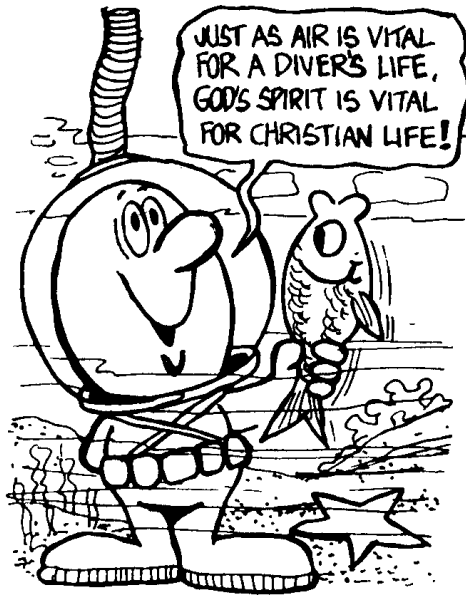


HOME ASSEMBLIES



and BIBLE BASICS

by W.B. Howard...Editor of Despatch



MINISTRIES

Christian Resource Centre

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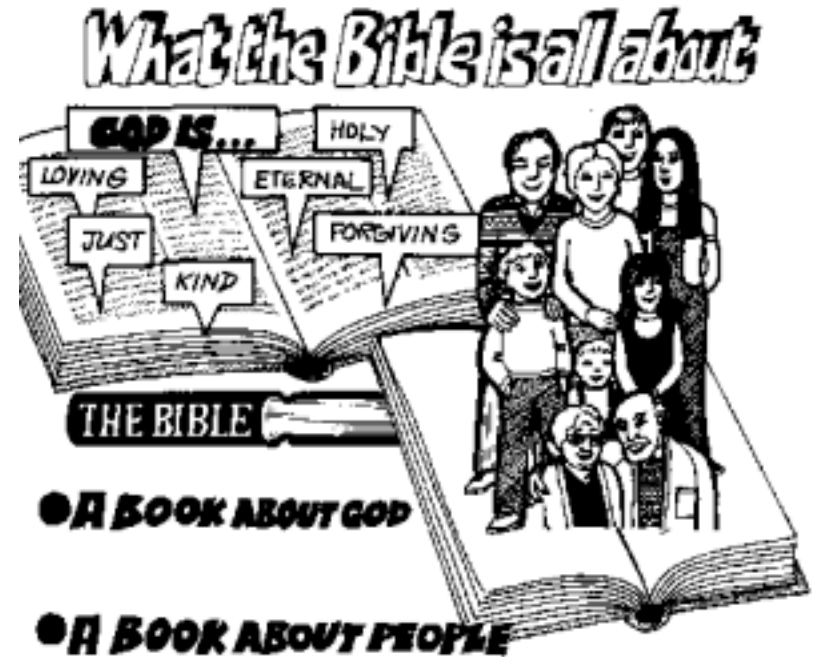
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Endtime Ministries
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- ♣ A Non-Profit, Ind. Service Centre.
- ♣ A Salvation Gospel Ministry,
- ♣ Not Social Liberation orientated.
- ♣ No personal, financial gain received by any staff member
- ♣ Publishes information that exposes the New Age New World Order [Qrtly] magazine ~ 'Despatch'.
- ♣ Publishes 'Women's Ministry' Booklet "Beauty for Ashes" ~ Full Sanctification
- ♣ Seminars, home meetings etc., are held on request, to reach out to those who are in need of a Saviour, and those Christians who need up-to-date information re the dangers of Global Education, Mind Manipulation, Alternative Medicine, New Age Deceptions in the Churches ... to protect their loved ones.
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- ♣ Presenting the TRUTH...
A clear Trumpet call...
- ♣ Affirming that the "WORD OF GOD", none other than the King James Version, the Holy Bible, is the Truth in its entirety.
- ♣ Seeking to uncover those things which the Hidden forces of evil desire to keep from the people of the world.
- ♣ Seeking to present the Truth in an objective, correct and God fearing manner.
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- ♣ Seeking to encouraging the followers of Christ to fight against the forces of evil in prayer, and to warn the ungodly while there is still time.
- ♣ Seeking to reinforce biblical belief in these latter days, before Jesus Christ returns.
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systems for God. It is called to spread the Gospel of Grace, and prepare believers to be taken out of the world's system by Jesus Christ at the Rapture.

SUBJECT #10.

All occult activity absorbed by true Christians in modern - day churches should be utterly rejected. Inner-healing, slain in the spirit, demonic experiences, false revival experiences should be firmly denounced.

What does the Bible show us?

ENDTIME MINISTRIES is still preparing the above subjects that have not been included here for Bible Study in the Home. The (8 Unit) Diploma Bible Study Course, (under Dr. Dennis Spackman of New Zealand), * Romans, Hebrews and Prophecy are other bible units that have been prepared and are Online.

Leader's Handbook is adapted for use in groups. (It is at present time not available, as it is being updated, for Home Assemblies. All costs will be kept to a non-profit price.

*Note when all this goes on our website it can be downloaded freely at no charge, remembering everything here is only maintained by donations of our subscribers to Despatch.

ENDTIME MINISTRIES has information on the various heresies (from our online files and other ministries) which are plaguing the churches in the 1990s... see below

- **Dominion Theology or Kingdom Now;**
- **Promise Keepers;**
- **The Alpha Course & Diapaxis**
- **Covenant signing;**
- **Rick Warren/Covenants**
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- **Toronto & Pensacola 'revivals'**
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Wendy Howard...

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Table of Contents

PART 1...SETTING UP A HOME ASSEMBLY

Introduction	04
How do we go about Establishing A Home Assembly?	
Point 1.	08
Are the times so perilous that home assemblies are imperative?	
Point 2.	08
Who can establish a Home Assembly?	
Point 3.	10
What about Communion, Water Baptism , marriages & funerals?	
Point 4.	10
What should be the main spiritual aims of a Home Assembly?	
Point 5.	14
How can two or three or more get started?	
Point 6.	16
What about problem people, & differences of doctrine?	
Point 7.	20
Is there a Biblically-correct form ~ worship service in a home?	
Point 8.	22
What are the advantages & disadvantages ~ Home Assembly?	
Point 9.	23
Can Body ministry glorify God? Must there be an ordained Pastor?	
Point 10.	25
Can a Home Assembly be like a missionary outpost?	
Point 11.	27
A counterfeit movement of prayer circles and cell groups	
Point 12.	28
A false leader or apostle may come into the Assembly	
A Few Comments	29
Bibliography	30

PART 2 ... BIBLE BASICS FOR STUDY

Outline of Bible Doctrines & Subjects ~	33
Subject #1 Cults verses Truth & Error	33
Subject #2 Jesus Christ is God, His incarnation	39
Subject #3 Eternal Security	41
Subject #4 Water Baptism	45
Subjects to be in a later booklet	49
List of Sources Available to Home Fellowships.....	51

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“How to Administer Assemblies”

by W.B. Howard...
Editor of Despatch

Part 1...

Setting up of Home Assemblies

INTRODUCTION.

The Endtimes, and its escalating heresy and compromise with the emerging Antichrist system, has forced many redeemed people of God to leave a syncretising, ecumenical Christendom! This sometimes means, often means, worshipping God in the home on Sunday. The Bible has given directions if such a development happens as the Rapture draws closer. Of course God knew that this indeed would occur, that is why we are told:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.”(Hebrews 10:25).

* Note in particular “as ye see

the day approaching.”

This passage is completely misunderstood by those who urge Christians to remain in apostate denominations. The verse should be read in its immediate context of verses 19-24, which give instructions to the believer worshipping in the holiest. *“The day approaching”* refers to the Day of the Lord, the time when God’s judgement will finally come upon the world in the Tribulation. As we see this day approaching, we should be prepared and waiting for the glorious Rapture of the Church which will take place just before the Tribulation, “and so much more” is to be taken very seriously indeed, we need “one another” in these perilous days. But we do not need unfaithful

baptism is entirely unknown! Note I Corinthians 11:20-29 - no presiding ordained minister! Philip, who had no special ordination, baptised the Ethiopian, who was actually a treasurer to Queen Candace (Acts 8:5-13, 36-39). And Ananias was not even a preacher, Scripture indicates no such thing, but he is given a duty by God to baptize Saul who would later be the Apostle to the Gentiles, and write the epistles which are Church Age doctrine (Acts 9:10-18).

A Quote from
H. A. Ironside to close:

“As to the formula, it is ‘Unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Being, as it is, ‘baptism unto death,’ it is fitting that it should be unto the name of the Trinity - for how unitedly do Father, Son and Spirit participate in the offering of the Son of Man upon the Cross! It was God, as Father, Who withheld Him not, but gave Him out of love to the world (John 3:16), while the Son was the voluntary Sufferer (John 10:17,18); and yet it was ‘through the eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God’ (Hebrews 9:14). Nor does ‘baptized in the

name of the Lord Jesus’ (Acts 19:5) nor the kindred passage quoted above from Acts 10 set this aside. Do not these scriptures simply keep before us in whose authority it was done -”

Following subjects
will put out in a
separate booklet.

SUBJECT #5.

The Bible is our authority, not extra - biblical experiences.

SUBJECT #6.

Tithing is NOT a New Testament doctrine or a necessity. Giving freely from a grateful heart is New Testament teaching.

SUBJECT #7.

The Rapture of the Church will occur before the Tribulation period.

SUBJECT #8.

It is not “loving” to fellowship with anyone or any group who says they love Jesus Christ, even if they hold different and false doctrines to your own. It is disobedience to God to do so.

SUBJECT #9.

The Church of Jesus Christ is not called to take the world’s social

Baptism is symbolic only. It vividly shows the believer dying and rising with Christ as described in the two important passages Romans 6 and Colossians 2. But it does not save us in any way. Why then should we go to the trouble of being baptized, if we are saved by grace through faith? Because in the New Testament it is abundantly clear that baptism is not only a symbol, it is also an ordinance of the New Testament Church. It is an obedience to God, it is an holy act of faith and gratitude to a Holy God. Baptism is an individual's response to God, that and his faith together. Read about Lydia in Acts 16:15. Her baptism was a part of being "faithful to the Lord."

What does Jesus Christ Himself say on water baptism?

Jesus said emphatically that making disciples must involve baptizing them (Matthew 28:19). The early Church taught that baptism was the obedience of faith, which was taught by Christ Himself. (Mark 16:16).

Who has the Authority to Baptise Believers?

There is no infant baptism in the New Testament, only baptism for those who have professed faith in

Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Who then can baptise believers?

Any saved person who has a ministry to reach the lost, and evangelises the lost, can also baptize converts under the Headship of the Jesus Christ as Head of the Body of Christ (Colossians 1:18). A male person if available, if times are so serious that there is a greater falling away, then surely female missionaries can also baptize the converted. All saved, dedicated, committed Christians have gifts by the Holy Spirit (I Peter 4:10,11; Romans 12:4-8).

