

Principle Workbook

Lesson 31 - The Last Days and Today

Aim

- * to review the three blessings
- * to see signs in the world today that the Three Blessings are being realized

Materials

- * Principle Level 4: Chapter 4 - The Consummation of Human History
- * Logos of different organizations
- * Bible passage - Acts 2:17,18
- * memory cards
- * Children's worksheets

Lesson Outline

1. Signs of The Last Days
2. Signs of the First Blessing
3. Signs of the Second Blessing
4. Signs of the Third Blessing
5. Activities - worksheet, memory game
6. Review the lesson aim
7. Prayer

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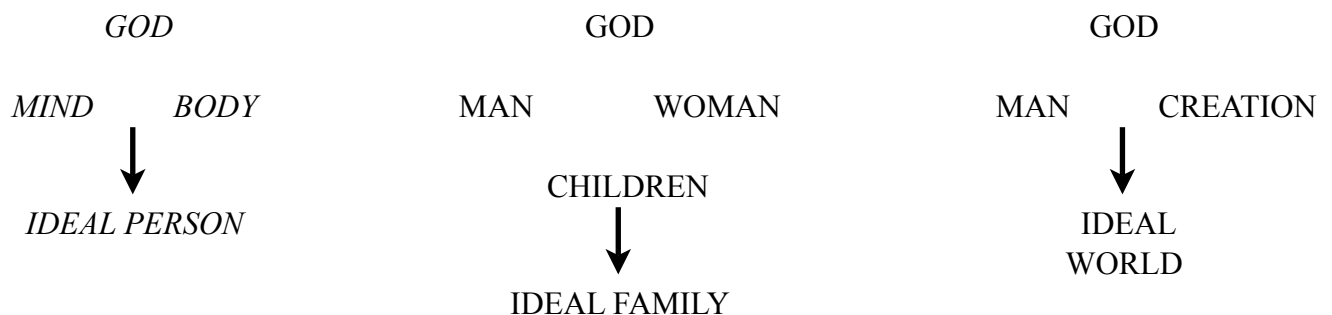
1) Signs of The Last Days

The goal of history is to establish God's ideal world; a place of true love, peace and happiness. This can only begin when man fulfills the Three Blessings. The Last Days is the time just before the ideal world is established. If these are the Last Days today, we should see signs in the world that the Three Blessings are being realized. The Principle explains that this is happening.

1st Blessing - to restore our relationship with God and perfect our character

2nd Blessing - to restore our relationship with people and build an ideal family

3rd Blessing - to restore our relationship with creation and have dominion over the creation



2) Signs of the First Blessing

With each blessing show cards with symbols of different organizations. The first blessing God gave to Adam and Eve was the perfection of individual character. Today there are signs that our relationship to God is being restored to its original state.

1. First, people's spiritual senses are being restored and communication with the spirit world is more and more common. Jesus said *"In the last days . . . I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.* -Acts 2:17
 - a) On TV there are mediums who pass on messages from spirits to their relatives on earth
e.g. - James van Praagh, spiritual medium.
 - b) Books are written about near-death experiences, where people die, experience the spirit world and return to earth e.g. - Don Piper's near-death experience
 - c) More and more movies have stories about the reality of the spirit world. eg. The Ghost Whisperer
 - d) Many 'new age' spiritual groups are appearing, inspired from spirit world.
 - e) Books and courses on spiritual growth, personal growth. e.g. The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne
2. Secondly, our true value as God's children is being restored. The growth of democracy, human rights movements, racial equality, women's rights and a desire for universal love, are all to do with restoring our true value.
e.g. Barak Obama is the first black President of the United States

3) Signs of the Second Blessing

God's Second Blessing to man is to create ideal families. From ideal families we can create ideal societies, ideal nations and an ideal world. This would be one family under God, where all people live as brothers and sisters. This is moving closer as people from different races, nationalities, languages and cultures are mixing together as never before.

e.g. The United Nations, The European Union, The International Monetary Fund, The International Red Cross, The Olympic Games, The Universal Peace Federation

4) Signs of the Third Blessing

God's third Blessing to man is to have dominion over the Creation, which is both internal and external. Internal dominion means dominion through love. We can see this happening today through concern for the environmental, in helping endangered animals, recycling waste and cleaning up pollution. External dominion is through science and technology, which has rapidly grown over the last 100 years, bringing us to the verge of an ideal living environment.

e.g. Save the Rainforest, World Wildlife Fund, Recycling Waste, Progress of Science & Technology, mobile phones, computers, space travel

5) Activities

- * Get children to put the cards under the correct blessing. Complete worksheet by cutting and pasting pictures under the correct blessing
- * Memory game

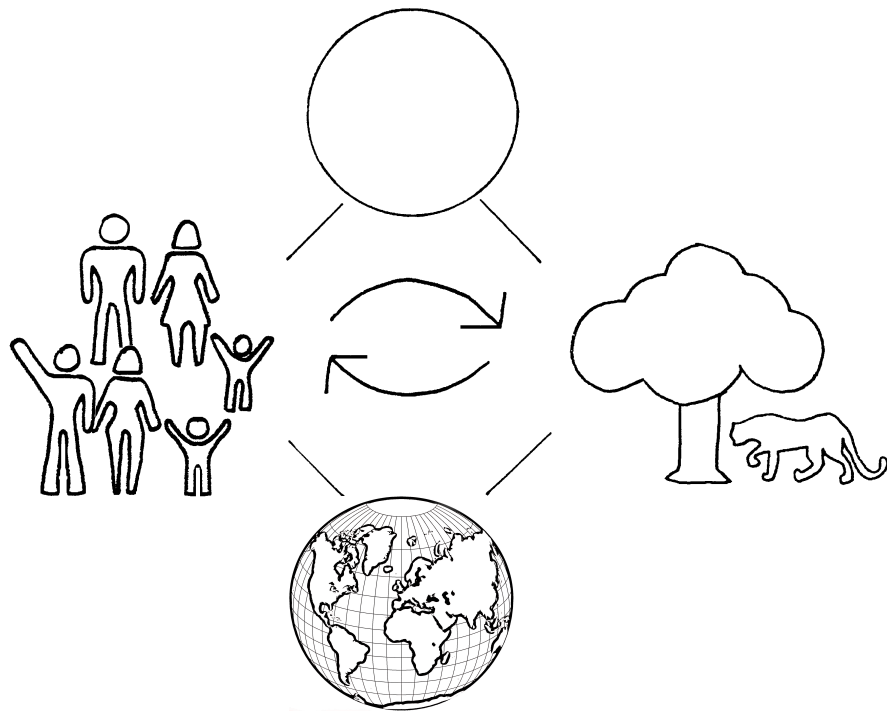
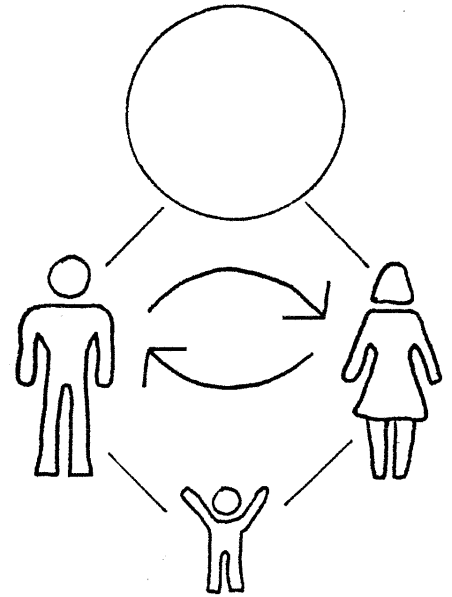
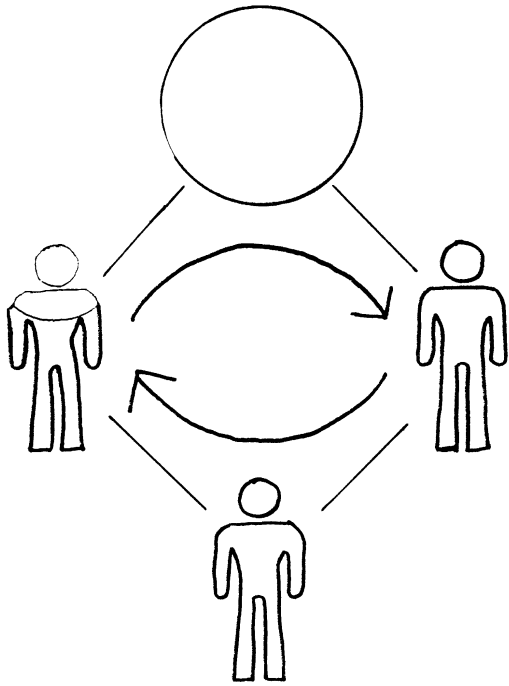
6) Review the lesson aim

