

# TIME TO AWAKE

CALLING THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST TO WATCH & BE ALERT

Summer 2023

THOSE  
WHO  
KNOW  
THEIR  
GOD

BETWEEN THE  
TESTAMENTS

THAT I MAY  
KNOW HIM



Christian  
Ministerial  
Fellowship  
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*"And do this, knowing the  
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salvation is nearer than when we  
first believed."* Rom. 13:11

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Paul Sherbird  
*Secretary, CMFI*



**T**he quality of our individual relationship with God is a matter of supreme importance, and should be of concern for every believer. Words of Jesus make it clear that our effectiveness as His disciples is entirely dependent on a close relationship with Him, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (Jn. 15:4).

In his article Pastor John Angliss writes, "The remnant church is now called to complete the exploits before Jesus returns to take His church, and we can be amongst those involved in such." Our theme for this edition (complementing the Southwest Bible Week) exhorts us to be ready to serve our Lord as the end of the age draws ever nearer. The Lord desires that we know Him in close and intimate relationship. James gives a wonderful promise, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (Jms. 4:8); David wrote, "When You said, 'Seek My face,' My heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek'" (Ps. 27:8).

As you read the articles, do be encouraged to seek deeper relationship with God; in drawing closer to Him, you may find yourself called to do exploits in His name, and for His glory. ■

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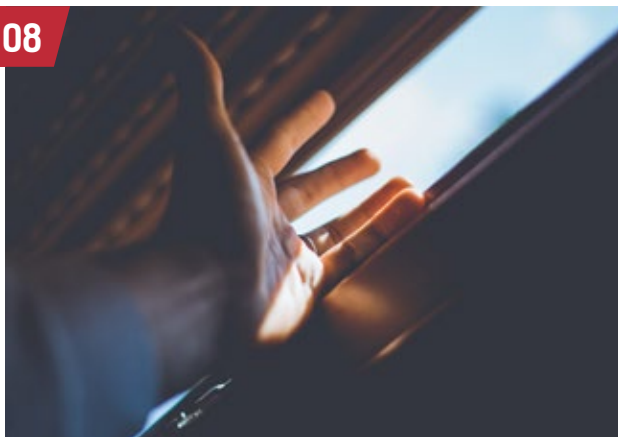
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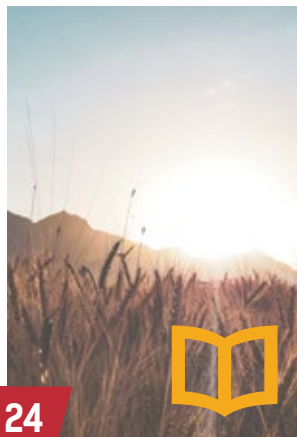
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# MAKING IT PERSONAL



Paul Sherbird  
Secretary, CMFI

**I** remember well in the early days of my new life as a born-again believer in Jesus, how I felt immense wonder and astonishment in experiencing the presence of Almighty God on a daily basis. At that time, having come out of the world, I knew very little about the God of the Bible, but I did know Him as a constant companion, was very aware of His presence, and knew I could communicate with Him, and He with me. Such experience is promised by Jesus to all who receive Him as Saviour. The

apostle John recorded words of Jesus relating to relationship with the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

Jn. 14:17, re. The Holy Spirit, “you know Him, for He dwells with you, and will be in you.”

Jn. 14:23, re. Father and Son, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come and make Our home with Him.”



*THERE IS FOR EVERY BELIEVER  
THE PROMISE OF KNOWING GOD  
THROUGH PRECIOUS, INTIMATE  
RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER,  
SON AND HOLY SPIRIT.*



Biblical salvation is not, as all should know, a matter of intellectual assent to a set of religious rules and regulations. It does have much to do with a restored relationship, forgiven sinners being reconciled to God the Father through the death of Jesus on the cross (Col. 1:21,22). Sin alienated us from God, acceptance of Jesus makes possible reconciliation and restoration of relationship; the barrier of sin being removed, sinners cleansed by the blood of Jesus are able to enter the very presence of God and commune with Him intimately (Heb. 10:19-22). And this is all by the grace of God because, “no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him” (Mt. 11:27).

**Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable (Ps. 145:3)**

Everything we know about God is that which He reveals to us through His Word (and it is of absolute necessity, that our learning and conception of God aligns with Scripture). It stands to reason, that we human beings made in His image must always be in awe of God our Creator who is far greater than we.

