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The Temporal versus The Eternal



*As for man, his days are like grass,
he flourishes like a flower of the field;
the wind blows over it and it is gone,
and its place remembers it no more.
But from everlasting to everlasting the
Lord's love is with those who fear him,
and his righteousness with their children's
children with those who keep his covenant
and remember to obey his precepts.*

Ps 103:15-18

*All men are like grass, and all their glory
is like the flowers of the field . . . The
grass withers and the flowers fall, but the
word of our God stands forever.*

Isa 40:6,8

Precious in the Sight of God

(1 Peter 2:4; 3:4; Psalm 116:15)

Paul Birston

Seeing things from God's point of view is not always easy. In fact, sometimes, it is impossible. We could not cope with knowing everything or having to be in control of the whole universe.

There are times, however, when it is critical that we understand what matters to God, to see what He sees, and value what He values. Our salvation depends on it. Fortunately, we are not left in doubt about what really counts to Him because He tells us through His Word.

There is a wonderful phrase that occurs several times in some of our English translations of the Bible. It is, "precious in the sight of God." God tells us what He sees as precious. In our Scripture references above, "precious" can mean "valuable" (1 Peter 2:4) and "(very) expensive" or "costly" (1 Peter 3:4) according to Walter Bauer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. In Psalm 116:15 it can mean "rare" or "splendid" according to *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*.

It is possible for us, from our perspective on earth, to see and understand some of what is of surpassing value to God, from His perspective in Heaven. With this in mind, please consider with me three special examples of that which is valuable, costly and splendid in the sight of God.

Jesus

The apostle Peter tells us that God's Son is "choice and precious" in His sight:

And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4)

Drawing on the imagery of Isaiah 28:16, a book with much to say about the restoration and rebuilding of God's people, Peter describes Jesus as a living stone, the cornerstone of a spiritual house, God's church. As a building material, stone is solid, strong, supportive and durable. Christ is a special stone with a unique place in the building; He is the corner stone (Psalm

118:22b). God placed this choice and precious stone in this special place at great cost: Jesus' death, burial and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sins.

Peter goes on to say that Christians too are living stones being built into God's house right along with Christ; we are brought in safely through baptism (3:18-22). What a marvelous and encouraging thought this is. He confirms it by saying "this precious value then is for you who believe" (2:7a). What, rather Who, matters most to God is for our benefit; God gives the precious value of Christ for us who believe!

Peter wrote to Christians who lived as "aliens" (1:1) in remoter parts of the Roman Empire that had lost their national

We can know what is most precious to God.

identities to Rome. These believers also faced persecution for their faith in Christ. They knew what it meant to be rejected. But they were not rejected in God's sight. They were being built into God's house. They became "a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (2:9b). Though we may be rejected, as Christ was, we have value from God, and we are valuable to Him. All this is possible because of Jesus.

A Gentle and Quiet Spirit

Having identified Christians as God's people and part of His spiritual house, Peter proceeds to give practical instructions on how Christians are to live as members of God's household. Even though they are "aliens and strangers" in this world (2:11b), their behaviour here is to be the best possible example, proof of their relationship with God above. Peter addresses servants, wives, husbands, elders, and God's church at large.

In the course of his guidance to wives, Peter says that their adornment should not be just external; they should,

let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God (1 Peter 3:4).

This is enlightening. Among all the beautiful things we can behold in God's

creation the "hidden person of the heart," and the "imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit" are precious to our Creator. Though the heart is invisible, its work is plain to all. Character comes from within, showing itself through the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. What power it has. Peter says that an obedient wife can win her disobedient husband "without a word" (1 Peter 3:1).

Just in case any are inclined to think the importance of inner character is the domain of women only, Peter challenges us:

To sum up, let *all* be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit. (1 Peter 3:8)

God has His eye on our hearts. What goes on inside of us matters to Him. It also makes a difference in the lives of those around us. How the world needs more gentle and quiet souls. By the power of His Spirit we can be this kind of people.

The Death of His Godly Ones

The Old Testament book of Psalms tells us about something else that is very costly and valuable to God. Psalm 116:15 says:

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones.

This verse appears in a Psalm of thanksgiving. The author thanks the LORD for saving his life and for still being able to walk before Him in "the land of the living" (Psalm 116:9b). He observes that God sees the deaths of His people as precious and valuable. They are on their way home to Him.

From the way we see things on earth, death is an enemy, something most people dread and avoid talking about. We often see death as frightening, a tragedy that no one wants to be part of. Even getting old has taken on undesirable negative connotations; we are getting closer to the grave. Life's ideal is to be young.

But God has a different view from the other side. To Him, the death of one of His children is precious. An infinitely valuable soul has ended life faithful to Him. When one of God's people dies, their life on earth comes to an end, but their eternal life continues. It has no end.

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The Eternal Spirit

Roy Merritt



Two important words are used in our title with the definite article before them. Obviously one is greatly challenged to understand the full import of either the noun, Spirit, or the adjective that is used to

describe this member of the Godhead. As mortal humans we are accustomed to think in terms of time. The concept of eternity is mind-boggling, whether we consider events before the earth's creation or existence in an endless relationship with our creator. Likewise, we find difficulty in considering the attributes and activities of a spiritual being who shares eternal existence with the Father and the Son.

Designations

Various designations are given to this third member of the Godhead: Holy Spirit, Spirit of truth, the Spirit, the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, etc. Actually, the specific reference to His eternal nature is used only once with the adjective "eternal" (Heb. 9:14). However, this characteristic is clearly implied in numerous references to His relationship to the Father and Son in various activities. These references range from the creation account in Genesis 1:2 to the beautiful invitation to share eternal blessedness around the throne of God (Rev. 22:17).

The doctrine of a triune Godhead has posed a difficulty to those who will not accept a concept which they cannot understand in rational terms alone. Many do not show a willingness to walk by faith. When an unbelieving friend chided the great orator, Daniel Webster, with the question, "How can a man of your mental caliber believe that three equals one?" He gave the simple reply, "I do not pretend to understand the arithmetic of heaven now." We have no difficulty accepting the concept if we search the New Testament for references to the three members of the Godhead, acting in cooperation with one another but as individual personalities.

Three Persons Cooperating

In Luke 1:35 the incarnation of our Lord is said to have involved the Father, called here "the Most High." The Holy Spirit was to be the agent of conception. The child who was to be born was the Son of

God. When this Son was baptized by John, three members of the Godhead were in attendance (Matt. 3:16-17). It is said that Christ "through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God..." (Heb. 9:14). It is noteworthy that the resurrection of Christ is attributed to the Father (Acts 2:32), to the Son (John 10:17-18) and to the Holy Spirit (Romans 1:4).

The Apostle Peter makes it clear that our very salvation involves the activity of the three members of the Godhead. In 1 Peter 1:2 he recounts how we are "chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood."

The authority of all three for man's salvation can be seen in Matthew's account of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19). The action of baptizing believers into the community of the saved is by the authority of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Even though three persons authorize the commission, they are so united in purpose, that it is said to be done "in the name", singular, of the triune Godhead.

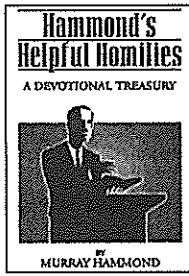
The personality of the Holy spirit is seen along with that of the Father and the Son in several passages where He is said to react in a personal way with the Christians. In John's Gospel, Jesus promises that the Counselor or Comforter, whom He is to send from the Father, will bear witness of Him. He identifies this Counselor as "the Spirit of truth." In the beginning of the next chapter, nine references to the Holy Spirit's personal activity are found in three verses. It is significant, that although the Greek noun is neuter, pronouns which refer back to it are masculine. These are translated "he" and "his" instead of "it" or "its" which grammatical rules would require (John 15:26; 16:13 - 15).

Among the passages where the Holy Spirit is identified as acting along with the Father and the Son in activities which show his personality, two are especially significant. In 2 Corinthians 13:14, Paul closed his epistle with a loving blessing. He desires that the Corinthian brethren might experience the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God. Along with these blessings, he desires that they may experience "the fellowship of the Holy Spirit." One does not have fellowship with an inanimate object or an impersonal force. In a similar manner the Apostle appealed to the Christians in

Rome that they strive together in their prayers on his behalf. His appeal mentions the three members of the Godhead. The love of the Spirit is considered as an important factor in the appeal along with the Father and the Son. (Rom. 15:30)

Despite the difficulty we may have in grappling with the concept of an eternal Spirit, it is healthy, from time to time, to review some of the biblical statements concerning His existence, attributes and activity. All that we know about Him is contained in Scripture. Curiosity might ask for more. Faith replies, "That is enough!"

