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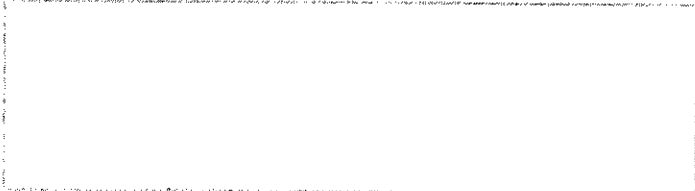
June 2000

The Camp Season is Here



Picture Courtesy David Lewis, Grimsby, ON

A group of seniors is being led by S. F. Timmerman in praising God at Camp Omagh in an environment that reminds us of the Creator



Two "Found" Scriptures

Walter N. Hart

In making his opening remarks to a large adult class, the teacher said that before he went to the regular lesson, he wanted to introduce two passages of Scripture he had recently "discovered." Now, from what I know of the teacher, his family, and his educational background, it seems unlikely that he had not come across these passages previously. What he really meant about "finding" these passages was that he had been attracted to a different interpretation or understanding of them. His brief discussion of them that day involves interpretations that I consider unwarranted, with implications that are potentially far reaching.

Mark 9:38-41

The first passage was Mark 9:38-41, which is paralleled in Luke 9:49-50. The Apostle John reported to Jesus that "we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." Jesus replied, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us."

The application made of this passage is that we are to embrace and celebrate, open our arms and receive, anyone who does good in the name of Jesus. In essence, that we are to assume a "no questions asked" stance. As someone has said, "Jesus did not ask for the man's baptismal certificate." Is this a fair application of the incident?

There is little doubt that the apostles were highly competitive and had problems with ambition and jealousy. Just before this they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest (Mark 9:33-37). Later James and John will seek special places at the right and left hands of Jesus (Mark 10:35-37). It is also interesting that some among them had recently failed in an effort to cast out a demon (Mark 9:18). It would not be easy for them to accept "competition," especially what seems to have been successful competition! Jesus' reply to John is a deserved rebuke of this competitive jealousy.

Anytime we show such attitudes we also deserve correction. Why should we want to stop anyone from doing good, and especially in the name of Jesus?

But when we make application of this incident, the following needs to be remem-

bered. (1) The man actually seems to have been able to cast out demons in Jesus' name. This must mean that Jesus had given him the power to do so, even as He did for the Seventy (Luke 10:17). Appealing to the name of Jesus without a real connection to Jesus, without obedience, would not work - the seven sons of Sceva found that out (Acts 19:11-16)! Claims are not enough, the will of the Father must be done (Matthew 7:21-23).

(2) There is no indication that this man was doing anything wrong or teaching anything false. There was no reason at all to disapprove or to seek to stop his activity.

(3) But suppose he had been telling people that they could substitute sprinkling for Biblical immersion, or that they did not need to be baptized in order to be forgiven, or that Jesus was just one way to heaven among many. Suppose he had been leading people to believe that they had a right relationship to God when in truth they had not responded in the way God asked them to respond. In spite of what good he was doing in one area, he would have been doing great damage in some other vital spiritual areas. There has to be concern not to seem to approve of or encourage any error being promoted or practiced. Indeed, while the good need not be opposed, there would be reason to seek to counter the error being advanced by the man.

I do not see how a fair understanding of the case of the man casting out demons lends any support to denominationalism or ecumenicism.

2 Chronicles Chapter 30

The second passage the adult class teacher introduced that day was 2 Chronicles 30:18-20. This concerns the Passover that Hezekiah led the people to celebrate, and reads, "For a multitude of the people.. had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover otherwise than as prescribed. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, 'The good Lord pardon all who set their hearts to seek God... even though not in accordance with the sanctuary's rules of cleanness.' The Lord heard Hezekiah, and healed the people." The implication left by the adult class teacher that day was that from this passage we learn that it is not necessary to be strict in our obedience to God; all that matters is that our hearts are right. Is this what the passage teaches? Should

we loosen up in our attempt to obey all the Lord has commanded?

To understand what was done we need to remember the background against which it was done. Ahaz had ruled Judah for sixteen years. The disastrous nature of his rule is recounted in 2 Chronicles chapter 28, where we are told of his promotion of idol worship, to the extent of burning his own sons as offerings to pagan gods. He even went so far as to literally shut up the temple, cutting off worship to God. Then Hezekiah came to the throne and led in a great restoration of the worship of God, including opening, cleansing, and rededicating the temple (2 Chronicles chapter 29).

