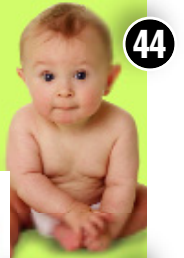
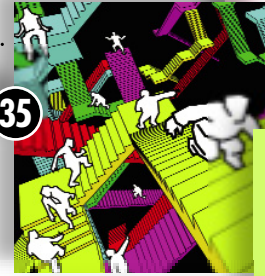


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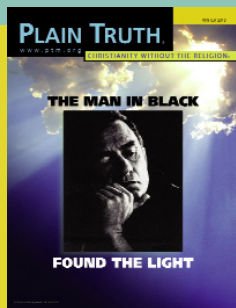
Features

- 14** "I felt as if God were waiting to strike..." *Is God just waiting for us to mess up?*
- 15** Parable of the Grumpy Neighbor *Remember Jesus' lesson about persistent prayer.*
- 19** Mixed Messages of Modesty *Legalistic dress codes can do more harm than good.*
- 22** Realistic Hope in Pessimistic Times *God promises to walk with us in any situation.*
- 26** Immanuel—God Comes to Us *In Jesus, God reconciled the world to himself.*
- 29** "Bah Humbug!" *Don't be a Scrooge—it's okay to enjoy the Christmas season.*
- 32** PT Readers "Share Their Testimonies" *Readers weigh in about Christian Clichés.*
- 35** How to Escape the Millennial Maze *Are you trapped in an optical illusion?*
- 41** Christians Who Obsess About the End... *No one knows the day or the hour!*
- 44** Joe's Place *Two things stand out about him: Joseph was kind. Joseph was faithful.*



Departments

- 13** He Asked Me to Remind You *Steve Brown*
- 17** Commentary *Greg Albrecht*
- 43** Tender Mercies *Ruth A. Tucker*
- 47** Growing Places *Susan Reedy*



Cover Story 6

Johnny Cash, following thirty-five years of "scraping the filthy bottom of the barrel of life" [his words], was reborn and renewed through God's grace. After receiving God's grace...despite setbacks and obstacles, Cash never lost faith in God's love or in the redemptive power of Christ.

COVER PHOTO BY LOOK MAGAZINE AND MARV WEGNER—PTM

Inside This Issue

How do we move from living in the house of fear to the house of faith? Here are some ways... *Realistic Hope in Pessimistic Times* 22

Rather than thinking about the implications of an imminent end-of-the-world scenario for the world at large, I thought only of myself. I wondered if the Lord would return before I had a chance to get married and...you know, enjoy the benefits therein. I wondered if the Lord would return before all kinds of bad stuff would happen in the world, such as nuclear war, the proliferation of Barry Manilow music and the threat of even more Barry Manilow music. *Christians Who Obsess About the End of the World* 42

Don't let the baby fool you. God came as a baby because he didn't want to scare us to death. But he grew up and died on a cross so you could live forever. A dead man got up from that grave and said that we could, too. *Joe's Place* 46

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EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Greg Albrecht

MANAGING EDITOR: Monte Wolverton

ART DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION: Marv Wegner

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Laura Urista

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR: Skip Dunn

THEOLOGICAL CONSULTANT: Jim Fowler



Through the Desert in a Cult With No Name

Our September/October 2009 cover story about the No Name cult is controversial, even among its former members. One of the first responses from a former member (who has expertise in No Names history but wishes to remain anonymous) asked for redactions. Here is our clarification based on that informed feedback:

It has come to our attention that our September/October 2009 cover story, "Through the Desert in a Cult With No Name," may need some clarification. Our author, Ken Armstrong compared No Names workers to Jim Jones and David Koresh. According to some, the workers do not wield this type of mind control and personal domination; however, their group does contain many cultic elements.

Apparently the reference to 144,000 is a splinter group teaching, not one held by the primary group today. Our article alludes to documents published by the No Names. We understand that they do pass around notes taken of sermons by workers, and perhaps some letters that members write to each other—but, they have no tracts or booklets and apparently boast of that fact.

Our article made reference to control allegedly exercised by workers over members' lives and that celibacy for workers is not important or heavily emphasized. It may be more accurate to say that workers don't approve of some occupations, but they do not control marriages and financial decisions of members. It may be more accurate to say that workers must leave their work if they marry. Their "sacrifice" in terms of living a celibate life is the chief aspect of their life that "elevates" them above laymembers.

The Editors

Our author responds:

The sources I used for this article are good and solid. One of the many sources I used is *The Church Without a Name*, a book by Kathleen Lewis, who is also a former No Names member. She differs with the other former No Names member who asked for a clarification.