St. Catharines, Ontario

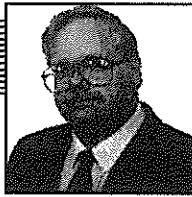
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EDITORIAL

The Prince of Peace

Wayne Turner



One of the most beautiful prophecies comes from Isaiah 2:2, "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it." (cf. Micah 4:1) Isaiah and Micah foretold a time when people of all nations would turn to God and come to His house to learn from Him so that they could walk in His ways and enjoy the peace that comes from God. At this time, God would sit as king over the nations governing all, judging between them and settling disputes. The peoples of these nations would destroy their weapons of war, turning swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. "Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

Similarly, Isaiah 11 speaks of a time when a "shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse" (v. 1) and "the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him." His delight will be in the fear of the Lord (v. 3) and righteousness will be his belt (v. 5). Then, in one of the most perfect pictures of peace, Isaiah says, "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest."

Today, it is hard to imagine such a peace in the world. This century alone has witnessed two great World Wars, as well as countless lesser wars and "police actions" like Korea, Vietnam, the Arab-Israeli War, Afghanistan, Granada, and the Gulf War, to mention only a few. Most recently, our attention has turned to Yugoslavia. At the time of this writing, NATO warplanes and missiles are carrying out a massive 24-hour campaign intended to break down both the ability and resolve of Yugoslavia's leader, Mlesovic, his military and the people of the country to continue the "ethnic cleansing" of the province of Kosovo. Television news programs are showing the "highlights" of each day's actions, smart bombs and laser guided missiles hitting their targets. Occasionally, we also hear reports of "collateral damage" - the accidental damage done to civilians and their properties. In mid-April, we heard of a passenger train that was hit by a missile as it crossed a bridge and of two train cars that plunged into the ravine below.

The situation in our world today is a far cry from the idyllic scenes of peace described by Isaiah. Nations are training for and learning war as much as ever. In some ways, we should not be surprised. Jesus warned that after his departure there would be wars and rumors of war. Humanity's hawkish and warlike nature would continue. However, also among the warriors of the world, there would be a people of peace, peacemakers, if you will, who would follow and serve the Prince of Peace. Jesus blessed these people and called them "Sons of God." (Matthew 5:9) These

would be people of love and compassion, who would not resist or retaliate against evil, but would trust in God. "'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty." (Zechariah 4:6) David wrote, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God." (Psalm 20:7)

At a time like this, Christians need to remember that they are called to peace, not war. It is a difficult struggle of conscience. What is our responsibility to our country and government? What is our responsibility to God? What is our responsibility to our fellow citizens of the world? What do Christians do when claims of atrocities, abuses, genocide and ethnic cleansing are raised? The least appropriate action would be to follow a course of isolation and ignore such things. Can a Christian, in good conscience, stand by and watch people suffer and die? In our search for answers, we need to be consistent with the values we have as Christians.

History often teaches us that situations are not always what they seem to be at the time. Is Mlesovic as evil as he has been portrayed? Or is there more here than we realize? We do not know. However, what we do know is that there are Christians among the people of Kosovo and that there are Christians among the rest of the people of Yugoslavia. This means that the more distant and abstract term "collateral damage" could include the lives, families and property of our brothers and sisters in Christ. And likely, it has. What is our responsibility to them and to the people around them that they have tried to reach with the gospel of Christ?

One thing that should cause us great thought and concern about the situation in Yugoslavia comes from Christians who have worked among its people as missionaries and are personally familiar with the situation that actually exists within the country. Several of them are cautioning against deciding too hastily based solely on media reports that present only one side or the other of the story. Certainly, it is clear that there have been tragedies and atrocities in Kosovo. This is unacceptable. But is there more that

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-- FOUNDED BY ROBERT SINCLAIR, 1936 --

CO-EDITORS

Wayne Turner, Eugene C. Perry

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

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LAYOUT/DESIGN

Brad Boland

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Send teaching articles to Wayne Turner, 45 Millfield Drive, Winnipeg, MB R2M 2N9
(204) 257-7926 E-mail: <wayneturner@home.com>
Send advertising and subscription information to
Gospel Herald, 4904 King Street, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6 Ph/FAX (905) 563-7503
E-mail: EPerry9953@aol.com

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When Life is a Success

Tim Johnson

Most of us enter the adult world with very little. Even with a good education we start out with second-hand furniture, used clothes, and perhaps a car that barely passed inspection. It's a big, intimidating world where everyone seems to be a success, except yourself. Life is hard and we are grateful for any opportunity, thankful for all the help we can get, and one is especially dependent on God.

Something happens to us as we make advances and start to accomplish things. Canadian materialism and the love of money tempts us. Pride in what a person owns becomes very important. Some people begin to flaunt their prosperity. Sadly, we forget about our humble beginnings and our dependence on God.

It is then that things in life soon show signs of sickness. Something is wrong. Our great ideas and plans for God just don't seem to get anywhere. Better finances don't seem to better our happiness. The relationship we thought we had with our children turns out to be cold, impersonal and distant. Worse, our marriage partner is a bit of a stranger to us and we find ourselves going in different directions. The great strides of success we thought we had attained turn out to be shallow indeed, or maybe just don't exist at all.

What is wrong?

To put it simply, God isn't in it. Our pride has led us to believe we are the authors of our own achievements. We've become convinced, sometimes without realizing it, that we've done pretty well and that people, or even God, couldn't do without us. Like the rich farmer of Luke 12:16-21, we've laid up treasure for ourselves and are not rich toward God. Like him, our lives could be called to an end at any time and our fool-

ishness would suddenly be laid bare.

There's only one thing to do. Remember that we started out with nothing, that we are basically nothing, and without God in our lives every minute we will accomplish nothing. It's extremely important to fall down on our knees and confess to God that we just can't accomplish anything worthwhile, fight off a single temptation, earn a single dollar, or save one soul, without his help, direction and wisdom. Jesus said, "apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Paul reminded some proud Christians, "what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Like us, they needed to recognize clearly that God is the source of all success.

Like us, they needed to recognize clearly that God is the source of all success

Moses, the great liberator of Israel from Egypt, freely admitted to God "I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me" (Numbers 11:14). One often reads in the Bible accounts of him that he "fell on his face before God." That is the position of a great man. The courageous prophet Jeremiah was often in dangerous circumstances and expressed his fear to God. The Lord said, "Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you" (Jer. 1:8). He lived and worked successfully for decades because he hung on to that promise. Isaiah, the most prolific of the major prophets, could do little for God until he realized, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of

unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Is. 6:5). He had to rid himself of himself before he could do anything of lasting value for God. A great lesson for every Christian to learn.

Perhaps the most effective of all preachers, the apostle Paul, could have easily felt smug and accomplished with all the new congregations to his credit. Yet he endlessly reminded us, "...I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given..." (Eph. 3:7-8). Even Jesus declared, "I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me (John 8:28).

No great success in any endeavor can be achieved without humility, a desperate need for God's help and guidance, and a full confession that we just aren't much without Him. That's when God can really use you and me, and that's when life is a success.

Moncton, NB

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In Our Lives

We can know what is most precious to God. What matters to Him from His perspective in heaven can enrich our lives daily here on earth. His values can make a difference in our lives each day when we make them our values too. We can make them work for us in several ways, when we: 1) let Christ be as precious to us as He is to God; He will be the focus of our lives; 2) realize we mean something to God; the value God places on Christ is for us who believe; 3) allow ourselves to be built as living stones into God's house, the church of Christ; 4) let our character grow more and more like Him; cultivate gentleness and quietude in our hearts; 5) see the value of others; 6) see life as a gift from Him; 7) let God's values act as a compass for our course; 8) realize death is not the end of life; God gives His people an everlasting future; He is there for us.

When the world rejects you as unfit for its building projects, as it rejected Christ, realize that God can give you value and make you a living stone in His spiritual house. See and treasure what is "precious in the sight of God."

Winnipeg, Manitoba

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Ph/Fax (905) 778-0366 (res.) (905) 895-6502 (off.)

Love Never Fails

When we come to the end of Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13, we find that, "... love always protects, love always trusts, love always hopes, love always perseveres, love never fails".

LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS. Love is always slow to expose the errors of others. Advertising the sins of others may not be the best way to help them overcome. Gossiping about someone's faults or sins provides no useful help for them. Going to them in love and humility may help but talking to others about them will most certainly not.

