

## THE ALBURY CIRCLE

### Objective

The children obtain some insight into the beginnings of a Christian revival movement which prepared the way for the re-establishment of the church of Christ with ministries and spiritual gifts.

### Contents

- The Albury Conferences.
- The Holy Spirit as the one who reveals.



## Introductory Remarks

In the nineteenth century individual Christian circles in England and other countries began to show a growing interest in the Bible, especially in prophecies regarding that time and the future. Between 1820 and 1833 alone over 70 publications appeared on this very subject.

Lewis Way (1772–1840) was a well-known Anglican clergyman of the time, who had written some articles on biblical promises. For 1 June 1826 he invited seven men to join him in London in order to explore prophetic writings with them and intensively study Old Testament prophecies. There the thought was born to convene larger gatherings of men in future who were interested in exploring biblical prophecies just as they were. Seeing they no longer wanted to meet in the noisy city of London, Henry Drummond, a banker and friend of Lewis Way, offered to have the meetings at his country seat in Albury—a secluded spot about 50 km south of London.

From 1826 to 1830 about 30 clergymen, the rest learned laymen, some of them with high positions, gathered once a year for conferences lasting several days. The focal point of their discussions was the question as to what the prophecies of the Holy Bible stated about that time and future events. The participants were particularly interested in statements referring to the Lord's return and God's judgments of mankind.

The conferences always took place during the first week of Advent. Only the last gathering in 1830 was convened already in July. A report about the miracle of healing the sick and the uttering of prophecies in Scotland had brought the participants together earlier than usual: "[This report] led to more intense prayers for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which had been prompted by Mr Stewart previously already," wrote Henry Drummond.<sup>1</sup>

Until then the participants had agreed on the interpretation of the prophetic books, however, their assessments of the gifts out of the Holy Spirit—which now were appearing in Scotland—varied. This led to the dissolution of the Albury Circle.

Four future Apostles belonged to the Albury Circle: Henry Drummond, William Dow, John Owen Tudor, and Spencer Perceval, as well as a few additional men who later bore ministries in the Catholic Apostolic Church. The Albury Conferences were, therefore, precursory for the development of God's work in our time.

<sup>1</sup> H. Drummond, *Narrative of the Circumstances Which Led to the Setting Up of the Church of Christ at Albury*, Albury 1834, page 3 ff.

## Lesson Plan

**Lead-In**

Workbook, Exercise 1

The children read the letter.

**Implementation**

Teacher's Presentation

Inform the children about the historical background.

Edward Irving (1792–1834) had been active as a clergyman in the London congregation of the Church of Scotland since 1822. He was a powerful preacher, which attracted thousands of listeners.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, more people were beginning to show interest in religious matters again. Not only in England but also in other European countries interest in the Bible grew, especially in prophecies about the time in which they lived and the future. The general public was once again made aware of lost issues of faith. Believers seeking the truth came together in individual Christian circles to pray and study the Bible.

One such group which, among other things, inquired into godly promises and their fulfillment, came together once a year from 1826 to 1830 at Henry Drummond's manor house in Albury—a small place near London.

Workbook, Exercise 2

The children work on the exercise.

Teacher's Presentation

In July 1830 the last of these conferences took place in Albury. Many participants had become convinced that the dissent among Christians was due to the fact that the Apostle ministry was not occupied at that time and that many of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that had been evident in the early church had been lost. For this reason they wanted to pray for the reoccupation of the Apostle ministry and for the gifts of the Spirit.

Discussion

Searching the Scriptures and understanding them properly help to answer questions of faith. The Son of God had already referred to this when He said that the Scriptures testify of Him.

A child reads to the class.

Bible

John 5: 39–40:

*"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."*

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Bible	<p>Elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus said the following to His Apostles (a child reads to the class):</p> <p>John 16: 12–13: <i>“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”</i></p>
Teacher’s Presentation	<p>Explain the Bible passage.</p> <p>Jesus had not yet told His disciples everything. The Holy Spirit would continue instructing them. The Apostles experienced this in their work.</p> <p>When the Apostle ministry was no longer occupied, the gift of the Holy Spirit could no longer be dispensed on anyone. The restoration of the original order in the Christian church was required to complete God’s plan of salvation. Several members of the Albury Circle recognized the necessity of praying for the reoccupation of the Apostle ministry.</p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	
Workbook, Exercise 3	<p>The children do the exercise.</p>
Discussion	<p>In closing, discuss the significance of the words: “If we ask for something according to His will.”</p>
Question Prompt	<p>What is God’s will?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ God wants all people to be saved.</li><li>■ God wants to complete His work.</li></ul>

