

Official Publication of the International Ministerial Association, Inc.

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TETELESTAI

By Rev. Richard Reneau, Sarasota, Florida
 Former IMA Chairman, IMA Member for 53 years

This article is reprinted from the *Herald of Truth*, January 1981.

The word used above is found in the book of John, Chapter 19, Verse 30. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished:" and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost." Actually what Jesus said in the Greek is "Tetelestai", which is properly interpreted "It is finished." But the literal meaning of the word is even more beautiful. It means literally — "nothing more can be done beyond that which is done, lest it mar the picture." An artist might well take a look at a painting and exclaim — "Tetelestai!" — not another stroke lest I spoil it.

Christ was speaking of our salvation plan and completeness. Not another thing could be done beyond what He had done except that which would be superfluous. All the prophecies, all the intensions of God, both past and future, relative to our redemption had been fulfilled. The cup had been drunk and nothing could be added to it that was not in it: "Tetelestai", it is finished. To think that God requires anything of us other than faith in what He has done is an insult to the cross of Christ. To think that He has left anything undone that I must do to be saved other than believe in the "**Finished**" work of the cross is ridiculous. However, this was spoken on the cross before the day of Pentecost and was referring exclusively to the plan of salvation. We must not draw from that remark that all things are finished and we have nought to be at rest. Christ left an unfinished work behind Him.

In Matthew 16:18 Christ says, "On this rock I will build my church—". The word "tetelestai" did not refer to the church for it was not finished; in fact, it had not yet begun. The church was initiated on the day of Pentecost. God has not yet looked at the church and shouted "Tetelestai". Many men have tried to say it but they have no authority to declare the church finished since Christ is the architect and de-signer of the church. The Word says that Christ is the "**author and finisher** of our faith." Only He can say "tetelestai" in regards to the church. Many denominations have fallen into pitfalls by trying to declare the church finished according to their interpretation. But God is not yet finished with the church.



In John 16:12, 13 Jesus declares that He is leaving an unfinished work behind Him. He says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth. . . ." Christ is simply saying, I am not finished, but the Holy Spirit will continue to teach you where I leave off. Your training and teaching is not finished. May I say to you that it still is not finished. Revelations, Chapters 2 and 3 are quick to declare that the spirit is still speaking to the church. Those who believe that the message to the seven churches are also depictive of seven church dispensations (which I also believe) must recognize that the last church age which is the Laodician church still had a message from God.

Too many preachers and pastors have drawn a circle around their many doctrines and declared that it was the ultimate in revelation. Not so. They have said, "This is it — This is it", but I declare that it is only a part of it. God is still speaking in our day and we would do well to listen if we have ears. The church is not just sitting here waiting for the Lord to return, it is still moving forward at the word of the Lord. Revival is breaking upon us once again because God has a fresh word to the church by the Holy Spirit to those that are listening. He has not said "tetelestai" to the church. God is building His church and we are workers together with Him.

Some day soon when the last soul that is to be saved will be saved, when the number which God alone knows will have been reached and not another thing can be added but that which would mar the picture, and when God sees that the church that is in the ground can be raised and that the church that is alive and remains can be translated without spot or blemish or wrinkle, He will cry "Tetelestai! It is finished!" What a day! WHAT A DAY!

"Providing today's ministers the freedom they want and the fellowship they need."



Dr. Tim Warner

CHAIRMAN'S Corner



Take the Limits Off from God!

How to overcome a minister's bout with doubt

They turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. Ps 78:41 kjv

Let's face it; having doubt, wrangling with unbelief and forgetting the blessed provisions of God is the most severe curse that plagues the human personality, especially ministers. It doesn't stop there; doubt can infect families, churches and even entire communities if left unchecked. It is said of Christ that the communal stronghold of Nazareth was so saturated with unbelief that **He could do no mighty work** there (Mark 6:5)! This is what happens when people foster a doubting spirit toward God and His written or living Word.



