

# THE EDIFIER

Volume 25

CHURCH OF GOD 7TH DAY

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## ***“Jesus Is Not A Brand”***

Over the past 50 years selling Jesus has become a multi-billion dollar business. Entrepreneurial preachers, gospel singers and churches alike merchandise Jesus, holding marketing strategy meetings to increase their profit or using business techniques to hold on to their market share.

Have we gone too far in our modern consumer society peddling online (supermarket) a variety of items such as Christian books, music, films, cards, clothing, caps, paintings, statues and even confectioneries, to mention only a few?

There is a prevailing message throughout Christianity that we must market the church to reach the unsuspecting and unsaved. They hope these products will light a spark.

*“It’s about picking people up at their level of interest,” said Bill Anderson, president of Christian Booksellers Association, a national trade organization representing more than 2,000 Christian stores.*

The Apostle Paul in the 1<sup>st</sup> century church dealt with a similar issue, those who sold the word of God and profited from it.

*For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ. 2 Corinthians 2:17 NKJV*

Paul was commissioned with the gospel message through sincerity and not with the pretence of the peddlers with their self-serving ways and with no

thought for the divine.

Remember the incident in the Temple where Jesus turns over tables full of coins and chases the moneychangers and the people selling animals away with a whip. It had become a house of commercial activity and not the house of prayer.

As He cleansed the Temple of greed and profit, Jesus quoted from Isaiah 56:7. *‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’*

*Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13 And He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’” Matthew 21:12-13 NKJV*



*And He said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!” John 2:16 NKJV*

Has Christianity today become “a house of merchandise”, where greed invades the heart of those who hide in the name of some ministry or church group, believing that they are

sharing the gospel?

*“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:21*

I am sure you have read and heard how many of renowned Christian leaders working in the gospel,

***Continued on page four***

## Inspiration from Hacksaw Ridge

Are you needing courage or inspiration?

I finally got the gumption to watch the highly acclaimed movie of the bloody, but amazing, WWII story of 'Hacksaw Ridge' about Desmond Doss who saved about 75 men as an army medic at Hacksaw Ridge in Okinawa without carrying a gun. Despite exhaustion and the likelihood of being killed he was motivated by saving *'just one more'*.

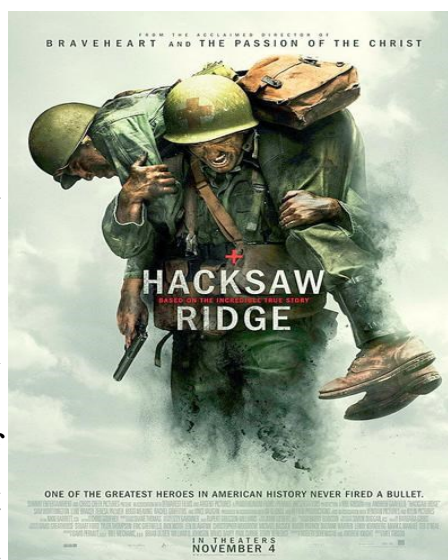
Doss, a Seventh Day Adventist, was the only conscientious objector to be awarded the congressional medal of honour in the US. Prior to reaching the front line, because of his strong convictions not to kill or even handle a gun, he was almost court martialled. He was also mocked and beaten by his fellow soldiers, but did not turn from his convictions. Many soldiers and their families were forever grateful he didn't.

The movie re-tells a true story. It's an inspiration for anyone being persecuted for doing right or wanting to be courageous in saving others.

Your life is a true story. True stories are often the best because they are real and they help us see and believe in great possibilities. They often show us how beauty can come out of ashes. The movie inspired me.

Watching the movie may inspire you in your unfinished true story.

Perhaps the fact that the story of Jesus Christ's sacrifice to save the world is true is why it, and no other allegedly 'similar' saviour stories, has impacted billions of lives worldwide for the better.