LOVE ALWAYS TRUSTS. Love always trusts God. The trust we have for God is closely related to the trust we have for others. The stronger our trust in God the stronger our trust will be in others. Do we really trust God? Do we trust God enough to sow generously, trusting that we will also reap generously. Do we trust God with our lives? When we pray "Your will be done," do we really leave that for which we pray in God's hands? Do we trust God with the lives of those closest to us? Trusting in God doesn't come easily or quickly. Trusting in God is a decision that we make after we have examined all the evidence. The Bible is full of people testifying that God is worthy of our trust. Looking at ones personal history will provide further evidence that God always keeps His promises.

Trust in God is essential if we are to trust in others. To trust in others is to believe that they can move closer to God, that they can improve and do better than they have. God often changes the lives of men and women through others who believe in them. I would not be preaching today, if it were not for some who believed in me, when I didn't believe in myself, and who trusted me with their pulpits even though I did not have a proven track record. People will tend to be exactly what

we expect them to be. If we do not trust them - if we expect them to fail, they probably will. If, on the other hand, we believe in them - trust them and expect much from them, we will seldom be disappointed. There is of course a risk in believing in others. People may fail us. We may be hurt when those we trust disappoint us. I believe that it is better to trust and be disappointed than to become cynical and not trust anyone.

LOVE ALWAYS HOPES. Hope is an essential part of our relationship with God. Without hope our faith would be empty, our trust broken and perseverance impossible. "Faith is being sure of what we hope for" (Hebrews 11:1).

Hope is an absolute essential, a basic ingredient in our relationship with God. Hope is an essential in our relationships with people. Can we continue to hope for the best in people when we have been disappointed repeatedly? We can if we trust in God.

LOVE ALWAYS PERSEVERES. It doesn't quit when things get difficult. Love always protects, believes and hopes. Love will never fail. Perseverance is more than passively enduring something. It is more than closing our eyes and gripping both arm rests through a bumpy airplane flight. It is more than sitting through a visit to the dentist. The ability to quietly endure trials is an important part of perseverance but it is not all of it. Perseverance is the ability to finish something that we have begun. Perseverance is the ability to make sure that the most important work gets completed. Perseverance is essential in our relationship with God. If we give up, all is lost. If we persevere, we will be rewarded.

Love will not always persevere unless we persevere with people. There are people around us that we will be tempted to give up on. There are people around us that will test us to see if they can get us to give up on them. We must persevere,

because our belief in them, our trust in what God can do through them, our hope in what God will do in them, may make the difference in their lives.

To some, love may appear to have failed. They have prayed for a loved one to get well, only to see them die. They have prayed for a heart to change, but the heart is still of stone. They have been abused physically, sexually, mentally, emotionally or spiritually by someone that should have loved them. They have seen those that should love them, those they had trusted, seek only to hurt them.

What appears to be love failing can be turned into victory through Jesus Christ. Jesus hanging on a cross between two thieves was the darkest moment in all of human history. It was not nails that held Jesus hands and feet to the cross. Had Jesus wanted to, He could have called for a heavenly SWAT team to rescue Him. Jesus could have released the righteous fury of heaven on the enemies of God. Had Jesus asked, His disciples would have gladly fought for Him and died for Him. Hundreds even thousands of others would have joined the righteous cause. Jesus' love for us held him to the cross. God's love for Jesus brought Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Love turned what appeared to be total defeat into the greatest victory the world will ever see.

Our resurrection from the dead, will right all wrongs and turn every defeat into victory, because love never fails.

Impatience fails..... Love never fails.
Unkindness fails..... Love never fails.
Envy fails..... Love never fails.
Boasting fails..... Love never fails.
Jealousy fails..... Love never fails.
Pride fails..... Love never fails.
Rudeness fails..... Love never fails.
Selfishness fails..... Love never fails.
Anger fails..... Love never fails.
Grudge holding fails..... Love never fails.
Resentments fails..... Love never fails.

If it failed it is not love. If it is love and appeared to fail, it will win at the resurrection. **PRAISE GOD, LOVE NEVER FAILS!**

Brian Cox

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Our Purpose



In the first known description of the activities of the church we read, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:42). We understand that these terms refer to some form of preaching/teaching, to sharing/togetherness, to remembering Jesus in the communion and to thanking/praising God respectively. Scriptures such as Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16 and I Corinthians 14:15 indicate that a capella singing was soon included.

These activities clearly had and were intended to have an impression on those who observed. They were "praising God and enjoying favor of all people" (Acts 2:47). Paul shows concern for the impression made on visitors, "But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, God is really among you!" (I Cor.14:24,25).

While involved in building and strengthening internal relationships and relationships with God, the early church was at the same time to consciously consider the impression that would be made on outsiders. The Colossian Christians were urged to "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity" (Col.4:5. See also v.6). We recently read or heard the statement, "The church exists to evangelize." Although some might look upon such a statement as too narrow and focused, it must be admitted that, as the body of Christ, the function of the church is to carry out the purpose of its head who both emphatically declared and openly demonstrated (witness the cross) that his purpose was to "seek and save the lost" (Lk.19:10).

In this column last month we revealed our concern that certain trends appear to us as indicators that the church is becoming less evangelistic. Perhaps a consideration of the contents of the GOSPEL HERALD is in order. Do the news reports from the churches justify such concerns?

The stated purpose of this publication

has, almost from its beginning in 1936, been "For the Promotion of New Testament Christianity". We have tried to do this by encouraging Christians to be faithful and zealous and by helping them to make the gospel message known to all who would hear or read. In the news reporting area two regular features for a long time were the "Here and There" page (news from the churches) and the "Gleanings from Foreign Fields" page (news from the mission fields). In both of these our purpose and effort was to report activities and efforts related to evangelizing and the results of such. We reported conversions at home and abroad. We made known the needs of evangelists and missionaries. We reported the establishment of churches and their growth.

The "Gleanings" page has, unfortunately, fallen by the wayside. We would like to revive it in order to inform our readers of the many current missionary activities and the wonderful growth of the cause of the Lord in many far off places. Space limitations, shortage of information and the lack of a departmental editor have prevented this. We are left printing occasional "mission news" items and these are sometimes crowded out by other news which is becoming less and less evangelistic in its content.

The "Here and There" page has been geographically departmentalized and is edited by volunteers in the three areas. The result has been an increase in the amount of space used but, in our judgment, not an increase in the amount of 'for the promotion of New Testament Christianity' content. We are not reading of more evangelizing, more churches being established or more people being converted. Frankly, we are concerned that more words and more space are reporting less and less of such.

We have noted the gradual trend away from reporting "spiritual" and towards reporting mostly "social" activities. Others have drawn this to our attention as well. These pages were never intended to be "society pages". Please do not misunderstand us. The only reason we would question Christians getting together for wholesome recreational activities is if these are replacing evangelistic activities and in fact stealing time and interest from such. Could it be true that more planning, energy and time is being directed into these "fellowshipping" activities than into reaching the lost? Sometimes the news reports seem to suggest this. Are there, perhaps, claims that these activities are reaching the lost? If

so, is it working? Are souls responding to the truth?

We sincerely hope that readers, reporters and editors will not be offended by these statements and observations but will, rather, understand our concerns and help us to use the limited space in the GOSPEL HERALD "for the promotion of New Testament Christianity". This means editing at all levels. Reporters will, we trust, be agreeable to exercising some restraints and willing for their submissions to, where deemed necessary, be edited by area editors and by ourselves to conform to the purpose for which our pages are intended. We want to report and encourage the spiritual and the evangelistic. *ecp*



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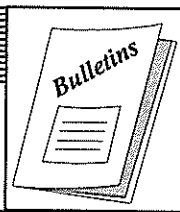
seminar location

Great Lakes Christian College
Beamsville, Ontario

for additional information

Owen Sound Church of Christ
835 - 10th Ave. East
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 3H8
Telephone: (519) 376-6702
E-mail: wn.hart@bmts.com

FROM THE BULLETINS



Short articles for this page are selected from church bulletins. Such should be sent to the editor at 45 Millfred Drive, Winnipeg, MB R2M 2N9; email: wpgwayne@aol.com

A Sermon Walking

Roger Lansdell

Reporters and city officials gathered at a Chicago railroad station one afternoon in 1953. The person they were meeting was the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize winner. A few minutes after the train came to a stop, a giant of a man - six feet four inches with bushy hair and a large mustache - stepped from the train. Cameras flashed. City officials approached him with hands outstretched. Various people began telling him how honored they were to meet him.

