CSDASignet

"And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO YAH" (Exodus 28:36)

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CLAIMING AND RE-CLAIMING

COVENANT

The New Moon ...page 7

Introduction

In this month's article I have incorporated the main points from the last two sermons I gave over the CSDA Internet Radio, the transcripts of which may be found in full at the locations below:

Within The Ark www.binaryangel.net/sermons/SN08.html

Catch The Fire www.binaryangel.net/sermons/SN09.html

The key message behind both of these studies is an examination of the "Covenant," the agreement that Yahweh makes with His people through which He blesses them and prepares them for the life to come. The first study was geared toward those who were not yet a part of the unique, undivided Body of the Messiah, (1Cor 1:10-13, 6:17, 10:17) while the second was an encouragement for revival and renewal among those who are already members.

As we shall see, the concept of the Covenant is not some ancient rite that began with Abraham and ended at the Cross, nor is it some dusty term reserved for theologians and historians. Rather, the Covenant is – and must be – a living reality for all who claim the name of Christ. It is within the Covenant, and only there, that the Three Angels' Message of Adventism can be properly expressed, and it is through the Covenant that Yahweh has made with mankind, by the infinite price paid in the blood of the Eternal Son, that we are – as stated in previous studies – "saved as individuals, (Rom 10:9-13) sealed as Tribes, (Rev 7:4-8) and redeemed as a holy nation." (1Pet 2:9)

Come Thou and All Thy House

The first sermon, "Within The Ark," began as an outgrowth of a series of studies related to evangelism, but it resulted in the use of Noah's Ark as a parable for the Church, and an examination of such subjects as Church Membership and the unity of the faith.

We need to understand primarily that Church Membership, like a place in the Ark, and like salvation itself, is an opportunity, not a right. It is an invitation, not a command. Those who do not see the beauty of it, the benefit of it, will not receive a blessing from it, although it is a *necessary* blessing for those who would follow the Bible's teachings.

When explaining Church Membership to those who are unfamiliar with it, or who have already rejected it in favor of isolation or a non-denominational pathway, we need to do more than just explain from the Bible why our beliefs on this matter are "right" and others' are "wrong." We must show how and why the perfect unity of the Father and Son find expression in the physical universe by the voluntary and mutual submission of Church members to one another and to the leading of Yahweh through His Holy Spirit.

It is only in very recent years that concepts such as "Church organization," "structure," and especially "authority," have become dirty words to Christians. This is a most startling development, considering that we all claim to be preparing for service to a divine King. "But," some say, "I follow the King directly now. I don't need pastors, elders and deacons telling me what to believe." It is a valid declaration that Church officials are not the ultimate authority on truth – yet statements such as that are seldom made

from a position of balance; they usually indicate a rejection of all authority, even those outlined in the Word Itself.

As Scripture tells us, "And [Yahweh] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph 4:11, 12)

We see, then, that these things have a definite place in the Christian world, "and so much the more, as ye see the day [of judgment] approaching." (Heb 10:25)

Yahweh deals with His people in terms of Covenants. He loves all men, and blesses them as He can, and answers prayers as He can, but He can only *consistently* bless, and ultimately save, those who are united with Him in a Covenant.

We read, for example, "I, Yahweh, have called thee in right-eousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am Yahweh; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa 42:6-8)

And yet Christ said of His disciples, "And the glory which [the Father] gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we [the Father and Son] are one." (John 17:22)

We have read that Yahweh declares, even when drawing men to Himself, "My glory will I not give to another," yet this glory was given to Christ, and then given by Him to us. How is this possible? The answer is already given in the words of the Messiah; the reason why He was given the glory of the Father is because He was able to truthfully declare, "we are one." It is the unity of the Father and Son that makes the Son not "another," but rather an expression (the "express image" – Heb 1:3) of the Father. We are thereafter invited, by means of becoming "one" with the Father and Son through the latter's sacrifice, to enter into a Covenant where we are no longer outsiders to the divine family, but become adopted sons, and "co-heirs" of the glory that is life everlasting.

It is unity with Christ, and the Father by Him, that ultimately saves, for we read of Yahshua's statement, "Then will I profess unto [the unsaved], 'I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mat 7:23) "Knowledge" here is a much more intimate thing than mere intellectual understanding, as we have said in various places before. It is a friendship, an accord, a covenant-relationship just as marriage is a covenant-relationship.