Anyone who is responsible to minister God's Word to the lost should also be responsible enough to see to the baptism of new converts (Matthew 28:19,20).

As with the statute of the Lord's Supper, in Scripture there is no mention of a human ordination which fits a person to preach or teach or to administer baptism. Actually it is quite the opposite in the New Testament, the Bible says this:

"...the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as HE WILL" (I Cor. 12:4-11).

In Scripture an ordained minister to administer Communion or

compromising churches.

Does any of the above indicate that born-again Christians should remain in churches which are filled with New Age doctrines, who are assisting the rise of the Antichrist in

their ignorance, and who are actively ridiculing the faithful people of God when they warn others of the disaster coming? NO. Of course born-again ones should "come out" from among them, as the Bible tells us to do (II Cor. 6:17-18). We should look carefully now at the Biblical instruction in Hebrews 10:19-25.

Note that verse 19 speaks of the holiness of worship, because we have spiritually entered into the "**holiest**" by the Blood of Jesus. Heb.9:8,12. This refers to the Holy of Holies, the very holy place of God, we have spiritually entered there because Jesus Christ's death rent the veil of separation between us (sinners) and a Holy God (verse 20) Hebrews 9:1-15; Exodus 26.

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Fellowship



The Old Testament Tabernacle was a representation of the True Heavenly place of God Almighty. The High Priest is now Jesus Christ, and we are a Royal Priesthood under Him, that is, ALL redeemed believers are, I Peter 2:5 & 9.

This means that we have a high calling to worship in a pure setting, with repentant and Biblically obedient Christians. We are not called to come into subjection to apostates, compromisers and New Age style pastors. We are holy people unto the Lord our High Priest. Or does any redeemed person really imagine that we can present worship to the Almighty God under the Headship of the Pure, Holy High Priest, in churches which are

filled with New Age doctrine, which seek to destroy the Bible, and are openly carnal and worldly?

Verse 23 of Hebrews 10 tells us we are to “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering”. Now this could hardly mean that we should listen meekly week after week, year after year, to heresy against the revealed Word of God as taught in modern day churches. Nor does it mean that we should subject our children to the same. To really “hold fast” and not waver demands proper teaching from the Word, otherwise we will find ourselves confused and some of you even departing from the faith - because of the sad, pitiful decline in denominational preaching and action. Will we actually support such things by our presence in services? Never!

Consider **verse 24 of Hebrews 10**. **“To provoke unto love and good works.”**

Are the sermons and sermonettes of the modern churches going to “provoke to love and good works?” Hardly, they will provoke to evil works and occult activity in many cases. Such as the Pensacola disaster, the awful Alpha Course, the ecumenical movement, the greed and selfishness of the prosperity doctrines, the ghastly new “bible” versions, urg-

ing people to support by their tithes the corrupt leaders who are making merchandise of the poor people in the pews, and blasting the ear-drums of congregations with rock bands!

Now on to **verse 25**, the verse under our main consideration. This verse has been used to castigate many of those who will not displease the Holy Lord by staying in apostate denominations. Does Hebrews 10:25 in any way indicate that Christians should stay in apostate denominations in order to not **“forsake the assembling of ourselves together?”** No, it does not. It says “ourselves.” That means born-again people, those who will not bow down to the spiritual darkness of the Endtimes. It does not mean any persons who claim to be a church-goer, or Christians. The true Christian remnant is to *“exhort one another.”* What is this “exhort?” To admonish, counsel one another. We can only do this by accepting the true teachings of the Biblical Scriptures, and we can only admonish each other in Truth. Therefore, to attend churches which have departed from the Truth of God is to disobey the scriptures shown in Hebrews 10:19-25. *“As you see the day approaching”* shows that those assembling together believe in the

2:12: “Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are risen with him through FAITH of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” Faith and baptism again are companions. The two most important passages dealing with the meaning of water baptism are Romans 6:1-4 and Colossians 2:12. Here we see the intimate connection between the death and resurrection of Christ, the believers identification with these, and baptism. This is the most significant teaching in the New Testament on baptism. So let us look with great attention at these glorious truths from God. When we come as believers to Christ we share in His dying and rising again to new life, and baptism pictures this as nothing else can. We go down into the water (we die) and we come out again (we are resurrected to new life). See the word “buried” in these wonderful verses, Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12. Now see that leaving the water means you share in Christ’s resurrection (Colossians 2:12). This is typified for us in water baptism, and shows precious truths about our own lives in a practical sense in Christ Jesus, which we will look into now.

Going down in the water shows the Christian as dying to sin, he/

she is agreeing to so do in Christ. 47 The believer accepts afresh the forgiveness eternally secured for him on Calvary (see Colossians 2:14). The believer who is baptized sees his old life is crucified with Christ, that he might no longer be in bondage to sin (Romans 6:6). He rises from the “dead” or the water, to now share completely the new life in Christ (Romans 6:10). Death, sin, bondage, the old life have no more dominion over him (Romans 6:9,14). The baptism representation caused Paul to write in this manner, **“...by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost”** (Titus 3:5).

Baptism is a symbol of our hope for the future! In Titus 3:5-7 we see the words, **“...made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”** The Biblical “hope” is not like the common usage in modern times, “we hope we can go”, rather doubtful and unsure. The Biblical “hope” is a triumphant certainty. As we are baptised in water, we rise again, and look beyond the grave which looms up ahead of us in a physical sense, and we look forward to the perfect life when sin, tears, sadness, cruelty and pain will not exist, when we are living and reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ in Eternity.

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46 The Bible shows this, “**Not by works of righteousness we have done but according to his mercy he saved us**”

(Titus 3:5).

If baptism truly saved us then we would be saved by works, the person doing something themselves for salvation, baptism would then be “good works.”

Read also Ephesians 2:8,9 again very carefully.

The Bible shows us that Jesus Christ completed salvation for us on the Cross. In John 19:30 Jesus said, “It is finished,” meaning that there were no works by any one needed to complete His redeeming sacrifice for the whole world. This work on the Cross goes on right into Eternity! To be saved for Eternity one must believe on Christ, no more needed.

It is obvious from one man alone that water baptism is NOT a condition for salvation, (it is merely an obedience for those who are already saved), and that man is the thief on the cross. One of the thieves who was crucified when our Lord was, repented and believed in Christ Jesus. He could not be baptised, he simply trusted in the Saviour, but Jesus said to him, “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:42,43).

The thief was saved without baptism, showing that those who teach baptismal regeneration are not correct at all.

Baptism for a Christian & its Meaning.

What does it mean for us to take part in the Christian ordinance of baptism?

What is it all about?

In the New Testament faith and water baptism are intimately connected. Baptism declares that gracious salvation is received by faith alone. Note that the Samaritans when they had faith for salvation they were then baptised (Acts 8:12).

What did they have faith about?

They “**believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ**” then they were “baptized, both men and women.” See another person who had faith and was baptized in Acts 8:36-38.

Note in Acts 18:8 that “believed” and “baptised” are again linked together. One last reference. Although there are more, Colossians

Rapture, when the true Church will be taken out before the Tribulation occurs. Do these modern apostate denominations even believe that Jesus Christ is coming back soon to take His people away? No, they even ridicule this doctrine, thus proving that we are indeed in the Last Days (II Peter 3:3,4).

It is clear from Scripture that we believers are not to assemble together with apostate church-goers (II Cor.6:14-18). But its clear also that Almighty God wants us to have the comfort, support, encouragement, sound advice, love and happiness of being in an assembly of believers on the Lord’s Day. To get to know these other believers as friends, whom we will meet with during the week also. God wants us to worship together, not just with our families or maybe even alone. (If that cannot be avoided, then God accepts our worship as given from a sincere heart.) This booklet has been written to encourage faithful Christians who have had to separate from the denominations, you are not alone, there are other members of the Remnant out there! And also to urge you to consider seeking to establish a Home Assembly in your own area. After all, the first church meetings were held in the homes of just simple people like you and

I (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; 7 Colossians 4:15; Philem. 1:2 etc.).

How do we go about Establishing A Home Assembly?

Part 1. of the booklet will be arranged into these sections, so that we can study the Word, pray and think together in an orderly manner:

1. Are the times so perilous that home assemblies are imperative?
2. Who can establish a Home Assembly?
3. What about Communion, Water Baptism, marriages and funerals?
4. What should be the main spiritual aims of a Home Assembly?
5. How can two or three or more get started?
6. What about problem people, and differences of doctrine?
7. Is there a Biblically-correct form for a worship service in a home?
8. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a Home Assembly?
9. Can Body ministry glorify God? Must there be an ordained

Pastor?

10. Can a Home Assembly be like a missionary outpost?

11. A counterfeit movement of prayer circles and cell groups.

12. A false leader or apostle may come into the Assembly.

What can you do about this?

POINT 1. -

are the times so perilous that home assemblies are imperative?

At this period of Church history the pagan powers which are in control of the planet are poised, ready to purge the world of all those who will not enter into Interfaith amalgamation. The denominations are blindly collaborating with these international powers. Soon it will be impossible to say “no” to indoctrination into the multi-faith, One World Religion. How much better to be in a low-key, non-denominational assembly, which is answerable to no one in a executive, ministerial position under a ministers’ fraternal in your area. No covenants to sign or else; no National Council of Churches taking authority over the church; no United Religions official visiting the congregation and so on. Get our Despatch magazine if you want to keep abreast of what the One World Church (Interfaith) is planning, and what they intend to do about

non-conforming churches.

This is not the time for making a big splash, it seems to me, not the time to seek huge connected congregations which are a glory trip for the pastor. The times are perilous, as the near future will show clearly soon. Better to establish small praying support groups, (autonomous assemblies) who can continue in the homes as we head towards AD 2000.

POINT 2. - who can establish a Home Assembly?

If one is picturing a fellowship which resembles (in a small way) a modern day church, with a professionally trained minister who has a degree in psychology, qualifications in Sociology etc., a large band of musicians and a board of directors, then obviously a home would never be a substitute (in some ways, thank God!). If one is seeing in anticipation perhaps a little band of sincere, Godly believers, who are ready to obey God, ready to pray for His will, then the sky is the limit of what God could do with such a group. The numbers are not important, the commitment to the Lord is. Quality not quantity. The need is not the call, because the needs around us are massive and how could we cope with everything, but there does not have to be a

weeping, fasting, living a good life, consecration, devotion or any other thing. Christ Jesus alone has done it all for us. Faith Alone, Christ Alone, Grace Alone. 1 John 5:10-13. Praise God, we can KNOW we have eternal Life, and this Life is not in ourselves and our works but “in His Son”.

SUBJECT #4.

Baptism.