The man politely thanked them and then, looking over their heads, asked if he could be excused for a moment. He quickly walked through the crowd until he reached the side of an elderly black woman who was struggling with two large suitcases. He picked up the bags and with a smile, escorted the woman to a bus. After

helping her board, he wished her a safe journey. As he returned to the greeting party, he apologized, "Sorry to have kept you waiting."

The man was Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the famous missionary doctor who had spent his life helping the poor in Africa. In response to Schweitzer's action, one member of the reception committee said, with great admiration, to the reporter standing next to him, "That's the first time I ever saw a sermon walking."

How often do those people that we come in contact with on a daily basis think to themselves, "That's the first time I ever saw a sermon walking"? Do our families see a "walking sermon" in the attitudes we exhibit at home? Do our friends see it with the words we use? How many of our actions or the things we are involved in would be considered a "walking sermon"?

The reality is that everything that we

say, do, think or are involved in is a sermon. With every word, thought or deed we are communicating a sermon that speaks volumes about who we really are and what we really believe.

The real question then is, what kind of a sermon is it? Just like a preacher's sermon; there are good ones, not so good ones and downright lousy ones. Usually what makes the difference between a good sermon and a bad one is the preparation that went into it.

As a result when we stop to consider what kind of a "walking sermon we are in our lives maybe we need to consider how much and how hard we are preparing ourselves to be a good sermon to all those around us. Too often Christians try to 'wing it' when it comes to "walking the talk". This, all too often, is ineffective and unproductive.

This week search for ways to prepare your heart and mind, in order to present a really powerful and effective "walking sermon" to those around you. If you do, maybe someone will think to themselves, "That's the first time I ever saw a sermon walking," and be drawn just one step closer to God.

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

C

1999 PROGRAM

O

July 2-4
Sharpening the Sword
with--Max Craddock

July 25-31
Week 3 (ages 11-13)
with--Brian Thompson

A

July 5-8
Prime Timers
with--Walter Straker

July 31 - August 2
Singspiration 99
with--Brian Cox

M

M

July 11-17
Week 1 (ages 7-9)
with--Max Craddock

August 2-7
Family Week
with--Brian Cox

A

P

July 18-24
Week 2 (ages 8-10)
with--George Mansfield

August 8-14
Week 4 (ages 11-13)
with--Guy Stopard

G

August 15-22
Teen Week (ages 14-19)
with--Rick McBay and Sharon Ellis

H

Is this Religion Really Christianity?

Steve Cordle

Recently, an article came across my desk concerning the apostasy that is affecting denominations in their view of Scripture and the teachings of Jesus. The article is from the November 15, 1997 Saturday Free Press, published in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. I adopted the title of that article for the title of my own essay on the subject.

The author, John G. Stackhouse is a professor of religion at the University of Manitoba and every year teaches a course on world religions, including the Christian faith. Mr. Stackhouse states that teaching Christianity is difficult because of the various doctrines such as one God, but a three person trinity. Also, hard for these theological liberals to swallow is the assertion that God took human form in the fully human/fully divine person of Jesus Christ and the account of death burial and resurrection of Jesus. The second reason Stackhouse claims Christianity is difficult to teach is that it is offensive. The offensive nature of Christianity is that it teaches that Jesus Christ is the only way to reach the one God of the universe.

Now we get to the point of my article. Stackhouse writes: "Perhaps surprisingly, many people in Christian congregations - even denominational leaders - agree that traditional Christianity is perplexing and obnoxious." He goes on to state: "The current moderator of the United Church [of Canada], for instance, admits that he, too, finds Christian doctrine too hard to understand and embrace. Bill Phipps of Calgary confessed that he doesn't believe that Jesus was divine, or that Jesus was actually resurrected or that there is a heaven from which Jesus will return and to which Jesus will bring his church."

Not only does the leader of the United Church deny basic Bible teaching, but Michael Ingham, the Anglican Bishop of New Westminster, British Columbia argues that Christianity is "not the only true religion or even the best for everyone. Jesus is not the only way to God. God is not actually a Trinity, but some sort of fundamental Being that is behind or within all other beings, and can be approached through a wide variety of world faiths."

What I do not understand is this: Why do people like Phipps and Ingham even bother to claim Christianity as their reli-

gion if they don't believe it? Mr. Ingham even asserts that Christians should not waste their time trying to convert people to what he calls our own particular route to the divine." We should go our own way and let people of other faiths go theirs.

I wonder how such people reconcile their thinking with the following Scriptures:

- John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

- Matthew 1:21 The angel telling Joseph about the child his fiancée would bear said, ". . . she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. "

- Matt 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."

- Acts 4:10-12 ". . . let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

- Philippians 2:9-11 "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The Bible is clear: Jesus is THE ONLY WAY to God, there is NO other way. Christianity is a very exclusive religion. Think about this: If all other religions are valid and will get one to heaven, then Jesus wasted his time coming to earth to atone for our sins. Jesus and God should never have paid the high price for the sins of mankind if it does not matter how one

finds his way to God.

Not only that, to deny that Jesus is the only way to heaven means one must deny the atonement of Jesus Christ for sins, which means one must believe in a salvation of works, which is apparently what Bill Phipps believes: "What matters about Christianity Phipps asserted, is caring for other people and especially for the poor and oppressed. No confounding doctrines here: just follow Jesus' example of charity." The problem is that simply doing good works will not save anyone: Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us we are saved by God's grace not by our works. Christians do good works BECAUSE they are saved and have received God's grace, NOT to be saved.

Consider also that in the newspaper article under review, Phipps denies there is a heaven! Think about it, what hope does he have to offer his church members? All he has to offer is materialism and this earth.

Compare that to what the Bible has to offer those who accept its teachings:

- I Peter 1:4- God has begotten us again ". . . to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved IN HEAVEN for you."

- Colossians 1:5- ". . . because of the hope which is laid up for you IN HEAVEN, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel."

Notice, our reward is reserved for us in heaven, not on earth. God is preparing for us a place in heaven to spend eternity with him. All religious leaders like Bill Phipps have to offer is hopelessness! There is a heaven to which we can go if we are faithful to God. That is our hope and the reward reserved for us!

Unfortunately, there are many in the world who will accept the ideas put forth by men such as Bill Phipps and Michael Ingham. Our job as Christians is to get to work and tell people the truth of the good news of Jesus Christ and what he has done for ALL mankind. As far as people who call their beliefs Christian and yet deny the basic doctrines of the Bible, I agree with John Stackhouse's closing remarks to his article: "It seems to me that those who follow such teachings could keep things a lot clearer if they would do just one thing. Call it something other than Christianity."

St. Catharines, Ontario

Articles for publication and/or reactions to this page should be sent to Linda Hammett Rt. 4, Box 164, Vincent, OH 45784.



The Heart of the Home

We know that the Bible teaches that the husband/father is to be the head of the home. He is the spiritual leader and the source from which the family receives its strength. However, I would like to think that the mother is the heart of the home. In a few days, America and other places throughout the world will be honoring mothers. Such a day of honor is not biblically based; however, I believe that God intended us to honor mothers.

The first woman was created by God as a helpmeet for her husband. She was there to make his life more enjoyable and to help him with the tasks and duties of his life. Her very name, Eve, means "mother of all the living". When Eve had her first child, she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord" (Genesis 4:2). God intended for her to be a mother and helped her in having children.

Not a lot is said specifically about mothering in the Bible; however, we can learn from the examples of some of the mothers whose stories are recorded in the Bible. There are certain traits that are characteristic of mothers. We can look to Bible women for examples. I would like to consider a few of these at this time.

Mothers are **caregivers**. Mothers nurture their children from before they are born until they leave the home (and sometimes long after that). While we often think of nurturing as feeding them, it includes much more. It involves comforting them when they are upset, encouraging them when they are uncertain, laughing with them when they are amused, and hugging them every day. It includes being there for whatever need might arise in their lives. Mothers give up time, energy, possessions and emotions for their children. We are all familiar with the woman whose virtues are recorded in Proverbs 31. We are told that she gives food to her household" (vs. 15) and "looks well to the ways of her household" (vs. 27). She is loved

and respected by her children; they "rise up and bless her" (vs. 28). Although we often compare ourselves to this woman and find ourselves lacking, we should instead consider her as an encouragement. Mothers just naturally, it seems, want to do what's best for their children.

Mothers are **teachers**. It is becoming more and more common in America for children to be home schooled. In most cases, the mother is the one who does the teaching. In times gone by, when schools were none existent in many areas, this book learning at home was almost the norm. However, the teaching that we are looking at in this article is the teaching of life skills more than that of the three R's. Children learn from the life of their mother. A lot of pressure is placed on us mothers regarding our attitude and behavior in the home. It seems that we set the mood for the rest of the family, which means that we must always be on guard. I have too often seen my bad habits and attitudes displayed by my children, ones which I never really thought about until I saw them doing it. We must always exemplify a Christ-like spirit so that they will learn that from us. A good example of this point is found in Timothy's mother. "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice. . ." (2 Timothy 1:5). Timothy had become the faithful young man that he was because of the example and teaching of his grandmother and mother.