In our recent teachings we have placed quite an emphasis on evangelism and Church Membership. These two concepts are not at all disconnected. In fact, one is necessary for the other to be meaningful, and so much the more as we see the end right upon us. As the other issues of *The CSDA Signet* make plain the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists is

insisting on its policy of force and oppression, and will receive its expected end. In the process, however, it brings upon the genuine Christians a great time of trouble. It is not to be denied that the circumstances will be unpleasant, for as it is written, "all that will live godly in Christ Yahshua shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim 3:12) Yet we are also told the end of the matter; those that strike with the sword will ultimately fall, and those who rely upon the Savior for their protection, resorting neither to the arm of flesh nor the policy of worldly men, will not be ashamed in the Day of Judgment.

But of the matter of the intersection between evangelism and Church Membership, we might say much.

One that brings a covenant but no evangelism, no good news to share, is an enslaver. He seeks, like the Pharisees, to bind the soul into a works-based system, an obligation, an exchange. Unfortunately there are many who treat Yahweh as if He honors such bargains.

Yahweh says, "THIS is the covenant: I will be your Elohim, and protect you, bless you and save you. You will be my people, walking in all my ways and testifying of me." This is the covenant, and there can be no other... that covenant is the Gospel, the Good News.

On the other hand, an evangelist who brings "Good News" of a type, but does not bring with him a covenant, is nothing but a deceiver, for Yahweh is a God of agreements. Yes, as stated above, we are saved individually; yet some people take this knowledge and somehow, amazingly, come to the conclusion that this means Yahweh is suddenly against structure, order and Law, even though all of these were His very own inventions. These are not unspiritual ideas, but unfortunately this world has seen the abuse of these good concepts for so long that it is difficult to separate them from the bad examples that are so abundant.

Some have tried to work for Yahshua without entering into His covenant; indeed, they believe they are doing so even now. In the early days, the Church was new and well organized, so we have few examples of errors regarding this matter. A few very dramatic ones do exist, however. We read of this incident:

"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Yahshua, saying, 'We adjure you by Yahshua whom Paul preacheth.' And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so, and the evil spirit answered and said, 'Yahshua I know, and Paul I know; but who are *ye*?' And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." (Acts 19:13-16)

It is true that in such places as Luke 9:49, 50 Yahshua said, "He that is not against us is for us." This does not, however, amount to a commendation of independent ministries and

ministers. We are not to seek to "forbid" anyone from proclaiming good things and the doing of good works; yet those who operate outside of the Covenant that the Father and Son have established have no sure protection from Satan's forces (as seen in the quote above), and may not give a reliable report of what the Gospel is. In fact, if they were truly giving the necessary measure of the Good News, how could they speak and act (whether actively by their doctrine, or passively by their example) against the very unity of all believers that the Bible so powerfully promotes? (1Cor 1:10)

In terms of reaction to the Gospel, including its elements of warning and judgment (for this is part of the overall message of Yahshua) there are five kinds of people. Some resist the truth, either disbelieving it, or lacking a desire to accept it. Some do nothing, waiting to see what will happen before making a change in their lives. Three types accept the word as it is spoken to them. The first find the Way of Life and stand near it, pointing to it. Some do not find it at all, and some both find it and go in themselves.

Obviously, all but the very last are in danger of final destruction, but not so obvious is the fact that those three kinds that move toward the truth are those who are in the most immediate danger while this life lasts. These are they against whom Satan particularly moves, for he has no need to stir up the do-nothings, or to agitate those who are already moving away from Yahweh. He is actively seeking to destroy those who are drawing near, (1Pet 5:8) so we must be sure that we are not the first type, who gain only an intellectual knowledge of the truth but do not live it themselves, or like the second who get distracted and do not find it at all. No, if we are moving toward the Life Everlasting, we must both know and do the truth.

When discussing Covenants and Membership, the question is often asked, "Do I need to be a baptized member of the CSDA Church to be saved?" The answer to that is much like the answer to the more general question, "Do I need to be baptized?" The answer we give to those who have heard and understood the message – at least to some degree – is, "It depends upon your reason for not being baptized." The Scripture declares plainly that Yahweh searches the hearts of men; (1Ch 28:9) so what is in the heart of one who hears this message, accepts most if not all of it, and yet says, "I don't want a part in that Body"?

If one has not yet been baptized into membership because of a lack of opportunity, that is one thing, and is perfectly fine. When the opportunity presents itself, the matter is easily rectified.