Christian baptism was first conducted on the Day of Pentecost. It had a similarity to John the Baptist’s baptism in the river Jordan (see Matthew 3), but in many ways it was different to this baptism. John’s baptism was entirely about repentance, for the Jews, not about receiving the Holy Spirit. Christian baptism has to do with obedience and thanksgiving to God for the gift of the Holy Spirit to indwell the believer, and it has to do with new life in Christ Jesus.

Acts 2:37,38 shows the first Christian baptism, note, “...in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...” Like John’s baptism, Christian baptism is about repentance and forgiveness, but it is not in itself a redemption ordinance,

we are saved through grace by 45 faith alone, not by any statute, Christian and Biblical or not (Ephesians 2:8,9). Nothing we do or don’t do can save us, only Christ’s shed Blood is needed.

Note also Acts 9:17,18.

After Saul had regained his sight it is shown he “...*arose and was baptized.*” Look at the household of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon them, and then Peter “...*commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*” (Acts 10:45-48).

What is Christian water baptism?

**Does it save us?
Should we believe in
“baptismal regeneration”?**

Some people misinterpret Acts 2:38 because it seems to align repentance, remission of sins, and receiving the Holy Spirit with baptism, as though baptism itself gives new life through the Holy Spirit, forgiveness through repentance and partaking of the ordinance. This is a misunderstanding however, as Scripture in other passages clearly shows water baptism does not save us, Jesus Christ alone does.

subject. The Israelites missed out on God's best for them, the land of Canaan. We will miss out on God's best for us here on the earth, being sanctified by the very Life of Christ and being a successful witness to Him and the Gospel, IF we become hardened by this world and its sinful attitudes. Our "rest" in Hebrews chapters four and five is resting from self effort, and allowing Christ Jesus to provide for us HIS righteousness by faith, we "rest" then, it is like the Land of Canaan in this portion of Scripture.

1 Cor. 1:30-31.

Hebrews 6:4-6 is NOT dealing with eternal salvation regarding the Christian believer. It presents the case of Jewish PROFESSED "believers" who have actually halted short of faith in Christ, after coming right to the threshold of salvation. They are even going along with enlightenment and conviction, but they turn back and refuse Christ's Life. Note verse nine, where it says specifically that

"we are persuaded better things of you... which ACCOMPANY SALVATION."

In other words, when we are saved we are given by God new righteousness and a change of heart which makes us NOT fall away. The rest of the chapter tells

us how safe we are in Christ Jesus, and High Priest ASSURES us that because He is within the veil, we will be coming there too. God promises this because He has sworn by Himself, seeing there is no greater, and because He CANNOT lie, that we are eternally safe. Read the whole chapter, and pray for God's enlightenment as you read. Note the words "immutability" UNCHANGEABLE, and "STRONG CONSOLATION", what a comfort this passage is.

1 Cor. 9:27: Here the word for "castaway" in the Greek, *adokimos*, means "disapproved." Paul was not the slightest bit concerned about his eternal salvation, he was concerned about his SERVICE, he didn't want to be left on the shelf somewhere, in some backblock. Paul did not want to be castaway from the front lines of service for the Lord. The verses 19-27 all deal with true service, and the reward of true ministry - they have nothing to do with losing salvation per se. Paul did not want to be "disapproved" of by God because he yielded to the flesh, and because he was undisciplined in his service.

We are saved only by trust in Christ alone, who died for us, He alone is our salvation, not works,

bolt from heaven in order for some Christians out there to step out in faith.

Who can establish a Home Assembly?

Any born-again couple or group who love the Lord and care about others.

Does it take a great understanding of Scripture?
This is a huge plus of course, but there have been those in Communist countries (still are) who have been simple folk, and they have nurtured believers and evangelised the lost because they cared and saw the tremendous need. These have even learned the Scriptures from mere scraps of paper, little portions of the Bible, when whole Bibles were not available! The Bible is an open book, we still have a free country, there are still good, solid old fashioned commentaries available. It depends how committed and faithful you are, how willing to get a message from God by which to feed the spirits of a small congregation.

A Home Assembly needs more than just a message from God or a sermon. There is prayer, we can all pray, why not pray together? There is singing hymns of worship, a musician is handy here, a guitarist, a keyboard player, some

one who can sing. But even if there is no instrument, people can sing together from a hymn book all those favourites which glorify God, songs for the children (if any), robust songs, spiritual hymns - this can be done with only three or four people present. People can share together the doings of the week; pray for unbelieving neighbours; share a meal on Sunday; meet during the week and invite others in; hand out Gospel tracts together in shopping centres. As the assembly grows, a 'Sunday school' could be run in a bedroom or on a verandah. Have a coffee morning to invite young mothers in, and ask the children along to 'Sunday school', (also saves disruption in worship meeting, families can stay together, without a separate Sunday School on Sunday). If you are alone, just yourself with no family members, no wife or husband, then there is still no reason why you cannot fellowship together with those who love the Lord. Every time you meet with someone else and discuss the Lord Jesus Christ and His love, talking about God and the Bible, you are assembling yourself together in a sense. You could still invite others to your home for a meal and fellowship on a regular basis.

Remember what the Bible says:

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“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”
(Matthew 18:20).

**POINT 3 -
what about Communion, Water
Baptism, marriages & funerals?**

If you have left the denominations then you already have a problem with:

Who will marry the living?

Who will bury the dead?

A Home Assembly has no ordained pastor, unless a retired pastor is in your fellowship. Civil authority to marry can be obtained without denominational affiliations, if this is a problem, if the group grows to require this, though it probably will not be an issue. If you died now, who would you get to bury you? A Home Assembly leader could surely be responsible for a service to bury the dead in a Godly fashion.

A suggestion here about marriage in a Home Assembly situation. All the legal requirements in a registry office could be handled prior to the actual wedding ceremony. Then a wedding ceremony with the Home Assembly could be held later, with a wedding feast. The former satisfies the secular laws, the latter is obedience to God and satisfies the

Christian heart.

As far as Communion goes, there is absolutely no reason at all that people cannot break bread together in a home, and share the cup in remembrance of Christ Jesus who died for us. The Communion service is just a simple, gentle remembrance, not a miracle mass which must be officiated over by a priest or clergy of some kind. The same applies to Water Baptism. Any sincere, dedicated believer can baptise a convert, in a bath, a river, the sea, or a swimming pool. There are only two Biblical ordinances, Baptism and Communion, and they can be handled successfully by a home fellowship. Communion should be seen as a commemoration of the Lord's sacrificial death and resurrection, it is not some legal event with strict rules and format, although Christendom has complicated this glorious remembrance into that which God never intended.

**POINT 4. -
what should be the main spiritual aims of a Home Assembly?**

Let us start with what should NOT be the aims of a Home Assembly. The aim is NOT to create a meeting where anyone can lord it over others, make a big

Law and Israel, it is the time for a new covenant of the New Testament. The rebellious of the Nation of Israel would be cast aside by God. This has nothing to do with a New Testament believer losing their salvation, nothing at all!

Romans 11:17-22 is also the Israeli nation (read the context, it is very plain). Read especially 11:1. Read the whole chapter carefully, God is talking about Gentile NATIONS here, not individual believers. If God does not spare His chosen nation, will be spare the Gentile nations?

Ask four questions here:

1. Who is Paul addressing in 11:13? *Gentile people.*

2. What is Paul talking about?
He tells about the opportunity for Gentiles to share in the spiritual blessings of Abraham (Romans 4:23-25)

3. Who are the broken-off branches of 11:17?

The NATION Israel who has just rejected their Messiah, Christ Jesus.
(Matt 21:42-43).

4. Who then are the grafted in branches who may be taken out?
The GENTILE nations.

The conclusion is that this passage has nothing to do with individuals losing salvation, but has to do with Gentile nations receiv-

ing the blessings forfeited by Israel. If the Gentiles refuse Christ as nations, they too will not remain under God's favour.

The **Matthew 25:24-30** parable deals with unsaved Israeli individuals who survive the Tribulation, but they find themselves spiritually unprepared to meet their returning Messiah. So also does Matt.22:1-13; Matt. 24:45-51; Matt 25:1-13; and Luke 13:23-30.

Hebrews 12:14 simply points us to the fact that we should allow the Lord to work in us His own holiness, we all will only stand before God in the holiness that Christ Jesus PROVIDES for us by His own righteousness, for us and in us. NOTHING is of us, because we are totally sinful and undone. Of course we must live holy lives in Christ, but not FOR salvation, but because we are SAVED. No one could possible “maintain” their own salvation! **What did Christ die for us and complete our salvation for, if we have to “maintain” it?** What an insult to Christ Jesus!

Hebrews 3:14. Read the context carefully. It deals NOT with losing salvation, but of missing God's BEST. See also 1 Cor.9:27; 10:5; Heb.4:1-16 etc., all are the same

Some of these can be given as examples:

Matt 24:13 is dealing with enduring physical torment and danger in the Tribulation, it is not dealing with spiritual salvation, see verses 3,6,14.

What “end” is this passage referring to?
The end of the Tribulation.

Ezekiel 3:20. This is Old Testament, dealing with the Law of Moses, it is not under the New Covenant of Grace. It has nothing to do with saved believers under the Blood of Christ.

Revelation 3:5. There are two “books”, this one is not the Book of the Lamb, we can never taken out of this, Christ has made us safe eternally. There is a book of physical life and a book of spiritual life. Moses and David were offering to have their PHYSICAL LIVES ended in exchange for the Israelites, not their SPIRITUAL, ETERNAL lives. (see Exodus 32:32-33). This is a reference to the Spiritual Life Book: Luke 10:20. Quite different to the Exodus reference. Col.1:27; Philippians 4:3.

1 Cor. 10:12 is dealing with a person’s confidence in himself, that HE is confident that HE will not

fall into sin, that He is self-righteous. It has nothing to do with our confidence in the eternal certainty of Christ’s sacrifice for sin, and our confidence in HIM.

1 Timothy 4:1 has nothing to do with losing salvation, it has to do with falling away from sound doctrine. This could be mere professing “christians” who are not even born-again, or it can mean also real Christians, who accept the devil’s false doctrines and turn away from sound doctrine, or in other words, “the faith”. The latter do not lose their salvation, but they do become heretics. People can go astray in doctrine without being lost forever! Our salvation does not depend on knowing every doctrine in the Bible perfectly, it depends only on what Christ did on the Cross of Calvary FOR us.

Heb.2:3 deals with people who are not yet true believers, they have heard the Gospel, are wondering about it maybe, but turn away and “neglect” to receive Christ as their personal Saviour. This has nothing whatsoever to do with a believer losing his/her salvation.

Matthew 3:10 deals with Israel (see context) and points to the ending of the dispensation of the

name for themselves, or become a little dictator. Body ministry is often very rewarding in a Home Assembly. Those who have the Scriptural knowledge to give a message take turns giving a sermon, or a Communion reading from the Word. Different homes can be utilised, so that no one couple or person becomes the absolute leader/s. A Home Assembly is not a show-case for a frustrated would-be preacher, it is a meeting of those of like mind, who want to worship the Lord in Spirit and in Truth.