Hezekiah's next move in restoration was to lead in a great observance of the Passover. This effort is discussed in 2 Chronicles chapter 30. Assyria had conquered the Northern Kingdom, but some of the people of Israel, as verse six says, had "escaped from the hands of the kings of Assyria." The goal was to have people from all Israel (north and south) come to Jerusalem for the Passover for the first time since the days of Solomon. So word went out "from Beersheba to Dan" for people to come to Jerusalem for the celebration. This was to be a new beginning, the first regular festival to be held in the newly cleansed temple.

But there were problems. Passover should be observed the first month, the fourteenth day. For two reasons this was not possible: Not enough of the priests had sanctified themselves (obviously, during Ahaz's reign the priesthood had been greatly compromised), and more time was needed to get the people to Jerusalem.

What to do? After consultation, it was decided to keep the Passover on the second month, the fourteenth day. The Law allowed the Passover to be celebrated at this alternate time as a concession to those who might have been ritually unclean or away on a journey at the regular time (Numbers 9:1-13). Such a decision to use this concession seemed fitting, for in a sense both of the stated reasons were present, with priests not sufficiently sanctified and the people not yet assembled in Jerusalem. It should be noted that Hezekiah was being very careful to use provisions of

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Is It Right?

Edwin Broadus

In a recent article we suggested that two fundamental questions in the Christian's faith and practice are (1) "Is it true?" and (2) "Is it right?" That article dealt with the first question and with the importance of what we believe. As promised, this article discusses the second of these questions. There are two reasons for writing about this: (1) Asking what is right should be at least implicit in every decision we make, and (2) We need practical help to ask and answer this question appropriately.

Questions about right and wrong presuppose moral values and a standard for forming these values. Dogs decide somehow whether to retrieve a stick or chase a rabbit, but they don't make these decisions for ethical reasons. Only humans have the capacity for moral decisions. But this capacity does not guarantee that we will make decisions on a moral basis.

Always, we need to ask, "Is it right?" before embarking on any course of action. We will not always ask this in so many words, but it should become "second nature" with us to make the question decisive to all our conduct, just as it becomes "second nature" to look both ways before we cross the street or to see if the electricity is off before wiring a light fixture. Once we raise the question, we will find some courses of action are morally neutral - like whether to have broccoli or spinach for dinner - but this does not diminish the importance of asking.

Any observer knows we do not always raise the question of right and wrong before acting. Often we are more concerned about what is expedient, enjoyable, least painful, least expensive, or most popular than with what is right. Even elders and Christian parents sometimes forget to ask what is the right thing to do and opt for what is expedient or easiest for the moment.

Failure to ask the right question clouds the issue and makes the problem seem more complicated than it really is. But, when we remember to ask what is right, it is amazing how the complexities clear up. We are freed from choosing between various inappropriate courses of action and can concentrate on finding the best way to do the right. More importantly, we are free to seek God's blessings on our endeavour because we have determined to do what is right.

But as important as it is to ask what is

right, it is equally consequential to understand what makes an action right. Moral values are not derived from individual conscience, societal consensus or human religious authorities, but from God. To ask, "Is it right?" is to ask, "Is this in keeping with God's will?" Jesus said, "I seek not to please myself but him who sent me" (John 5:30).

God's will is expressed in God's written word. While we pray for wisdom to understand and apply it (James 1:5) and recognize the role of the Spirit in this (2 Corinthians 3:14-18), it is to the written word we turn to know what is right. When Satan tempted Jesus, he responded every time by appealing to Scripture: "It is written...." For Jesus, God's will was the final answer.

With all this most Christians will have no argument. The difficulty comes in living by it, in doing what is right. What practical help can we offer? The beginning point is to make certain we remember to ask the ques-

...when we remember to ask what is right it is amazing how the complexities clear up."

tion, "Is it right?" and then resolve to do what we so often already know God wants us to do.

More than we like to admit, our perplexities about what to do in some situations are caused by failure to ask this question and then to abide by the answer we know to be right. Oswald Chambers, noted for his devotional writings, said, "Beware of the tendency of asking the way when you know it perfectly well. Take the initiative, stop hesitating, and take the first step. Be resolute when God speaks, act in faith immediately on what he says, and never revise your decisions. If you hesitate when God tells you to do a thing, you endanger your standing in grace. Take the initiative, take it yourself, take the step with your will now, make it impossible to go back. Burn your bridges behind you - 'I will write that letter'; 'I will pay that debt.' Make the thing inevitable."

But beyond this, we also need to grow in our knowledge of the Scriptures and to ingrain the habit of obedience. The example of Jesus, when he was tempted, is especially helpful here. What is so impressive, about his response to Satan's assaults, is that Jesus reacted almost instinctively. He was like a skilled carpenter who does not make the

wrong cut because he knows from long experience what to think about before using the saw. He doesn't panic in crisis, for he knows what to do.