If one has not been baptized because of a lack of desire, however, that is a problem indeed. These are they who say, "I don't see the need for the covenant, but the teachings are good." There are two problems with this approach. First, they will not have a genuine, living testimony; Satan can easily destroy their usefulness by simply having the ones with whom they are speaking ask, "Why aren't you in unity with those who are teaching this truth?" If the reason why is because of a lack of

desire, or not seeing the importance of membership, there is no good response to that question, and the evangelism is likely to fail.

Second, for the individual's own sake, the question needs to be asked in return, "Why is there such a lack of desire?" The CSDA Church is not, at its core level, about doctrines, as we have endeavored to express. It's not about the teachings, or practices, at its most essential base. It is about the relationship between the Son and His Body on earth, which consists of united, but individual, souls. What the CSDA Church is, and what membership within it means is, a representation in human flesh of the unity shared by the Father and Son. That is it.

The keeping of the commandments is a result of this unity, because the commandments are a representation in actions of the character of the Godhead. The faith of Yahshua is a result of this unity, because the faith is a sharing of the mind that they have. (1Cor 2:16) The victory over sin, a connected concept, is a result of this, because it is the abiding of the Son in us that keeps us from transgression. (1John 3:9)

The New Moons are a result of this unity, because by this ordinance in the time of the moon's darkness we prepare our hearts to receive new light as we stand firmly on all that we have thus far received.

If one asks, "Can I be saved without being a member?" it's not necessarily a problem, but the reason why the question is even asked does need to be examined. A burning desire for unity with Yahweh and His people is direct evidence of the divine Spirit residing in the soul. A lack of that burning desire is a sure sign of something necessary for salvation missing, for if we do not desire to be with our brethren here on earth, we will not desire the Heavenly fellowship in the ceaseless ages of the New Creation.

We have done a number of studies on Covenants and Church Membership. In fact, an entire book, *A Sure Covenant* (www.binaryangel.net/books/), is all about this subject. What I'd like to emphasize now, however, is the importance of presenting this in its true light to the people we evangelize.

We know that in the antediluvian world a long period of warning was given, and then swift destruction. This is a lesson for us in the last days, for it is written that the time will come upon the unprepared as a "thief in the night." Some may think that if the time of warning is long, the coming of the actual disaster will be easily seen... but this is not the case.

Some, when they hear our message, act as I imagine some did when seeing Noah building the boat. They may say, "That is a nice boat." But seeing no value in it, (for remember, it had never rained before) they simply move on. Others may say, "That is a nice boat," and when Noah invites them inside, they say, "No, thank you... I like the idea of the boat, and I see the need for escaping the flood, but what I plan to do, since your

boat is so large, is to stand on top of it, or hang on to the sides. When the waters rise, I will be safe, but I don't need to go inside where there are animals of all kinds and close quarters. I want to keep my distance, and I value my space." Others, the very few, say, "That is a nice boat," and when Noah says, "Come in," they agree and enter.

The first group of people, which sees the strength of the boat and moves on, consists of those who don't see the benefit of unity and covenants at all. They believe that they have a better idea, and Yahweh, they imagine, must go by their rules. Obviously, they are going to be wiped away in the judgment.

We are seeing more and more members of the second group. These say, "This is a good boat," and they say, "The flood is coming," and they say, "We must be safe from the flood," but they think that by being near the ark, they are sufficiently "close" to salvation. This is a grave mistake. Some may have thought that they could stand on the ark for a while, and when the waters went down, everything would be fine. But let's see what would have happened if anyone had, theoretically, done this in the days of the Flood:

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of Heaven were opened. And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered." (Gen 7:11, 17-19)

As can be clearly seen, the flood was not a mere raising and lowering of the waters. It was a cataclysmic event, violent in strength and long in duration. We understand from the *Spirit of Prophecy* writings that even with the ark's sturdy construction, were it not for the assistance of the angels in holding it together, the ark would have broken apart. [*The Spirit of Prophecy Volume One*, page 74]

The trials of the last days will be exactly the same. Some see our message, our practices, our teachings on Victory, and they say, "Those are nice principles, but I don't see the need to become a part of your organization, your body." They say this because they do not understand covenants; it is not the practices, not even the principles, that save us. It is Christ who saves His people, and those who are *His* people are those who are in covenant relationship with Him as defined by the teachings of Himself and His apostles. It is not merely those who claim to be Christians, nor those who do "the things Christians do." If they are not covenanted to Him, and to each other (for the Covenant works both ways, as described by the two great commandments in the Law: Mat 22:37-40) such works are without value.