CHRIST JESUS & HIS BODY - THE CHURCH.

The main aims are to glorify God together, assembling as members one of another to offer spiritual praise to the Lord. What is the True Church? It is not a denomination, or a building, or a group of people who have a name recognised by the community around them. The True Church is composed of all those whom Christ has saved by His Blood. It was He who began to build the True Church, and it is He Himself who continues to build it. The Church is built upon Jesus Christ as Son of the Living God, upon the very declaration of Himself as the Christ:

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of

the living God ... and upon this rock

I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:16-18).

Because of the above, and the magnitude of the declaration of Christ Jesus as the Son of God, and His own work in building the True Church, (n.t. church is an autonomous ~ self governing body) no ecclesiastical organisation, no denomination, could possibly claim that the term could refer to themselves. They are merely the earthly organisation wherein some of the True Church may meet at times, or support with their offerings. The Church is really a Body, a living organism, Christ is its Head, it has many, many members. If you are born-again you receive nourishment from that Head, and if you are surrendered to God you are being controlled by that Head, just as all others who make up the Body are. That Head is in Heaven, and He intercedes for the Body continually (Romans 12:4; I Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 4:15,16; Colossians 1:18,24; 2:19 - see Hebrews 7:24,25).

The Aim and the Reason for the existence of any fellowship is primarily to worship God in Holiness and TRUTH. To seek, find

and obey God's will for your fellowship, and its combined members. To imagine that Christ's Church is some sort of public organisation or a system which has been set up by men in the world is completely wrong. Just as it is erroneous to imagine that the Kingdom of God is of this world, right now, it is erroneous to imagine that Christ's Church is of this world. The real Church was never meant to exist in the world as a sort of powerful, society changing, ecclesiastical structure.

- God's redeemed people are in the world but they are not of it (John 17:14,16);
- they are a heavenly people, not an earthly people (I Cor. 15:48);
- they are strangers and pilgrims in this earth (I Peter 2:11);
- they have a heavenly citizenship (Phil.3:20).

NO ONE can excommunicate a saved person from the True Church, or force them to sign on the dotted line in order to be a member of the True Church. Every true member of the True Church has his/her name written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The only way in is trust in the Shed Blood of Christ alone for salvation; there is no exit orders ever from God, for we are saved by Grace alone. To worship God in Spirit and Truth means no com-

promise with ecclesiastical organisations who claim to be THE Church, and who teach false doctrines and deny the Word of God.

Sectarianism has taken over the True Church's Role.

In the 1990s sectarian groups have almost swamped the True Church's role. Church-goers have separated themselves into many and various groups, each quite certain that they have the truth and nothing but the truth. They might call themselves Baptist, Uniting Church, Anglican, Seventh Day Adventists, Catholics, Assembly of God etc., In a real sense this is sectarianism, when all along the True Church has simply CHRISTIAN as its name. This is a Divine Name. The early Christians did not have ecclesiastical, official status, but the gospel they preached was wonderfully blessed by God with converts. It was not official in its constitution, it was rather a work of the Holy Spirit. See in Acts 11 the simple men and women of Cyprus and Cyrene, those who had been scattered from Jerusalem after Stephen was killed, and persecution rose up.

Barnabas of the assembly at Jerusalem came to Antioch to help these Christians. Did he come as

(f) **JESUS CHRIST not only claimed equality with God Himself, but His apostles claimed He was equal with God as well.**
John 5:18; Philippians 2:6.

(g) **JESUS CHRIST is shown in the Bible to be ONE with GOD, to have the fullness of the Godhead.**
Matt. 26:63,64; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3;

SUBJECT #3.

The saved are safe for all eternity, and cannot lose their salvation under any circumstances.

The Bible makes it quite plain that once saved we are eternally secure in Christ Jesus forever! Many modern day churches do not teach the Truth about salvation in this regard, and fear of being lost will result if such an error is tolerated in a fellowship. We have NO WORKS by which we can add to the completed Salvation wrought for believers by Christ Himself on the Cross. We did not begin with works, and we shall surely not end with works for salvation.

"For by grace are ye saved ... not of works lest any man should boast." (Eph.2:8-9).

"Boast" of what?
Of being righteous, of being good enough to be saved. Some think we must live a good life to be saved. No one would be saved if that was the case, we are all totally sinful by nature, fallen beings, who can only be saved by God looking at us through the Blood of Christ Jesus. AFTER we are saved we live obedient lives by God's grace alone, but this is in gratitude and because we are changed creatures, not to earn our salvation. Believers who preach that we are eternally secure in Christ do so because the Bible says so just that.

"There is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them which are in Christ Jesus..."

(Romans 8:1) See also Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 3:3; John 5:24; 6:37; 10:27-28. We are already Sealed 11 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30.

The strongest verse in the Bible is probably Romans 8:30, and the second would be Eph. 4:30. According to Rom.8:23 the "day of redemption" is the Rapture. The child of God is sealed until the day of the Rapture itself, safe till Christ takes him/her to Himself. Verses pointed out by those who are in error about **Eternal Security of the Believer**, are always quoted out of context.

from a strict nation of Monotheists, they believed in One God. They would never have used the words they did about Jesus Christ if they saw Him as a created being who was subordinate, inferior, to God. Here we should compare the Old Testament verses with the New Testament:

- **Matthew 3:3 compared with Isaiah 40:3.**
- **John 12:41 compared with Isaiah 6:1.**
- **Ephesians 4:7,8 compared with Psalm 68:18.**
- **I Peter 3:15 compared with Isaiah 8:13.**

(c) **JESUS CHRIST** possesses the very “attributes” of God, or the quality and characteristics of God.

Jesus Christ is declared to be:

- Self-existent;
- unchangeable;
- Truth; Love;
- Holiness;
- Eternal;
- omnipresent (present everywhere);
- omniscient (knowing everything);
- omnipotent (all powerful).

Here are just as few of the verses which show Christ’s God-attributes:

- John 1:4;14:6;5:26;
- Hebrews 7:16;13:8;
- Revelation 3:7;I
- John 3:16;
- Luke 1:35;
- John 6:69;
- Hebrews 7:26;
- John 1:1;
- Proverbs 8:23;
- John 17:5;
- John 8:58;

(d) **JESUS CHRIST** has the very **WORKS** of God ascribed to Him. Here we are not thinking of miracles which could have been given to Christ from God, but of such works as creating the world, upholding everything by His power, the raising of the dead at the last hour, judging all men. God cannot delegate such works to anyone, only **GOD** can do these works Himself:
John 1:3; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16.17; Hebrews 1:10; .

(e) **JESUS CHRIST** was given honour and worship which can only go to **GOD**. He did not refuse this, but accepted it as **GOD**, as **DIVINE HONOUR**.
John 5:23; 14:14; Acts 7:59; Rom. 10:9, 13 with Gen. 4:26; I Cor. 11: 24, 25;

the fake leaders of today would come? Ready to lord to over them, seeking to build a little kingdom for himself, anxious to get them all settled into his own denomination before others snapped them up? Of course not. Barnabas assumed no official position over them, he exhorted and assisted them as a servant of God. Everything was spontaneous and alive, no organisational control. It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians through the revelation of the Holy Ghost - see Acts 11:26. It is obvious that God intended believers to be known as Christians in this dispensation, the Church Age. The word “called” is really interesting here.

I will quote from Andrew Stenhouse, p.20, ‘Sin of Sectarianism’:

“...the Spirit of God has chosen to use a special verb when telling us what the Christians were ‘called’. Had He wanted to tell us what the Antiochians called them, He would doubtlessly have used the common verb kaleo, but He prefers to use chrematisai which according to Newberry, Young, Green, and others has the meaning of ‘oracularly or divinely called.’ The usage of this same verb in other Scriptures passages seems to limit it to occasions when God

was the Speaker or Caller.” 13
(End of Quote)

Because we believers are members of the True Church, The Body of Christ, called “Christians” and nothing else as a Body by God, because we have a High Priest who is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, we should never be intimidated by denominations and their leaders. We do not have to call ourselves some organisational name to be legitimate, to keep up “appearances.” Nor should we think we must assemble in a named hall (church?) in order to worship God, or have a priest, or denominational pastor over us in order to please God. Christians are called by certain terms in the Bible, disciples, saints, children of God, believers, but none of these are the name of distinction which these terms really sum up - **CHRISTIAN!**

We are disciples of Christ, believers in Christ, children of God because of Christ, saints in Christ our righteousness. We are **CHRISTIANS** together beloved of God. This is true unity in the Faith. We should not be divided into sects. Nor should we leave our communities to receive as the only witness the heresies of the sectarian structures, which are filled with the apostasy of these Endtimes! **WE CHRISTIANS**, who have

not bowed the knee to the New Age, are the ones who must still carry out the Great Commission, though time may be very short, and Christ may soon call His Bride home.

We can certainly picture the True Church of God as a flock, isn't that what Jesus Christ showed us? He said, "I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine." He said in John 10:14,27,28 these encouraging and comforting words, precious they are to be sure as we face the Great Falling Away of these Last Days: ***"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow ME: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."***

The above verses show that although the True Church can be missionary minded in every way, the worship service and gathering is not made for those who are seeking salvation, but for those who are saved and are the flock of the Shepherd. The Church service is for the flock of the Shepherd to gather with Him, and be comforted in His love and care. In these days we can see a major event going on world-wide, it is the time when the Voice of the Shepherd is calling His flock out

of sectarian, apostate groups, and He is calling His True flock of needy sheep to Himself. They do not accept the voices of those who pretend to represent the Shepherd, for they KNOW His Voice and they follow HIM - counterfeit shepherds do not deceive the True flock. Wolves in sheep's clothing are obvious to them, they can see the slobbering, long-nosed snouts!

POINT 5.

How can two or three or more get started?

Really getting started is as simple as inviting someone to dinner. Begin by getting together for prayer and discussion with those of like mind, even if there are just two or three. Seek God together gently, being at peace, no striving to "get going", utterly dependent on Him and His will. Enjoy a meal as a group, all contribute so that there is no strain on anyone in particular. If your doctrine and aims are in agreement with the Bible together, consider your next steps, proceeding in prayer.

This old advice by the great Christian leader, George Muller, who established many homes for orphaned children just by trusting the Lord with everything, is timely here:

"GUIDANCE.

there has to have been some kind of rejection of Christ Jesus and repentance in the inner soul, for people to turn to the cult in preference. Nevertheless, the prayer of a righteous man or woman accomplishes much

(1 John 5:13-21).

SUBJECT #2.

Jesus Christ is God, His incarnation.