* to review the three blessings

* to see signs in the world today that the Three Blessings are being realized

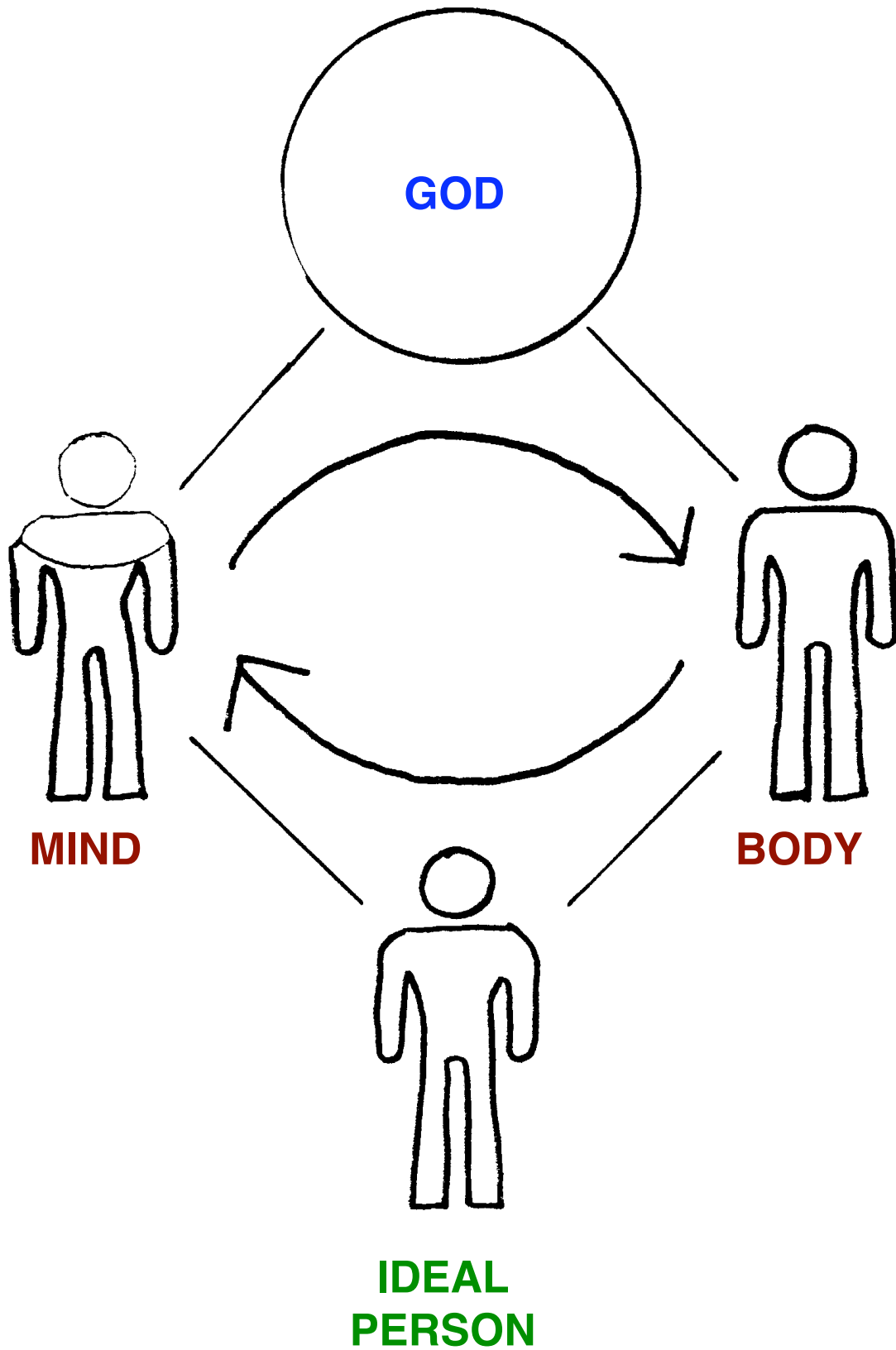
7) End with a prayer

The Three Blessings



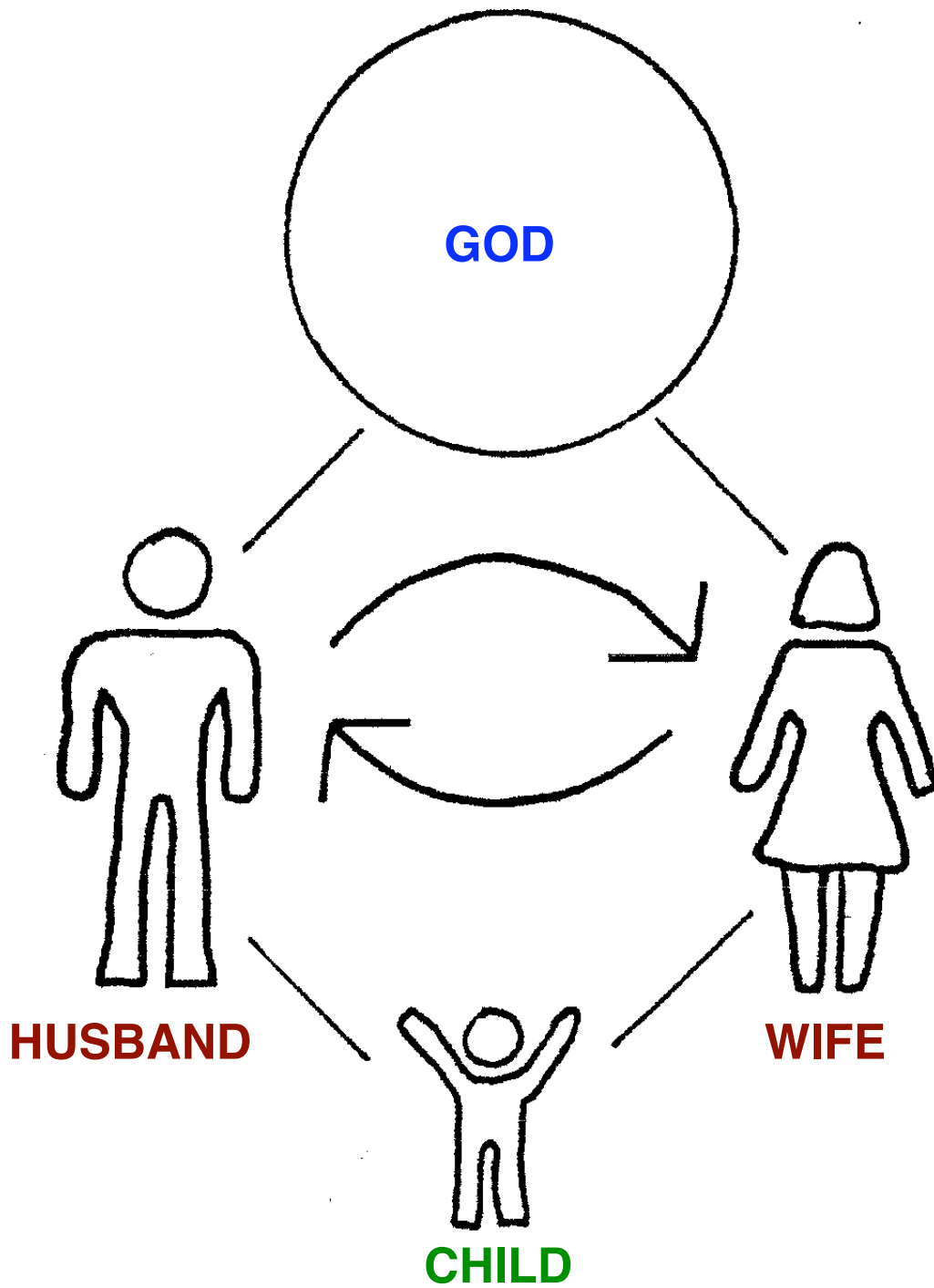
The First Blessing

Be Fruitful



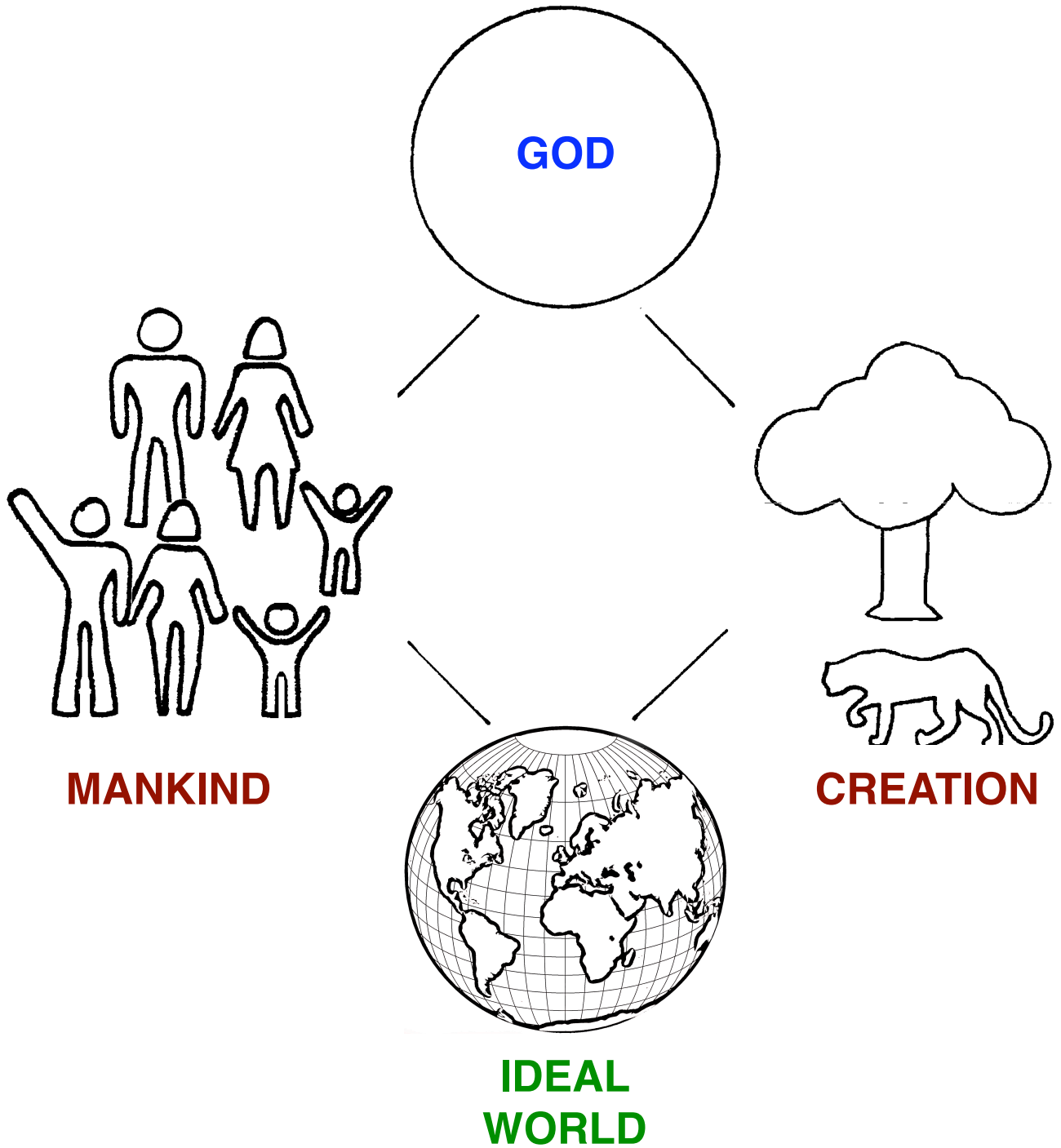
The Second Blessing

Multiply



The Third Blessing

Dominion



Chapter Four

The Consummation of Human History

Part 3 - The Present Days are the Last Days

Jesus promised that he would return soon (Rev 22:20; Mt 10:23, 16:28; Jn 21:22). As a result, Christians of every age have believed that their time was the Last Days and the time for Christ's return. Based on an overall view of the history of God's Dispensation for Restoration, we can know that we are now living in the actual age of the Second coming. This will be explained more fully in the chapter "The Second Coming". However, we can also know that our time is the Last Days by observing events in the world around us. As Jesus said, "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates." (Mt 24:32, 33)

What kinds of signs would indicate that we are in the Last Days? The goal of human history is the establishment of God's ideal world, which is the world based on the realization of the Three Blessings. The Last Days is when the evil world is destroyed, but it is also the time just prior to the establishment of the ideal world. Therefore, if our era is the Last Days, we should be able to see signs in the world that the Three Blessings are being realized. Based on this understanding, we will show that we are now living in the Last Days. Let us examine our era in light of the Three Blessings.

The first Blessing is that each person can perfect his character and become one in heart with God. In God's ideal, such a person is to enjoy complete freedom of thought and action and is to embody original love and have the character and value of a child of God and a lord of the Creation. Thus he would live the life that is lived in the Kingdom of Heaven. However, because of the Fall, man could not realize the First Blessing. The Last Days is the last stage in God's dispensation to restore each fallen person as a person of perfected character.

In the present era, fallen man is developing a deep inner thirst for restoring the contents of the First Blessing as a reality in his life. This inclination is evident in the recent worldwide interest in new faiths and in movements toward universal love, liberty, equality, and human rights and dignity. The real purpose underlying these trends is not the restoration of man's external and superficial freedoms or values. It is for man to restore the original love, original value, and original freedom which were endowed at his creation, but then lost. The conclusion of God's dispensation in the Last Days will bring about the realization of the First Blessing.