In actuality, none of this is instinct, either for the carpenter or Jesus. Jesus was thoroughly acquainted with God's word, and he had long cultivated the habit of doing what his Father said. Like the psalmist, he could say, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11), and "I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands" (119:60).

One obviously must know Scripture before he can apply it as Jesus did. But it is more than knowledge; there must be a deliberately cultivated habit of obedience. Chambers said, "We have to get into the habit of hearkening to God about everything, to form the habit of finding out what God says. If when a crisis comes, we instinctively turn to God, we know that the habit has been formed." Jesus had formed the "habit of hearkening," and it served him well in crisis.

But finally, from a practical and biblical standpoint, we must realize that doing right is more than asking the right question, personal resolve, understanding God's will, and developing the right habits. Sin is far more formidable than this. Like Paul we sometimes find ourselves saying, "What I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Romans 7:15; see also verses 19-20).

Some have wondered who is speaking here - Paul the law-keeping Jew or Paul the Christian. But more likely he is speaking as a representative of anyone who tries to overcome sin alone. It takes more than a self-help program to defeat sin. The very next chapter of Romans tells us of the role of the Spirit, for it is "by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body" (8:13), and "the Spirit helps us in our weakness" (8:26). Without the Spirit's help, we ultimately fail. With it there is victory.

But there is no victory, even by the Spirit, if we do not determine to make our decisions moral ones by raising the question, "Is it right?" and by seeking God's answer to the question. Only when we are ready to do this are we open to all that God's Spirit can and will do to ingrain the habit of obedience and to give victory over sin.

Burlington, Ontario

EDITORIAL

Peer Pressure

Wayne Turner



Peer pressure??! Isn't that something that we need to discuss with our teenagers? What does peer pressure have to do with mature, adult Christians? Aren't they past that kind of thing? Those who believe that this is true sadly underestimate the influence people have over one another, at any age.

Throughout history there are many examples of the power of peer pressure -- how mature, intelligent people can become part of an ugly, irrational mob. The fear of Communism created the McCarthy era when public hearings in the U.S. Senate led to the public denunciation and blacklisting of many prominent citizens. Suspicion and fear intimidated people into submission. Lynch mob justice has also showed how good people can be stirred up into violence.

An example of the horrific potential of this type of influence is the infamous Salem witchcraft trials of 1692. A group of young girls, stirred up by the voodoo tales of Tituba, a West Indian slave, began to shiver and scream at night. In the belief that the girls had been bewitched, Tituba and eventually 19 others were executed as witches. Five years later, Samuel Sewall, one of the judges, confessed he had been wrong and considered himself to be largely at fault for the outcome of the trials.

Few, if any of us, are likely to experience such extreme social pressures. However, we will face pressures to conform to those around us, from both outside and inside the church, that may be even more insidious and still just as harmful to the people they affect.

In Galatians 2, Paul tells of an incident where social pressure caused highly respected leaders in the church to act in a hypocritical and unloving way. In the early years of the church, there was a sharp disagreement over the place of Gentile Christians. The Judaizers (or circumcision party) believed that Gentiles were obligated to be circumcised and to live according to the Law of Moses. Paul understood that Christianity was not merely an extension of the Law and that Gentiles were not bound to keep the Law. They were fully included in Christ. At Antioch, fellowship existed between the Jewish and Gentile Christians until the arrival of some Judaizers. Peter, through fear of the circumcision group, stopped associating and eating with his Gentile brothers. Other Jewish Christians followed his example including even Barnabas (v. 13). Paul had to publicly confront Peter for his hypocrisy.

In his letters, Paul shows an awareness of the different ways that social pressures can act on Christians. In Romans 12:2, he warns, "Do not be conformed to this world" or as Philips paraphrases it, "Don't let the world push you into its mold." The world seeks to be the standard of what Christians believe, teach and do. The church today is under pressure to ignore Biblical standards and accept the values of the world around us. We are being told that Biblical concepts of marriage, divorce, premarital sex, homosexuality, to name but a few, are unpopular and out of

date. Even our conviction of the universal need for Christ and the Gospel is being condemned. We cannot allow the light of Christ to be diminished or snuffed out by the darkness!

The actions of Peter and Barnabas at Antioch demonstrate another type of social pressure, that which comes from within the fellowship of the church. As at Antioch, the pressure may be to conform to someone's particular issue or hobby. Most people, when they believe or feel strongly about something, find it difficult not to try to bind their views on others. They may be unable to distinguish between what is genuinely Biblical and what is a matter of personal preference or taste.

Another type of pressure may push us to accept some novelty or change in our practice or teaching regardless of whether it is Biblical, genuinely helpful or divisive. This pressure may come from sincere people who may not understand the implications of their actions or it may come from those who have made a deliberate decision to create such change.