The Bible shows us the glorious fact that God did not leave mankind alone in a fallen state after the Fall in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3), but He sent His only Begotten Son into the fallen world, to save sinners. This Jesus Christ was not just a good man and a wonderful teacher, as some will tell us, He was GOD, the Second Person of the Trinity. Christ Jesus was not an avatar, one who took on the role of the "Christ" as many have done before Him and since Him. Jesus Christ was and is the only true Christ, He was GOD come into the earth. Jesus Christ was not a created being, or "a god" as the JW's imagine, He was and is right now GOD. How do we know, the Bible tells us.

(a) JESUS CHRIST is expressly CALLED GOD in the Bible,

in John 1:1.

Here we will go to "*Christian Theology*" **Emery Bancroft:**

"In John 1:1 the predicate precedes the verb by way of emphasis, to indicate progress in thought, the Logos (Christ the Word) was not only with God, but was God. The Word is distinguishable from God, yet the Word was God, of Divine nature; not a God, which to a Jewish ear would have been abomination, nor yet identical with all that can be called God, for then the article would have been inserted."

(End of quote).

John 20:28 shows Thomas declaring, ***"My Lord and my God."*** Jesus Christ did not rebuke him for saying this. This is equivalent to a statement by Himself that He was Deity. Titus 2:13 is a direct declaration of Christ's Deity. Hebrews 1:8 would be blasphemy if Christ was not indeed God. No mere man could have these words written about him in Holy Scripture. This verse applies to Jesus Christ an Old Testament ascription of Jehovah, it rightly implies His absolute Godhead.

(b) JESUS CHRIST has the Old Testament DESCRIPTIONS OF GOD applied to Him in the Bible.

The New Testament writers came

appeals of some sects. People want a solution to “what happened to my relative who died not even believing in God?” There is NO solution if they neglected so great salvation as that offered in Christ whilst alive! (Hebrews 2:3).

F. Sects often claim that there is no salvation outside of their own group. This gives a strong authoritarian flavour to the sect, the hierarchy is seen as powerful because eternal life or death are in their hands, given by God Himself. The Catholic Church is one such group which claims that salvation is only found within its structures. (Gal. 1:9; Matt.7:15; 11 John 10-11).

G. Sects are so dangerous spiritually that they can be seen as death-traps! People who embrace the false teachings are bound in Satan’s trap,

“And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

(11 Timothy 2:26).

Sadly, very rarely does someone from a strong cult escape! The sects offer something for needy people that they do not find in Christ Jesus! - and that something is what they are really seeking, that is why they fell into the snare in the first place. Satan has a trap

designed for everyone:

The Catholic Sect offers ritual; grandeur; control for weak people who need it; worldly beautiful tradition and drama; a “god” one can see, the Pope; a sense of superiority over others; and a “mother Goddess” figure who appears in apparitions. This appeals to the one who wants earthly riches and pomp, and wants “spiritual” things that can be seen.

The Christian Science sect has a place for those who are sick in body, and want above all else to be well physically. It teaches that sickness is all in the mind.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses sect have a trap for those who dislike the Christian Churches and their preaching of Jesus Christ.

Theosophy sect appeals to the one who wants political world peace and unity, with humanity as top-dog with a god-like image.

Behind any sect, the appeal is always there that no true repentance is required, and the humbling of trusting only in the death of Christ Jesus is not taught. The sects have no real “offence of the Cross.” This is why the sects do not give up their victims easily,

(a) I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter. When one is truly in this state it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of His will.

(My comment: apply this to the situation of seeing the need of a Home Assembly).

(b) Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

(c) (Very important) I see the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusion also. The Holy Spirit guides according to the Scriptures, never contrary to them.

(d) Take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God’s will in connection with His Word and Spirit.

(e) I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

***(f) Thus, through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection I come to a deliberate judgement according to the best of my ability and knowledge; and if my mind is thus at peace and continues so after two or**

three more petitions, I proceed accordingly. In trivial matters, and in transactions involving most important issues, I have found this method always effective. Romans 12: 1,2. “

(End of quote).

*** NOTE:**

(f) shows we come to a deliberate judgement, we don’t just procrastinate in a passive way. You should “proceed” if the heart is at peace before God, this is the next step after prayer and reflection together as a group. If there are NO STOPS in your spirits, no closing of the door on the enterprise, no serious loss of peace over the matter, then “proceed”, do not just dither between “do it” or “do not do it” and stay inactive.

When you have passed this initial step of seeking God’s will, meeting with what is the core group of your Home Assembly, and thus being at peace, establish your order of service together (I Cor. 14:40). Then invite others whom God lays on your heart. Friends who have indicated they are feeling like remnants, Christians who have left the denominations or who cannot stand the pressures of the apostasy happening in the churches. Maybe drop them invitations in the mail. Those who live in your area who are not Christians, but whom you know

16 well, can be asked along when the service has settled down a little. Do not be feel that your group must provide some “professional” service and Bible message. In fact, most people are seeking understanding, a loving caring atmosphere, human warmth and interest, more than a formal, cleverly prepared meeting. Make the assembly homely and “natural”. Be yourselves, not putting on airs and adopting a Sunday service facade. Be prepared to have small meetings if God wills it. Numbers are not important, worshipping God together is, and providing a haven of peace and Godliness in these wicked days is important. The Home Assembly can be used for gentle neighbourhood evangelism, giving practical service to the elderly and needy, like one parent families with mothers who are finding it hard to cope. Show your love as a group to those who are not believers, seeking to win their souls for Christ. As you grow and get helpers, branch out by visiting elderly citizen’s homes, take a singer or pianist, talk to and comfort people. Develop a tract ministry, hand these out on the beach together. There are many ways to reach out into the community after you get started.

These are the latter days, people are harder than ever to reach for

Christ, so do not be discouraged if your group gets only the “gleanings” of the harvest for souls. Satan’s counterfeits are everywhere, multitudes are falling for cult and New Age lies, thousands pour into the churches where false revivals dominate, few find the straight and narrow path

(Matthew 7:14).

*** Keep on witnessing and praying, keep your light shining in the darkness. One soul saved bring joy to the angels in heaven (Lu. 15:7).**

*** Like the Philadelphia church in Revelation 3:11 “...hold that fast which thou hast...” this church is truly the ‘last days’ church.**

POINT 6.

What about problem people and differences of doctrine?

Holiness, purity of doctrine, sound and moral relationships in the assembly, peace and growth of members demands that home fellowships should have discipline and order. The sad fact is that the denominations have so drifted from sound doctrine and diligent teaching in the 1990s, that many coming out of the denominations have lost years of Biblical instruction. They may love the Lord, be very keen to obey the Word of God, they may have realised that the churches have gone into ram-

C. The sects always have human beings as authorities, and their teaching and doctrines are set against the Scriptures of God. Personalities predominant in sects. You will hear people speak often of these live or dead leaders or founders.

- **Kenneth Copeland,**
- **Mary Baker Eddy,**
- **Ellen White,**
- **Rodney Howard-Browne,**
- **Sai Baba,**
- **Pastor Russell - J. W.**
- **or who ever is followed.**

Sound Christians are followers of Christ Jesus, all other Christians, leaders or Pastors, are merely saved sinners, even though used of God sometimes in wonderful ways.

D. Sects often claim they have “new” teachings which are an additive to the Biblical Scriptures. These may come from the sect’s founder or from a special “move of the Spirit”, which is extra-biblical revelation. But the Bible in reality is a completed work to which can be added nothing at all! (Rev. 22:18-19). Any group which is claiming that they have “new” revelation” which is equal in authority to the Bible, or is even of greater authority than God’s Word is a sect. Sects change the

37 meaning of existing Scripture as well, subtracting as well as adding, ignoring the plain teaching and making the Scriptures say something contrary to the obvious sense of the passage. This is why a knowledge of the Bible is vital to each individual. False teachings are relatively simple to spot when one is grounded well in God’s Word.

E. Always the sects teach doctrines which interfere with the Biblical teaching about salvation. One of the teachings of many sects is the possibility of salvation after death. The sects often teach that people who die with no faith in God can still have a chance after dying. The Catholic Church teaches this, and prayers for the dead, alms given for the dead and rituals entered into for the dead are common. Jesus taught that this is not so, by His teaching of the lost and how to be saved etc. (Matt.7:13-14; 18:8-9; 25:21,30; 25:46; John 3:16; 3:36). Jesus Christ warned about the possibility of being lost forever after death (Matt. 18:8-9). The Bible makes it plain that DEATH is the time when everything is already decided (Hebrews 9:27). People are very disturbed at the demise of a loved one, and want to think that there will be a chance for them in the here-after. This is one of the

cepts the offer of free salvation in Christ Jesus alone. False Christianity and all the fantastic and amazing cults we see around us in the 1990s ALL teach that man can save himself, or pander to his pride that he is not lost but really “a god”, or teach that mankind is inherently good and not sinful at all, and so does not need salvation as a free gift. These are all ACCURSED!

READ Galatians 1:6-10 about there being but ONE GOSPEL!
STUDY carefully I Cor. 15:1-23.

We are not saved by taking part in the Mass, going to confession, saying hail Marys, crawling on our knees to the river Ganges and throwing ourselves in, channeling ETs, or living a “good” life - there is no other way to be saved but by the Cross of Jesus Christ. Any other “method” of salvation is ACCURSED by God. II Cor. 6:17. Wrong and Right will never mix, we believers have no part in the churches who teach an accursed message.

Identification of a Sect

A. The most important feature of a sect is that the central truth of the Gospel is missing! If this central truth is missing in a main-line church, then it has strayed into

becoming a sect. Here we must look carefully at what is being preached. The doctrine of Salvation, that it is necessary to repent, trust in the Blood of Christ, Jesus is the Only Way to God etc. If people are deprived of these vital doctrines then the church is no longer a Christian church.

B. The sects do not encourage personal, free investigation of the Scriptures. They have set Bible teaching, which is supplemented by books, videos, magazines which preach the same messages. People are kept busy with these supplements, and quote the same verses and applications as the videos, magazines etc. Only a section of the Bible is taught, such as the “faith” movement, which concentrates on the passages on “faith” predominantly. The genuine Gospel, prophecy, sound Christian living, the proper doctrines of the Bible are left out in the “faith” movement.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses concentrate on proving Jesus Christ is not God, and pushing damnable heresies about the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The J.W.’s founder “Pastor” Russell died in 1916 in the most miserable way, and is now in hell, he has paid for his foolish apostasy.

part apostasy, yet STILL have false doctrine in their hearts and minds, which seems legitimate to themselves. The most distressing part of these latter days with the Great Falling away is, for me as an older Christian, meeting with sincere and fine Christians who have false beliefs still hanging on them like grave clothes. Left-overs from neo-evangelical groups, Pentecostal “revivals” and the like! It is so hard for them to realise that the Bible does not teach what they have learnt over years, thinking it was correct.

Some of these beliefs or doctrines might include:

* **Extra-biblical** revelations and visions, believing that they or others can “prophecy”, or image Jesus Christ etc.