It is impossible for any of us to know everything about God, however, we can know Him in very precious relationship. Our human relationships help illustrate the point: we may learn much about famous people without having any sort of personal relationship with them; and in our personal relationships, we may be very close to those we love, and feel we know them, yet never know everything about them. We understand that we cannot know everything about God, even so, we can know Him in that intimate relationship made possible by the death of Jesus. John encourages us to enter fully into that relationship, “that you may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full” (1Jn. 1:3,4).

There is for every believer the promise of knowing God through precious, intimate relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The new covenant promises that, “all shall know Me from the least of them to the greatest of them” (Heb. 8:11). It is not enough to know about God, we must know Him personally, it is in the participation of that relationship that we find help, blessing, and fullness of joy. ■



# RESPONDING TO HIS VOICE



**Pastor Dave Tattersall**

*Bourne Evangelical Church, Lincolnshire*



**DAVE & SUE TATTERSALL**

I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Saviour in the year 2000. I was attending Elim Pentecostal Church in Blackburn, Lancashire. I felt the Holy Spirit pass through my body from head to toe, I felt so clean and started to cry.

After being on the leadership at Elim, we then attended and supported Salem Congregational Chapel, Rimington near Gisburn, Lancashire. During our time there both my wife Sue and I were deacons, and we served there for many years. Years later we both felt called to support churches and we moved to Lincolnshire being led by God to support Bourne Evangelical Church. The pastor asked me to become an elder, and after much prayer I accepted.



*EVEN THOUGH I HAVE AN EXPERIENCED PASTOR AS AN ELDER, THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CMFI MEMBERS IS VAST, AND GIVES SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL CHURCH. THESE MEN OF GOD HELP ME TO REMAIN STRONG AND REAFFIRM MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE IS CORRECT.*



We have always been happy to serve in the background and support others. Whilst at Bourne and serving as an elder, I had a dream, and in that dream I was leading the service and the pastor was at the side. I knew the dream had come from the Lord but didn't realise the implications of the interpretation. Considering the fact that, as far as I knew, the pastor had no intentions of stepping down, on the Sunday I relayed my dream to the pastor; his response took us by surprise. He was considering handing in his notice to pursue what he felt God calling him to and further his ministry.

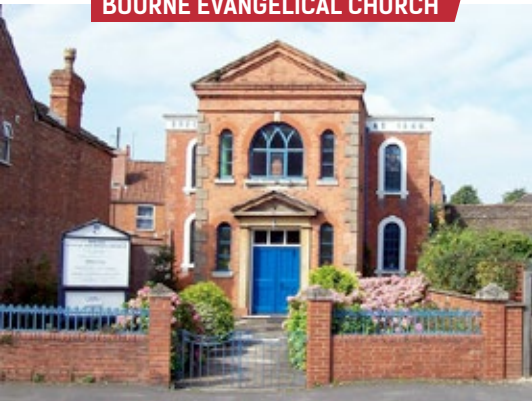
The pastor position was advertised, I waited about six months to see if the Lord would bring anyone forward but

no one suitable applied for the position. I felt the need to apply, rise up, so I put my name forward. I prayed that the Lord would stop it if it wasn't of Him. The Lord didn't stop it, and the vote was cast, and the congregation said yes. This was confirmation that this was the right path to take.

The thought of being a pastor was not something I had considered, I must admit at first it felt strange, but the Lord raised me up, and as I trusted Him I suddenly felt like a switch was flicked on, and there I was knowing I had made the right decision.

I had no second thoughts about joining CMFI, having gone to a few conferences I knew what they were all about, and the support and encouragement they provided. It gives us in ministry the confidence that there are other pastors around who believe what you believe, and we can support and encourage one another. Even though I have an experienced pastor as an elder, the experience of the CMFI members is vast, and gives support to the local church. These men of God help me to remain strong and reaffirm my understanding of the Bible is correct! ■

### **BOURNE EVANGELICAL CHURCH**






**John Angliss**  
Chairman, CMFI

# BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS



**A MESSAGE  
FOR TODAY**





***The people that  
know their God  
shall be strong  
and do exploits***

(Dan. 11:32).

**T**he above text which is the theme for the 2023 Southwest Bible week comes from one of the most wonderful books in the Bible, and of course has a challenging application way beyond its original context and certainly for the end time church. Suffice to say that the Lord Jesus implicitly believed in Daniel's writings as revealed in the great Olivet discourse (Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14). This is against the unbelief of modern criticism which thinks that Daniel is a pious fraud. The reason is that liberal theologians don't want to accept the fact that God could reveal the future in such detail to a human being, but of course we rightly know that to be a lie from the pit of hell as God is both omnipotent and omniscient (knowing all things, past, present and future).