Paul was a target of pressure from other Christians. This is seen in some of the accusations to which he responded in his letters. In Galatians 1, it appears he has been accused of watering down his teaching to make it more acceptable to the world. "Am I trying to please men?" he asks. "If I were ... I would not be a servant of Christ" (v. 10). Paul's answer to any attempt to pressure him to conform to either the world or what other Christians expected was that he sought to please God. He wasn't concerned about whether any person approved of him or not. What mattered was whether God approved. "We make it our goal to please him..." (2 Corinthians 5:9). In 1 Thessalonians 2:4, he wrote, "We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts." He admonished the Colossians to "live a life worthy of the Lord and ... please him in every way" (1:10) He charged Timothy: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Paul has given the only moral and spiritual compass that will allow us to deal with the ever increasing pressures that we face. It

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-- FOUNDED BY ROBERT SINCLAIR, 1936 --

CO-EDITORS

Wayne Turner, Eugene C. Perry

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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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Articles for this page or reactions to it should be sent to
Max Craddock, Editor, 5 Lankin Blvd., Toronto, ON M4J 4W7,
Phone (416) 461-7406, e-mail <maxc@sympatico.ca>



A Worthy Husband/Father

Max Craddock

This being an equal opportunity page, this month let us consider the important and rewarding role of "husband/father". In the plan of God a man can marry and serve God by being a good husband, and father, if the union is blessed with children. In the very second chapter of the Bible instruction is given for being a husband when Moses writes, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) Next to God the most important being in a man's life is his wife. He has the "responsibility" of loving her and honouring her since she is his choice to be his life long companion and the mother of any children they may have. In this relationship he will be a blessing as he fulfills his responsibility to family.

Husbands need to understand the depth of this relationship which is well illustrated by Paul in Ephesians 5:25, 28 & 29, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church." Jesus paid the ultimate price, his own life, for the church. His love was complete, self-sacrificing and freely given. In the same way a husband gives his complete and self sacrificing love to his wife to help her grow in her Christian walk and to help her enjoy their relationship of oneness. No room for selfishness or an "all for me and mine" attitude. Had Jesus taken that attitude toward the church he would have been gone when the soldiers arrived to arrest him in the garden. Love your wife and give yourself for her is the direction of God!!

Further, on husband/wife relationships, Peter writes, "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives,

and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers"(1 Peter 3:7). Peter has been talking about the responsibilities of wives in Christian living and here turns to the husband. He must be careful to maintain the proper, God-given relationship with his wife. He will interact with his wife on the basis of an intelligent understanding of her needs as a person and as a woman. He must do this to be able to encourage her and build her up in the faith.

The caring husband will listen, carefully, to his wife in order to understand her perceived needs. He will inquire as to her physical, emotional and spiritual needs as she understands them. He may have to make adjustments in his own life to adapt to these needs and will do so joyfully as he seeks for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of his wife. Understand that ignorance is not bliss in building the happy and blessed husband/wife/family relationship.

HUSBAND NOTE: To fail to be this kind of loving, considerate and respectful husband has terrible consequences...an unhappy and joyless home and a hindered spiritual (prayer) life (1 Peter 3:7).

Husband as father. Someone has written the following about fathers. "A father can be big or small, fat or thin, jolly or solemn, but is always someone to love and look up to. A father has broad shoulders to sit on when a parade is passing by and strong arms for tossing small children in the air. A father has pockets with money that jingles, and sometimes he can be persuaded to use it on treats like candy or bubble gum. A father likes football (hockey, etc) on TV, a clean house, children on his knee, outdoors, barbecue grills and Mom. A father can mend a toy, read a story to his children, fix a leaky faucet, and open jars easily. A father knows answers to ques-

tions like 'why is the sky blue?' and 'where does the sun go at night?' In the eyes of his children a father is everything wonderful - he is security and understanding and loyalty and love, and no moment of the day is happier than when someone shouts - 'Dad's home!'" While these thoughts express truth about Dad, the greatest task a father has is to raise his children in the way of the Lord. "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4) This is a task that ought to be joyfully entered into with hope for the future. Sometimes one's efforts may seem to be in vain. However, the task given fathers is to teach and direct in the Lord's way. When children come of age they have to make their own decisions about the course of their lives. If they choose to reject the training and example of a God-fearing father who has taught them the Lord's way, the father must continue to seek to influence them for the Lord and pray that the seed that was planted will take root and produce fruit in time.

May you fathers who have young children at home learn from the failure of others who have gone before you. A motivational speaker, Sheila Murray Bethel, said, "Never once have I heard an older person look back on life and say, 'Boy, oh boy! I wish I had spent more time with the corporation!' or, 'If I had it to do over, I would get up even earlier in the morning and godown to the company and really get after my job!'" It is easy in the present world to get caught up in the material and forget that, as a father, there is only so much time when the children are at home when one can mold them for godly living. O yes, remember that children will be greatly influenced by what they see as being important...really important to Dad!