* **Various “interpretations”** accepted, with the idea that your “interpretation” is acceptable to them, so their’s must be acceptable to you. A sort of “loving” “tolerance” that does not know that one must read the Bible which interprets itself, and that there is only ONE interpretation, many applications. God’s Word is not a book of confusion!

* **Left-over beliefs** about the Church as Israel, keeping of the Sabbath, being under the Law in the Church Age, revival being in

some way a sensory experience involving manifestations coming on the body.

* **The acceptance of New Age Bible versions** as being easier to read, and sounder than the actual Bible the Authorised version.

Because of the difficulties which can arise with new persons, it is wise to begin a Home Assembly with others of the same mind and heart.

Important to note, if you have differences with friends who want to begin fellowship with you, get those ironed out before you begin. A core of sound people is a great start. Pray together, seek God on any differences, search the Scriptures together.

Endtime Ministries would be only too pleased to give guidance in any matter where believers find themselves stumped. Some of the Basics are included here with this booklet. (see p.31)

Our Diploma Bible Courses, under the headship of Dr. Dennis Spackman of New Zealand, is available for cost of paper and postage only, we are a non-profit organisation. (free on Internet)

This course can give leaders in Home Assemblies a sound grasp of Scriptures. It is always a good

18 plan to give people messages which show them what the Bible does say, rather than criticise or denounce the false beliefs flatly. Remember, those who come out of denominations have often been wounded, no one needs more arguments and disruptions.

An assembly is meeting for God's glory! Unless proper spiritual relations are maintained amongst believers, it cannot function for the Lord's glory. This is a serious affair, we venerate a Holy God. What happens when someone or a section of the assembly will not accept Biblical doctrine, or is causing trouble in some way? This should not occur, but it may. In no way should a small group be allowed to drift away into a potential "cult" just because the core fellowship members are weak. Weakness is not love and tolerance, it is foolishness and dishonouring to God.

Discipline and Order in the New Testament.

In modern days one could almost suppose that any old thing goes, and that as long as people "love the Lord" then we can be happy little playmates together. This is not Biblical. Disciplinary action is to be taken for various causes, by the assembled Body, not by a

few lordling it over others by the way. We are servants of each other, not little popes and priests! Let's look at some of the Bible's instructions on discipline:

(a) A brother or sister who is overtaken by a "fault", then he/she is to be restored by those who are spiritual (Galatians 6:1). This "fault" is a transgression, a sinful action of some sort. Do not allow sin to develop unhindered in the assembly, or get captured yourselves! Satan loves to break up fellowships with sexual immorality, greed for money and lust for power over others.

(b) Unruly talkers, vain speakers, are to be exhorted and rebuked by the elders (II Timothy 4:1,2; Titus 1:9-11). Especially in a small group pompous talkers can disrupt services. Do not feel unkind if they must be firmly asked to keep order. Otherwise no one will be able to worship God in peace. When a message is being given in a home, there is no reason for interruptions or debates to be allowed to occur. The time to discuss the message is afterwards over a cup of coffee.

(c) Believers or the unsaved who cause divisions, and disorderly people who refuse to be reasonable, are to be avoided, withdrawn from if they persist. (Romans 16:17,18; II Thess.3:6).

(d) A heretic who utterly refuses

(b) The group's beliefs about Jesus Christ Himself.

False teachers and groups often teach that Jesus Christ was not God, or if He was God, then He was not also man. Jesus Christ was True God and True Man, the Bible shows us. Read these passages that show this false attitude to Jesus Christ: I John 2:22; II John 7; II Peter 2:1.

What kind of errors can the false religions teach about Jesus Christ?

What should we look for? These errors can include:

- * the ancient beliefs of the Gnostic heresies, so prevalent in New Age circles today, which deny His true humanity.
- * Apostate denominations in Christendom itself can be of the higher criticism schools which insist that Jesus Christ was a great man, a marvellous religious teacher, but deny anything and everything that shows that Jesus Christ was GOD incarnate.
- * Such as the Virgin birth, * Christ living a sinless life,
- * His sacrificial death on the Cross as a sinless substitute,
- * His bodily resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father.
- * Any group or teacher that does

not believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was truly God and man in every way, the only begotten Son of God, is a counterfeit and is false.

STUDY Rev. 1:8-20 carefully,
NOTE: that this is a description of the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE :
v. 8 compared with vv. 13 & 18.

(c) The group's beliefs about Salvation.

Every false cult, teacher or religion believes that man can save himself/herself in some way, and does not humbly trust only in Christ Jesus' death on the Cross alone for Salvation. The Bible says **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ..."**

NOTE "that believeth" - not who lives a good life in his own eyes, not who goes to church diligently etc.

NOTE some of the Bible verses which teach that man is saved by God's unmerited favour in Christ Jesus and His death, a free gift: Ephesians 2: 1-10; I John 5:11,12; Romans 3:21-26; 6:23.

Only true Christianity teaches that man is utterly lost in sin, and on his way to hell unless he ac-

On the New Testament Jesus Christ made wonderful promises to His followers, read John 14:26; John 16:13. Both these verses have to do with New Testament Scripture.

Cultists often take away from the Scriptures or add to them. See what God's Word warns us about here in Rev. 22:18,19. This shows that the Scriptures are FULLY inspired, they do not need a Mary Baker Eddy or a Robert Schuller to write added "truths" which they claim complement the Bible, when they actually contradict Scripture, or take away from the mighty truths of God. No cult who claims to have leaders whose teachings are uniquely inspired or are especially in authority under God should be trusted. Any groups or teachers who criticise the Bible on the other hand to such a degree that they insist that a teaching or teachings should be "taken away" from the Bible, is not of God. Modernists in such churches as the Lutheran, Anglican and Uniting churches tend towards this destructive behaviour many times. Culling of Bible passages, symbolising passages, making out that scientific knowledge has disproved the Bible, all these things and more happen in modern or cultic churches. The authentic teacher in an authentic

church teaches that ALL Scripture is inspired by God, and ONLY Scripture is our authority, it only is the infallible Word of God. A group will stay sound who yields only to God's Word, and searches the Scriptures daily to prove whether the Bible teaches what they are being taught or teach. A church which believes that itself is of greater than or of equal authority with the Bible is false! The Roman Catholic Church believes this of itself.

STUDY Acts 17:10-15.

NOTE in particular verse 11.

See the Bible for its own record on its contents:

- Exodus 4:10-12; 34:27;
- Numbers 12:6,8;
- Deuteronomy 4:2; 18:20;
- Mark 12:36;
- II Samuel 23:2;
- Jeremiah 1:6-9;
- Numbers 22:38; 23:26.

For the testimony of the New Testament read:

- John 12:49,50; 17:8; 5:19;
- Mark 13:11;
- Acts 2:1-4; 2:7, 11;
- I Cor. 2:13;
- I Thess. 2:13.

correction, seeks to spread his own errors in the very midst of you, is to be rejected (Titus 3;9-11). Now this is a "curly" one! In every fellowship there will be those who see things differently in minor matters. Every matter is of great importance, true, every doctrine is vital, true, but be prepared to be sensitive here. It is a different matter if an assembly member who is considered able to give a message presents heretical doctrine, than if a believer who comes along each Sunday but does not speak in a service holds heretical doctrine. Give the latter time to adapt, if the doctrine is not dogmatic theology, agree to disagree and keep off the subject.

For instance,

"dogmatic theology" is

- salvation by Grace through Faith; the Trinity;
- the infallibility of Scripture;
- the Divinity of Christ Jesus etc.

Non **"dogmatic theology"**

might be the

- * Gap Theory or
- * Pre-Adamic Earth;
- * Genesis six and the line of Seth or fallen angels controversy;
- * whether Adam had a belly button or not;
- * where the Rapture occurs etc.

We are **NOT** Jehovah's Witnesses,

who have every belief set out according to their own books and leaders. We are people living with the Almighty God, in a breathtakingly alive situation. Others must have their spiritual integrity kept intact, discussion should never be outlawed by the few. A fine line should be observed between doctrinal correctness and giving room to develop together as a group, without pressure and bombastic arrogance.

The above is not compromising, it is giving people time and space to adjust. It is establishing good relationships so that others can feel that they trust the group members enough to seek advice and understanding. At all times everyone should only be seeking to know for sure what God's Word says, and to be willing to drop their own opinions.

Do not allow disagreement to split the group if at all possible, although a legitimate split may happen. The Home Assembly may just grow too big for one home. At the membership number of twelve and over, you may agree together to split into two groups. There are no set rules about this, nor is there any reason that people should attend at the closest home to them, if they prefer not to. It could be wise, if

20 you divide into two groups after a period, to meet or intermingle. Have a mixed group sometimes, or a picnic, call in to inquire about how things are going, keep together. You may decide not to divide at all, but even decide to meet in a bigger venue. It is entirely your group's decision before God. (Remember local assemblies are best being local, to support each other when needed.)

(e) A person who is guilty of blatant immorality, or ungodly behaviour, who refuses to repent of this, who indulges in such conduct despite warning and exhorting from elders, he/she should be put away from the Home Assembly and refused fellowship (I Cor.5:11-13; II John 10; I Timothy 1:20). **Here let us give a proviso.** New converts sometimes find a Christian change of life a startling contrast to their former ways. They might have had a defacto relationship, gone out drinking every Saturday night to the early hours, gambled, taken drugs, cheated and lied. A lapse or two, when new converts are first seeking to live a life pleasing to God, should not automatically mean they are tossed out of fellowship. Be more patient with such a one.

POINT 7. Is there a Biblically correct form for a worship service in a home?

There are obviously Biblically correct ways to pray, worship and open God's Word, with reverence, humility, love and dependence upon the Lord Himself. But there is no actual formal service as such outlined in the New Testament, we are not under religious Law, we are free in Christ Jesus (Galatians 5:1).

Some suggestions may be of help here:

(a) Should you meet every week? If the group wants this to be settled, then do so. If your core people have other commitments, then you could consider meeting fortnightly, although I myself would see weekly as more appropriate. When first starting out there may be no one who stands out as a particular leader, as pastor material. Therefore the week before the Home Assembly decide between you who will give a Biblical message for the next Sunday. This means teaching the Bible message, not giving your own thoughts about some matter or other. Appoint also a service leader for that Sunday who will take care of any organisation required, who can keep order gently if anyone is talking and so on.

be. And do not assume that you must be correct, if unsure of Scriptural teaching on some point or other. The Bible is your only authority in everything, not a former church or some favourite author, although Godly authors can be of great help, naturally, in leading us to the appropriate verses and passages. Get out your Bibles together, read all passages carefully, discuss one with another, and do a chain reference study from a sound chain reference Bible if time permits. God is not a God of confusion, the Holy Spirit will lead you into all truth.

The Bible studies are presented so that you can have "stepping stones" into the Scriptures, to help you find the relevant passages easily. They are not designed to bring any opinions or thoughts of the writer in any way to the fore.



