

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION[®]

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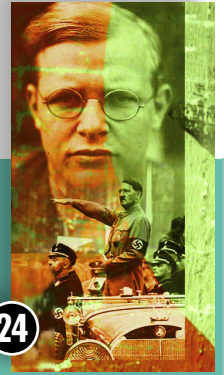
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Cover Story

The amazing story of the founders of Habitat for Humanity—a husband and wife team who started over...and over again...from scratch. This is a story of, as the current issue of Auburn Magazine proclaims, "The rise, fall and resurrection of Millard Fuller."

COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FULLER CENTER

About This Issue

A little over a year ago I met Millard Fuller for the first time. We were in the "green room," preparing to be interviewed on a television program. Of course, I had heard of Millard, and Habitat for Humanity, the non-profit he founded. What I hadn't heard about was the remarkable story of how Millard and his wife, Linda, started their lives all over again—from scratch—not once, but twice. Our cover story, "Building on God's Grace," is all about a husband and wife who have made, by God's grace, courageous life decisions. Millard and Linda are the "real deal"—transparent, open, courageous, warm and humble Christ-followers (for more about their ongoing work, visit www.fullercenter.org).



Greg Albrecht with Millard and Linda Fuller at the Fuller Center for Housing in Americus, Georgia.

We have another story about two people for you in this issue—Wayne Warner draws our attention to a study in contrasts. "Dietrich and Adolph: The Cross of Christ—or the Broken Cross?" probes the hard questions that Christians must ask when any message, pushed and popularized by church or state, stands against the gospel.

This issue, with its features and regular columnists is a Thanksgiving treat (American style—Canadians already celebrated in October)! Celebrate with us—this issue is a veritable spiritual dinner table loaded with God's grace!

—Greg Albrecht, Editor-in-chief

MISSION STATEMENT

Plain Truth Ministries proclaims authentic Christianity without the religion. Our work is Christ-centered, based on God's amazing grace, giving hope to those burned out by legalistic religion.

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How Would Jesus Vote... Or Would He Even Bother?

Thanks for not publishing a clear facial image of Jesus on the front cover of the September/October issue of *Plain Truth*. I really look forward to each issue. However, I would be disappointed to see an image of God, be it Father, Son or Holy Spirit. An artist's concept of what Jesus may have looked like is a false image any which way you imagine it. We are to think of Jesus as the risen Lord in glory, not in Christ's humble state when in human form, Jesus emptied himself of glory.

Canada

I appreciated the article by Greg Albrecht in the September/October *PT*, especially the statement "Absolute affiliation and allegiance with any political party is out of character with our citizenship in heaven (Philippians 3:20)." There are many who have so deified their particular political party that their devotion to that party can legitimately be called "idolatry." Some Christians need to prioritize their allegiance by recognizing that submission to the Lordship and character of Jesus Christ must be the utmost of their consideration.

I must admit that Greg is a brave man! To provide an opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of each major political party is risky in the polarized political climate of the present season, but I applaud Greg for his willingness to do so. I happen to agree with his evaluation.

California



God's Voter Guides

I note the article by Glen Moyer warns against "voter guides" distributed from church pulpits. The next to last paragraph of the article contains two sentences that

seem to speak of "change." One refers to a "breath of fresh air blowing across the fruited plain." The other mentions "a revolution is at hand." These phrases say to me that a little change or revolution might be a good thing. We certainly have a candidate who often speaks of "change." Could it be that pastor Moyer is himself offering a veiled "voter guide"?

Alabama



"I can't be depressed... I'm a Christian."

The July/August issue of *Plain Truth* was truly an answer to my prayers—especially the article by Therese Marszalek on depression. I am an inmate at a Federal Correction Institute, and all I get from the chaplain here is to "be strong" in dealing with my depression. It's nice to know I'm not alone. Thank you and God bless you!

North Carolina

I can't tell you enough how much I appreciated Therese Marszalek's article in the July/August *PT*. As a longtime Christian who has battled depression, this article encouraged and inspired me!

