

# The World Ahead

A ministerial publication of the  
*Living Church of God*

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Vol. 18 No. 35

August 31, 2017

## **THE MISSION**

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish *His work*.” -- John 4:34

Greetings from Charlotte,

Weather events made news this week, with fires in southwestern Canada and the western United States, and Hurricane Harvey devastating the gulf coasts of Texas and Louisiana—and more hurricanes are coming in the next week. Reports from Texas indicate that our brethren appear to have made it through the hurricane without too much damage. The Feast site at Lake Conroe also appears to be okay. In Canada, threats of evacuation affecting Church members were lifted when the winds changed direction. God does answer prayers! In the western Pacific, North Korea continues to unnerve its neighbors by launching missiles—the latest one flew over Japan. As part of our efforts to explain the significance of these events and proclaim good news about the future, *Tomorrow's World* Presentations were held last weekend in Fayetteville, North Carolina and Fort Myers, Florida, that drew 42 visitors. This week, Mr. Weston performed a wedding in Michigan, and he and Mrs. Weston had a productive visit to the Canadian office. I had a very positive visit with our congregation in Milwaukee, where our Sabbath service was streamed successfully to six other congregations. As we see dramatic events occurring around the world, we need to pray for God's people, and that God will empower His Church to accomplish the mission we have been given.—DSW

## CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

### Men's Training Camp—Charlotte, North Carolina

On the weekend of August 25 through 27, a Men's Training Camp was held at Copperhead Island in Charlotte. The theme of the weekend was, “No Excuses: Building Godly Manhood.” There were 35 in attendance, including a few who came from as far away as Massachusetts, to rough it and sleep in tents! Friday night, Mr. Rod McNair opened with an introduction to the weekend and a Bible Study focusing on a lesson from Joshua, entitled, “Does God Have Our Full Attention?” Sabbath morning, Mr. McNair led an interactive, one-hour discussion session on “Personal Spiritual Leadership.” After a short break, Dr. Scott Winnail led another interactive session about “Marriage and Family.” A relaxing two-hour break was followed by Sabbath Services, with Mr. Mike DeSimone and Dr. Winnail giving split sermons. Saturday evening, Mr. DeSimone guided the final interactive meeting on the subject of “Work and Career.” Each of the sessions was designed to draw out input, thoughts, and counsel from each of the men attending. The evening

closed with a bonfire and a heart-to-heart fireside chat. Sunday morning, Messrs. McNair and DeSimone wrapped up the weekend, focusing on the takeaways—how we can continue to grow in becoming even more godly men.

## FEAST OF TABERNACLES

### Day of Atonement and the Sabbath after the Feast

We are now contacting all pastors to collect information about services to be conducted on the Day of Atonement and the Sabbath after the Feast. This information includes which congregations will hold services, what time they will be held, and whom to contact for more details. After compiling this information, we'll post it so brethren can use it to determine their travel plans. Pastors, please send your information to [cad@lcg.org](mailto:cad@lcg.org) by **Thursday, September 7**.

### Feast Speaking Schedules

Most Feast of Tabernacles speaking schedules have now been sent out. If you are giving a sermonette or sermon at the Feast this year, please be preparing *now* to give “meat in due season” that is uplifting and inspiring to everyone! **Please send your Festival Coordinator your title(s) by Sunday, September 10**. Thank you, ahead of time, for the effort, preparation—and prayer—that you will be putting into your messages for this year's Feast!

### Feast Sermon CDs for Those Who Can't Attend—Repeat Announcement

**Attention Pastors:** The names of all those in the U.S. who will not be able to attend the Feast and who wish to receive a set of the Feast of Tabernacles sermons on CD should be submitted by tomorrow. If you know of someone who needs these CDs and whose name has not been sent in, please send it in immediately. Note: For those who have Internet access, one sermon will be uploaded each day during the Feast at [www.lcg.org](http://www.lcg.org). The French sermons will be uploaded to [www.eglisedieuvivant.org](http://www.eglisedieuvivant.org).

### Activity Registration and Payment Now Open!—Repeat Announcement

Activity Registration is now open for most Feast of Tabernacles sites, so members and guests may register for activities. Payments for activities can also be made for most sites. (Please note that activity registration is not yet open for a few Feast sites, because details are still being finalized—if you have any questions, contact your Festival Site Coordinator.) Simply go to [www.lcg.org](http://www.lcg.org), and click on the “Feast of Tabernacles” link to gain access to registration and payment pages. If you have any questions, please contact your Festival Site Coordinator.