We can also know that the present days are the Last Days when we see the restoration of the First Blessing in the restoration of man's spiritual state. We have already explained that each person is created to become one in heart with God and to be able to fully communicate with the spirit world when he has perfected himself. However, before the Fall, Adam and Eve were able to communicate with God and the spirit world, although their capabilities were not completely developed. Because of the Fall, Adam and Eve and all of their descendants, that is all of mankind, fell into a state where they are insensitive to the presence of God. But as the Bible indicates, communication with the spirit world will be restored in the Last Days: ""... in the last days ... I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ... on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy"" (Acts 2:17,18). Recent increases in spiritual experiences and psychic phenomena worldwide reflect the restoration of man's heart and spirit to the level that Adam and Eve enjoyed just prior to the Fall and indicate that man is on the verge of restoring the First Blessing.

God's Second Blessing to man was the ability for Adam and Eve to perfect themselves as the True Parents and create an ideal family, and then one society and one world centered on that family -- in other words, the ability to create the model family and to make the world one family. The basic unit of that world is the ideal family. Through it God's dominion of love will transform the world into one of a unified culture centered on true love.

However, Adam and Eve fell and became parents with Original Sin, and thus all of mankind became children with natures of evil and realized a world under an evil sovereignty. Therefore, God has worked through religion and through developing the external aspects of civilization to guide man toward the establishment of this unified culture and one world family.

Historically, many different cultures have come into existence. Through time, however, higher cultures have emerged centered on rising new religions. Through a process of absorption of the varied and numerous lower cultures by the higher and more universal ones, a consolidation of cultures has taken place. As a result, there are only four major cultures remaining: Christian, Moslem, Far Eastern (based on Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism), and Hindu. This convergent flow of history shows the trend toward man's establishing one world culture -- and that God's Second Blessing is being restored.

The world of one culture centered on God's true love will be realized when all people become brothers and sisters, with God as their parent. Based on this viewpoint, Christianity is the central religion in the work to fulfill God's Dispensation for Restoration because Christianity introduced God as the parent of all mankind, because it awaits the Messiah, who comes to establish one culture, and because it has worked to unite the world as one family.

As a result of God's dispensational work, man since World War II has, to an unprecedented extent, become aware of the need for international cooperation and world government. This awareness has given rise to the United Nations and many international commissions and organizations, and concerned with international standards and internal control of everything from nutrition and food resources to the use and resources of the seas, from atomic power and ecology to international law, from concern for the welfare of children (e.g., international adoption agencies and UNICEF) and disaster aid (e.g., International Red Cross) to world health (e.g., the World Health Organization) and world economy (e.g., the International Monetary Fund and World Bank), and a multitude of others. Economic interdependence and cooperation have developed to such an extent that the well-developed nations are to a great degree the marketplaces for the people of the world. Thus we find ourselves living in a world community, where the races, nationalities, languages, customs, cultures, and products of the world intermingle and harmonize as never before.

Because of the tremendous advances in transportation and communications, the world has "shrunk" to such an extent that we can travel to almost any part of the world in a few hours. (Just fifty or sixty years earlier, in the scope of that same few hours, our "world" was perhaps a hundred miles in radius.) With this ease of travel, travel to other countries has increased tremendously, bringing about unprecedented interaction and mutual understanding and harmony among different peoples and their customs, bringing us to the threshold of a unified world.

In this century there has been unprecedented development among many peoples worldwide of tolerance and understanding of other people and of a spirit of love. It is God's dispensation to restore the Second Blessing that has given rise to such attitudes. It also led to the benevolent treatment of the defeated nations by the democratic victors after World War II and the granting of independence to colonies and territories; it has led to foreign aid programs, to increasing ecumenism, to inter-cultural exchange, and to interracial and international marriages and adoption of children. All of these show the

trend toward the restoration of God's Second Blessing to man -- the blessing of true love among people and the establishment of one world family.

All of these hopes and trends will reach fruition when the final gifts of history arrive, the Lord of the Second coming and the new universal ideology that he brings, in other words the gifts of God's Heart and the God-centered ideology. No home can be truly a home without parents; so man's desires for harmony and love will only be fulfilled when God and the Messiah can stand in the position of man's parents.

God's third Blessing to man is the right and ability of a perfect person to have spiritual and physical dominion over the Creation, that is, both internal and external dominion. Internal dominion over the Creation means dominion through love. External dominion is man's use and development of the Creation for his life through the means of science and technology.

Evidence that the present time is the Last Days, and therefore the stage just prior to the restoration of God's Third Blessing, can be seen in the developing concern and love for nature and also in the tremendous development of science and technology.

Originally, man's appreciation and love for the Creation are proportional to the growth of his spirit. Evidence of the restoration of man's love for the Creation can be seen in the ecology and conservation movements, in societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, in drives to restore polluted areas, and in organizations and clubs formed for the appreciation of nature.

Through science and technology, man is restoring his external dominion over the Creation. Tremendous scientific progress has taken place in this century. Through this man has been gaining control over disease and over the sea, land, air, and even outer space. Man is also on the verge of being able to create an ideal standard of living for all people through such things as mass production, high yield crops, transformation of deserts to farmlands, and environmental control. Use of the ocean floor and even both polar caps are also examples of man's ability to turn the Creation into an ideal home.

We can see that the Three Blessings are in the process of being restored to mankind. Thus we can see that the establishment of God's ideal world is upon us -- that we are in the Last Days.

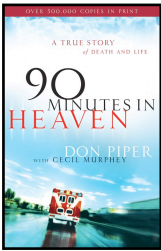
Signs of the First Blessing

Spiritual senses being restored



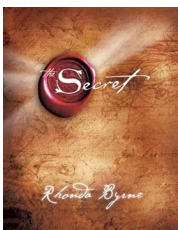
James van Praagh - spiritual medium.

He has a TV show called "Beyond With James Van Praagh", in which he contacts the spirits of people in the audience and passes on messages to them. He also got the idea for a TV series called "Ghost Whisperer" in which one character has a gift to communicate with earthbound spirits or ghosts who cling to the living because they have unfinished business in our world preventing them from "crossing over" or going into the light.



Don Piper - near-death experience

He died in a car accident. 90 minutes later he came back to life. During those 90 minutes he went to spirit world. Later he wrote a book called "90 Minutes in Heaven".



The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne

One of many spiritual growth books about the law of attraction and how positive thoughts can attract wealth, health and happiness

Signs of the First Blessing

Freedom, human rights, equality as God's children being restored



UNICEF -United Nations Children's Fund

UNICEF works for children's rights, their survival, development and protection. It has been working for over 60 years in different countries all over the world. In 1965, this organization received the Nobel Peace Prize for its work.



Women's Rights Worldwide

Working Against the Oppression of Women Around the World



Racial Equality

Barak Obama, the first black President of the USA

Signs of the Second Blessing

One family under God being restored -
international organizations working together to make a better world



Universal Peace Federation

movement for world peace - one family under God



The European Union

cooperation between nations of Europe



The World Bank

Gives loans to poor countries



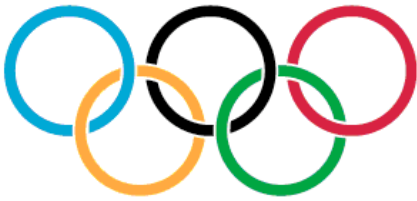
International Red Cross

Its mission is to help the victims of war and violence . It has 97 million volunteers worldwide in 186 countries.



The United Nations

It is an international organization working for cooperation in international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and achieving world peace. The UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to stop wars between countries. There are currently 192 member states,



The Olympic Games

The Olympic Games are an international event of summer and winter sports, in which thousands of athletes compete in a wide variety of events. The flag has a white background, with five interlaced rings in the centre: blue, yellow, black, green and red. It represents the five inhabited continents of the world, while the six colors are those that appeared on all the national flags of the world in 1931.

