

Michael Morrison

I was born in Illinois in 1955, and I married Janet Wood, who comes from New Zealand, in 1984. We live in Arcadia, California. We have two children, Steven and Melinda, both now graduated from college.

I grew up in southern Illinois, in Sparta, a town of 3,000 people. I went to the University of Chicago for two years, but I didn't care for it. I finished my degree in biology at Southern Illinois University, and then studied wildlife zoology for two years. I completed all the classes for a master's degree, but the research project didn't work out. My employer went bankrupt and my romantic life crashed and it was about then that I realized my need for Christ.

I became part of the Worldwide Church of God in 1978; I went to Ambassador College 1980-1983, and right after graduation I began work writing lessons for the Bible Correspondence Course. In 1986, I started working in the Editorial Department on *Youth* magazine, *The Good News*, and *The Plain Truth*. In 1988, I began working on pastoral publications.

About 1990, the Editorial Department encouraged all employees to begin accredited study appropriate to their work. Since I worked with pastoral publications, I figured that biblical studies would be appropriate, and I began taking classes at Azusa Pacific University. It was an odd experience—I felt like I was a spy sent into enemy territory. I felt that my job was to learn what they believed, but not necessarily to believe it myself.

But eventually I learned that they were not out to brainwash me. Azusa students came from many denominations, and the teachers had a high tolerance for diversity. I even learned that there were good reasons for believing some of the things they believed! I continued part-time there until 1997, when I received a Master of Divinity degree. I then took classes at Fuller Theological Seminary, wrote a dissertation on the book of Hebrews and received a PhD in 2006.