## COMMENTS

**The Value of Trials:** Trials are never pleasant. Yet, when trials come, it is important to maintain a godly perspective (Isaiah 55:8-9). The Bible reveals that God allows trials to come to accomplish His purposes. Job was a “blameless and upright” man “who feared God and shunned evil,” yet he experienced a sudden series of tragic reverses because God was working out a purpose in his life (Job 1). Jesus and John the Baptist did not suffer and die because they sinned. They each had an important role to play in God’s plan, and their lives ended when they had fulfilled God’s purpose. We can be confident when trials come when we *remember* that God cares for each of His children (Matthew 10:29-31) and that God is molding and fashioning each of us for a much bigger purpose (Philippians 1:6). We also need to *remember* God’s promises: that “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28), and that God “will make the way of escape” when we look to Him during our trials (1 Corinthians 10:13). This is why James wrote that we can be thankful for trials—so we can learn lessons as we see God’s purpose for our trials (James 1:2-4).

Have a profitable Sabbath,  
Douglas S. Winnail

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## NEWS AND PROPHECY—August 31, 2017

**Deluge in Houston!** Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Gulf Coast over the weekend, destroying properties and drenching parts of Texas and Louisiana. One Houston county saw over 30 inches (nearly a meter) of rain in just 72 hours ([Washington Post](#), August 28, 2017). Officials expect over 30,000 people in evacuation shelters, and President Trump designated parts of Texas and Louisiana national disaster areas. Officials are calling this catastrophic flooding an 800-year event ([Wall Street Journal](#), August 28, 2017). Harvey has shattered rainfall records in the continental U.S. for a single storm, with more than 50 inches (127 cm) falling in parts of Houston—America’s fourth largest city ([New York Times](#), August 30, 2017). After moving briefly off shore, the storm returned to hit the Louisiana coast and bring more flooding on Wednesday. Major oil refineries along the Gulf Coast have shut down due to flooding. More than one million barrels of crude oil per day will go off-line, leading to a hike in gasoline costs ([CNBC](#), August 27, 2017). There are also growing health concerns due to public water supplies contaminated by sewage and petrochemicals. Amidst all the rain and flooding on the Gulf Coast, parts of the American northwest and western Canada are enduring sweltering heat and drought-like conditions. Bible prophecies have long warned that as a result of disobedience, God will cause rain to fall on one city and not on another (Amos 4:7). Droughts, floods, disease and disasters are also part of prophesied signs of the end times (Amos 4:9; Deuteronomy 28:22; Matthew 24:7). The impact of Hurricane Harvey on a key American city could be just one example of what is to come. We need to pray for all those who are suffering from this and other tragic situations that are occurring around the globe. To learn more about *why* weather catastrophes like this occur, be sure to read or listen to [Who Controls the Weather?](#)

**Why Europe Wants To Control the Internet:** In recent decades, the Internet has become far more than a research and communication tool—it has become a wealth-generating machine and a tool used to topple governments around the world. This fact has prompted nations to seek to control Internet commerce as well as the political power inherent in the Internet. “At the center of this global tussle between technology and politics stands Europe, whose policymakers have set their sights on becoming the de facto global arbiters for how companies—and, in some cases, their users—behave online... Europeans officials are already expanding digital rules for data privacy and are clamping down on what can be published online” ([Politico](#), August 20, 2017). The European commissioner for justice recently stated, “As Europe, we must set the global standards.” End-time Bible prophecy reveals that a European beast power will one day control a global commerce system that will make nations rich for a time (Revelation 18:1-3; see also Ezekiel 27). The Internet is a powerful tool that could be central to this venture. For more biblical insights about Europe’s role in future events, read or listen to [The Beast of Revelation](#).

**Hidden Costs of Smartphones:** Just 20 years ago, who would have guessed that people would develop “separation anxiety” from their smartphones? *Nomophobia* is the clinical name for this emotional state, and it goes hand-in-hand with the fear of being offline. Studies show that growing numbers of people experience anxiety, along with increased heart rate and blood pressure, when separated from their cell phones ([Time](#), August 22, 2017). Researchers warn, “While we can’t stop technology from evolving... we can at least try to stop ourselves from using our smartphones 24/7 and from becoming overly dependent on them as extensions of ourselves.” For many today, spending time with their electronic device (phone or tablet) is a higher priority than spending time with other people—or even with God! The biblical admonition is to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). Electronic devices can easily become one of the tools of the “god of this age,” Satan the devil (2 Corinthians 4:4), to separate us from more important aspects of life. For more wisdom on how to use technology wisely, read [“The Two Faces of Technology.”](#)—*Scott Winnail, Chris Sookdeo, and Francine Prater*