Those who are trying to follow along, to stand on the principles of truth without uniting themselves with those who are OF the

truth, have no way of withstanding the trials and temptations of the Time of Jacob's Trouble, and it will be far worse – at least in terms of the spiritual deceptions and testing, if not the actual physical danger – than they have imagined. Thus, the only true safety is inside the ark. The only true safety is in uniting with those who are heading heavenward, and this is true for two reasons, one directly spiritual, and one more practical.

The spiritual reason is as we have seen: Yahweh blesses people through covenants. He may, and has, answered prayers for, led, and prospered, those who are not in covenant with Him, and these blessings are designed to lead men to gratitude. However, without the covenant in place, such a one has no defense against Satan, against wicked men, or against the disasters that may seem to come by providence or cause-and-effect.

The practical reason is that although it is Yah's grace that saves, our faithful response determines whether or not that grace will be effective. It is grace that grants us the freedom – even the very *ability* – to respond in faith. And a part of that faithful response is the development of a Christian character. Yahweh is no respecter of persons, but He respects character... and character is *the* evidence of our covenant with Him.

How does this relate practically to the idea of a covenant, such as Church Membership, being necessary for sanctification? By this: except under the most extraordinary of circumstances, character is developed within a community. We read, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Pro 27:17) It is thus, by sharing experiences, that we come to know Yahshua "in His saints" as it is written in 2Th 1:10.

When we therefore speak of Church Membership, and covenants, let us remember the parable provided by the history of the ark... we see that it is not enough to praise the ship-builders, or to plan to stand upon the boat when it is afloat (for this is what some propose to do) but they must follow on into the Ark itself, and be with the people, in every sense of the word, when the door is shut.

When we have Yahshua, we have His people, for we are not separate from Him any more than a living body can be separate from its head. This is what it means to follow Him, and this is what it means to be in His Covenant. It is not that the people save you, or that the fellowship saves you... but among that people, and within that fellowship, is where Yahweh happens to place those whom He will save.

Go Forth

The second sermon was directed toward those who are already members of the CSDA Church; they have understood what was spoken above, and thus have no great need of every point being reinforced with Scripture. They know these things already, and need only, as it is written in the Word, to speak "often one to another" (Mal 3:16) about such things.

The inspiration for the sermon came during a visit taken by my wife and myself to Miami, Florida, where a number of friends and relatives reside. During the course of our stay we were able to give a number of Bible studies to her aunt and to the person with whom we were staying. Although the studies went well, with little actual resistance, I could not help but notice that the *passive* resistance that many put up when our message is spoken in their hearing is in many ways even worse. Those who have an active resistance will at least voice their concerns, and state their disagreements. Passive resistance will say, "That's a wonderful message," but then make no effort toward absorbing the truths that are shared.

One of the last nights we were in Miami, I was praying about our evangelism, and also for the efforts of our pastor, who is currently out of the country, and who may need to remain thus in order to avoid the persecution that is about to await him in the United States for the faith and the testimony that we bear...

As I prayed, I clearly heard the voice of Yahweh, as the voice of an Angel, giving a very firm caution about those of us who remain here in North America. I was told that if the work being done in another country succeeds, even partially, the CSDA message could take firm hold in that place. This much is good, and a great blessing, however, I was told that if things were not strengthened here, this latest outpost would become THE center of the CSDA work.

Now, what does this mean? It means that the probationary period of this country is very close to closing completely, and those of us who have not been actively heeding and obeying the voice of Yahweh will be left without a missionary field when it does. We must be prepared for such an eventuality, and ready to do what the Spirit of the Most High directs, for merely having one's name on the CSDA record books (for all its importance discussed above) will not help.

It is true that Christ saves, not the Church; but the Church is the name we give to that group of people whom Christ has covenanted to save, as stated earlier in this study. Yet mere membership is not enough. *Ideally* it is, for a "member" is one who participates actively in the membership activities, including evangelism, and the walk of sanctification; but we must ask ourselves, which of us would be prepared to hear the voice of Yahweh as the still, small voice that came to Elijah, and change our whole lives, sever many connections, give up most comforts, for the sake of the Gospel work? The answer must be, "Each of us, all of us."

