

FeedBack

They Died For the Truth

Your cover story on the martyrs who died for the Bible was absolutely exceptional ("Martyred for the Message" by Joe Maxwell, September). Few believers are aware of the supreme sacrifices men and women have made for the Word of God over the last 2,000 years. Most are aware of the brutality in Rome's coliseum, but there is much more throughout history. I was enlightened and inspired by their deeds.

Phil Hannah

Temecula, California

The bloodshed of the martyrs and their hunger to be like Christ is so humbling. I contrast this with the advertisements in your magazine for "kingdom millionaires." Where in the Bible do we find this prosperity doctrine that is promoted by the charismatic movement?

I believe the example of many charismatic leaders and their constant pleas for money and asking people to "plant seeds" have done nothing more than prostitute the perfect message of God into some sort of multilevel marketing scheme. If you really want revival, sell the jet planes, yachts and fancy cars, and get real and love the people.

Hal Farthing

Fuquay Varina, North Carolina

Where is the self-denial and brokenness of such people as Hudson Taylor, Jim Elliot, and those who gave everything to make God's Word accessible to us? When I read of the

faithfulness and power of the persecuted church in Uganda, Korea and Sudan, I am almost embarrassed to call myself a believer.

Janie Newsome

League City, Texas

Don't Stop Praying for Israel

After reading William Arensman's letter to the editor in September, I had to respond. He wrote: "I am tired of hearing the mantra, 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem.'"

When God gave us this instruction, no conditions were applied. We mustn't forget that Israel is the "apple of God's eye" and His plan for Israel has not changed one iota over time.

Kenneth Cowman

Sykesville, Maryland

One of your readers wrote a letter to the editor in which he said: "I am tired of hearing the mantra 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem.'" ... Israel needs to be shaken until they admit they're still stiffed-necked like Jesus said of them."

I can't fathom how we Christians can take the very words of our Lord and say we are tired of hearing them.

John Hopper

Murphy, North Carolina

Does the strategic alliance between Israel and the United States require us to ignore the Christians of the Middle East—namely the Chaldo-Assyrian natives of Iraq? For 2,000 years they have lived in dire circumstances and been threatened with extinction. They have endured hostility from

Turks, Kurds, Arabs and Persians, but their case is never publicized.

I am one of them. Israel has received billions of dollars in aid, but the Chaldo-Assyrians receive nothing. They are losing their faith. Thousands of them have become Muslims through intermarriage. The extermination of the Chaldo-Assyrian race is more horrible than the Holocaust.

Ann Jirjis

San Diego, California

When Your Pastor Lets You Down

Thank you for the article about church leaders who fail ("When a Shepherd Sins" by Francis Frangipane, September). Our small church is going through exactly what is described in your article.

Most of the members have quit coming to church. We are dealing with confusion, anger, and lack of trust and respect for our leader. This article has helped me so much in releasing all my negative feelings to God and letting Him give me the strength to forgive.

Judy Schock

Vida, Montana

Forgotten Voices

Thanks for Lee Grady's exceptional column nudging us to remember the forgotten Christian voices of the past (Fire in My Bones, September). I shudder to think where I might be on the spiritual landscape had it not been for the powerful impact of such writers as Andrew Murry and A.W. Tozer. They

and others pressed upon me the need to know Jesus intimately during my spiritual adolescence.

Everett Stenhouse

Palm Desert, California

Where I live, a “seeker-friendly” church sprouted up where, as Grady describes, “worship is a canned performance.” I went to see what was going on there, since this church has practically emptied all the other churches in town.

I never heard any teaching on the cross, repentance or hell. I asked one of the pastors about this. He just smiled and said, “Well, we don’t want to offend any of the new folks.”

Jim Hall

Shelbyville, Indiana

House Church Church?

Regarding your recent article on house churches (“God Is Out of the Box” by Ken Walker, June), I too am a bit bored with church and religious activities. It’s probably because I do not see the church in action, as it was in the book of Acts.