*Written by David Kidd*



## THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE

*If your faith has been undermined by attacks on the Bible's reliability it's helpful to remember the following.*

It's fantastic we have both Old and New Testaments because the NT confirms the amazing accuracy and Divine inspiration of the OT by reporting incredible fulfillments of its prophecies.

The fulfilled NT prophecies Jesus made about Jerusalem's downfall, confirmed by contemporary historians, also provide powerful confirmation of the NT.

The common *Chinese Whispers* argument alleging NT accounts got distorted just as a report can be distorted as it passes from one person to another is a favourite attack. However, such clearly does not apply to the NT because the writers were commonly eye witnesses or able to talk directly to such. Eye witness evidence is crucial in court.

It's also very important there are over 5000 surviving ancient copies, in whole or in part, of NT writings. This is a massive amount of copies compared to other ancient books. This is very important for verifying the NT's original content.

The authenticity of the NT is also enhanced by the honest tendency of its writers not to hide embarrassing facts about themselves. Further, people point to contradictions in the four gospels. However, in a court of law, if four witnesses gave exactly the same testimony, the judge would suspect collusion, because people reporting events usually see them from different angles. Small apparent contradictions can therefore be easily explained and actually are more suggestive of authenticity than identical accounts.

Hence the Bible has far more going for it than the critics say, so take another look, especially at Christ, the only Saviour of the world.

*Written by David Kidd*



*Continued from page one*

becoming multi-millionaires by taking advantage of their congregations and in many cases, the brethren who are the poor of society.

Recently a televangelist was asked why he needed a private jet for his gospel work and his reply was, "so that he doesn't have to fly like everyone else in a "long tube with a bunch of demons." When "Inside Edition" approached him he changed his story to, "it protects me from demons". His net worth is valued at about \$760 million.

*"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."* Matthew 6:24 NKJV (NIV 'money')



You might say this is an extreme example of a person selling Jesus, but let me give an example using the word 'moderate' when it comes to sharing Jesus Christ. I have known brethren who have written encouraging and uplifting Christian books and printed thousands of copies at their own expense and sometimes through donations, with no thought of profit or gain. The scripture which comes to my mind is, "Freely you have received, freely give". Matthew 10:8 NKJV

I acknowledge there is an element in the scripture where preachers had and have the authority to live from the gospel, by receiving offerings from the

brethren. Today we would say a reasonable wage, received from the church for the minister or staff member to live on.

*"Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel."* 1 Corinthians 9:14 NKJV

Also in many other cases ministers and workers in the gospel have made a decision not to receive recompense for their efforts and time. Like the Apostle Paul who mainly supplied his own needs by working as a tentmaker, so do many today earn their money outside of the gospel.

*But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. 16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.* 1 Corinthians 9:15-18 NKJV

Paul wanted nothing to hinder the liberty, stewardship and joy he had through his ministry of the gospel. His reward was to preach the gospel without the charge of avarice. (Material gain)

I pray that as disciples of Jesus Christ we too are motivated by our faith, mixed with a grateful heart towards the love of the gospel message and the great commission that Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour has bestowed upon us!

*Written by Phil Kordahi*





***The Bible Advocate*** is one of the oldest religious magazines in America, and is regularly distributed in print and online. The BA is devoted to topics such as Bible doctrine, current social and religious issues, Christian living, practical teachings on Bible topics, textual or biblical book studies, and personal experience.

### BA Online

<http://baonline.org>

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## *The New Zealand Church*



The church in New Zealand is based in Tauranga in the beautiful Bay of Plenty and has a core of about 25 people who attend quite regularly. We are blessed with several musicians including a few guitarists, a keyboard player and two violinists. We started meeting in our home in December 2016 and moved into a hall about October 2018.



We are diverse in age, culture and denominational backgrounds. The nationalities that currently attend regularly include Kiwi Europeans and Maoris, Philipinos, Koreans, Papua New Guineans and last but not least, Jamaican (Angella). There's a Kenyan family we are close to that hopefully will return to church soon. Please pray that God will bless and increase our efforts to spread the gospel and share God's love.