An Outline of Bible Doctrines & Subjects to Study.

33

SUBJECT #1.

With so many cults, denominations, and new groups rising up, how can any of us know what is the truth and what is counterfeit or error?

How can we know for sure that our own group is sound?

There are three important rules by which we can gauge what is a true group or church and what is not.

These are:

(a) **The groups' beliefs about the Bible.**

A false group will often put the hierarchy of the church at the top of the authority tree, not the Bible. Yet the Bible claims hundreds of times to be the very Written Word of God. Jesus Christ accepted that the Old Testament Scriptures were the Word of God, were Divinely inspired and made no mistakes. He said "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), in regard to the Old Testament, in the same passage He called the OT the "Word of God."

live in a little tent away from the house and among the olive trees. There he had his bed and table and a chair, and when able to sit up, he sat there pondering over the Word of God and writing a few letters. When I came home my mother said, "I want you to go out there and see James Fraser." I went, and he greeted me very kindly and said, "Well, young man, you are trying to win souls," and he went on to give me a word of encouragement and said, "Sit down and let me tell you a few things my Father has been saying to me." Oh, the things he began to give me from the Word of God, as I sat there for perhaps two hours. And then I said, "You must not talk any more, you will be exhausted." He said, "Take these things and pass them on to others." I said, "But how can I learn these things for myself? Can you tell me of some books I can read that will explain all these things?" "My dear young man," he said, "I learned these things on my knees on the mud floor of a little thatched cottage on the north of Ireland with my open Bible on a chair before me. The One who wrote the Bible came day by day and explained them to me, and you can learn more in a few weeks

on your knees, with God, over His Word than you can in all the schools in a lifetime." I was amazed and I thanked God all my life since for that little Irishman, James Fraser. All through the years I have cherished the lesson he taught me. If you want the wisdom that cometh from above, if you want knowledge that is real, study your Bible for yourselves, in dependency upon the Holy Spirit of God. Do not depend upon what others can give you. I am afraid there are many Christians who hardly ever open their Bibles except when they come to a meeting."

(End of quote).

In order to get your assembly onto a good start, a few basic doctrines from the Scriptures will be presented herein, as taught in the Word. There will be others of course which come up, but search the Scriptures, and God will give you all the answers as you study together. God wants you to be sound doctrinally far more than you do yourselves. As mentioned before, people coming out of apostate churches have absorbed far more errors than they often imagine they have. Everyone must be patient and kind, do not cause them more heart-ache over these matters, important though they

The leader or elder could also give a Communion reading for the day. It is easier for someone else to caution a disrupter than the one who is preaching.

(b) Communion could be taken each week, or each fortnight perhaps. No need to buy special communion glasses. One nice goblet or glass, wiped carefully with a serviette or tissue between people, is quite sufficient. A small silver tray with a silver goblet if these are available, a small covered container for the pieces of bread on the same tray. Perhaps a vase of flowers near where the communion items are set out. Anything dignified and nice is suitable. Grape juice/wine, a pita-type bread which has no leaven, broken in tiny pieces, or something of that fashion. Bible passages such as I Corinthians 11:18-26 are suitable. A song or hymn which deals with the death of Christ for us is a good choice before communion.

** If possible you may like to 'set-apart' the things used for communion, in the homes where meetings are to be held, and keep them in these various home for the Lord's Supper*

(c) Choose your hymns to sing, or ask for favourites from a book. You can use shared books, or photocopies, if the group is small a few will go around for awhile. If

your musician is not experienced 21 remember to choose hymns beforehand so that he/she can practice up. A guitar, a keyboard or piano, or even unaccompanied singing is fine if there is a strong, enthusiastic voice or two.

* A prayer to start;

* a hymn or two;

* time to share and ask for prayer;

* hymns again;

* communion with a shorter message than the main Bible teaching, with people being asked to thank the Lord for the cup and the bread;

* the main Bible teaching finishing with

* prayer and a

* closing hymn.

No more is needed for a simple home service of worship unto God. If your group decides upon another pattern, that is all right as well of course.

Perhaps a simple order of service could be hand-printed or typed for people to be given when they arrive, especially if there are new Christians. This sets the tone and avoids the feeling some might have that they can interrupt or comment ad lib. It is wise to avoid taking a collection when the assembly is small. Advice about giving to worthy Christian work could be given to people so they

would be obeying God about offerings, do your homework about this, God's money must go to sound organisations and missionary endeavours. See yourselves as being supportive of each other as well, be generous to the believers in your assembly, do not let needy families suffer want if the rest of you can give a helping hand. This too is giving to the Lord's work (James 1:27). There are no instructions about tithing in the New Testament! No assembly business should be discussed at a worship service, or a collection taken if the unsaved are there.

Point 8.

Advantages & Disadvantages of Home Assemblies.

The disadvantages are:

* that denominations have large halls with lots of people filling them up, this may be a bit more satisfying than being in a small group.

* The singing and music will be more "enjoyable" in larger denominational meetings.

* There are activities which small home assemblies cannot attempt.

Advantages of Home Assemblies are many however, we will list here some of these:

(a) Home Assemblies do not have to raise money to pay buildings

off, they do not have bank balances, treasurers, constitutions, committee meetings, fetes to raise money or church "games" about all these matters. They do not have minister's fraternal or denominational heads over them, who dictate church policy to the pastor of the church and the other leaders!

(b) Home Assemblies can be set free to give together to simply spread the Gospel. Everyone in the assembly can be used in their various gifts, encouraged to become a vital part of the assembly.

(c) Home Assemblies can give the close care and love which large denominations often fail to give, or neglect to stress. People in Home Assemblies know each other as intimate friends, no one need feel that they have come and gone from a service without a single soul seeming to care whether they were there or not. How many times have you heard the comment: "they seemed friendly enough at that church on Sunday, but when I met them in the street they didn't want to know me!" A home is a place where friends meet, and Home Assemblies can provide comfort and fellowship which often larger groups cannot. A caution here. DO NOT leave everything to one couple, or necessarily load one couple or person with providing a home setting

Part 2...

Beginning Bible Basics

It would be wise to keep Sunday worship services as times when possible controversy is kept well out of the picture. These services to the Lord should have messages which inspire, comfort, encourage, lead hearts into worship and awe of the God we adore, delight the listener when they realise that God loves them and protects them, and help believers face with confidence another week in what is often a very wicked society. People are finding the work place hostile, unsaved neighbours critical of them, unsaved relations have become persecutors, and they need so much an untroubled Sunday worship time which is pleasant and joyous. But, the Home Assembly needs to get its doctrinal stand right on God's track, centred in the Lord's Truth, or problems lie ahead!

The best place to get doctrines straight, and have unity of mind and spirit established around God's Word, is a mid-week meeting. Here various areas of disagreement can be aired, if they exist.

In starting a Home Assembly, it would be wise to tackle the basic doctrines of Christianity straight from the Bible in the first weeks after you have begun to worship together, remember though, at a mid-week Bible study and prayer meeting, not on Sunday. This study is NOT for any body to foist their own pet doctrines on others, or to do anything other than find out what the BIBLE tells us. It is not what some preacher or author has said, but what does the Bible really say.

Be prepared to admit that YOU were wrong if need be, it does not matter if you have to eat your pride. All that matters is that God's Truth is taught and preserved.

An encouraging quote from H. A. Ironside will, I know, inspire the reader:

"I have told elsewhere how, years ago when a young Salvation Army officer, I had come home for a brief furlough to southern California, where my folk had an olive ranch. I found an Irish preacher there, a poor man dying of tuberculosis, and he was too far gone for a change of climate to help him. He had asked to be allowed to

30 in the right and never wrong. If your first effort brings sadness and division, then just start again afresh. No money to lose, no building to sell, no airing of dirty linen in public, no denomination to placate. Learn by mistakes, humbly.

A quote from **Andrew Stenhouse** will finish this section on Home Assemblies. I pray that these comments will encourage the reader to seek God about stepping out in faith into the great spiritual resources which are his/her own in the Spirit of God. These resources are love towards one another in Christ, grace, the use of the Scriptures, as yet untapped answers to prayer, the joy of working in a team together for the Lord God - may God fill your cup to overflowing, and prepare a meal before you in the presence of your spiritual enemies.

“Scripture teaches that in ministry, as in all the works of God, there is room for much diversity without destroying the unity or harmony. There are diversities of gifts, ministries and operations, but one and the self-same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11), and this variety is needful for us as individuals and assemblies. The Word of God, moreover, is both

profound and extensive, and we should be constantly acquiring fresh knowledge and fresh visions of the glory of Christ and His church. The tendency of the sectarian mind is to run all truth, or rather some truth, into a fixed mould, and express it in cut-and-dried forms of speech. ... The fashion of the sects is to draw up a statement of doctrine, a confession of faith, a series of articles, or some document that will be authoritative for all the members. But this amounts to setting aside Scripture as a perfect and sufficient authority.”

Bibliography:

- H. A. Ironside, Litt.D., “Studies on the Psalms”, pub. Loizeaux Bros.
- E.H. Bancroft, D.D., “Christian Theology”, Pub. Zondervan
- A. Stenhouse, “Sin of Sectarianism” pub. ?

Suggested Reading:

- J. Gardner, “House Fellowships”, pub. UK.

for every meeting, or expect them to counsel and comfort unaided. The hosts and hostesses can get very tired of this. If there are suitable homes, rotate around. If there is really only one home suitable, then make sure you all bring food, wash up the dishes, run a carpet sweeper around before you leave and so on. Be ready to ask someone to YOUR home to talk about their problems.

Remember your main aim, which is to glorify and worship the Lord. “Growth” or “success” have no place in the thinking of those who worship together in Home Assemblies. A dietitian I attended recently advised us to consider HEALTH first and foremost when planning meals and exercise. She said to ignore losing weight per se, just eat nutritious low fat foods, plenty of fruits and vegetables, and the weight would take care of itself as we aimed at health. So too “growth” and “success” should be ignored. We are not meeting for those things. If we aim at spiritual health, growth and success will handle themselves. Spiritually healthy aims are, pleasing the Lord; depending upon and knowing Him; loving others and being there for them to make a difference to their often sad lives; giving of yourself to

show the lost that Jesus Christ loves them and wants to save them; humbly taking a responsible place that you may serve others in a fellowship.

POINT 9.

Can Body ministry glorify God?

Must there be a pastor?

Consider here what many true, sound Christians have suffered in these times of the “falling away.” (II Thess. 2:3).

They have often sat under pastors:
* who have allowed fake revivals to run riot over congregations;
* who have stocked books stalls in the church with the works of false teachers, some quite Satanic (Copeland, Hinn, Campolo, Joyner ‘ad nauseam’);
* who have presented easy-believism instead of the Gospel;
* who have preached philosophy and psychology instead of Scripture;
* who have brought rock music into the church to corrupt the young;
* who allow NIV etc as pew bibles instead of KJV,
* and much more. We could go on a long time here.

