekah, so too has it been given to the Holy Spirit to approach us. And just as Eliezer guided Rebekah to Isaac and told her all about his master's son, whom she had not seen but would marry, so too the Holy Spirit guides us in all truth and speaks to us of our coming Bridegroom, Jesus:

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you (Jn. 14:13-15).

On her journey to meet Isaac, I think it fair to assume that Rebekah was carried by one of the very camels that she watered the night before. It was if her act of

service provided the transport along the way. No doubt as she went with Eliezer, Isaac would have been the subject of much conversation, and although she had not seen him, she would have had great anticipation of meeting him in person. Finally, at the end, she set her eyes on him and asked Eliezer, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" (Gen. 24:65). A lovely picture of the rapture as Isaac left his home to meet her in the field (the world) - Just as Jesus will come for us when we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And Eliezer said, "That is my master."

As we journey toward a Messiah whom we have not yet met in person, we come to know Him in advance of that meeting through the Holy Spirit. As we are led and guided by the Spirit, we walk 'in' the Spirit. When we do, He takes the opportunity to tell us more about Jesus, until the time when He will introduce us to Him in person. Therefore, as we near

the end of our journey, we shall neither miss Him as He comes to meet us, nor shall we mistake Him for another, for just as Eliezer said to Rebekah, “That is my master”, so shall the Holy Spirit say to us, “That is the Master.”

### WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

In conclusion, how might we prepare for the marriage supper? By not making the mistake of the ‘foolish virgins’ of whom we read in Matthew 25:1-13, but by walking in the Spirit. Those five foolish virgins represent those who are only *professing* Christians, whilst the five wise represent those who are *possessing* Christians, true believers, possessing the oil of the Holy Spirit. It may be said, that in their profession, those foolish virgins went forth to meet the Bridegroom, but that did not make them saved persons. The wise virgins represent the true believers, who not only have lamps, but enough oil to see them through to their meeting with the Bridegroom when He comes out to meet them.

Rebekah was led throughout her journey by Eliezer who prepared her to meet her bridegroom. I pray that we may be led throughout our journey by the Holy Spirit as He prepares us to meet the Bridegroom.

Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:7-8). ■



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Christian  
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CMFI  
NEWS



Pastor Ian Huxham  
Oversea Co-ordinator



*WE ARE CONTINUALLY  
AMAZED BY GOD'S GRACE  
IN THE WAY IN WHICH HE IS  
MOVING ACROSS THE FACE  
OF THE EARTH, CALLING  
HIS SERVANTS TO UPHOLD  
THE TRUTH OF HIS WORD  
AND BOLDLY PREACH THE  
GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.*



**I**t is with much joy that we recently received into fellowship a significant number of new members from Nigeria, both from Lagos and Akwa Ibom State. I am certain that all our members, wherever they may be, would like to join me in welcoming them all to CMFI. Moreover, wherever you may be reading this, in whichever country, and wherever the Lord has called you to ministry, know that we care greatly for you, and thank God for every remembrance of you.

We are continually amazed by God's grace in the way in which He is moving across the face of the earth, calling His servants to uphold the truth of His Word and boldly preach the gospel of Jesus



Christ. We are equally amazed by the growing interest in the international ministry of CMFI, and the number of applications we receive here in the UK from our brethren in distant lands, across several continents. At this point, I would like to appreciate our Secretary, Pastor Paul Sherbird who for many years has willingly continued to undertake all the administration of CMFI, including assisting our brethren from overseas.

However, in order both to take some of the weight off of brother Paul, and also to try and increase the effectiveness of our overseas mission, we have decided to create a new position within CMFI, that of Overseas Co-ordinator. This is a position that as an existing member of the CMFI Council of Elders, I am pleased to take up, especially as the Lord has given me a heart for international missions. I have also been speaking with other UK members, some of whom have greater experience than me in missions, in regard to setting up a small missions team.