Our web-site is [www.churchofgodsllove.com](http://www.churchofgodsllove.com). There are sermons there to listen to and articles and books to read. We welcome visiting brethren and are happy to accommodate them during their visit.



## The Weaver

MY LIFE is but a weaving  
Between my Lord and me,  
I cannot choose the colors  
He worketh steadily.

Oft times He weaveth sorrow  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper  
And I, the underside.

Not till the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly  
Shall God unroll the canvas  
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful  
In the Weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.

*He knows, He loves, He cares,  
Nothing this truth can dim,  
He gives His very best to those  
Who leave the choice with Him.*



## Australian General Conference

**7-11 JANUARY 2020**

### Theme for the conference

*"United in Fellowship,  
Committed to Discipleship"*

### Everyone welcome!

You're invited to the next Australian General Conference of the *Church of God (Seventh Day)* to be held 7-11 January 2020, at 95 Glen Osmond Rd, Eastwood, South Australia.

Free breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided to all who attend.

*God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**1 Corinthians 1:9 NKJV**

# Youth Vibe



## The 10 Commandments

When you study history it is interesting that you will find that many countries use the ten commandments as part of their founding law and constitution.

God's law, and specifically the 10 commandments, are a great moral standard for every age, nation and person. These timeless precepts are unique from the mind of God. It is important for us to learn them and live by them!

The Ten Commandments as found in the New Testament



**Exodus 20**

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the ..... and ..... commandment. [Matthew 22:37-39](#)

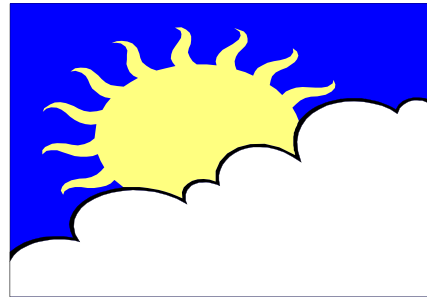
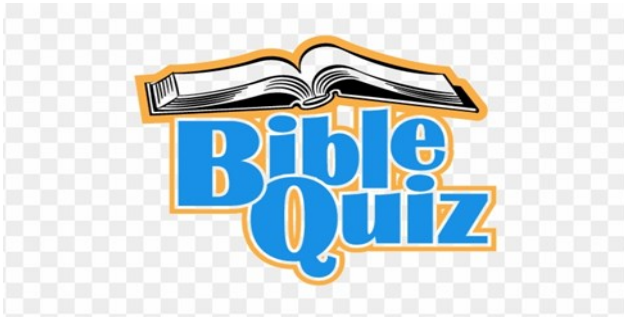
"Do not think that I came to ..... the ..... or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to ..... [Matthew 5:17](#)

So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, ..... the ....." [Matthew 19:17](#)

Jesus said, "'You shall not ..... 'You shall not commit ..... 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear .....,' 19'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" [Matthew 19:18-19](#)

For whoever shall keep the whole ....., and yet ..... in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For He who said, "Do not .....", also said, "Do not ..... " Now if you do not commit ....., but you do ....., you have become a transgressor of the law. [James 2:10-11](#)

**Scripture is quoted from the New King James Version**



**What does “Eve” mean?** (Genesis 3:20)

New beginnings

Mother of all living

Daughter of God

**David’s original wife was:** (1 Samuel 18:27)

Bathsheba

Leah

Michal

**Which of these narratives was recorded only by Luke?** (Luke 22:44)

Jesus being fed vinegar

Jesus sweating blood

Jesus being nailed to the cross

**“Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years”** (Luke 1:18)

Mark

Zacharias

Joseph

## *The Weekly Cycle*

*Some find it hard to believe that the continuity of the weekly cycle has been maintained for thousands of years. Many are of the opinion that it has not been kept accurately over the centuries.*

*Some believe that the Sabbath was not observed from Creation until Moses and that therefore the weekly cycle of Israel’s Sabbath keeping was not a continuation of unbroken weeks.*

*So what is the rational conclusion?*

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