With this in mind consider these questions, Dad, in conclusion. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU...Read from the Bible to your family; Told you child your dreams for him or her; Let your children see your tender feeling and love toward you wife; Demonstrated your interest in your child's school work, music, hobbies or friends by participating and listening to their dreams and concerns; Hugged and kissed your child? Let them see by your life and priorities that you are truly A WORTHY HUSBAND/FATHER.

CHRISTIAN YOUTH

Articles for this page or reactions to it should be sent to
Brian Cox, Editor, 165 Britannia Ave., Bradford, ON I3Z 1A4,
Ph/Fax (905) 778-0366 (res.) (905) 895-6502 (off.)
E-mail: brian@coxfamily.net



Salt, Light and Christian Example

Brian Cox

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

The story of salt in the history of mankind is an interesting one. In Jesus' day the hot climate in the Middle East and the perspiring their bodies would need to do to keep from overheating meant that in a day they would lose large amounts of salt that had to be replaced. Thus, it was necessary for them to consume large amounts of salt, far more than we would believe safe today. Salt was such a valuable commodity in the first century that at least a part of a soldier's salary was paid in salt. The word "salary" originates from this practice, as does the expression, "The man is worth his salt."

In the first century, salt was used as a preservative. They had no refrigerators or freezers and in their warm climate meat would go bad very quickly if it were not salted. Salt provided an invaluable service in preserving their food. We, Christians, can be the salt of the earth in preserving the world through our good examples.

Salt was used in Jesus day, as it is today to flavour food. Christians can add flavour to their world today if they choose to. Christians are often viewed as people with little flavour; those who never have fun; those who never smile. We can be a flavouring influence in our world - people should be better off because they have spent time with us. We can show our world how to have a good time without doing wrong. When we smile we can show oth-

ers that Jesus is a source of great joy in our lives.

However, when salt loses its saltiness it is good for nothing. The salt in Jesus' day was often less than pure; there were many other minerals in with it. When the salt dissolved you would be left with these other minerals. What remained would have no preserving power and little flavour. What remained was good for nothing, yet the mineral that remained if spread on fertile ground would render the land sterile. They had to use caution when they discarded salt that had lost its saltiness; it was thrown on the path and walked upon. Salt that has lost its saltiness is a dangerous commodity. If it falls in large enough amounts on fertile ground it may render it sterile. Those counting on it to flavour their food would be disappointed; those counting on it to preserve food would have valuable meat spoil. A Christian who is not being a good example and having a positive influence on the world is being a bad example. There is no middle ground! Perhaps the most dangerous bad example is that of indifference, of neither being for Christ or against Him.

Light is meant to be seen! Why would we light a lamp and then hide the light that it sheds. The houses of Jesus' day were built with few if any windows, so they tended to be rather dark even in the daytime. The lamps they used were small and made of clay; they burned olive oil drawn up with a wick. Compared to the electric lamps of today, they gave very little light, yet that light was so precious, because it was all that they had to give light to their home. Christianity is meant to be seen! It is seen in the good deeds that we perform to give glory to God.

Light guides the way! Lights down either side of an airport runway serve to guide the planes to a safe landing. Christians are lights that light the way for others. We hope and pray that other peo-

ple will follow our example in doing what is right.

Light often serves as a warning! Flashing lights serve to warn us of danger ahead. Christians can serve as warning lights, warning others of dangers ahead if they keep going down the wrong road.

We hear a lot about role models today. We have heard the spoiled, overpaid athletes of professional sports say that they don't want to be role models for young people today. Yet, too many young people still follow them into destructive lifestyles. If we want a role model that will not disappoint us we must turn to Jesus, who was tempted in every way as we are yet did not sin. Jesus can show us how to live in a way that pleases God, so study the gospels and get to know Jesus. See how Jesus interacted with others; learn about what he valued and what his priorities were. As you learn, seek to incorporate a Jesus lifestyle into your life.

You may think that you are too young to be a role model to others, that no one would look to you for an example. Yet, there are many that are watching you and appreciating your example. They may be the younger children in your school, neighbourhood or church, or maybe even some your own age who find growing up to be quite a struggle and take comfort in your positive example. I believe that you can also be a positive example to those that are older than you are. You can show those who are older how to live for Christ by your example. So, let your light shine before men so that they can see your good works and glorify the God of heaven.