The earlier chapters in Daniel give a panoramic sweep of Gentile history particularly in relationship to Israel (Nebuchadnezzar's image covers from the Babylonian captivity right through to the Roman occupation of Israel, and then leaps through to the end of the church age). Chapters 10, 11 and 12 cover the relationship of principalities and powers to the earth (10:1-11:1), the pre-written history of the kings of the north and south (11:2-35), and the time of the end (our days, 11:36-12:13). Chapter 11 deals with the period between the Old and New Testaments. This is a much neglected period in history, and from which we can learn much. Events here lay the foundation for the days of Christ (11:33-35), and also give much revelation from verse 36 onwards concerning the time of the end (where we are now).

## THE MACCABEES

Our highlighted verse (above) particularly describes the behaviour of the Jews under the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes, who by behaviour is a clear type of the future antichrist, and he sacrificed a pig on the altar of the Jewish temple. In that, he foreshadows the final antichrist of 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10, yet to come, but many feel is close at hand, and will control a one world system and government. In its immediate context our verse above refers to Mattathias an aged priest and his sons known as Maccabees, who from 166 BC to 47 BC fought to restore the national life of Israel. Mattathias, driven to desperation by the acts of Antiochus raised a revolt against him, and fled to the mountains with a number of followers zealous for the faith

of Israel. He died 2 years later and was succeeded by his 3<sup>rd</sup> son Judas, known as 'The Hammer' or Judas Maccabeus, who by avoiding pitched battles, and by guerrilla warfare, defeated and routed every Syrian army sent against him, and in 165 BC retook Jerusalem, purified the temple and restored the daily sacrifice. He fell in battle in 160 BC and was succeeded by his younger brother Jonathan who was later slain. His son known as John Hyrcanus had a long and prosperous reign. Others followed with varying success. (Also, this marvellous pre-writing of history by the spirit of prophecy through Daniel in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC motivated the modernists as described at the beginning of this article). Alexander the Great, the Ptolemys of Egypt, the kings of the south and the Seleucids of Syria, the kings of the north and even the Romans (Dan. 11:30, ships of Chittim) are all amazing prophetic predictions found in Daniel. Time and space forbid further details, but at some juncture during the latter part of this period a new class of spiritual leaders arose who understood the prophetic scriptures and knew how to instruct the people. There were persons like Simeon and Anna (Luke chapter 2) who at the birth of Jesus waited for the consolation of Israel, and later, Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:51). These foreshadow what we end-time believers should be doing, awaiting the kingdom of God, which is for us, the millennial reign of Jesus on earth.

Between the Testaments, Satan sought to Hellenize the Jews (the Septuagint version was of course Greek), and secular humanism, democracy and many other influences of modern thought were seeded



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and birthed during that period. (David Pawson elaborated on this in his fine book “De-greecing the Church”). Also during that period other groups like scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees arose, and also synagogues, giving a backdrop, and often opposition, to our Lord’s ministry. God was not silent during this period.

Having superficially examined the background of our verse, we can now infer some contemporary applications. The Maccabees were totally committed and sold out to their cause. The first challenge is, “They that *know* their God,” both the starting point in the Christian life and its continuing necessity: John 17:3, “And this is eternal life that they might *know You*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ who you have sent.” Salvation and eternal life are to do with *relationship*, the several marks of which are shown in the first epistle of John by the phrase “and hereby we know that we know him by ...” In other words, we should have ‘birth marks’. Thereafter our constant aim should be to

know Him better, summed up in Paul’s wonderful desire, “That I may *know* Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death” (Phil. 3:10). These last 2 characteristics show how difficult experiences help us to know Him better. We must always seek to enhance and deepen our relationship with the Lord. The big danger without these is found in Matthew 7:21-23. Even miraculous ministries might evoke that solemn statement at the end from Jesus, “I never knew you.” All of this will make us *strong* and the next step is to do *exploits*! Acts is a record of how the early church did just that. The remnant church is now called to complete the exploits before Jesus returns to take His church, and we can be amongst those involved in such. A message on these is for another time, or for somebody else to pick up. Church history is replete with many of these exploits to date, and may we complete the final chapters. May Daniel 11:32 be the desire and experience of all who read this article. ■



*The people who know their  
God shall be strong and  
carry out great exploits*

(Dan. 11:32).