Having a *bout* with *doubt* is no sin in itself; nor does it mean the people who carry such disbelief are evil in themselves. No, having a battle with unbelief is "common to man" and throws in against us when we are tempted (1 Cor 10:13). Unbelief is the spiritual virus that seeks to destroy the immune system of faith in the whole of mankind. Doubting God's Word is the invisible ameba that worms its way into the core of our being. It's what Jesus said came from "within," or at the **heart** of man (Mark 7:21). Losing the bout with doubt keeps us away from God and actually lies to us about the reality, existence and the power of the Almighty to help us. Doubt's power can be broken, however, thanks to **a man called Jesus and a book called the Bible.**



Jesus came to give us a new heart; a heart that is born of God, faith-filled and has not for its operation any room for doubt. In fact, this **new heart** cannot, will not, nor is it capable of sinning (1 John 5:18). Christ, the sinless Lamb, came to destroy doubt through His vicarious death, verified burial and victorious resurrection. The Holy Spirit is sent to convict us of sin that has its roots in unbelief (John 17:6). The Spirit of God will lead us to the One who declares us "righteous" the moment we believe (V.10). Finally, the Holy Spirit reveals that the prince of darkness, the author of unbelief is himself judged through the cross.

In the New Covenant we are extremely blessed to not only conquer doubt and unbelief, but also pursue a life of genuine faith in God. Jesus taught us that we are **to have faith in God**. Faith in God can actually move mountains, fulfill our heart's desire and have our prayers answered supernaturally (Matt 17:22-23). If God expected Israel, in the Old Covenant, to believe Him and not limit Him through doubt, how much more is it His desire to take the limits off HIM for believers today? If doubt limited His provision in the Old Testament, how much more does it offend His Majesty if we choose doubt over faith in the New Testament?

Can we still have a bout with doubt as Christians, Church workers, or ministers of God? The answer is yes, but we will not lose this battle unless we give way to the sinfulness that still lodges in our bodily members (Rom 7:23). Preachers of yesteryear called it "leaning on the arm of flesh." Paul's writings call it "living by the flesh" (cf. Rom 8:1, 4-5, 8 etc.). However, we are no longer "in the flesh" nor are we "subject to the flesh" for God has made a "way of escape." We can now conquer our flesh and win the temptation over doubt (1 Cor 11:13).

God promises victory at every turn if we have the proper mindset (Rom 8:13-17). The key to victory here is summed up in one word: FOCUS. The Bible teaches that **what we behold is what we will eventually become!** That's why we must be in alignment with the writer of the Book of Hebrews who wrote: **Looking unto Jesus [who is] the Author and Finisher of our faith** (Heb 12:2)! We must "come" to God through prayer on a regular basis. As ministers of the IMA, it's imperative that we diligently seek Him (Heb.11:6) and focus our faith. Here it is that we will overcome doubt and be well established in faith, which, by the way, is very pleasing to Him.





THE HOME OFFICE

Dr. Paul W. Todd, Administrator

IMA FISCAL YEAR

Many IMA members may not realize that our IMA fiscal year ends on July 31. Basically all that is affected is the financial accounting procedures. It does not affect the membership year. Based on our By-Laws annual membership begins on January 1 and, obviously, closes on December 31.

The end of the fiscal year is a very busy time for the Home Office because it does affect much of our financial record keeping. We start new files and store the old ones. We do inventory and prepare reports for the National Board and the National Convention Business Meeting.

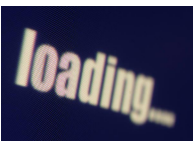
IMA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting is held as an open meeting on Thursday morning at the National Conference. Financial reports for the IMA General Fund and the IMA Missions Fund is presented at the Annual Business Meeting of the National Conference. National Board members are chosen by those IMA members who attend the Annual Business Meeting. There are other matters of concern that are presented to the members.



A Special Note. It has been policy for several years that: "All business brought to the floor of the National Conference must be presented to the National Chairman by Wednesday noon before the Business Session on Thursday morning in order to be placed on the Agenda. New Business items will not be accepted from the floor during the Business Session."

WWW.INTERMA.NET



I have mentioned the IMA Web Site several times in this column. There are no "bells & whistles" that take a lot of time to download. Probably at some point that will change some. But there is a lot of useful material there. The **HERALD NEWSLETTER**, **NATIONAL CONFERENCE BROCHURE**, **CHURCHES**, **MISSIONARIES**, **MEMBER LINKS**, **NEWS**, **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY**, **BY-LAWS**, **DOCTRINAL POSITION**, **POLICY MANUAL** and **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION** are all available.

We endeavor to keep the Web Site updated. It is a difficult task because of the constant changes, especially to membership information. Thank you for your patience.