BMC

(continued from page 4)

does not matter where these pressures originate. Paul says, "Even if we or an angel from heaven..." The only basis on which we can stand, the only direction we can take, the only principle we can live by is to do what we know is pleasing to God. Our goal is not the praise of men. It is praise from God, hearing His final commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your master." May we have the faith and courage to stand firm.

Slouching Toward Sodom

Roy D. Merritt

Every Bible student recalls how Abraham's nephew Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom." What looked to him at the time to be a very good choice turned into a disaster. In a short time, righteous Lot was living in the city as an influential resident who occupied a position of honor at its gate. He evidently had an ambivalent attitude toward his new home - disgusted by its perversity but enjoying its prosperity (2 Peter 2:7-8). He was a good man in an evil place - but he was there by his own choice.

When God obliterated Sodom along with its twin city, Gomorrah, Lot lost everything: his wife, his house, his possessions which he had valued so highly. He ended up living in a crude cave with his two daughters. No doubt he realized with great sorrow that he would have been better off tending sheep and cattle in the Jordan valley than gradually moving into full citizenship in wealthy, sophisticated Sodom.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, various writers use Sodom's name as a terrible example of vice perversity. Derek Kidner has given an incisive comment on the city's sin: "At this early point in Scripture the sin of sodomy is branded as particularly heinous. The law was to make it a capital offense, grouped with incest and bestiality (Lev. 18:22; 20:13) and the New Testament is equally appalled with it (Romans 1:26-27; 1Cor. 6:9; 1Tim. 11:10)."

Our Lord used the example of God's punishment of this corrupt city to teach the people

of His day the horrors of ignoring God's laws (Matt. 11:23-24). The Apostle Peter referred to Lot's ambivalent attitude toward the city into which he drifted after first merely "pitching his tent toward it" - sickened by what it was but charmed by what it offered; a righteous man unable to choose between good and evil.

After several millennia have rolled by, we can look to Lot's predicament with sympathy and understanding. We see his situation repeated all around us. It is very common in our culture to see people letting their desires for physical well-being and prosperity govern their major decisions. Often the norms of the society around them have a far greater influence than the inner dictates of faith and conscience.

In a recent survey made in the United States, pollsters found that 90 per cent of the population claimed to believe in God. Another 43 per cent said they attended religious services at least once a week, and 58 per cent reported that religion was a very important factor in their daily lives. Despite their claims for the influences of their religion on the way people live, we see every day that secular influences are gaining ground more rapidly. In Canada an even more secular society, than that of our southern neighbors, is taking over.

There is but a thin veneer of religion in many lives. Ethics and morals are seen as something that can vary from situation to situation, and be applied in any way that seems good at the moment - just as Lot found his

neighbors in Sodom doing. There is a slow but inexorable slide toward relativism in values and pluralism in religion. As in the days of the judges in Israel, every man does that which is right in his own sight.

Christianity should not be against culture nor under the dictates of culture. It sets a higher standard than human culture has ever been able to achieve. Christians should be supportive of higher standards in every area of life - no matter what the people around may be doing. They are required by their Lord to be lights and salt in society.

It is becoming more and more apparent that Christians who speak out against various forms of evil will be labeled and condemned as prudish, naive, bigoted or with other derogatory slurs by some loud-mouthed activists who find their lifestyles threatened. The labels and sneers are to be expected. Christ said it would happen, that men would say all manner of evil against His followers. Such slanderers started early and will continue until Christ returns. Christians must realize it and stand firm despite it.

If we as Christians are hated for righteousness' sake, we must not retaliate with hatred. Our Lord taught us to love sinners even while we oppose their sins. The vice and violence of Sodom stemmed from barnyard morals and jungle ethics. Faithful Christians do not slouch toward Sodom in their daily walk. They march toward Zion to a different drum-beat.

St. Catharines, Ontario

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POINT BY PERRY:

Malnutrition



In a presentation to the Subcommittee on Crime, House Judiciary Committee, United States House of Representatives on May 27th, 1999, Darrell Scott, whose daughter, Rachel Joy Scott, was one of those who lost their lives in the Columbine High School shooting in Littleton, Colorado, courageously declared that "Columbine was not just a tragedy ---- it was a spiritual event that should be forcing us to look at where the real blame lies". He continued, "Much of the blame lies here in this room" and quoted from a poem he had previously written in which the trend towards violence was blamed on the removal of prayer and respect for God from the instruction of the young. He said, "We do need a change of heart and a humble acknowledgment that this nation was founded on the principle of simple trust in God".

Another bold reminder of the part governments are playing in current destructive trends was the prayer of Joe Wright at the opening of a new session of the Kansas Senate. Departing from the usual pious platitudes and acceptable generalities, his prayer called for repentance and righteousness. Here are three from a list of confessions included in the prayer: "We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values"; "We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it pluralism." and "We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our fathers and called it enlightenment".