Given the loose organization of the No Names (also called 2X2s) I feel that former No Names members have many varied experiences and therefore have different opinions. Kathleen Lewis calls what happens within the No Names "mind control." I can only conclude that the person asking for a clarification was looking for an article closer to their own subjective experience rather than the broader article which I wrote. To say that the article was not well-researched would not be a true statement.

Ken Armstrong, Oregon

I have read the article by Ken Armstrong, and I want him to know that his account is extremely well-written. I was born and raised in this heresy and I can verify that it was a desert experience. I will be posting this article on my website which is dedicated to helping former members of the No Names whom we challenge to "step out of the 2X2 box of bondage towards freedom in Jesus Christ" (www.veteransoftruth.com). The article by Ken Armstrong and other similar articles have a way of opening the shutters over people's spiritual eyes.

Colorado

Some members of the 2x2 group blew up about Ken Armstrong's article in the September/October *Plain Truth* because it was so true! These hardliner 2x2s want their ears tickled, and an article like Ken Armstrong's cut to the quick. It was an awesome article, otherwise the 2x2s would have said nothing. Even some of the so-called ex-members are not free.

I totally understand the term "cultic Christian." There are so many flavors of heresies filling the church today, so many people think it's all about being "good." Man complicates God's wonderfully simple plan of salvation. So many churches are just a facade—they have an appearance of being orthodox, but they are rotting on the inside.

Email

I wanted to thank you for a great article, "Through the Desert in a Cult with No Name" in the September/October 2009 issue. I have had several run-ins with workers and members of this cult. Matter of fact, we have several families in our neighborhood who are members of the No Name (2X2) cult.

At one time they tried their best to get us to come to one of their meetings, which were usually held on a week night at a meeting place in town. My wife decided to

go one night, just to see what it was like. Just like the article described, they sang a couple hymn songs and then a worker got up and gave a short message. We both agreed that there was an eerie feeling about these people who were very proud of the fact that they had no name or real beginning.

The No Names have targeted the Amish people in our area and have been successful in sucking some into their cult. A paragraph on page 10 explains it very well; it reads, "They proselytize by moving slowly and deliberately, identifying vulnerable and malleable targets. They draw them in gradually, keeping them at arm's length until they accept the notion that failure to obey their workers will lead to excommunication and damnation."

This was nailed very squarely on the head. In dealing with the Amish, I find that there is very little difference between the two groups. Those who leave the Amish and get involved with the 2x2's continue to stay in the same predicament.

I quoted John 3:3-7 to a former Amish member who now attends the No Name group, and when I asked her, "are you born again?" Her reply was, "I am born anew every morning." They base their salvation on the fact that they belong to their No Name group. It truly is a cult, leading sincere people down a dead-end street. But thanks to PTM, some may be saved from falling into the trap because of this well-written article.

**Pastor
Ohio**



The Christian Ambush

Bert Gary's article "The Christian Ambush" in the September/October 2009 issue reminded me of something that happened to me sixty years ago, when I was twelve years old. I didn't grow up going to church, so I knew nothing about what goes on inside a church or why. So, I had never heard of "altar call" to be saved. In fact, I may not have even heard of being saved at that time.

I went to church with a friend from school. When the altar call was made, this woman came running up to where I was seated; grabbed me by the hand and rushed me down to the altar; knelt herself down beside me and started crying and begging God to save me. After a few minutes she got up and pulled me up. The

preacher announced that I would be baptized the following Sunday.

In all these years, I never thought of the word "ambush" in connection with my experience, but that word fits perfectly! For something that's of the heart, between God and the individual, I could never understand how some people think it can be taken care of by force!

North Carolina



Living "As If"

The *PT* keeps getting better and better. Susan Reedy's article [in the September/October 2009 *PT*] about injuring her shoulder was just for me! A week ago I was at the nursing home where my wife is a patient. It was after lunch and I wanted to get her from her wheelchair into bed. The CNA's usually do this but I got tired of waiting for them so I tried to do it myself. I picked her up, turned her and as I set her on the bed I pulled a tendon in my left leg. At the time I didn't feel much pain, but the next day I was in agony. After two days my son took me to the ER. Gout had settled in my knee. It was when I was in pain that I read Susan's article. What did I learn? Patience!

Nevada



Cancellations

After receiving *The Plain Truth* magazine for over forty years, I'm asking that you cancel my subscription. It's not that I don't like the *PT*, but I'm "going green" and will continue to read it online. Please give my subscription to someone who is waiting for one.

Oregon

I wrote last week, asking you to cancel my *Plain Truth* subscription. I neglected to give you my mailing address. Well, praise God. Please ignore that letter. I would still like to receive your magazine. Truth is sometimes hard to take. PTM is truly doing a wonderful work for God.

Alberta, Canada

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