I so wish all Christians could read and understand the insights she provides—particularly "Christians" who seem to condemn those of us who battle with depression, accusing us of a lack of faith and all manner of spiritual dysfunctions because we can't just "buck up and get over it." As a longtime financial supporter of PTM I want to tell you that this is the kind of loving, heartfelt ministry PTM provides—Christlike in every way. I can't thank you enough!

California

How the Christian community needs to hear this message! We need to understand the chemical causes of depression and seek treatment. Is it not wonderful that those things in our lives that can be so devastating can be turned around to be such a blessing? It is only when we can truly say "I understand" that trials can provide a platform to minister to others.

Email



Hooked on Religion

I've been striving to kindle some of the zeal into our congregation that was experienced by Acts 2 Christians. Ron Benson's article in the July/August *Plain Truth* ("Hooked on Religion—How to Kick the Habit") seems to differ with and detract from many of the practices that the early Christians followed. He stated: "How do we do church? Meetings. Lots of meetings. Meetings on Mondays, meetings on Tuesdays. Especially those meetings on Wednesdays and Sundays, which are particularly holy squares on the church calendar. Meetings for worship, meetings for Bible Study, meetings for Sunday School, meetings for prayer.... How do we do church? Lots of giving...."

Yet from Acts 2:42-47 I observe that:

- 1) Every day seemed to be a "holy square" on their calendar.
- 2) They met primarily for prayer, study and worship.
- 3) They gave lots more than a tithe and an offering to fill the needs of their mission.
- 4) God responded favorably by calling people to join in their work.

I'd appreciate an article showing how the church (and any congregation in particular) could recapture this kind of dedication to the work of God collectively, as our forefathers did in the first century.

Texas

- *Comparing today's North American 21st century congregations to the first century church is an apples-and-oranges comparison. The Christians of Acts 2 did not meet in a building with a sign outside announcing themselves to be a church.*

They did not have discipleship classes, recovery seminars, coffee klatches, picnics, summer vacation Bible schools, soccer leagues for kids, softball leagues for adults, men's and women's retreats, etc. I believe that was Ron's point about meetings, meetings, meetings.

From reports I've read (in terms of logistics and physical characteristics) the underground, loosely organized house church in China is probably a closer replication of the New Testament church. Of course, Christians came together often in the first century (as the text in Acts 2 details) but there was far less, by our definition, structure.

I suggest that recapturing dedication to God does not begin with activities, seminars, retreats and a piece of real

estate people regularly visit. Dedication to God springs out of grace-based, Christ-centered relationship—if that relationship is present then dedication will be present in the lives of Christians, whether they regularly congregate in a building or not, whether they attend special meetings and activities or not.

Dedication to God begins with the message and the vision—not with the physical surroundings and embellishments. Dedication to God flows out of the living waters of Jesus, and our single-minded focus on him—with activities following at a distance, serving our focus on Jesus.



Christianity Without the Religion

Thanks for all the CWR worship service CDs and literature I have been receiving from PTM. I really enjoy everything you provide and thank you for allowing me to be a part of your work in Him.

Oklahoma

Thank you for everything the Lord is using you to do. I am still learning to be Christ-centered—please pray for and with me. Thank you for the worship services on CD and the weekly eUpdate. You keep giving me more and more answers. I am so blessed and I'm learning so much and understanding it for real! There are no human words that can express Jesus, grace and faith. I have outlived 3 wives and my quiver is still being filled (great, great, great grandchildren). I love you all at PTM!

Pennsylvania

Thanks for sending me your CWR worship services on CD. They are particularly helpful as I don't own a computer. I've enclosed a check, and I am so glad to participate in this ministry as I feel the Body of Christ and unbelievers need to hear the message of God's grace. It was like being born again when I first discovered that my relationship with Jesus was not dependent on what I've done or do but upon what Jesus has done. I've since learned what "entering into his rest" truly means. The works I do are a result of Christ in me, and not anything done on my own strength. Thank you so much for your ministry—it has been a great help to me.

Saskatchewan, Canada

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