I saw very clearly that night what is obvious to me now, that our work, our efforts, have not generally been enough. In recent emails, we have received some wonderful reports of the beginning of some success in our traveling pastor's new mission field. This is cause to rejoice, and greatly, yet it must, MUST also be a call to action for those of us who are here. We must remember that the Pharisees, who were secure in their membership as the seed of Abraham, had the kingdom taken from them and given to others, because those others were more willing to bear fruit.

If we wish to be spared that eventuality, we must be provoked to action, and give all of ourselves to this work.

I spoke earlier about the Covenant, and the importance of entering into it. Now I say to those who have already claimed it that it is time to *re-claim* it, to renew our Covenant with Yahweh, for He stands ready to renew His Covenant with us. If we wish to carry forward the CSDA work in North America, we must be prepared to do just that... work... in the spirit of Agape love, and with the realization that what we know, and what we have, is necessary to save the souls of those around us.

It is time to renew our commitment to the work as individuals, and to do it, not to wait for someone to come up with good ideas. We already know the manner in which we must function, and for the specifics we must each be searching ourselves and asking, "What can I do, with my skills and resources, to press the battle to the gates, and increase the Kingdom of Yahweh?"

Now, none of us are doing nothing. I am writing articles, books and studies. My wife is making videos in Spanish on YouTube. The brothers and sisters in Canada are translating our documents into Korean, handing out flyers, and trying to get a revival started. Those that remain in Tennessee have quite a lot to deal with as the Conference's human strength comes against us even now. All of us are doing something... what I am saying is, and what I was shown was, with the times being what they are, and the end right upon us, we need to be doing more, and praying fervently that the "more" we need to be doing is shown to us while it is yet day. We must be praying fervently that we all see this greater need that I am talking about. We must be praying for one another, that we see this great need and move to fill it, and that we remain undistracted and unspotted by the world.

Now, to those who are still on the outside, I would like to just say a word to supplement and reinforce what was said in the first part of this article: Church Membership is not something like a club or any human organization. It is a spiritual commitment to represent the unity between the Father and the Son in the bond that you have with them, and with your fellow members. If you would like to know how to go about beginning this process, I will state it as simply and as plainly as I can, and I will emphasize that this is THE way, and there is no other way. The way is to understand these things:

- 1) This is no time for secrets. Privacy, of course, is the right of any person, but secrets are things that you deliberately try to keep from others, and this is an indication of sin in the life.
- 2) Confess your errors. If you've confessed them in private and haven't seen healing, confess it to someone you trust, and in public if necessary. Become accountable for what you are doing.
- a. Are you a bad example to others? Confess it, for-sake it and put it away.

- b. Do you have a weak prayer life, or poor Bible study habits? Confess it.
 - c. Do you have a love of the world? Confess it.
- d. Do you have inappropriate feelings for other people, Church members or not? Confess it.
- e. Do you have a need to look or feel important, or helpful, or intelligent? Confess it.

These things will all prevent you from receiving justification, which is only the first step in the Christian walk; and these are the days of last chances, I tell you that very plainly.

For our baptized members, it is the time to get dedicated. We also have things we need to watch for.

- 1) Are you tempted by Laodicean feelings? That needs to be confessed and cleansed.
- 2) Are you easily distracted from the Gospel work? Confess that.
- 3) Are you feeling doubtful about the way that the end time events are playing out? This is something that needs to be discussed openly.
- 4) Are you feeling discouraged by the events that have taken place? This is Satan's work on you, and you must vigorously deny his power.
- 5) Are you feeling fearful about the future? This is something to be resolved by communication. Remember that we as brethren are here to comfort and encourage one another.
- 6) Are you lacking fervor? This is similar to being tempted by Laodicean feelings, and should be acknowledged and then shed.

All of us are tempted at times, sometimes very strongly, by some of these things, myself included. But I remember the life of my Savior, and I remember the work that has been done, and is being done, by those who love humanity, and want to see them saved from destruction. I do not want the work to pass from us to a more willing field – I want us to be that more willing field, and if the work must shortly pass from this continent as the hearts of men, women and children are hardened against the truth, let it not be for lack of effort, and let us pass with it. Let us be willing to go where the harvest is ripe and ready.

I am not saying we must all move to another country, but we must be prepared to do whatever does need to be done, and we must pray for wisdom to see how we can help those who are laboring where the wheat is prepared for the barn.

I pray that this message will strike a chord with all who hear it. In particular, I pray it will inspire those who share the responsibility with me of publicly addressing our people in the name of Yahshua. We need to hold the urgency and the importance of these remaining days before all who fellowship with us — whether they are baptized already or working toward it.