On a personal note, and by way of a brief background, I was called to the Great Lakes region in East Africa where initially I spent some years working with small rural ministries around Lake Victoria in the Western Province of Kenya and also in Uganda. At that time, I was associated with one of the largest Pentecostal denominations in the UK, which duly co-opted me to work with its International Missions Department and sent me to Rwanda and Burundi following the genocide. Since then, although I now

reside fully in the UK and minister here in the churches the Lord has called me to oversee, I maintain a loving heart for our brethren in other countries, wherever they may be.

My hope is, that I might begin to learn with which countries and ministries our UK members already have connections. Then perhaps, by God's grace, introduce them to CMFI members in the corresponding area. As a result, should they find themselves overseas and in close proximity to fellow CMFI members, a visit might be arranged on behalf of CMFI, in order to encourage and support the brethren. Alternatively, for those UK ministers with no existing missions connections, introductions could be made to trusted partners, for whom we can vouch, as a result of accepted CMFI membership.

However, I am sure there will be many other opportunities that will present themselves in order that those of us who enjoy the true unity of the Spirit, may work together and co-labour in the Master's vineyard. May God bless you and keep you. ■

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you are interested in discussing further our plans for international missions or would like to contact me personally, you may do so by email:

**Email:** [allnations@cmfi.org.uk](mailto:allnations@cmfi.org.uk)



## **God's Questions:** Responding To The First Five Questions God Asks Every One Of Us

Author: Philip Greenslade

Published by: CWR



**Review by Pastor John Angliss**

**T**his book was first published in 2003. It's premise is that we look for answers in the Bible. The real issue is answering the questions that God asks! The five main questions He asks are in the book of Genesis. Answer those and you find the meaning to life.

1. "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9): This raises the theological question of our lost and restored relationship with God and why we hide from Him.

2. "Who told you?" (Gen. 3:11): Raised the question of where we get our ideas from. Cultural indoctrination and parental programming in a post modern world, or from God? Most people who believe in evolution got it from school and not because they have ever really examined its evidence.
3. "What is this you have done?" (Gen. 3:13): This raises the moral question of how far we are responsible for our words and our deeds. And explores the nature of guilt and the boundaries of our moral responsibility.
4. "Why are you angry?" (Gen. 4:6): Raises the psychological question of the sources of our emotions and why we react in certain ways.
5. "Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4:9): Raises the social question of how our individuality is set in a social context, and how we relate to and are responsible for others. A bearing on abortion!

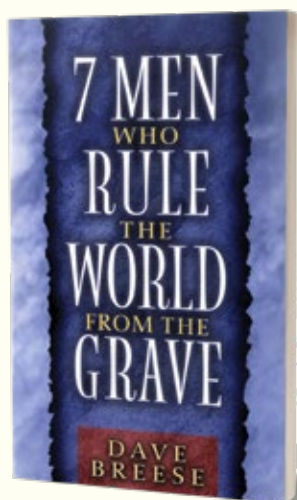
These five questions are a real challenge to what we preach and have wide ramifications. Helpful to soul winners, and evangelists alike, this book will challenge you, and give you added thought and content for your preaching. It gave me much thought for preaching, and I highly recommend it. ■



## Seven Men Who Rule the World From The Grave

Author: Dave Breese

Published by: Moody Publishers



Review by Pastor John Angliss

**W**hilst this book was first published in 1990, it is still very much up to date and whilst somewhat academic, written in a way and with vocabulary that even the layman can understand. It analyses the philosophies and teaching of seven well known characters who have shaped history and the course of the world not realising they are the tools of principalities and powers to keep men from the real truth of God's Word. These are:

1. Charles Darwin who systematised and advanced the principle that evolution was behind the origin of species. Taught as fact to our children, idolised in the media, but actually 'science fiction in action.' Not a shred of proof!
2. Karl Marx, who developed and advocated the notion of modern communism which at one time controlled a third of the world.
3. Julius Wellhausen who initiated 'higher criticism' and 'modernism' which has destroyed the faith of many.
4. John Dewey who argued for an educational system focused on problem solving and the growth of the child in all aspects of his being.
5. Sigmund Freud, who promoted the view that the sexual instinct is the driving force behind all human action leading to permissiveness.
6. John Maynard Keynes, who advocated the policies for reducing unemployment and expanding the economy that today find their expression in deficit spending and governmental activism.
7. Soren Kierkegaard, who stressed the obligation each person has to make conscious responsible choices among alternatives, a major tenet of existentialism.