Signs of the Third Blessing

An ideal world being restored



Recycling

The universal recycling symbol is an internationally-recognized symbol used to show recyclable materials. It is composed of three chasing arrows



Save The Rainforest (STR)

This is a charity that was founded in 1988 by teachers and students in USA. Schools from around the United States do projects to educate people about the rain forest. It has also provided opportunities for students and teachers to actively campaign for rain forest conservation.



World Wildlife Fund

This is the world's largest independent conservation organization with over 5 million supporters worldwide, working in more than 90 countries, supporting around 1300 conservation and environmental projects around the world. The group says its mission is "to halt and reverse the destruction of our environment".



Advances in science and technology in the 20th century



G3 mobile phones



iPad

OVER 500,000 COPIES IN PRINT

A TRUE STORY
of DEATH AND LIFE

90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

DON PIPER
WITH CECIL MURPHEY



Don Piper
near-death experience



James van Praagh
spiritual medium



Rhonda Byrne
Spiritual growth



UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund



Women's Rights Worldwide



President Obama
Racial Equality



Universal Peace Federation
movement for world peace

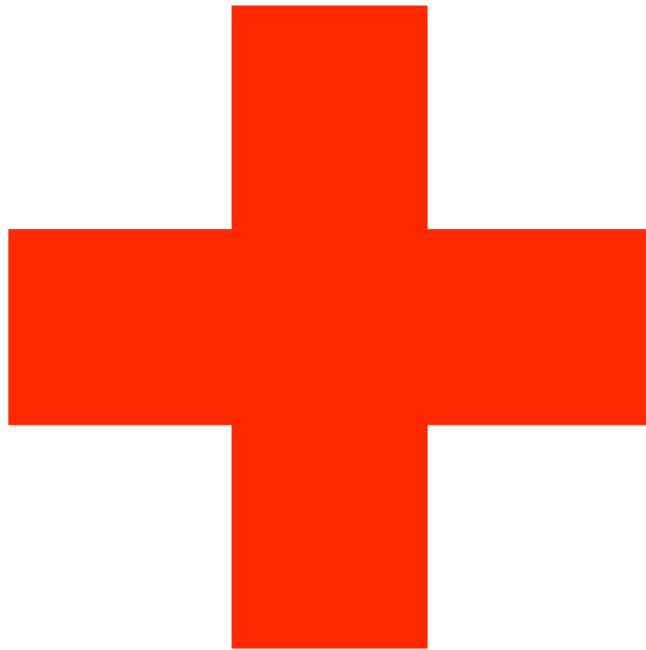


The European Union
cooperation between European countries



The World Bank

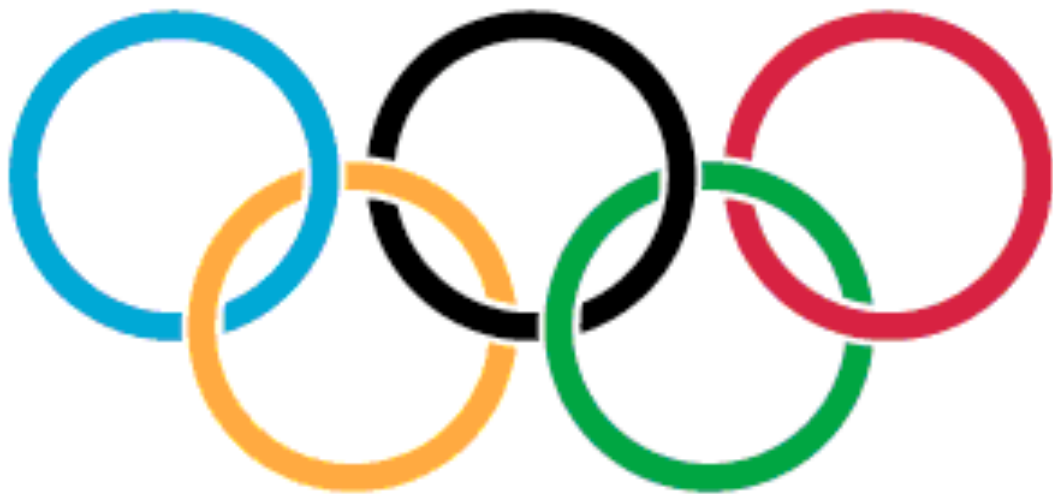
The World Bank
loans to poor countries



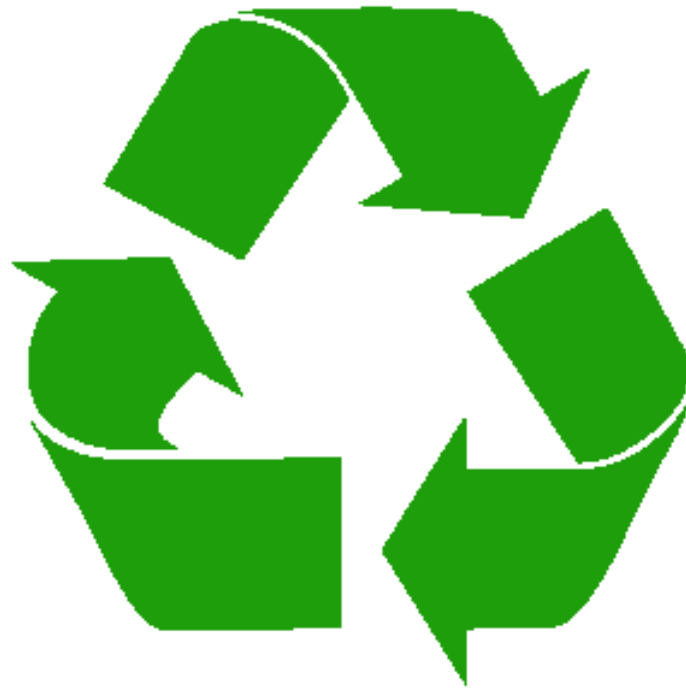
International Red Cross
helps victims of war and violence



The United Nations
Cooperation between nations



The Olympic Games
World sports competition



Recycling



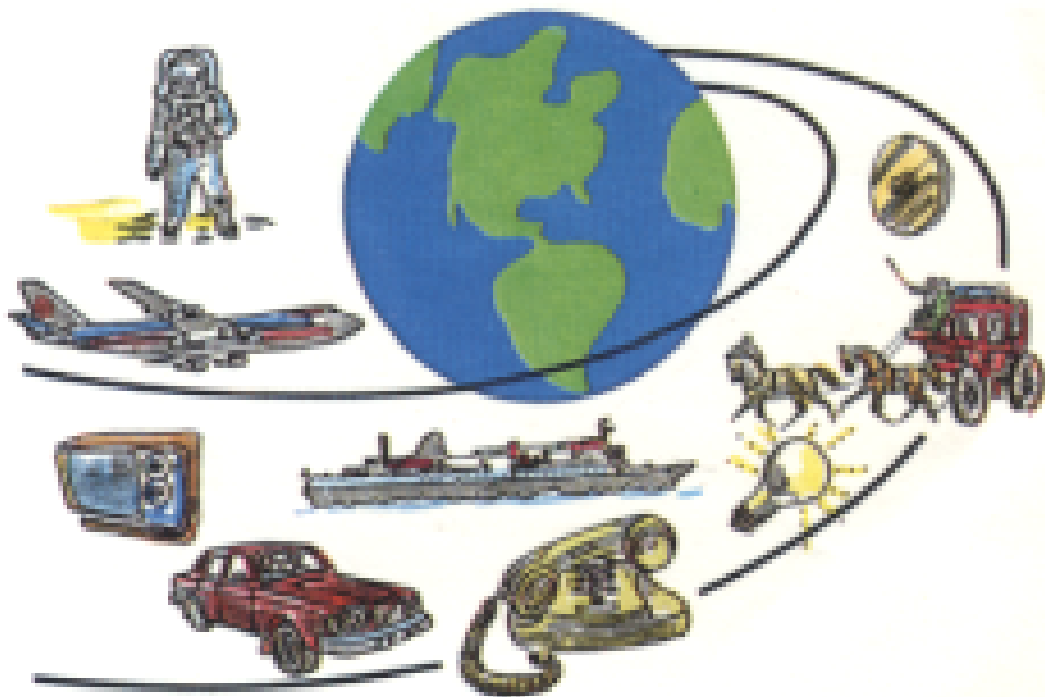
Save The Rainforest



WWF[®]