It is acknowledged that the above were both directed at governments in our neighboring country. At the same time, it is feared that they are equally applicable in Canada.

Man is a threefold being, -- body, mind and spirit. In providing for the growth and maturing of our young we need to consider the nurture of all three. Instead, both public institutions and, in too many cases, private homes are giving good attention to and making provision, at considerable cost and inconvenience, for the mental and physical development of the young but totally neglecting the spiritual. Jesus is said to have grown "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Lk.2:2).

When he was grown and had been bap-

tized "to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt.3:15), Jesus went off by himself for a while and when, after a forty day fast, he was physically hungry, the devil came and encouraged him to prove his divinity and satisfy his hunger by turning the stones into bread. Jesus' answer, a quotation of scripture, is a classic statement that needs to be heeded by all. He said, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Mt.4:4). To fail to recognize this is to hazard our well-being, both temporal and eternal, national and individual.

Neglect of spiritual food results in undernourishment or starvation of the spiritual man. The well-being of the individual and of the society in which he lives depends on the degree to which life and culture are oriented in the ways of God. The best of education, along with proper diet and physical exercise still leave a spiritual infant or weakling without food from God's word.

While Jesus paused at Jacob's well in Samaria, waiting for his disciples to get food, he talked to a Samaritan woman about God's will. When they returned they found him with little interest in food. He explained, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about" (Jno.4:32). Unfortunately, feeding on God's word and gaining strength by doing the will and work of God are rarely looked upon as of value in our times.

Having compassion on the hungry multitude that had followed him, Jesus miraculously fed them. Afterwards, he took the opportunity to emphasize the greater importance of the spiritual food that he came to provide. He said, "Do not work for

food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you." and continued, "the one who feeds on me will live because of me" (Jno.6:27,57).

The more we neglect or deliberately leave out the spiritual training of our youth, the greater the likelihood of violent episodes such as are frequenting our news and alarming the parents of school age children. Man is from God and needs God's guidance, - "it is not for man to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23). Depending on human wisdom leads to disaster. "there is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (Pr.14:12). Oh, that we and our leaders would realize that, "the statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple" (Ps.19:7).

For a safer, saner society, provision must be made for the spiritual nurture of its members. This starts at home where fathers are instructed to bring children up "in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Eph.6:4).

ecp

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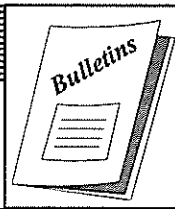
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FROM THE BULLETINS



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

The One Who Would Speak For God!

"Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment." -James 3:1 (A.S.V.).

This past week Sydney and I were traveling down the road and I decided to play one of my sermon tapes to see if she would recognize my voice. (Imagine the fun a preacher's daughter gets to have!) As the tape was playing I turned to her and asked her who was speaking and with a big smile she said, "JESUS"! Then as the man on the tape read the end of Luke 24 she turned to me again and said, "Jesus says he wants you to preach about him". It is amazing how God used a three year old girl to remind me of an awesome responsibility. The person who would speak for God has a very important job and must take it seriously. As James told us, the task of teaching is not for everyone. The person who would preach, teach a Bible class, be a Sunday school teacher or speak a word for God in any other fashion must ask at least three questions:

1) Do my listeners "see" that the message of God affects me? Can I teach about the importance of Jesus and the Christian life and dedication to the church and then allow my "audience" to realize that its not that important to me? Paul told his audience to "be imitators of me, even as I also imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Timothy was told to "take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching." (1 Timothy 4:16)

2) Do my listeners "hear" the message of God? The people I am attempting to teach must hear the message God conveys through His word, nothing more, nothing less! Peter commanded us that "if any man speak, let him speak the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). Titus was told to "speak the things which befit the sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1)

3) Do my listeners "understand" the message? We are not trying to say that if people refuse to see the truth its the messenger's fault, but as the messenger, the message must be conveyed in an under-

standable way! (Nehemiah 8:8)

Yes, the ones who would speak for God must remember that they are speaking on behalf of Jesus and nothing, in the way they live, in the message they teach or in the language they speak, must be an obstacle to the listener.

Drew Chapados, Windsor, Ontario

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a central topic to the life and teaching of Jesus, and of the apostle Paul as well. The New Testament talks a great deal about relationships between God and man, and between man and man.

Being imperfect creatures, these relationships can become hurtful and strained. Satan's major avenue for attacking the kingdom of God is through the day-to-day interactions of human relationships.

There are two aspects of forgiveness. One involves both the offended and the offender(s).

In the first case, forgiveness is the decision of the offended person to surrender the right to get even or retaliate against the offender. This is in accordance with scriptural teaching not to repay evil with evil (1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9; Rom. 12-17-19). This releases the offended from the prolonged negative affect of anger, resentment and stress, and thus enables a quick recovery from the hurt and return to a joyful attitude toward living.