# THOSE WHO KNOW THEIR GOD



Pastor Ian Huxham  
*Evangel Church, Sidmouth*

**A**s I sit at my desk to write this article, my understanding is that the CMFI magazine in which it is contained, will be available for distribution at the South West Bible Week. Although I trust this article may stand alone for those of you who did not attend the Bible Week, my prayer is that in many ways, it will provoke much continued thought among those of you who did attend. In any event, I should perhaps begin by explaining that both the Bible Week and this particular edition of the magazine share

the same theme taken from the second half of verse 32 of Daniel chapter 11, *"the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits."*

Having prayerfully considered that which I should share, the intention of this article is to spend a little time focusing both on the fulfilment of Daniel's prophetic words (of which I shall provide only an overview) and then more importantly perhaps, to emphasise the absolute need to know God in our lives both for now and in the testing times to come - and how to know Him.



## THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION AND THE MACCABEES

Many times, we are reminded in God's word that it is not our physical stature nor our earthly capabilities that qualify us to serve the purposes of God in our lives. We need only recall the boy David who faced down the Philistine giant Goliath. Or perhaps Gideon hiding in the wine press, who later, leading just 300 'valiant men' won a decisive victory over the Midianite army. No, it is neither our physical stature nor our earthly capabilities that matter so much as how well we know our God. A further example is provided in the fulfilment of Daniel's prophetic word concerning the carrying out of great exploits.

Daniel's words are incredibly encouraging to us because they stand the test of time and remain true for us today. However, in context Daniel was prophesying about an event which found its fulfilment in the intertestamental period, which is a time spanning some



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400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New. By the Spirit of God, Daniel accurately predicted the events surrounding two warring kings, the king of the North and the king of the South, and the impact of those events upon Jerusalem. The land to the north was Syria and the land to the south was Egypt, and at the time of the fulfilment of Daniels' prophecy, both were Hellenistic, Macedonian Greek, following the division of the Macedonian empire established by Alexander the Great.

The king of the North is a term that referred to a line of Greek Syrian kings known as Antiochus, of which perhaps the most notorious and brutal was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who declared himself as god (Epiphanes meaning god manifest or chosen of God). Having invaded Egypt and subsequently leaving as victor, on the way home to Syria, he then looted the temple in Jerusalem, stationed a garrison there and defiled the temple by sacrificing unclean animals. This is quite likely the 'abomination of desolation' of which Daniel also wrote. Later he went out to invade Egypt again but on this occasion was prevented from doing so by the Romans, and this just made him mad – or madder still, because the Jews already thought of him as a mad man. In his frustration, he became intent on even more destruction elsewhere, and as he particularly hated the Jews, he returned to Jerusalem. He bought off Jewish officials and stopped the daily sacrifices. Only on this occasion, he was met with Jewish resistance (the Maccabean revolt). And it is of the Maccabees that Daniel was speaking



when he prophesied that the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits.

Now, how does all this information help us?

## **REJOICE AND BE EXCEEDINGLY GLAD IN PERSECUTION**

Although finding its fulfillment in the Maccabees, Daniel's prophecy still speaks to us today. The reason for this being that in Antiochus IV Epiphanes, we are given a clear picture (a type, or foreshadow) of the Antichrist who is to come. This is confirmed for us by the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24:15-16 who, when explaining to His disciples the sign of His coming and the end of the age, begins to describe the beginning of the Great Tribulation thus:

"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Mt. 24:15,16).

Being that the purpose of this article is not to explain my own personal understanding of end time events, the timing of the rapture, or whether we (the believing church) will or will not be around to witness this time, I would simply point out that prior to this seismic event, in the last days, the spirit of antichrist and lawlessness will abound. This will be a testing time for all true believers. It will be a time of intense persecution. Perhaps some of you have already begun to experience

the beginnings of it. Certainly, I, along with a number of others, have received the unction of the Holy Spirit to warn our fellowships to prepare for it. And in doing so, we remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:1, that when people revile us and persecute us and say all kinds of evil against us falsely for His sake, we are to, "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Do you recall in Acts 5:41 when the apostles were on trial, "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." Remember how Paul and Silas sang in jail, even singing in the midnight hour. Did they enjoy their persecution? I doubt it but they endured it, and they not only endured it, but they did so with joy. Throughout it all, Paul knew the sufficiency of Christ's grace, as we discover in 2 Corinthians chapter 12 and verses 9 and 10:

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Scripture tells us of so many heroes in the faith who were intensely persecuted. Most all of the disciples died a martyr's death. And we should remind ourselves

