

GLEANINGS — January 3, A.D. 2016
Explaining the Sign

The title of today's gleanings does not refer to one of the miracles of Jesus, nor to any of the Bible's other attesting signs and wonders. It refers to the street sign with moveable letters which stands outside of New Life Church's building. In observation of New Year's Day, the sign read:

**BC OR BCE,
AD OR CE:
JESUS ANCHORS
THE CALENDAR!**

Shortly after this message was posted, a neighbor came over to share not only the encouragement that she and her husband read and appreciate the sign's brief weekly notes, but to inquire further about the exact meaning of this particular one. An expanded version of the answer she was given follows.

B.C. of course stands for **Before Christ**. Traditionally, anything that occurred in history prior to Christ's advent is dated recessively with reference to that advent. In other words the further into the past we explore, the higher the number of an event's date. For example Greek philosopher Aristotle began tutoring military conqueror Alexander the Great in 343 B.C. and King Solomon, through whom the Holy Spirit tutors to this day by way of Solomon's inspired Proverbs, died about 930 B.C.

A.D. does not stand for "after death," that is the death (and resurrection) of the Lord Jesus, as some have supposed. It represents the short Latin phrase **Anno Domini**, meaning year of our Lord. As time moves onward with reference to our Lord's advent, each year has a higher number.

So **Jesus anchors the calendar*** in that sense that ALL of history is reckoned with His first advent as its central event! The calendar in use by all mankind declares this: anything that has happened from creation to the present, happened either B.C. or A.D. – "before Christ" or "in the year of our Lord!"

This in itself is a powerful testimony to His glorious Name. In ancient times, nations and empires counted years according to kingly dynasties or other significant events such as the Greek olympics. Today, the entire world uses the same calendar. Everyone reckons time according to history's most significant event: the coming of the Son of God into the world!

As you might surmise, some don't like that! Enter our other two acronyms, B.C.E. and C.E. They represent, respectively, "**Before Common Era**" and "**Common Era**." In other words, those who want to marginalize the Lord Jesus Christ realize that they can't change the numbering of the years, but they hope to eradicate awareness of WHY the years are numbered in the way they are.

Thus as you might have noticed, your friendly neighborhood gleanings author makes profuse use of the terms A.D., or "year of our Lord," or "year of grace" both in things written for public consumption and in private, such as dating paper checks, correspondence, etc. He regards this as one small way to fight the spirit of antichrist, and to bear witness to Him Who in the year **A.D. Unknown** will come again to put a final punctuation mark on history – which might be called, as someone cleverly has pointed out, **HIS STORY!**

**Two facts should be noted in connection with this. One, there is no "year zero." The next calendar year after 1 B.C. is A.D. 1. Two, though the actual date of Christ's birth is a few years before A.D.1, this does represent any error in the Bible.*