World Wildlife Fund

Conservation of the environment



Advances in science and technology

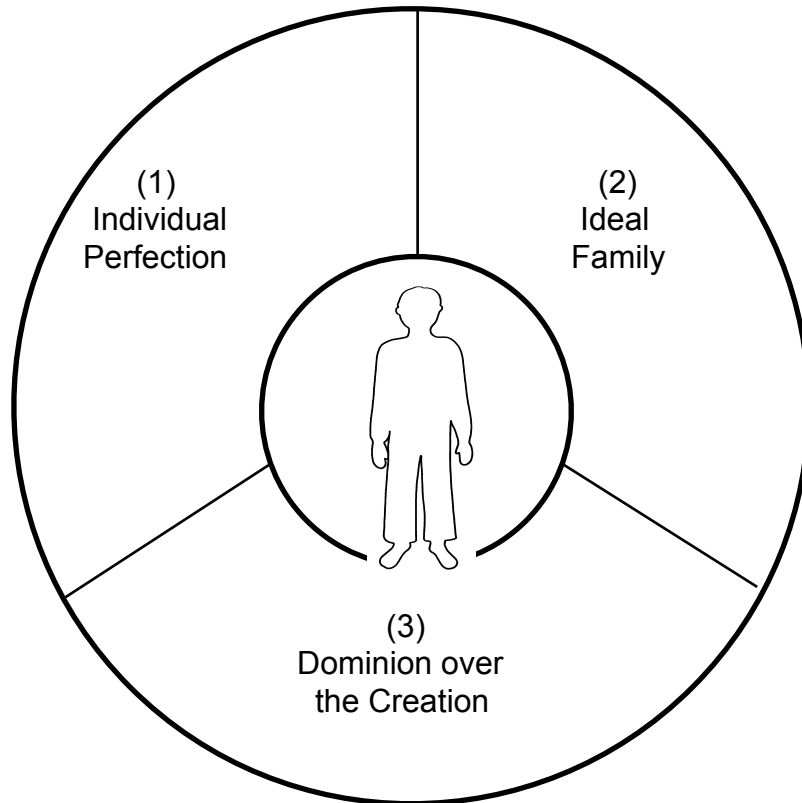


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The Last Days & Today

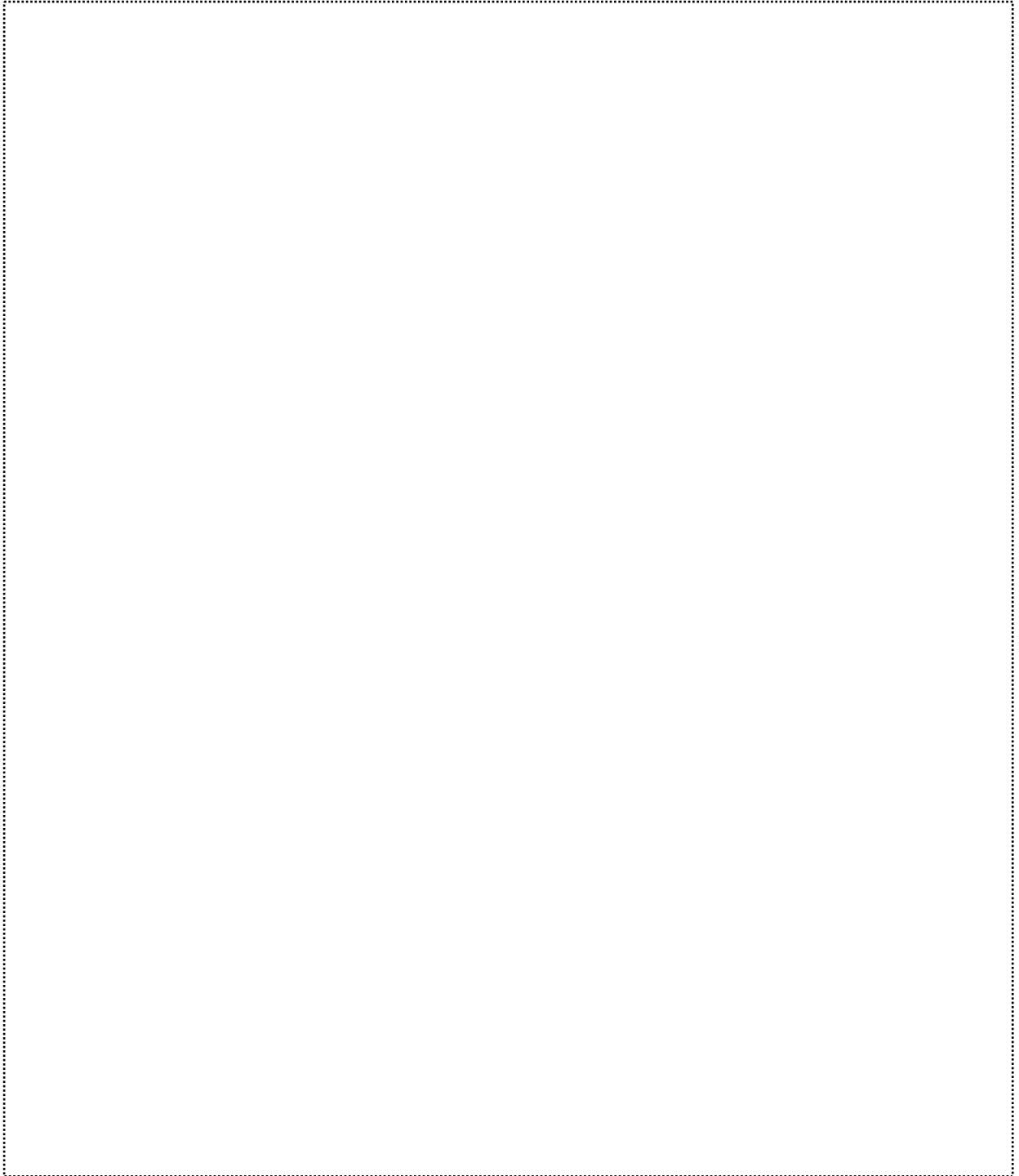


SIGNS OF THE THREE BLESSINGS

The goal of history is to establish God's ideal world; a place of true love, peace and happiness. This can only begin when man fulfills the Three Blessings. The Last Days is the time just before the ideal world is established. If these are the Last Days today, we should see signs in the world that the Three Blessings are being realized. The Principle explains that this is happening.