MIDSOUTH DISTRICT CONFERENCE REPORT

By District Chairman Wayne Mays

Often times after a meeting one has little to report on but the last two years our district conference has been like old time camp meeting.

This year July 13 & 14 was awesome. Powerful preaching from Rev. Curtis Silcox and our morning speakers. What made the conference different was the Holy Ghost showed up. I told them our evening services and especially on Thursday night was like our Sunday night services use to be.



Thanks to the host church New Life Christian Assembly, Dora, Alabama, Pastor James Aycox and the congregation for making us feel at home.

To describe the conference best I am reminded of an old expression; **HEAVEN CAME DOWN, KISSED THE EARTH AND WE GOT CAUGHT IN THE SMACK!**

COFFEE CUP CORNER



St. John The Beloved, contributing author

Hey Honey, they really like me!

Having just moved into town, the young minister inquired to see if there was a local ministerial gathering where area pastors and chaplains assembled. Sure enough, he found that a group of clergymen that met once per month and found out the details of where the meeting was to be held. He couldn't wait to go and tell his brethren about his call and ministry to their community. Upon attending his first meeting, he was elated that they listened so intensely about his call to ministry. They readily recognized his gifts and voted to give him some very meaningful responsibilities in their group. He couldn't wait to go home and tell his wife about his new found favor with the local preachers. *God has certainly granted favor me favor*, he thought to himself. He rushed home and proceeded to tell his wife, "Hey, Honey, you'll never believe it, they really liked me; they made me President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Ministers Group!"



IN REMEMBRANCE

We recently received information by letter that **Rev. Dr. E. H. (Jim) Ammerman**, Dallas, Texas, went home to be with the Lord on May 1, 2011. He founded the *Chaplaincy of Full Gospel Churches, Inc.*, a recognized Endorsing Agency by the Armed Forces Chaplaincy. Dr. Ammerman has been a friend to the IMA for many years. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Charlene, family and friends...

Church Tax Compliance



Angie Childers, Executive Director/Treasurer, The Cathedral, Evansville, Indiana

TAX UPDATES FOR CHURCHES, MINISTERS & MINISTRIES

The following information reflects some of the newer changes and requirements the IRS implemented earlier this year. You may already be familiar with some, and some have been in effect for a year or so but have not been well publicized. These topics were discussed at a tax seminar I recently attended.



The IRS has increased the standard mileage rate to 55.5 cents a mile for business travel occurring between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2011. The previous rate was 51 cents a mile. If you drive a personal vehicle for church or ministry related business and keep an accurate accounting of this mileage, you can be reimbursed from your church or ministry. Make sure your mileage log indicates the business purpose and includes place of travel and date. Accurate accounting is a must! The tax code imposes strict limitations on the use of the standard mileage rate

This next tax law has been in place for a while, but is not well known, So the IRS is trying to get the word out concerning the 990-N (e-Post Card) electronic filings. Tax exempt and non-profit organizations that average \$25,000 or less in gross receipts during a previous 3 year time period are required to file a 990-N. You must file the 990-N annually. 990-N is available on the IRS website to file electronically free of charge

The filing of a 990-N is not required by IMA affiliated churches, or organized churches, unless your church runs an unrelated business income tax (ubit), type of business. It does apply to ministries and charities. If within a 3-yr period you have not filed the 990-N, by the 3rd year, the IRS automatically revokes your exemption. The IRS publishes a list of organizations who have, under the law, been revoked of their tax exempt status.



The IRS is making a major effort to make sure the political activities of a church and its Pastor and staff, comply with their regulations and codes. There are only 4 permissible (legal) political activities the church can participate in and 9 prohibited (illegal) political activities. If you would like a list of these, please email me at [bethc22\(g\).aol.com](mailto:bethc22(g).aol.com).

And as always, check with your tax professional concerning this information and how it may or may not pertain to you.

I plan to be at the IMA National Conference. If you would like to submit a question to my email beforehand or bring questions with you, I will be happy to answer them.


IMA
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 19-22

**PRE-CONFERENCE DAYS
 OF PRAYER & FASTING**
SEPT. 13 - 14
Or Set Aside Days of Your Choice

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EDITOR

Dr. Paul Todd

The views expressed in the Herald Newsletters do not necessarily reflect the consensus of IMA members