Why does anybody imagine that a meeting of believers cannot

function WITHOUT such mess makers? Meetings will function far better WITHOUT them to pervert proceedings and cause trouble for those who oppose them.

We do NOT include here those few and fine pastors of churches who are standing faithfully true to God in Australia, and there are still those left, praise the Lord. God may well raise up a Pastor for your Home Assembly, in His own time, if you do not have one to start with.

Consider then the position the True Church is now in, in the late 1990s, close to the next Millennium. The New World Order Global Unity of all religions is almost complete now. The denominations are ALL involved to a lesser or greater degree. True Christianity is on the decline, just as the Bible warns us would happen in the falling away (see also II Peter 2:1-3; Jude 17-20). There may be persecution coming for those churches which will not amalgamate with all of Christendom and other pagan religions. If the True Church within the denominations does not withdraw, will not their witness and freedom be seriously curtailed by leaders and church-goers who are “falling away?” If we were in a pagan

country as missionaries, wouldn't we be willing and ready to step out in faith to glorify God and witness to others about true Christianity? If any of us were in China, or India, or in a wilderness somewhere as missionaries, would we cry “we have to have a pastor in order to hold meetings?” Of course not! Beloved of God, we ARE in a wilderness of confusion and paganism, and our land has become as black spiritually (nearly) as Tibet! Only more subtle and seductive, with a “civilised” facade!

Do we have to have an ordained pastor for Home Assemblies? No. Does there have to be one leader, who assumes the pastor role? No, in some ways Body ministry, under the headship of Christ Jesus alone, as High Priest, has many advantages when a fellowship is small. Everyone can feel a vital part, no one considers the group their own particular “ministry”, or gets swept away with pride. People take part together unto the Lord. Yes, the Bible teaches of certain leaders, pastors, teachers and so on, but these offices have been vastly overrated in our day. Pastors and teachers and elders are Biblically called to SERVE the Body of Christ, not to make a professional career, or Lord it over congregations, or create a “king-

wanted to come and be with us in that capacity we would welcome him and his people. We also said we denied his assertion that he was an “apostle” of the area. A very powerful man in a lot of ways, the “apostle” became angry at what he saw as our rejection, and left!

(no apostles today anyway, not scriptural)

To our surprise we were later approached by two of those who came with him that night, they wanted to join our fellowship and were glad we had put the “apostle” in his place!

Anyone who joins in with your Home Assembly should show themselves to be sound Biblically, spiritually and even morally before taking a teaching place in the fellowship. That does not mean that only sound people can come along to your fellowship, those who are confused and in problems need your loving help. But as far as teaching goes, they must be proved before they can take a preaching or teaching role. Deal lovingly but firmly with those who want a little kingdom of their own, not in front of believers in a Bible study or meeting, but privately so that a loving and peaceful time together won't be disturbed.

A FEW COMMENTS

Every true believer has a love for the Word of God and should be able to become acquainted with the whole counsel of God in the Bible. Do you realise that if you are sincere and humble God has given you a SAFEGUARD against falling into error? It all depends on trusting utterly, not passively, but actively in your Divine Guide, the Holy Spirit. Look at the glorious teaching of I John 2:18-27. It is very nice to have complete agreement with fellow believers, but real life being what it is, often the case is that in all matters we are not entirely in agreement at all. The Scriptures give us instructions to speak the same things and to be of the same mind (I Cor. 1:10; Philippians 2:2), yet there are areas where the Spirit of God has seen fit NOT to give clear testimony. There is liberty for Christians to act differently in such cases, according to their consciences before the Lord, as they understand the mind of God. The Word of God does not divide Christians, it always binds them closer and closer together in mind and heart. It is men's own opinions that divide, disobedience and wilful determination to be always

ous traps in these groups, not happening in Australia only but world-wide. Endtime Ministries has data which shows the agenda of these global cell groups or prayer circles. They have to do with SENSITIVITY TRAINING, CONSENSUS, ECUMENISM, UNITY IN DIVERSITY, DEPENDENCY on the leaders in a New Age global fusion. These groups are now encouraging data-based information files of a personal nature on all members of the cell or circle. These may then be accessed by the One World Church later on. Despatch magazine exposes this global move for manipulation of the masses, write to us for more information.

POINT 12.

A false leader or apostle may come into the assembly.

What can you do about this?

Small groups can attract strong, ambitious would-be leaders, who may seek to take over a Home Assembly for reasons of self-glorification. We had a fellowship once where this happened, and it was rather a crisis. A man read in the local newspaper a small advertisement we had put in for a Bible study class. He then found out our time and place for the mid-week, evening meeting, and pre-

sented himself and a few of his own people at that home. He insisted that he was the new leader sent by God, that he was an apostle of our area appointed by the Lord Himself. At another time, in a different area, a similar incident happened. This time it was at a spiritual warfare community. A man, his wife and two children turned up and said that the man was the apostle of our area, and he even claimed free food and lodgings for his family as “perks” for a special apostle of God! Your fellowship may not encounter a fake apostle, just a God-appointed leader in their own eyes.

How would your assembly handle an emergency like that?

The news of a Home Assembly will spread even if you do not advertise, especially in a small town. Firstly, do not be intimidated by such people. Any new person/persons should be welcomed, but not as potential kings of the castle! We calmly took the “apostle” aside who turned up at our Home Assembly, just three of us, and explained that he was welcome to come and worship and learn from the Word around the feet of Jesus Christ with us all. We explained we had Body ministry, that Jesus Christ Himself was our only True leader in the group, and that if he

dom” for themselves. They are supposed to be there simply to be helpers of others, and give themselves sacrificially so that others may grow in the knowledge of God and His Word. The core group should discern the capacities of the people who come along, and make sure that only those who CAN give Biblically-correct teaching do so, otherwise meetings will not be uplifting and helpful. Yes, Body ministry can glorify God!

All believers are priests (I Peter 2:5,9; Hebrews 13:15). It is the privilege of all believers to worship the Almighty “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23,24). In view of this stupendous fact, the early church simply met together in dependency on the Spirit of God. Their worship meetings would not have been presided over by one man who took charge over all things, believers were free to worship, pray, give thanks and praise. However, such an arrangement demands a consciousness of the presence of the Holy Spirit, that HE might control and guide, otherwise confusion will result. Note that in I Cor.11 the apostle Paul carefully shows his instructions about the proper partaking of the Lord’s Supper, but there is no mention of a presiding priest or clergyman, the instructions are given to the whole assembly as

believers. There was no ecclesiastical officer in attendance. The apostle Paul insists that ALL should be done for “edification.” That is for benefit, enlightenment, spiritual growth and instruction.

POINT 10.

Can a Home Assembly be like a missionary outpost?

The Home Assembly can and should be like a missionary endeavour. We Christians are lights in the dark world, YOU are a light. Light overcomes the darkness as it spreads out. God has placed you in a certain neighbourhood with certain people around you. All of us know many unsaved people. When you meet in Home Assemblies pray for the neighbours around you, when you meet in another home, pray for those neighbours too. Prayer for the unsaved is vital to the success of this kind of evangelism. When you have settled into a solid assembly yourselves, ask neighbours or unsaved friends and relations to your Home Assembly and lunch, but make sure you tell them honestly that it is a home service. Don’t get them there under false pretences by asking them to Sunday lunch, and when they get there, casually saying that a service is on as well!

A Sunday school can often open the way to get to know parents too, you can start with only a half dozen children. Have an afternoon meeting during the week, instead of holding a separate meeting which divides parents and children at a worship service.

A note of caution, neighbours may want to use your Sunday school as a “baby-sitter” service whilst parents get a chance to go out by themselves. Older children would still benefit even so, very young children should not become your responsibility.

Pray that God will give you all insight and wisdom in reaching out to the unsaved; pray that you will have ordinary life contacts with those who are “ripe fruit”; pray that the Lord will open hearts to receive invitations to attend the Home Assembly. If you have a close neighbour come in to a service for the first time, it could be wise to have someone else give a Bible message on that day. Then if they reject the message and teacher, the way is still open to you to continue casual relations. Don’t imagine that you know beforehand which neighbours will respond to an invitation, the very ones you may think will turn up their noses, could be the ones God is dealing with inside themselves. We cannot pre-

judge. Ask them all.

Why would people come who are unsaved?

There are lots of reasons why people would come, apart from the obvious one that the Holy Spirit is drawing them. People are lonely, especially the elderly, they lack warmth and contact of a personal nature in this world which is filled with money grubbing and confusion. Others would like to have intellectual enrichment, maybe to think more deeply about the world and life. Some have looked everywhere and still have a spiritual hunger in their lives. God has only commanded us to sow and water the seed of life, not to give life and increase. The responsibility is all His, ours is only to be obedient to the call (Mark 16:15). How much easier it is to reach out to others when you are meeting for prayer for them with concerned Christians, how much easier it is to invite sinners in to your home when praying Christians are there also to support you and your family.

In a Home Assembly there is no need to arrange seats in lines of course, like church pews. Sitting in a lounge room in comfortable surroundings is very nice and casual, keep it all gentle and simple when the unsaved are present,

maybe keeping communion for another slot because they would not be able to partake. Remember that, if you are faithful in prayer and life, God will use the neighbour-contacts you make to reach other unsaved people with the news about your Home Assembly. They have friends and families, school friends who do not go to Sunday school, people they meet in business and so on. Pray and ask the Lord about more formal reach-out as you go on over the months, or years. It is God’s work entirely. If your assembly grows and you feel you want a computer or photostat or some such thing,

DO NOT accept financial aid from a government department in the form of sales tax exemption on paper or supplies, these come with the price tag of possible intervention in your affairs! Times are perilous. Your assembly should not register as a ‘church’ with the government! (as it is not a ‘church’ as such) There is no need to do this, any Home Assembly which is unknown in the future could be a great asset if persecution comes to this country. Anyone can hold a club meeting in their own home, have a party, run a class on art or music, have people to lunch and such things. See your assembly in

this way.

Be considerate!

Little things to you might cause large troubles to the assembly, and loss of respect from neighbours. You could even be forced to close up! * Do not make loud noises at night, play loud music, park across peoples’ drive-ways, let your children run in peoples’ yards, bang doors and toot horns, or in any way be a nuisance. * Do not give neighbours a real reason to object. Be low-key, win with subtle love. You are judged by the world because of your behaviour, do everything decently, in order.

POINT 11.

A counterfeit movement of prayer circles and cell groups.

In these days of large churches where people often feel like ants the “small group” within the large church has arisen. This is in no way the same as a Home Assembly. These groups are attached to and complimentary to a big church which is still in a (often apostate) denomination. The doctrine and control comes from the compromising pastors and hierarchy of the denomination, the teaching is controlled by them, and the leaders are especially chosen by them to fit in with their own agenda. There are very seri-