**“**  
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that when we suffer for our faith, it is identification with Jesus. I don't know if you are aware of this but the English word for martyr is translated from a Greek word that means 'witness'. Saul of Tarsus was there when Stephen was stoned, and he saw at first hand his witness. But the stoning of Stephen did not stem the growth of the early church - far from it, persecution resulted in the growth of the church. Later, many of those who saw the witness of those martyred in the Colosseum were left wondering why the followers of Jesus would lay down their lives for Him rather than offer a pinch of salt to Zeus. And today in places all over the world, many, many followers of Jesus continue to lay down their lives as their witness. Not for one moment am I suggesting that our great exploit will be solely to die for our faith - before we die for Christ we must first live for Christ. However, in living for Christ I am certain that persecution will come, "A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20).

There is a saying that goes, 'if you never run into the devil, you must be going in the same direction.' I sense that before

too long, if you continue unswervingly in your faith, you must soon run into the enemy. The way things are progressing in the world, I would venture to say that before too long it will be impossible to be a true follower of Jesus Christ and not be on a collision course with the enemy.

### **BUT THOSE WHO KNOW THEIR GOD ...**

I am convinced that persecution, particularly in this nation will soon intensify. Looking back, for quite some time I used to wonder how it was that the martyrs and those who have suffered intense persecution were able to do so whilst maintaining their witness and continuing steadfastly for Christ. I now begin to understand that it can only be by Christ's grace, which as He said to Paul, "is sufficient for you." And glory to God, it will be sufficient for each of us. His strength is made perfect in weakness and when we are weak, then we are strong. As it was with the Bible characters of old, neither our physical stature nor our earthly capabilities will qualify us to serve the purposes of God in our lives, only the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that grace, we need not fear any of the things we are about to suffer. Even if we are imprisoned, or called to die, we need not fear. His grace will be sufficient and there will be a crown. The martyr's crown is called the crown of life. It is referred to in James 1:12 and also in Revelation 2:10, an inspirational word to the persecuted church:

"Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be

tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

The reward for our persecution will make it all worth it. As Jesus has told us, “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Dear friend, we can face our future in this life knowing that we are well able, knowing that those who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits. *But you must know God!* And the first step to knowing God is to receive Jesus Christ and accept Him as Saviour. When you do, you will be filled with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will help you read God’s word through which He has made Himself known to men and revealed His Son Jesus Christ. He will also help you pray and praise God (God inhabits the praises of His people) and bring you into fellowship with spiritual

brothers and sisters (where two or three are gathered in His name, He is in the midst of them). But it all starts when you receive Jesus and accept Him as Saviour.

Should it be the case that you have read this article and do not yet know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, now is your time to receive Him. Simply believe that He is the Christ, the Son of God who died for your transgression and rose again victorious over death so that you do not have to pay the consequence of your sin and may have eternal life in Him. Jesus said that no one comes to the Father except through Him. Those who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits, and the only way to know God is through Jesus. When you receive Jesus you will not only carry out great exploits, but you will also discover that you can do *all* things through Christ who strengthens you. To Him be all praise, honour, and glory now and forever more. Amen. ■

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■





# THAT I MAY KNOW HIM



**Pastor Peter Bond**

*The Lighthouse Christian Fellowship,  
Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset*

<sup>10</sup>*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; <sup>11</sup>If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. <sup>12</sup>Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*  
<sup>13</sup>*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, <sup>14</sup>I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians. 3:10-14

**O**ur text is found in Philippians chapter 3, verses 10-14.

### A DECLARED INTENTION

On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018 a young man walked down the sands at Margate and into the sea. His *declared intention* was to swim round the entire coastline of mainland Great Britain. One hundred and fifty-seven days later, having swum between six and twelve hours a day, he emerged from the sea and walked up those same sands, the first man ever to have accomplished that particular feat of endurance. In the course of the swim he “accidentally” broke the record from Land’s End to John o’ Groats. However, had he stopped there, or stopped, say, at Scarborough, or Great Yarmouth, or even Herne Bay, as far as the record keepers were concerned, it would have been a failed swim. Unfair? Uncharitable? Perhaps. But their verdict would have

been based on the premise that his *declared intention* was to swim from Margate to Margate; and anything short of that would have barred him from a place in the Hall of Fame.