One of my favorite recordings in the Bible is the story of Hannah. She wanted nothing more in life than to have a child. However, "the Lord had closed her womb" (I Samuel 1:6). To make matters worse, Elkanah's other wife, Peninnah not only had children - sons - but constantly tormented Hannah every chance she got. But Hannah never gave up praying that God would one day bless her with a child. It

has always amazed me, especially since having my own children, that Hannah would want a child so badly that she would promise to give him back to the Lord, should he grant her that blessing. It seems to me that having a child and then losing it would be worse than not having one at all. My oldest son left home this year for college, and it was the hardest thing I have ever had to live through. I have felt like a part of my body is missing. But Hannah's situation was much different. She took her son, Samuel, at a very young age, and left him to grow up with Eli. I don't know whether or not she was able to see him during his growing up, but he did not live with her once he went to live with Eli. How very hard that must have been for her. Yet, she prayed a long prayer of thanksgiving to God, knowing that she would give up her son (1 Samuel 2:1-10). She wanted what was best for her son. Because of her faith in God, He blessed her with three sons and two daughters after Samuel was born (1 Samuel 2:21).

Mothers are unlike any other humans on earth. It is always amazing to me that a mother can scold and discipline her child one minute and the next, that same child is running to her for comfort or asking her to read a story or laughing with her. That is because the bond between mothers and children is stronger than anyone can explain.

Mothers are also taken advantage of a lot by their children. Mothers are expected to always be there to do the laundry and housework, cook the meals, transport the kids to and from, help with homework, mend the clothes, bandage the wounds, entertain and comfort. Yet mothers rarely receive the recognition that is deserved in response to these tasks. That's why it is good that on at least one day of the year, attention is drawn to the greatness of mothers.

I would like to say something at this point about my mother. She is my best friend! I have been blessed with a godly mother who has always shown me an example of Christian faith that I daily thank God for. She taught us by her example how to live as God would have us live. She has always encouraged us to do the best we could in whatever we did and that

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by *Walter R. Straker*
 750 Clark Boulevard
 Bramalea, ON L6T 3Y2
 Fax: 905 792-8623
 E-mail: straker@echo-on.net

ONTARIO

Ajax: Youth night was March 19. A new sign has been erected in front of the church building. While John Hopwood was in the hospital, his wife was mugged while shopping and was badly bruised. The April 3 & 4 meeting, with Michael Tackett was a great success. Approximately 765 people attended the Training for Service, which was sponsored by the Ajax congregation this year, with Michael Tackett as the featured speaker. (Editors note: I would encourage anyone who wasn't there to purchase the three tapes from Bruce Robinson at Beamsville: 905 563-1729. Send him a cheque of \$15.00 and he'll send you the tapes.)

Beamsville: On March 7, Lee Whitfield, son of Lawrence and Lily, was baptized. The adult Bible class is studying the topic of Marriage and Divorce and Remarriage on Sunday morning. David Buskirk, missionary to Irian Jaya, spoke on the 28th. On the 31st, a group of 82, from Dickson, Tennessee were with the congregation. Make plans to hear Dr. Lynn McMillon, who will be holding a seminar on Marriage and Family on Feb. 4-6, 2000. A short puppet play was arranged and shared with the children and parents on Sunday evening, April 11. In a report from Ruth Zimmerman she states that the nursery school that they started in Lae, Papua New Guinea in 1997, is still running and God still continues to bless it.

Bramalea: Eighty-two brethren from Dickson, Tenn., presented the Sunday evening service on Mar. 21, and came back on Tuesday, the 23rd and passed out 2400 "Good News Is For Sharing" brochures and invitations to listen to the Key to the Kingdom program and take correspondence course. The ladies of the congregation planned to celebrate their "Ladies Day" April 17, with Lillian Lourenco planning and leading the program. Guest speaker was Aileen Fraser from North Warren, Michigan.

Brantford: A spring meeting is planned

for May 13-16 with Don Smith of Beamsville, doing the speaking. The subject is, "Living Above Our Stresses."

Collingwood: Wayford Smith exchanged pulpits with Randy Morrith of Meaford on April 18.

Fenwick: Bill Schwarz, of Waterloo, held a meeting April 17 and 18, entitled "The Power of Mentoring."

Guelph: The brethren held a singing workshop with Jeremy Knight. Guest speakers have been Ralph Perry, Jeremy Knight, Bob Hibbard and Keith Thompson.

Meaford: The first Men's Breakfast of the year was held on Mar. 20 with 30 members and guests present. Sunday night small groups have been studying prayer and have been well attended. Two groups are meeting in homes and one group at the church building. A Kid's Club for children up to 12 years, meets at the same time under the direction of Edythe Williams, capably assisted by our teens. A Junior Youth Rally was held on April 10 for children ages 2-10 years. Cheryl Anne Gordon, Scott and Teresa Mansfield and Linda Gilmore led this activity.

New Liskeard: Regular attendance runs approximately 12. The brethren meet in homes. On March 25, Beth Johnston was baptized into Christ.

Newmarket: The ladies had a dinner at Debbie Chen's home on March 29. On April 9, the brethren had a singing fellowship at their building. On the 12th, the ladies had a guest speaker to explain to them about the Women's Shelter in the area and how they could be helpful in that area. The Great Lakes Christian College yearbook, HEMSO, for 1998 is dedicated to Peter Mashinter, late of this congregation.

North Bay: In the North Bay news, it is stated that the eight Laotian brethren are still in prison and their special newsletter is on <http://members.xoom.com/northbay-coc/laoseight.html>. An e-mail dated March 29 reads, "Mike baptized Beth Johnstone the night before last."

Judy.

Another, dated April 14 reads, "Rick Orton baptized April 4 . . ."

Ottawa: A ladies day is scheduled for May 14, 15 with Nelle Merritt as guest speaker. "Remind Me, Dear Lord" is the theme.

Owen Sound: "The second child selected to receive help through the Sunday School program is six year old Pious Hinoe of Liberia, one of those African countries impoverished by civil war. He is

being helped through the Christian Relief Fund. Our Vacation Bible School has been scheduled for July 19-23. An area singing was held here April 11. Our rest room facilities are being increased and improved, thanks to generous donations of materials, labour, and expertise. The Owen Sound congregation has accepted the responsibility for this summer's 20/20 Vision Soul Winning Workshop. It is appreciated that Peter Morphy had made a good beginning in planning the program and the church did not want to see this good work discontinued. Calvin Russell is serving as overall coordinator for the program, which will be held Aug. 5-7 on the campus of Great Lakes Christian College."

Walter Hart.

Sarnia: Building renovations are complete and further renovations to the parking lot are being considered. An open house is being planned for June. The congregation is still looking for a minister and the men of the congregation are taking turns preaching and teaching. Daryl Collins, their newest convert is seriously considering Great Lakes Bible College.

St. Catharines: "The Ontario St. church in St. Catharines asks congregations and individuals to mark their calendars for two special events coming in 1999. We will host a seminar on marriage and the family with Jerry Jenkins of the Roebuck Parkway church in Birmingham, Alabama, Aug. 29-Sept. 1. Also the congregation will host John Clayton for a seminar entitled "Does God Exist?" on Oct. 2 and 3. John is a scientist who was raised as an atheist and converted to Christ in his 20's." St. Catharines had their spring VBS on March 14-19. The brethren canvassed the community with flyers for VBS on March 6 and 13. Thursday night, the congregation had a farewell for the students from Oklahoma Christian University who had participated in the VBS. Brandy Huard was baptized Sunday, March 14 and two more baptisms are reported for early April. A special surprise 50th anniversary celebration was held April 17 for Jim and Jean Hunt.

Stratford: A mission day was held on March 13. Wayne and Brenda Speer, who are working in Albania, reported to the congregation. On Tuesday, the 9th, the men had an enrichment day at the building. The brethren passed out offers of free Bible correspondence courses on the rural routes of Stratford. Several visited

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Canadians in Lithuania

There are currently three Canadians working as missionaries in Lithuania. Chris Nichol, a graduate from the Edmonton Church of Christ Intern program is the evangelist for the congregation in Vilnius. Kevin Carson, who served as an evangelist in Edmonton, is now the evangelist in Klaipeda, and is there with his wife Catharine and two children Jesse and Claire. How did this come about?