I am not referring to people having church in their homes but the demonstration of spiritual gifts in operation, giving possessions to poorer brothers and sisters in Christ and the fruit of the Spirit.

The people I talk to who are involved in house churches seem to have the same reasons for not belonging to a more traditional church body. They are hurt, do not want to be under a spiritual authority, are rebellious or are bored with church traditions. To be home churchd is also a way of

getting out of paying tithes and offerings.

I understand how some of them feel and have felt the same way. But the Word of God hasn't changed. We still need to be under spiritual authority, and we are to assemble ourselves with the body even more now than we used to.

name withheld

I believe that if the motivation to start a house church is based on being hurt in a denomination, boredom, or inability to honor spiritual authority, then its all wrong. House churches still must practice proper accountability and submission to authority as Christ demands.

You do not get away from that by staying home. When we begin to look at Christ's agenda rather than our own, we will find that we will be comfortable serving Him anywhere—no matter what others are doing or may try to do to hurt us.

Nerissa Golden

St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles

I am in agreement with Charisma's warnings about the "lone rangers" who start house churches. I believe this will be a very divisive issue for years to come. It seems that many of these "church dropouts" are unsubmitive and unaccountable. However, we still must return to the New Testament model of the church. Maybe the underlying reason there are so many dropouts today is that churches are too structured and controlling. I have been around many denominations and have spent years on the mission field. Although evangelism is encouraged, it seems most leaders assume that everything else must happen within the four walls of the church.

When will we wake up and realize that Jesus sent his disciples out two by two into people's homes to preach the kingdom?

Louis C. Roy Sr., Apostle
Oasis Christian Fellowship
Toledo, Ohio

More on Brownsville

J. Lee Grady's article on the Pensacola revival was balanced and fair (Fire in My Bones, July). We have been members at Brownsville Assembly of God since 1988.

The revival was great. It appears many mistakes were made; some of our former leaders have been accused of being more concerned with their own ministries and finances than the church. Only God knows.

My conclusion: If Brownsville Assembly does not survive (and I think it will), what happened here was worth the cost of one church. Thank you for remembering us.

Douglas Broxson
Pensacola, Florida

I am very heartbroken to read the article about Brownsville Assembly of God. I think the reporter tried to cast a negative light on Pastor Kilpatrick and the leaders of the church.

As a pastor I was changed at Brownsville. God rekindled a fire in me that I thought was lost. I saw my denomination having church like we did in the days of my youth. Praise God, revival had come!

Chuck Clark, Pastor
Union, Missouri

I feel very fortunate to have attended the Brownsville Revival. Just as J. Lee Grady's life was changed there, my life was changed too. The hunger of the people attending the services was unbelievable.

The revival team poured out their hearts night after night. Only our Lord knows how many lives were changed worldwide. I am glad I can tell my grandchildren, "I was there!"

Howard Jackson

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Many of us who were active in the charismatic renewal in the 1970s experienced the same disappointments that our friends at Brownsville are experiencing today. In hindsight, I have learned that it is usually division that causes a revival to end.

A divided church gives a foothold to the enemy. Discord grieves the Holy Spirit. Is there a remedy? Let's start with Philippians 2:2-3.

Darrell L. Shawver

Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

In Support of Katherine Harris

Thank you for endorsing Katherine Harris, a godly woman from Florida, for U.S. Senate (Stephen Strang, August). To all Christian voters I say: This may be the first time you put your heart in action to change the community where you live, but please don't let this be the last. The church must become relevant to our communities or it will succumb to relativism.

Steven Breathitt

North Richland Hills, Texas

Sabbath on Saturday?

John Chasteen touched on a very important aspect of the Ten Commandments when he wrote about the holy Sabbath (Digging Deeper in God's Word, September). I would like to know if we Christians ought to observe Saturday as the Sabbath.

I have heard many popular evangelists talk about the Ten Commandments. They elaborate on all of them except the fourth commandment. There are some churches that do preach and observe the seventh day as the holy Sabbath. I would like to know more about this from a biblical perspective.

Lazarus Solomon

Starkville, Mississippi