Beloved, the apostle says: ‘Now they do it to obtain a *corruptible crown*; but we *an incorruptible*’ (1Cor. 9:25). A perusal of the main points of 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 would be much in keeping with our thoughts in this article. When we embarked on the ‘course’ referred to by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7 our *declared intention* surely was to *finish that ‘course’* (sic.); indeed, to ‘press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus’ (Phil. 3:14); and to ‘obtain’ the ‘prize’ (1 Cor. 9:24). It may be that insufficient emphasis has been laid in recent times on the solemn admonition lovingly ministered in Hebrews 4:1. One wonders sometimes how much “ministry”



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is merely aimed at keeping the people content, and regular in their attendance at services. Concern for their souls often does not extend to preaching them the whole truth. In our text, we catch a glimpse of Paul the "spiritual athlete": running that he may obtain, running to receive the prize, running to finish his course; running lest he should 'come short' and be adjudged 'a castaway', break that word down, beloved, into its two most obvious parts, and you see immediately the proper meaning as intended here. Before considering 'exploits' for the Lord, we must each be certain that we have a firm grasp on the very basis of all Christian experience that opens to us the hope of 'receiving the end of [our] faith, *even the salvation of [our] souls*' (1 Peter 1:9).

The apostle begins, 'That I may *know Him*' (Phil. 3:10). I need hardly say again that such personal knowledge is the

linchpin of all that may be considered as true and, therefore, biblical salvation. In this same verse, Paul recognises that *fitness for the race* consists in a progressive death to self, sin, and the world. In other words, if the prize is to be his, he must progressively be 'made conformable unto His [Jesus'] death'. We blithely sing, "Oh, to be like Jesus!" forgetting that such a likeness can only be fashioned by the constant application of the cross in our lives; indeed, by submitting ourselves to 'the fellowship of His sufferings'. If we are truly 'crucified with Christ' (Gal. 2:20), and truly 'buried with Him by baptism' (Rom. 6:4) – not simply dunked sacramentally in water – then, we are incapable of envy, bitterness, unforgiveness, gossip etc. How wonderful, beloved! As any participant in a physical endeavour will tell us, *fitness is the key*. The Christian life, beloved, is not a hundred metre dash, or even a marathon; it is *an endurance event* (see



Matt. 24:13): and the Lord must ever strengthen and equip us for the next leg of it. In our “wannabe” world of dreams and ambitions, it is vital for Christians to understand that a sincere desire to finish the course, of itself, does not guarantee the completion. Spiritual fitness is a real and refining work of the Holy Ghost; and, as with physical fitness, it can often be an uncomfortable and demanding experience, stretching us far beyond what we conceive to be our limits. While the *prophetic future* may be known to us in broad terms by revelation of the word of God, our *personal future* is known only to the Lord. Thus, His work in us must take into account much that at present is not perceptible to us.

### A FIXED RESOLVE

In Philippians 3:11 we witness the apostle’s “stop at nothing” mindset. He begins, ‘If by any means’. That’s how serious this ‘race’ is, beloved. Paul represents here not the exception, but the rule. He is holding firmly in view the glorious truth imparted to us in 1 Thessalonians 4:14, often termed “the rapture”. The ‘resurrection’ referred to in Philippians 3:11 is not the general resurrection of all who have lived and died. The Greek word here (*exanastasis*) is used only once in the New Testament, and means literally, “the resurrection *out from among the dead*”. Paul has in mind ‘the dead in Christ’ who ‘shall rise first’ (1 Thess. 4:16). We can see how this great truth in our time has been sung and spoken of to a point where it becomes a happy-go-lucky, complacent assumption that everyone who calls Jesus ‘Lord’ is going to make it. Not so with the writer of Philippians, the apostle to the



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BELOVED, MAY I ASK YOU  
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Gentiles. No, no: 'If by any means I might attain', is his fixed resolve. May it be ours, dear friends.

Look now at the opening statement of Phillippians 3:12, and ask the question: Do you mean to tell us, Paul, it's not automatic? It's not already "in the bag"? But I have always believed that once I was saved etc. ... It seems not, beloved; not for Paul anyway. Only when writing to Timothy from death row in the city of Rome can Paul confidently assert, 'I have finished my course, I have kept the faith' (2 Tim. 4:7; see verse 8 also). Beloved, may I ask you the question: Is the unceasing battle against our natural complacency a dominant theme in the ministries you are submitting yourselves to? Is it a theme at all? If not, those ministries could be selling you short. It is a sobering fact of spiritual life that we gradually become what we sit under, if we are open to what is being said. In my humble experience, a proclivity for partial

truth is far more common than it is for the fullness of truth.