I pray that all of the readers of *The CSDA Signet* will take away from this study the things that Yahweh has showed me, and the things that the Scriptures declare of this last generation:

- 1) Yahweh has established a Covenant with His people, and only those who do not reject His provisions will ultimately be redeemed. (Heb 8:10, Psa 1111:9)
- 2) None of us individually is important to the work, but together we are the only source of light this planet has. (Mat 5:14)
- 3) Yahweh must and will have a people to represent His character on the earth as a witness to His love, His patience, and also His judgment and soon return, for "he left not himself without witness" of these things. (Acts 14:17) If we are not committed to being that people, He will take the work elsewhere. (Mat 21:42, 43) I do not want to see that happen.
- 4) Those who are not yet baptized should be constantly on their knees in prayer, and then vocal about confessing their faults to Yahweh and, if necessary, to the brethren. (James 5:16) Now when I say this I do not mean constantly confessing the same class of faults over and over again, or suddenly seeing "the truth" every so often. I mean finding those things that have been in you, and then having the glory of the Gospel remove them, so that they will not be there any longer.
- 5) Those who are baptized should be constantly on their knees in prayer. We are being called now to renew our Covenant with Yahweh, and our commitment to the Gospel work. The days are few, and evil, and we will need all of our fervor, all of our love for our fellow members and those still lost in the world. We will need one-another's encouragement and prayers. (Heb 10:23-25)

May these words work on the hearts of all who read, and may they thereby be richly and eternally blessed.

- D.P. Aguilar

"In Romans 7, St. Paul says, "The law is spiritual."
What does that mean? If the law were physical,
then it could be satisfied by works, but since it is
spiritual, no one can satisfy it unless everything he
does springs from the depths of the heart. But no
one can give such a heart except the Spirit of God,
who makes the person be like the law, so that he
actually conceives a heartfelt longing for the law
and henceforward does everything, not through
fear or coercion, but from a free heart."

- Martin Luther

The New Moon

Does the moon glory in and of itself? God forbid! The glory of the moon is the sun. The "Sun of Righteousness" is the glory of the Church. The moon possesses no life in itself and produces no light of itself. As a dead body, the moon travels its prescribed course ordained by the Creator.

There is no deviation from the path. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye appear with Him in glory...ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him [the new man]." Colossians 3:3,4,9,10.

"And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ..."". Genesis 1:26. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:11.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure...That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:13,15. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16.

"Trials patiently borne, blessings gratefully received, temptations manfully resisted, meekness, kindness, mercy, and love habitually revealed, are the lights that shine forth in the character in contrast with the darkness of the selfish heart, into which the light of life has never shone." (The Mount of Blessing, p.44).

The "Sun of Righteousness" says, "Ye are the light of the world." Matthew 5:14. But "without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John [the Baptist]. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light...He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light." John 1:6-8.

In this respect John the Baptist was a "lesser light"--as it is written of him, "...to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:79.

So we conclude that the moon has significant meaning in symbolizing the humanity of the church and the church's function as "a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness...". Romans 2:19. Every true believer catches the beams from the Morning Star and transmits the light to those who sit in darkness, whether they be in their own neighborhood or in regions beyond. Christ and His people are co-partners in the great work of saving the world.

"New moon

n.

- The phase of the moon occurring when it passes between the earth and the sun and is invisible or visible only as a narrow crescent at sunset." —The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2006

The New Moon is understood by Christ's Church to be His sign of humility and our dependence on Him for life, both now and forever. The Ordinance of Humility and the Lord's Supper are observed monthly to keep fresh in our minds the scenes of Calvary and the coming day of redemption and the soon appearing of our blessed Savior. We eat of the Tree of Life (in symbol) every New Moon Day because Christ is our life--we partake of the flesh and blood of the Sin-pardoning Redeemer.

This is eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life. The living oracles of God, "It is written", are leaves of the Tree of Life, which human beings are to eat in order to gain spiritual life. As we eat the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, they become unto us eternal life, "The words that I speak unto you", He said, "they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). The restoring, vital current from Christ heals the wounds that sin has made. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:3.

"And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Yahweh." (Isaiah 66:23)

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Church Home Office: 1162 Old Highway 45 South Guys, Tennessee 38339

Editor:

Lucan Chartier claimvictory@hotmail.com (662) 287-9758

Distribution:

Giselle Aguilar bautistagiselle@hotmail.com (843) 234-0928

www.csdachurch.org