In the early 1990's, Keith Levy, a representative from the Waterview Church of Christ in Richardson, Texas, visited the Baltic states looking for a mission work for Waterview. Lithuania was selected. One family moved to Vilnius and worked for a while but then returned to the U.S. The work was carried by short-term workers for a period of time, and then Chris Nichol was hired and he moved to Vilnius in January of 1997. The Carsons visited Lithuania in January, 1997 and made their decision to move to Klaipeda to start the second congregation in the country. After a two-month period in Richardson with the Waterview congregation, they moved to Klaipeda in May of 1997.

The work in Klaipeda was started with a three week campaign involving 20 teachers from Waterview. There was a large base of students already studying the Bible by mail with teachers in the U.S. and over 800 people came out to study the Bible in person. The classes were held in the Klaipeda hotel in the heart of the city. After the team from Waterview left, a second group of teachers from the Centre For Christian Education joined the Carsons and continued the teaching for another month. At this time the classes and worship services were moved to a temporary location in a Music Academy, and then to a Tailor School. Another group of teachers from a congregation in Aztec, New Mexico followed in the summer of '97. In the autumn, the church and study centre moved into more permanent location in a rented building in the heart of the old historic part of the city, just 1/2 a block from the city's main market. The church held an open house for its new study centre in November of '97 and approximately 100 people attended the event. The same month the Carsons and Chris were able to travel to the European American Retreat in Chiemsee and meet with Christians from across Europe. In 1997 there were approx-

imately 40 people baptized as part of the work in Klaipeda.

1998 has thus far been an active year for the church in Lithuania. In February a 20 foot shipping container of medical aid from the congregation in Waterview arrived in Klaipeda. This aid was distributed to various hospitals in the Klaipeda region. Many needy people were helped, the profile of the church was raised, and valuable contacts in the community and government were made. The Carsons were also joined by Rebecca McKinnon, a young woman from Texas, who will be assisting them with the work in Klaipeda for two years. In April the Carsons had their first furlough back to Canada, and in their absence the fill-in teachers presented a series of lessons for the community on Bible geography. In May, teachers from the Centre for Christian Education returned to present a series of public evening lessons on basic Christian Evidences and the Bible. In June there was a visa scare and the Carsons and Rebecca McKinnon were facing possible expulsion from the country. However, thanks to much prayer and a good lawyer, everyone received new one-year visas.

A Christian camp for teens was held near Vilnius in July 1998, with the help of a team from Mississippi. Over 50 Lithuanian children attended from both Vilnius and Klaipeda. In August, a team of college students from Waterview came to Klaipeda and conducted a Vacation Bible School for children in the congregation and children of people who are coming to regularly study the Bible. Again, in August, the group from Aztec, New Mexico returned and along with daily, one-on-one Bible studies there was a series of 7 evening lessons presented on the Bible and Science and Evidences for Belief in God. In August, as well, a second medical shipment arrived from Waterview and was distributed to the main hospital in Klaipeda, surrounding medical clinics and hospitals, and also some orphanages. A third shipment arrived in October and was sent to the University Hospital in Vilnius. Also in October, through the medical mission ministry from Waterview, laboratory equipment was brought over and a lab was set up as a gift from the church to the Baltic American Clinic. A young Lithuanian woman and member of the church in Klaipeda moved to Vilnius to be

the head technician in that laboratory.

The two congregations in Vilnius and Klaipeda continue to grow and mature. The church in Vilnius moved into a larger rented facility in September, and the church in Klaipeda is waiting for the renovations to be completed on a larger building that it will be renting in the new year. Thus far 11 people have been baptized in Klaipeda in 1998. The average Sunday morning attendance in Klaipeda is 42 people.

Historical Background On The Church In Klaipeda

Henry Ciszek, now living in Cornwall, Ontario, was born in the U.S. in 1916. He moved back to Poland with his family in 1926. Henry married in Poland in 1937, and then immigrated to the U.S. in 1938, without his pregnant wife, to find work, with the plan of bringing her over in the near future. September 1, 1939 Poland was invaded. Henry returned to Poland in 1945 but was unable to find his wife and child as they had been deported to Sivera by the Soviets. He stayed and served as a Methodist pastor in Warsaw and Praga. During this time he met Otis Gatewood, a Church of Christ missionary, and was converted in October, 1957. Henry continued to work in Poland with the late brother Jozef Naumiuk, establishing churches of Christ in Poland. He was arrested and jailed many times, his last arrest being on April 7, 1967. He was released in 1970.

Upon his release, Henry located and met his daughter for the first time in Vilnius, Lithuania, in July 1971. He returned to Canada and worked among the Slavic-speaking people in Montreal and Cornwall.

When the Soviet Union fell, Henry returned to Klaipeda in July, 1987 and again met his daughter. In the succeeding years he preached and baptized 27 in Klaipeda, including his grandson Andrei Dubrov and his wife Lena. Henry struggled with ongoing health problems, and was hindered by only being able to be in the country for 90 days at a time. Eventually, it was necessary for him, due to failing health, to retire to Canada. Three of the Christians from this original congregation have become an active part of the new congregation in Klaipeda. We are indebted to brother Ciszek for his pioneering work spreading the gospel in this part of the world.



by Marion Waugh
4727 15A Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6L 6J1
Phone & FAX: 403-463-7324

ALBERTA

Edmonton: Bob Thomas from Texas paid us a visit on March 7 to report on the mission work in Irian Jaya, West New Guinea. We have supported this mission work for a year now.

We rejoice that Carol-Lynn Morris was baptized in Christ on March 7. Carol-Lynn is the grand-daughter of long-time member Ann Robertson. Brian Sams was baptized on March 26. Welcome to the family of God. Carol-Lynn and Brian!

Our monthly Parent Talk discussion was held on March 20. We began discussing "Kids in Worship." We watched a short video tape taken during a recent worship service and discussed what we observed. After a short lesson on the meaning and purpose of worship, we had a discussion on "Preparing for worship." The discussion was so good that we have decided to have our next Parent Talk session on April 24 devoted to the same topic - practical measures to prepare and train our children in worship.

Nadine Cissell and her son Bodie placed membership on March 14. Nadine has moved to Edmonton from Lloydminster. We welcome Nadine and Bodie to our family here.

We held our annual Men's Retreat on March 12-14. There were 38 men in attendance for this event. We examined the theme of building relationships with each other. Several men gave lessons for the first time, among them Shawn Redding and Marty Clark. Other excellent lessons were given by Roy McDonald and Bruce Hoddinott.

Congratulations are due to Mellissa and Dan Davidson, whose first child, Bethany Grace was born on March 20. Also born in March was Bryce Paul Johnson, brother to Sean, Launa and Ashley, and youngest son of Grant and Trish. Born to Ruth Ginther, a son, James.

The 1999 edition of the Alberta Spring Fellowship was on April 2-4. The theme, "Keeping the Flame Alive" (evangelism) was addressed by our invited speakers, J. J.

Turner from Bear Valley, and Philip Slate from ACT.

Coming up on June 4-6, we will be hosting a Gospel meeting on the theme of "Truth." Charlie Kymes, pulpit minister for the Crosstown Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma will be sharing six messages on truth during that weekend.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver (Oakridge): Allen and Betty Jacobs returned from India for the wedding of David Jacobs and Xavinnie Shen.

Robin Georgoulas was baptized into Jesus Christ for the mission of his sins and to receive the Holy Spirit.

Work continues on the baptistry and it should be operating soon.

The school chorus from Cascade College (formerly Columbia Christian) was here on March 26th to perform.

On April 10th, there was singing at the Burnaby congregation.

On April 17th, there will be a Disaster Preparedness Meeting. We will be passing out literature in the neighborhood, inviting our neighbors to attend.

The Central Valley congregation will be hosting a dinner and auction on April 17th, to raise money for the plane ticket needed for Velma Foreman. She has been serving as a missionary in Papua, New Guinea. Marcia Hasbrouk is collecting handmade items to be given for the auction.

On May 15th, there will be a day of Praise and Devotion, plus two taping sessions for Key to the Kingdom. Brothers and Sisters from other congregations will join us for that wonderful day.

MONTANA

Great Falls: On March 19-21, the state lectureship was held in Belgrade.

The youth rally was held on April 2-4. Dan Frazer was the featured speaker and the theme was based on Jeremiah 12:5, "If you have raced with men on foot and they have wore you out, how can you compete with horses?" The idea is being prepared to run the race and fight the good fight that God has laid out for His people.