Paul sees that, by faith, he must take hold of ('apprehend') the very thing for which he was himself taken hold of ('apprehended') by the Lord Jesus Christ on the Damascus road – see the end of Philippians 3:12. Again, in verse 13, he sees it not as "done and dusted"; but very much as *work in progress*, the very stuff of the race itself. Observe the apostle here, beloved, as it were, mid-stride: *one hand pushing back the encroaching past, the other reaching towards the approaching future*. How many of us can testify to the perils of allowing the past to invade and repossess our minds? Paul is not suggesting here that the facts of his past, some of which he faithfully records in the Scriptures, may literally be forgotten. But such things, since they are no longer remembered by God (Heb. 10:17) must not be permitted to have any weight or influence upon the mind;

and we are not to suffer any degree of condemnation on account of them. 'There is', after all, 'no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus'. But notice, beloved, 'who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit' (Rom. 8:1). We must always get the whole thought of God, and be willing to face its implications. I am tempted at times to urge Christians to throw away the breakfast table "promise box"! *Truth can become a lie when incomplete in its expression.* Take for example the oft-quoted biblical cliché, 'All things work together for good' (Rom. 8:28) - that is by no means God's truth when severed from the rest of the verse.

Lastly, I must 'press toward the mark'. Though this may legitimately be thought of as "pressing on towards the finishing point": more exactly 'the mark' refers to what we might call a lane marking on the ground. The 'way' is 'narrow' for all runners; but the 'course' is unique to the individual: it is peculiar to each one of us, and ordained of God. I must hug ('press toward') the lane marking ('the mark') set down by the Lord; for to deviate from that line (as was the rule in the ancient games) would be to risk disqualification. Let us take comfort, beloved, in that 'the Author' is also the 'Finisher' (in all senses of the word) of our faith/race (see Heb. 12:2). Notice that, like Himself, the Lord intends us to run our course with joy. By abiding in Him, and by consenting ever to His leadership, we shall never finally stumble, fall, stray, or fail to endure to the end. For the great 'Forerunner' has already ('for us') 'entered into that within the veil' (Heb. 6:19, 20): where He looks for us even now, and expects to receive us at the last. Hallelujah! ■



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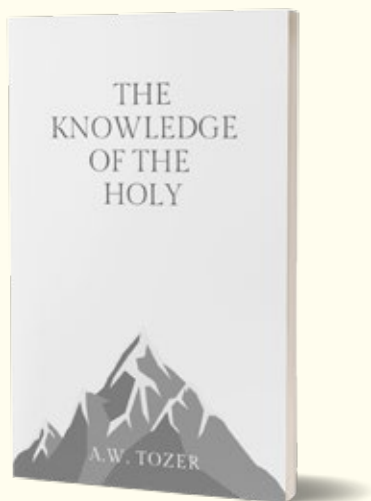
# GRAIN FOR THE FAMINE

Book Reviews, and encouragement to read good Christian books.



## The Knowledge of the Holy

Author: A. W. Tozer



Review by Paul Sherbird

**In my study I have a few select books for reference which are always close at hand. Among them, one very often chosen is this book by A. W. Tozer, subtitled, “The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life.”** In twenty three short and very readable chapters, Tozer explains various attributes of God, and gives profound understanding and insight into the true character of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

First published in 1961, the book remains hugely relevant today. Tozer noted in his preface that, “The Church

has surrendered her once lofty concept of God, and has substituted it for one so low, so ignoble, as to be utterly unworthy of thinking, worshipping men ... The low view of God entertained almost universally among Christians is the cause of a hundred lesser evils everywhere among us.” One wonders what his comment would be now, 62 years later when doctrinal apostasy, compromise, and defective morals have afflicted much of our contemporary church?

Many consider Tozer a true prophet, and he saw a worrying, and ongoing decline in the church’s concept of God, and believed that the heaviest obligation lying upon the church is to, “purify and elevate her concept of God until it is once more worthy of Him.” He considered that the church faced great calamity if it did not rediscover the majesty of God, and if it failed to pass on to future generations a noble and Biblically correct conception of God.

This book is not written as a technical, theological exercise, but is intended to reach into the hearts and minds of those who long to know and understand the truth about God, to encourage reverent meditation and worship on the being of God, and to be of benefit for those who hearts are stirred to seek after God Himself. I highly recommend this book; if you long to know the truth about the character of God, and desire to worship Him in spirit and truth, as God Himself desires (Jn. 4:23,24), you will find within its pages much to inspire, educate, challenge, bless, and help. ■



## 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



**HAVE YOU EVER  
CONSIDERED HAVING A  
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**

Southwest of England

## **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Mon 29 April - Thur 2 May, 2024

Venue: New Testament Pentecostal Church, Ballynahinch, N. Ireland.