Whilst this book is slightly academic, it is well within the reach of the layman to understand, and I personally found it extremely enlightening and helpful, and would unreservedly recommend it. ■

## RECOMMENDED AUTHORS

Other authors whom we recommend are as follows:

*“Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1Tim 4:13).*

These suggestions will help you to do that.

- ▶ The Bonar brothers
- ▶ EM Bounds
- ▶ John Bunyan
- ▶ David Baron
- ▶ Ray Comfort
- ▶ Jim and Elizabeth Elliot
- ▶ Arnold Fruchtenbaum
- ▶ Sam Gordon
- ▶ Ada Habershon
- ▶ Mark Hitchcock
- ▶ H Wayne House
- ▶ Harry Ironside
- ▶ David Jeremiah
- ▶ Tim La Haye
- ▶ Lance Lambert
- ▶ Martin Lloyd Jones
- ▶ CH Mackintosh
- ▶ FE Marsh
- ▶ FB Meyer
- ▶ G Campbell Morgan
- ▶ Andrew Murray
- ▶ Watchman Nee
- ▶ Stephen Olford
- ▶ J Edwin Orr
- ▶ Jessie Penn Lewis
- ▶ AJ Pollock
- ▶ Derek Prince
- ▶ JC Ryle
- ▶ Adolph Saphir
- ▶ Erich Sauer
- ▶ WG Scroggie
- ▶ CW Slemming
- ▶ CH Spurgeon
- ▶ FA Tatford
- ▶ RA Torrey
- ▶ AW Tozer
- ▶ WE Vine
- ▶ John Walvoord
- ▶ Warren Wiersbe
- ▶ David Wilkerson
- ▶ Herbert Lockyer - The ALL THE series plus others
- ▶ Rose Publishing - guides and pamphlets



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BOOKSTALL OR SMALL  
CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOP?**

Contact us if the Lord is speaking to you.



# CMFI EVENTS



Annually CMFI and its members host two main events:

## SUMMER BIBLE WEEK 2024

Sun. 18 - Thurs 22 August  
Bicton College, Devon, England  
*Details overleaf*

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

Mon 29 April - Wed 1 May  
Venue: New Testament  
Pentecostal Church,  
Ballynahinch, N. Ireland.  
Email: [info@cmfireland.org](mailto:info@cmfireland.org)  
Tel: +44 (0) 7723365725  
Web: [cmfi.org.uk/conference](http://cmfi.org.uk/conference)



## REGIONAL DAYS

Other one-day and weekend events are held throughout the year in various locations in both the UK and Ireland.

## INTERNATIONAL

Outside of UK various events are hosted by CMFI members worldwide. Please contact us for details of events in your area.

## KEEP IN TOUCH

- ▶ Be informed of upcoming events
- ▶ Invite a CMFI speaker
- ▶ Register as a CMFI Supporter

**Email:** [admin@cmfi.org.uk](mailto:admin@cmfi.org.uk)

**Tel:** +44 (0) 1872 263579

# SOUTH WEST BIBLE WEEK 2024

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CMFI

**SUNDAY 18 –  
THURSDAY 22  
AUGUST 2024**



## **BICTON COLLEGE**

East Devon, England

An opportunity for fun, fellowship,  
spiritual refreshing and sound Bible  
teaching for the equipping of the saints.

**To book your place contact Ian Huxham:**

**E:** [admin@cmfi.org.uk](mailto:admin@cmfi.org.uk)

**M:** 07445 847263



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