The men's retreat will be held May 13-15 with Stan Freidas as guest speaker. "Ninety nine in ninety nine: is the goal of attendance.

On May 29-31, there will be a work camp at the Yellowstone Bible Encampment. In preparation for summer, a new roof is needed on the old kitchen, dining and meeting facility and we need to complete the chapel.

Mike Forrester and John Deans put on Christ in baptism in March and were res-

cued from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of the Son.

Construction plans continue on the church building. As well we continue our search for a second evangelist.

The "MOPS" (Mother of Pre Schoolers) group has been a part of the church here for 5 years. In February, Kimber McLean attended a MOPS convention in Chicago. It was a wonderful experience and she brought home enthusiasm, new ideas and wisdom. As school winds down for the summer, so does MOPS. But plans are already being made for the fall. We are contemplating expanding with a MOPS night program.

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she didn't expect us to be perfect. She loves us unconditionally. I know that because I've made a lot of terrible mistakes in my life, and she's always been there for me. She has always given us good advice but ultimately let us make our own decisions.

She has dedicated her life to the Lord. She sacrificed much time for Christian education with little in return for many years early in my life. She gave up things so that we could have what we needed. Later in her life, she gave up the comforts of home and the nearness of family to travel across the ocean to Africa where she influenced the lives of many people there.

I am very grateful for my mother and all that she has meant to our family. You do not have this avenue of paying tribute to your mothers as I do, but I would encourage you to do something special for your mother on this special day. Most mothers don't need to have material gifts given on this occasion but would enjoy a simple thank you for what they do and an "I love you, Mom".

Some of you may not be able to tell your mothers how special they are because they have already passed on. However, this might be a good time to stop and reminisce about her, remembering what she meant in your life.

This may be a difficult time for some who may not have had mothers with whom they shared a close relationship. There's always the cases of abuse and abandonment that swell in the memories of some. May God comfort you during this time.

Remember your mother--after all, she is the heart of the home!

BOOK REVIEWS

Books to be reviewed in this column should be sent to
Keith Thompson, Editor, 348 Dixon Blvd., Newmarket, ON L3Y 5C4
(Books may be ordered from the Gospel Herald)



Jesus, Hero of Thy Soul by Jim McGuiggan, Howard Publishing Co., West Monro, Louisiana, 303 pages, \$14.99 U.S.)

Jim McGuiggan is one of our brotherhood's finest authors. We have previously reviewed books of his like "The Power To See It Through" and "The God of the Towel." His books are now being sold in evangelical bookstores as well as in our own. We hope this is for the good. It is good to see books by brethren having wider distribution, but does this mean we have to compromise any Biblical teaching?

The author says he is sick "of the literature that reduces the Christian life to quiet times, fixed grins, happy talk, and saccharin songs." He is also sick of "scholarly literature that pours scorn on the people of God". Also he is "one of a great multitude who are sick of themselves!" But, he adds "not so sick that we don't know who we are or whose we are. Not so sick that we can't see the glory of the Biblical Christ, can't recognize our hunger for something more glorious as the work of God in us." We could go on and quote many of the moving passages in this powerful book. Great

75 Years at 346

In June of 1924 the church began to meet at 346 Strathmore Blvd. in Toronto. The congregation is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. We are planning a homecoming day to invite former members and friends to join in a day of praise and fellowship, rejoicing in God's rich blessings over those 75 years.

STRATHMORE HOMECOMING
JUNE 27, 1999
BIBLE STUDY - 9:45 A.M.
WORSHIP - 11:00 A.M.

There will be a pot luck luncheon following the morning worship to provide a time of visiting and fellowship.

(Anyone who has stories and memories from "Strathmore Days" they would like to share in printed form are asked to send them along to us for inclusion in a book of memories. Send them to: Strathmore Blvd. Church of Christ, 346 Strathmore Blvd., Toronto, Ont., M4C 1N3 or send by email to: maxc@sympatico.ca)

works of literature like "Les Miserables: and "A Tale of Three Cities" are among the inspirational writings that are cited. Jim believes that "Jesus is Alive!" and that He can change our lives.

A Miracle Named Jesus by Gary Holloway, College Press, Joplin, Missouri, 151 pages, \$7.99 (U.S.)

Gary Holloway is Director of Graduate Bible Studies at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee.

This excellent book gives us a fresh look at the miracles of Jesus. Teachers and preachers will find a great deal of assistance in this well written book. The author is a gifted communicator. Sometimes he uses a totally different approach to get the reader's attention. He shows the difference between the supposed "miracles" of today and the real ones that Jesus performed.

"A Miracle Named Jesus" would be ideal for class use or private reading.

Dangers Men Face, Overcoming the Five Greatest Threats to Living Life Well, by Jerry White, Navpress, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 222 pages, \$

We have many "Ladies' Class Books" but not too many that are directed especially to men. Here is a great book that will help meet that need. Jerry White understands men. He is the president and CEO of The Navigators. Trained in the field of astronautics, he taught at the U.S. Air Force Academy and worked in various jobs in the American space program. He has written a book just for men that can be used for personal or group study.

One of my grandsons tells me of exciting things that will "knock your socks off." This book will do that for men. It will open our eyes to see the faults that we are blind to. It will also help women to understand men. It will provide renewal, reflection and restoration.

He writes "...the dangers we need to fear the most are the ones we do not see until it is too late." He takes us through five common danger zones that men need to avoid. Men need to realize that they are on a dangerous journey. They face: "The Danger of Loss", "The Danger of Sin", "The Danger of Freezing", "The Danger of Confusion in Life" and "The Danger of Withdrawal."

He concludes, "Dangers abound in living out the life of Christ, but there are warning signs and help from God at every turn. We want to finish life well as men. We want to be role models to our children and to the non-believing world. We want to live in peace and joy in the midst of a world that pressures us at every point. We can avoid the dangers if we heed the signs and carefully apply the antidotes we have discussed. Have a great trip along this road of life!"

(continued from page 4)

we need to know before we, as individual Christians, support NATO's military campaign against that country? Isn't it more appropriate for Christians to provide humanitarian and spiritual support to all who are involved?

It is our sincere prayer and hope that, by the time you read this, the crisis in Yugoslavia will have been resolved, the machinery of war turned off, the people of Kosovo safely returned to their homes, and a real peace established in Yugoslavia. Even more, we hope that Christians, around the world, have genuinely demonstrated their commitment to the Prince of Peace and to the eternal gospel of reconciliation with God as the only means by which the world will ever truly attain peace.

Rigdon and Slate to Teach

Dr. Robert Rigdon, Sylva, North Carolina, and Dr. Philip Slate, Abilene, Texas are scheduled to teach short courses in conjunction with Great Lakes Bible College's fall term.

Dr. Rigdon will teach "Introduction to Sociology," August 23-27 in a retreat setting at Camp Omagh, Milton, Ontario. The course will examine the principles of sociology including such topics as social groups, control, stratification, class, institutions and change. An application of these principles to the Christian worker's involvement with people will be made. Bob Rigdon is retired from thirty years of teaching psychology and sociology at Western Carolina University. He is an active gospel preacher and elder with the Church of Christ in Sylva, NC. His TV series, "Happiness Explained," is viewed throughout south-eastern USA and in many locations in Russia and Ukraine. Credit students are to be registered by July 15 in order to begin advance reading for the course.

Dr. Slate will teach the course "Evangelism" in a short course September 20-24 in Waterloo. This course will give a comprehensive examination of the Biblical teaching on evangelism. It will also relate these principles to current efforts to "disciple the nations." Philip Slate, noted for his leadership in world missions, both in practice and in teaching, will retire from his work as chairman of the Department of Missions of Abilene Christian University this summer. His future activities will include work-

ing with the mission activity of a congregation in Murfreesboro, TN and serving institutions such as Great Lakes Bible College around the world.

Both courses will be available to students enrolling in the Gateway Year at GLBC this fall. As well, individuals not regularly enrolled in full-time studies are invited to participate in one or both of these courses. Classes may be taken for credit or as audit.

A third special activity is scheduled for GLBC's fall term, 1999, and this in conjunction with its Field Education program. Walter Straker, preacher with the Bramalea Church of Christ and part-time teacher with GLBC, will co-ordinate an outreach activity in La Vega, Dominican Republic, October 18-24. The "Good News Encounter" by GLBC students and staff will be in association with the 15th annual Iberoamerican Encounter. This is a meeting of workers from throughout the Spanish-speaking world for mutual encouragement and evangelistic outreach. The GLBC team will target English speaking residents of this predominately Spanish Dominican Republic. GLBC's Field Education program combines both study and practice in Christian outreach and service. Each participant works under the dual leadership of the school's coordinator and a local congregation. Individuals not regularly enrolled in GLBC's courses are invited to participate in this learning serving experience. (Contact: GLBC, 62 Hickory St. W, Waterloo, ON N2L 3J4; (519) 884-4310; learn@glbc.on.ca.).