More details to follow. Expressions of interest very welcome.



**Christian  
Ministerial  
Fellowship  
International**

## **REGIONAL DAYS**

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

## **INTERNATIONAL**

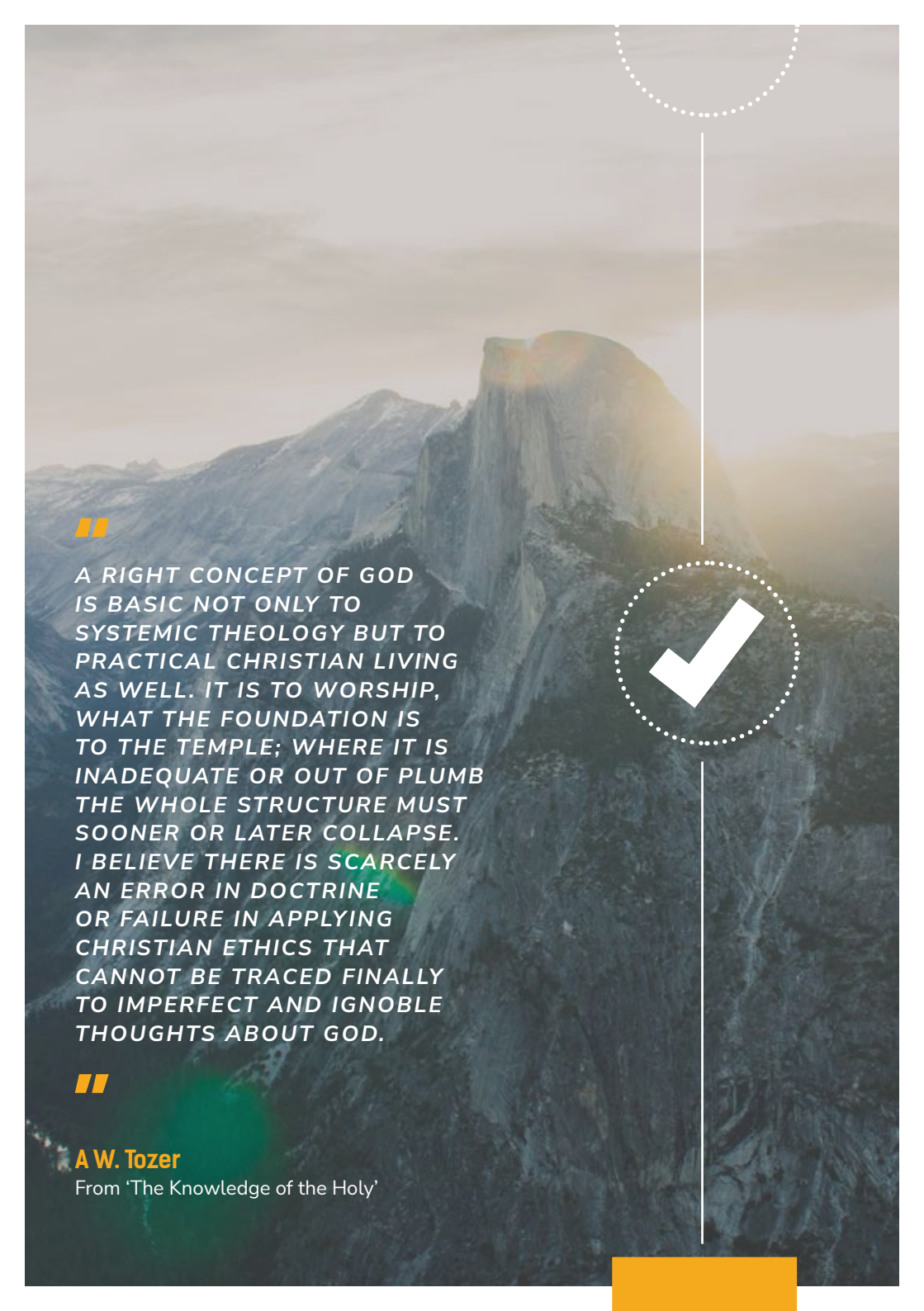
A West Africa Conference to be held in Ghana is in the planning stages for 2023.

## **KEEP IN TOUCH**

- ▶ Be informed of upcoming events
- ▶ Invite a CMFI speaker
- ▶ Request more copies of the magazine

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From 'The Knowledge of the Holy'