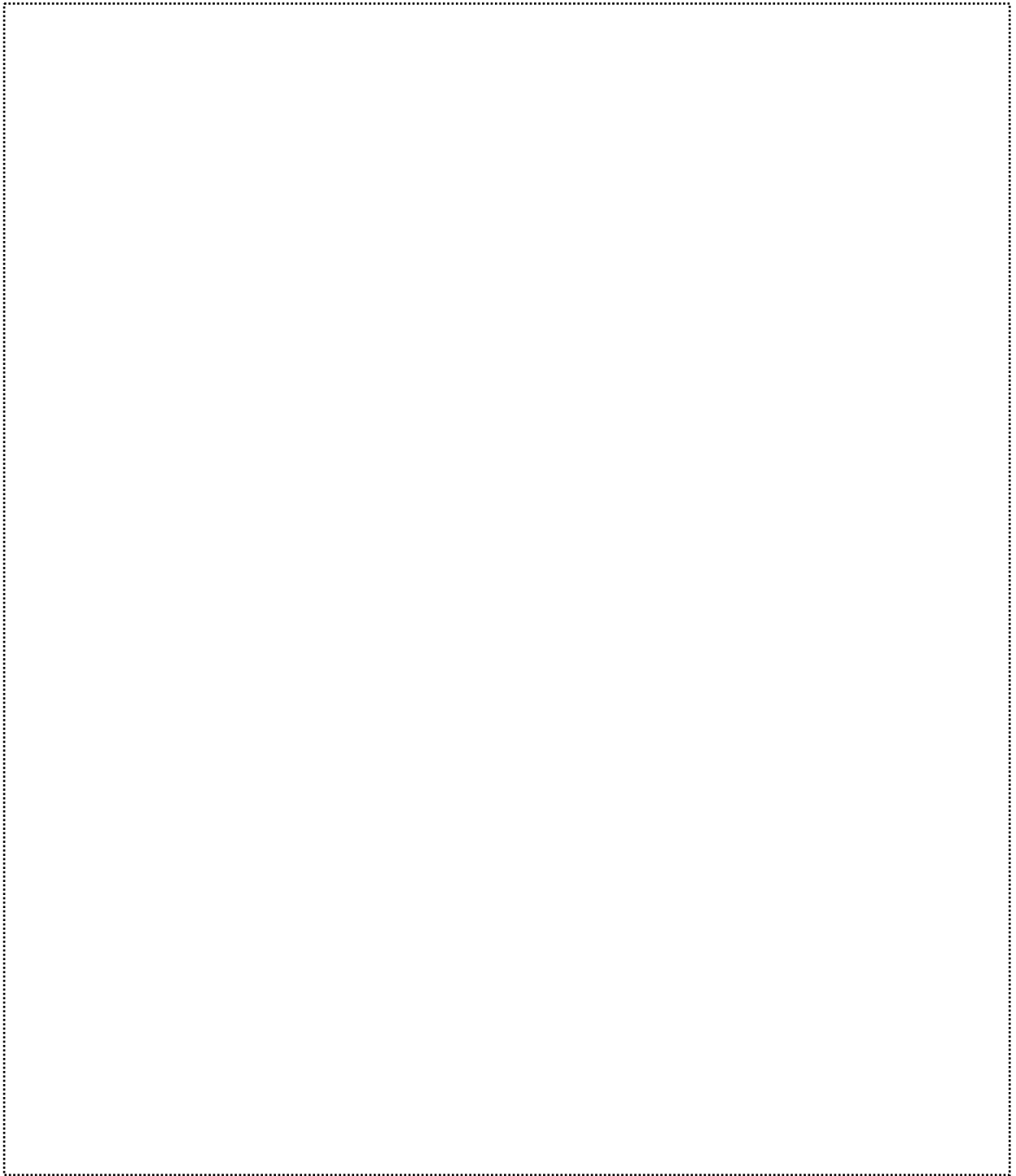
1) **Signs of the First Blessing**

In the world today, freedom, human rights and equality is being restored and a growing number of people are having spiritual experiences



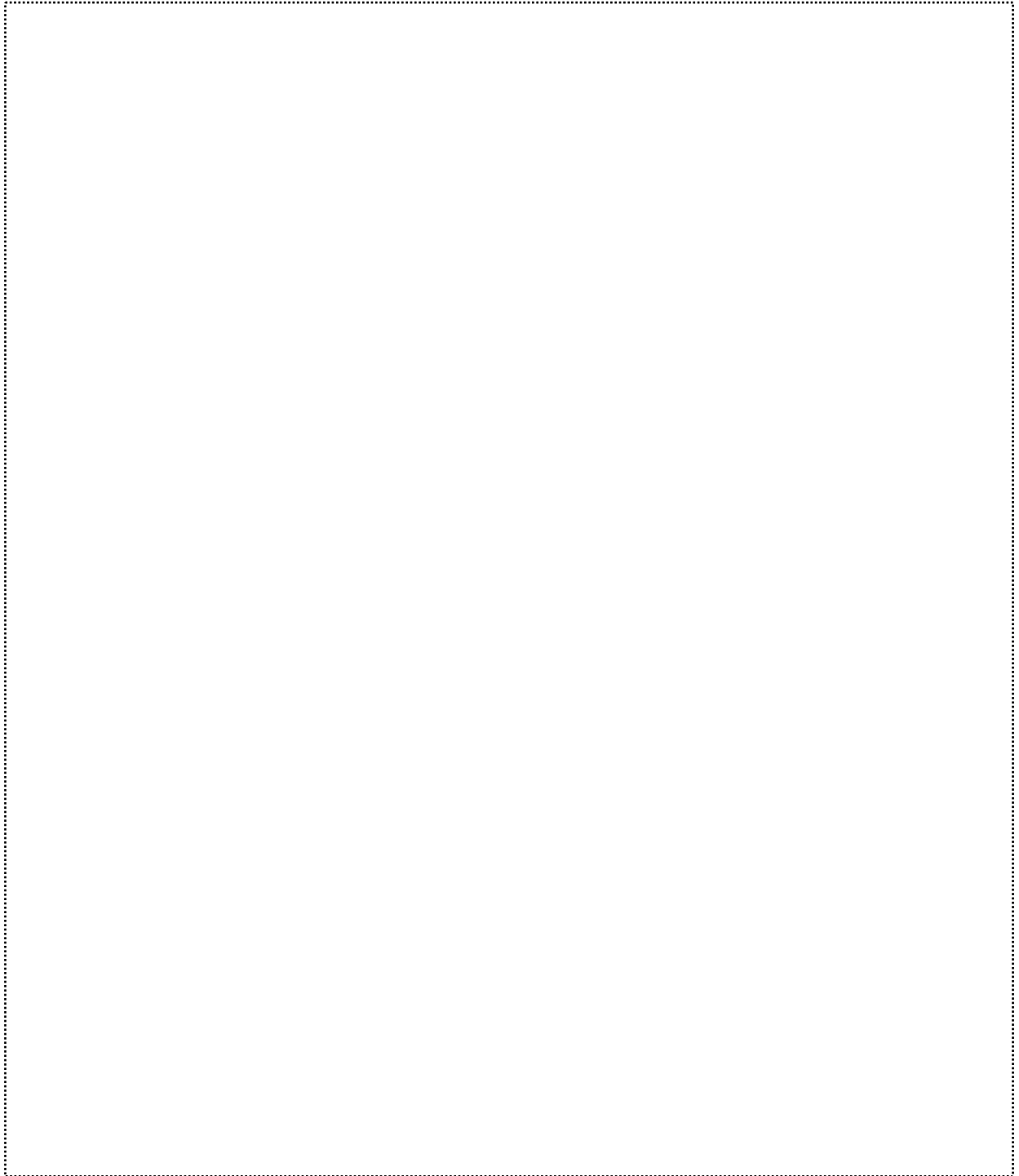
2) Signs of the Second Blessing

Building one family under God is coming closer, as races, nationalities, languages and cultures of the world are mixing together as never before.