Geoffrey H. Ellis

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Plymouth, MI on March 28 (this is the supporting congregation for the Stratford work).

Sudbury: "Maturing gracefully in the Lord" is the theme for a ladies day on May 1 with Marilyn Whitfield as speaker.

Thessalon: The brethren collected clothing for the victims of Hurricane Mitch to be sent with Santiago Molina. On Jan. 14, they hosted the birthday party at the Algoma Manor.

Thunder Bay: Vacation Bible School will be August 9-13 with a team from Western Christian College, teaching the children. John Whitfield's by-pass surgery at the Hamilton General Hospital went smoothly on March 12. He is now home recuperating.

Tintern: March 28 was a Celebration of Friendship Sunday. Two hundred and three were in attendance. Surveys regarding the possibility of building a progressive seniors' care center were sent to all the congregations in Ontario. It is requested that they be completed and returned to the Tintern church, attention Steve Smith by the end of May.

Toronto: [Bayview]: The brethren were collecting food for the Chester Public School breakfast program. David Knutson continues to speak during the interim, while they look for a new minister.

Toronto: [Strathmore]: Eighty-two brethren from Dickson, Tenn., presented the lesson on Sunday morning, Mar. 28 and came back the 29, 30, and 31 for devotionals in the building each evening before retiring to their hotel. Gyimah Dwomoh was baptized on Sunday evening, Feb. 28. Word has been received that two were baptized in Victoria, BC as a result of the Key to the Kingdom program and the WBS correspondence course. Anyone who has been a part of the congregation is invited to a homecoming on the occasion of the 75th anniversary to be celebrated on June 27 in a day of worship, praise, thanksgiving and fellowship. Ralph Perry began a teacher training series on March 6. There will be three more training days during the year. Sister Maria Kolesnikow, age 84, was killed by a "hit and run driver," while taking her daily walk. A gospel meeting with Ray Lee Overton of Bedford, VA is planned for June 12-14.

Waterloo: Merv and Wilda Eaton celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 1. The congregation has organized itself into different ministries and each member has been encouraged to be actively involved in at least one of these ministries, but as many as three. At their annual meeting and dinner on March 28, each ministry leader explained their goals and seven targeted

tasks for their long and short range plans. Ladies Bible study is taking lessons from "His Needs, Her Needs" in different ladies' homes. A fellowship game night was held April 16.

Windsor: April 18 the brethren had a combined Spanish/English service, followed by their monthly birthday night. A family of three from Albania have an apartment secured and will be moving here May 1. The ladies continue to collect items for the Hiatus House women's shelter as their benevolence project.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Moncton: Tom Johnson, age 16, youngest son of Tim and Diane, put on his Lord in baptism. At the meeting with Walter and Elaine Hart, Elaine taught a special ladies class with 12 present and Walter had 36 attend the seminar on Saturday with 13 community visitors. A gospel meeting is planned for May 28-30.

NEW YORK

North Buffalo: David Cornfield has lost the use of one arm and the other is now beginning to be affected. The GLCC chorus was to sing the evening of March 14, followed by a fellowship. March 28, the ladies were revealing their old and picking new "prayer sisters."

A Canada wide church directory is presently being compiled by brother Blair Roberts in Prince George, B.C.

OBITUARIES

Hazel Jane (Fee) Straker

(April 19, 1911 - February 14, 1999)

Born in The Round Plains District of Saskatchewan near the Perryville Church of Christ, Hazel lost her mother, Mary Hall Fee, eight days later and her father, Walter Fee, when she was twelve. She passed away in the Weyburn hospital at 11:00 on Valentines Day with her three daughters at her side. Her husband, Norman, of sixty-one and a half years, pre-deceased her in July of 1994. Her legacy is Walter (Shirley) of Brampton, ON., Bernard (Carole) of Yellowknife, NWT, (presently living in Southeast USA and working with the "Sojourners"), Bernice (Al) Johnson who lives in Brandon, MB., Kathy (Bud) Harvey, of Yellowknife, NWT, and Darlene (Wayne) McKeage, of Calgary, AB. Hazel had twenty grandchildren and thirty-six great-grandchildren at the time of her passing. She was the last of her family.

Born in a log house, she spent most of her growing up years in the same area, living as a foster daughter of Jack and Maggie Spafford, and becoming a Christian on Nov. 29, 1931, at the same time as Brother Spafford and her soon to be husband, Norman did. They were married a year and two months later on January 25, 1933. For twenty-one years they farmed in the Wishart District, later moved into Punnichy for four years and then spent the last forty years in Weyburn, working with Western Christian College from 1959 - 1977.

Hazel was very active in the church, teaching Sunday School, wherever she lived. She was active in horticulture, in

quilting, as a 4-H leader and took up curling after she moved to Punnichy. She and Dad believed in Christian education and sent all five children to Radville, (later Western Christian) where each met their spouse.

Hazel Straker, a collector since her early teens, kept scrapbooks and pressed flowers and leaves, and in later life collected stamps. She loved to read. She counted the birds in the area every year and, even while living on the farm, would usually find a hundred different species. She was a prolific writer and kept in contact with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren by letter, even up to a couple of weeks before her passing. She loved to travel and in December of 1998, spent two weeks in Brampton with Walter and Shirley and visiting old friends in the area - Daniel and Clara Pauls, and childhood playmate, Walter and wife, Muriel Kerr.

Two funeral services were held. The first was at Weyburn, with sons Bernard and Walter participating, and grandson, Kim, reading the eulogy. Sons-in-law, Wayne McKeage, led the congregational singing and Al Johnson, a prayer. The grandchildren sang at each service. A second service was held at Wishart, where she had grown up, and where she was buried alongside Norman, in the Round Plain Stone Church Cemetery.

Walter Straker

Marion Garner

Following a lengthy illness, Marion Garner of the Smithville, Ontario congregation passed from this life on Thursday, February 18 at the age of 76. She with husband Arthur have long provided leadership and stability for the congregation.

She leaves behind husband, Arthur; son Brian and family and daughter Janice (George) Barber.

adapted from the Bramalea Banner

Elma McNery

1909-1999

Elma McNery of Selkirk, Ontario passed away on Wednesday, April 14, 1999, in the town of Dunnville. Elma, born December 10, 1909 in Walpole Township, was the daughter of Gordon and Minnie Hoover. In her ninetieth year, she was predeceased by her nine brothers and sisters. Her passing is mourned by her husband, Stanley and by many nephews and nieces.

Elma was serving as a teacher at Lambs Corners when she met Stanley McNery, formerly of Folkstone, England. They were married August 21, 1941. Following completion of Stanley's studies at Freed-Hardeman College in 1944-45, the McNerys committed their lives to serving in the Gospel. In addition to preaching in Ontario, Stanley served in Muncie, Indiana; Detroit, Michigan; Dayton, Ohio; and in Tennessee at Morrison, McMinnville, Cookeville and Livingston.

Stanley and Elma were in Ontario in the years immediately preceding the chartering of Great Lakes Christian College in 1950, and Stanley was a member of the founding board of directors. The McNerys were not able to have children, but they were spiritual parents to a great many young people during the years of their ministry. This writer was frequently a guest in their home in McMinnville during the early years of their retirement.

They returned to Selkirk five years ago. Elma's funeral service was conducted on Saturday, April 9, at the Hyde and Mott Funeral Home in Hagersville, Ontario. Tony Lawrence, evangelist with the Bye Branch Church of Christ, McMinnville, TN assisted in the service. Burial took place in the historic Selkirk cemetery where many of Elma's family are resting.

Geoffrey H. Ellis

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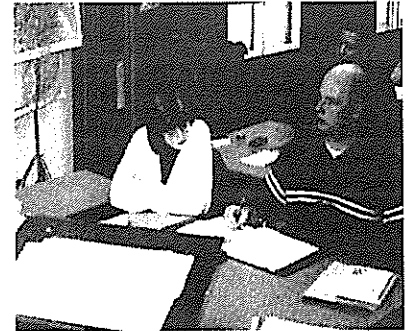
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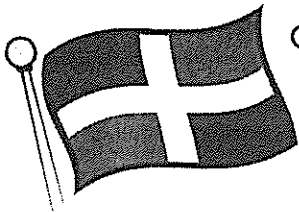
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