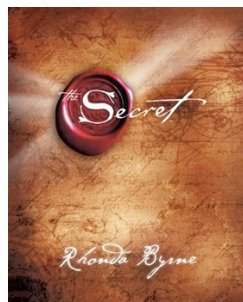
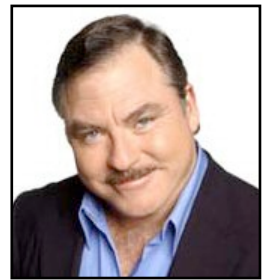
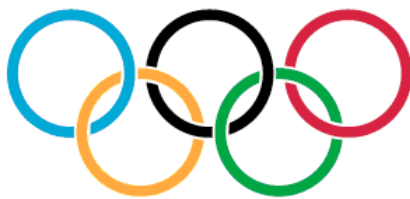


3) Signs of the Third Blessing

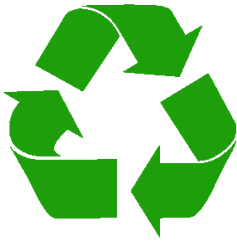
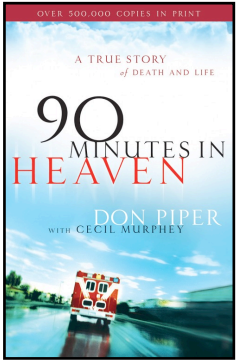
Our growing love for creation can be seen in many environmental movements. Rapid progress in science and technology over the last 100 years, has brought us close to creating an ideal living environment



Each picture is a sign that the Three Blessings are being fulfilled. Cut them out and stick them on the page that best fits one of the Blessings.



Cut and paste pictures in the right place

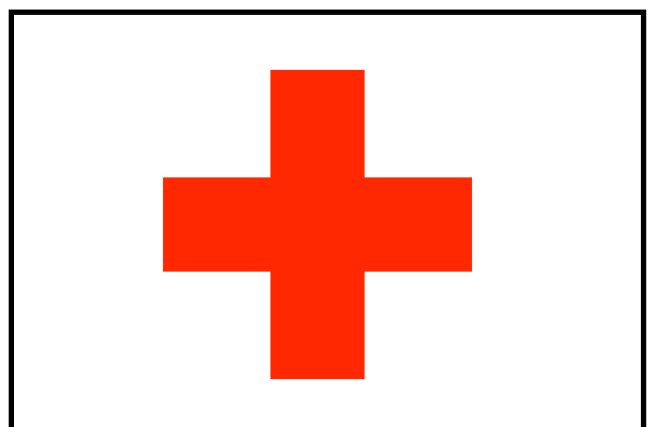
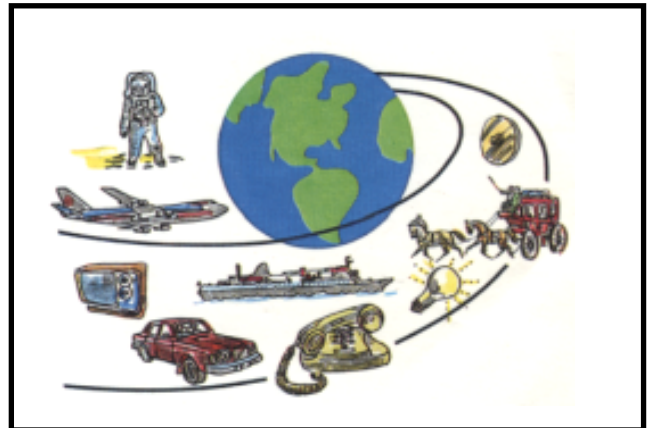


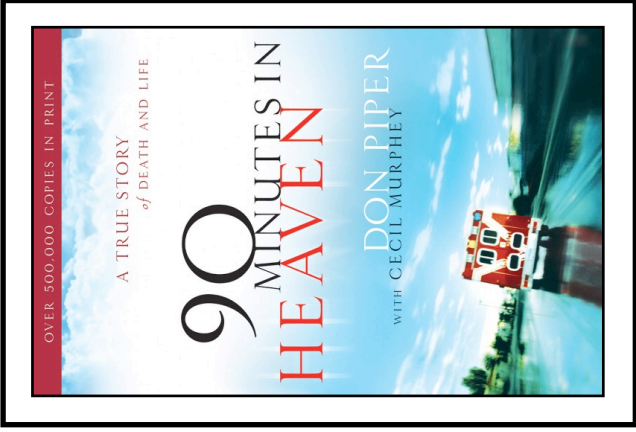
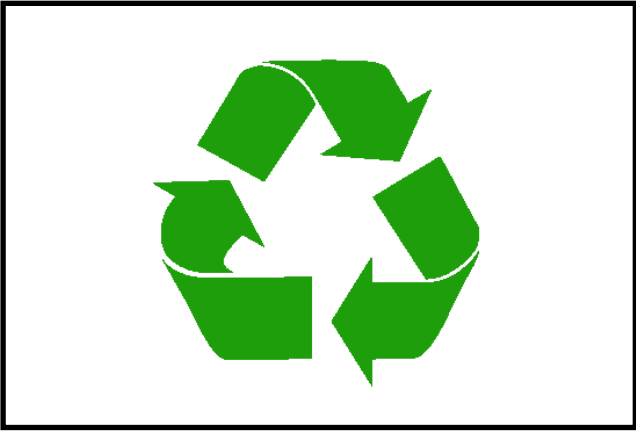
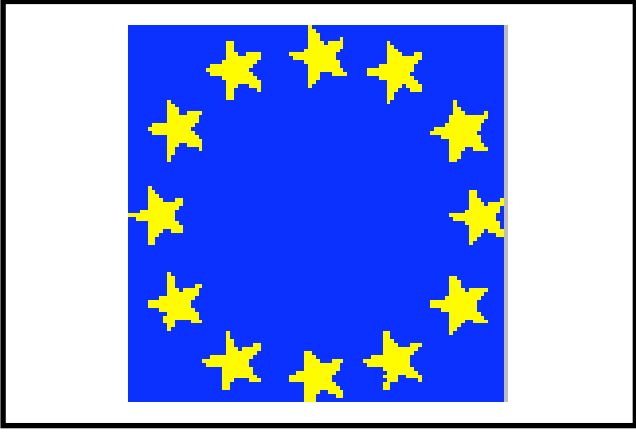
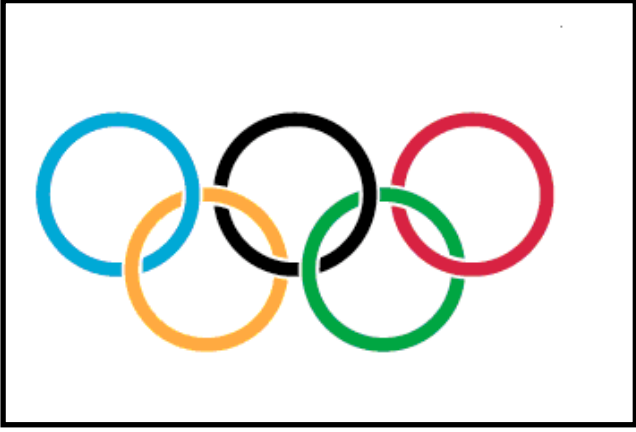
Principle Main Points
Unit 4 - The Last Days

(31)

The Last Days & Today

18 pairs







Other signs of the last days