A writer in Christianity today (10 Jan.00) writes: "Forgiveness happens only in the heart and mind of someone who has been wronged. It lays the groundwork and creates the opportunity for the reunion of two peo-

ple. You can forgive someone and they may never know it. Or they may refuse all attempts at reconciliation."

As the writer says, the "decision" by the offended to forgive and not retaliate heightens the potential for reconciliation. This leads the offended to pray for the offender (Matt. 5:44) that he will see his wrong and repent of it. The offended can then begin the process of reconciliation as described by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20.

This then leads to the second aspect of forgiveness -- the forgiveness of reconciliation. This reconciliation forgiveness is given by the offended when the offender(s) comes and confesses, repents, and asks forgiveness for the offense. This restores the relationship that was broken.

Reconciliation forgiveness must be practiced in Christean communities if there is to be peace and unity amongst believers. Where it is not practiced it shows a poor understanding of Jesus' teaching on relationships. We must foster practises of forgiveness and reconciliation in which sin is acknowledged and continued.

Art Fleming, Beamsville, Ontario

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FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN

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



A 15-Minute Vacation

Linda C. Hammett

Time. Continuous period measured by clocks, watches, and calendars. A commodity of which most of us have too little. Or do we? I have found myself over the past year or so excusing myself for not getting things accomplished, important things that should have been done, by saying that I just didn't have enough time. I really believed that to be true. I've said that 24 hours in a day just isn't enough to get everything taken care of that I needed to do.

I recently attended a short Time Management course, and what I learned there has made me change my thinking about not having enough time.

Everything we do is done because we make a choice to do it. That includes things at home, at work, at school. Yes, there are things that we have to do in all of these places, but we ultimately still make the choice about whether or not to do them. If we feel that we don't have adequate time to finish what we desire, then perhaps we need to stop and look at the choices we are making.

168--a magic number! This number represents the number of hours each person living today has in one week. How these hours are filled varies from one person to the next. One process that we were asked to complete at the class was to estimate how much time we spend each week doing the things that we do. We then subtracted that total from the 168 total hours in the week. We were all surprised to find that we had many hours that were not accounted for during the week. Those who were most surprised were the ones who said they didn't have time for this or that.

This exercise was done to make us aware of the fact that very few people actually don't have enough time. We were struck with the fact that we felt hassled and stressed because we were not making the best use of the time that we had, which made it seem like we didn't have enough time.

Okay. That was the easy part. The hard part is to now determine how to better manage the time we do have. I believe that we

need to be good stewards of our time just as we should be with our money and talents, etc. God has given us 24 hours in a day and has left the use of those hours up to each of us.

There are many things that rob us of time--having too much stuff, long phone conversations, TV, lack of organization, not being able to say "no"--just to name a few. So, the first step in making a time budget is to identify for ourselves what robs us of time in our lives. Once that is done, then we have to find ways to get rid of these hindrances. For example, if we have too much stuff, it is difficult to find things when we need them. Get rid of the clutter and unnecessary stuff. Use a bookmark when you're reading so that you don't waste time trying to find where you left off the last time.

The most important way of budgeting time is to do the important things first. Time with God in prayer and Bible study should be a priority in each of our lives. If we begin our day in these activities, the rest should fall into place naturally. We will have set a good foundation for the remainder of the day. If a day could be represented by a glass jar, the activities of our day by rice, and the important things by stones, here's a good object lesson. If we take the jar and fill it with all of the rice (activities of the day), and then try to add the stones (important things--time with God, family times, serving), we find that the stones will not fit into the jar. However, if we begin with those stones and then add the rice, the jar holds it all. Try this! It's a great lesson.

In the class we were urged to make choices that help to energize and revitalize ourselves so that we are able to do all that is required of us as women. Do you ever wonder how the woman of Proverbs 31 was able to do and be all that she did and was? We were told that we need to take 15-minute vacations! You might wonder how a period of time that short could be a vacation. The instructor simply meant that we should take at least 15 minutes each day to clear our minds of everything that might be causing us stress or worry; to just sit and relax;

to pray; to turn the lights down low; to basically withdraw ourselves from the hustle and bustle of daily life. She assured us that this would be extremely helpful in getting us through the rest of the day.

Jesus gave us an example when, many times, he withdrew from the crowds and his apostles to spend time praying and communing with God. We are also told to "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). Life on earth is really very short when you consider the whole scheme of things. We must endeavour to use every minute of every day in the best way possible. Always have time for the important things and the rest will follow.

Have a nice vacation!



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NEWS

- EAST -



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

ONTARIO

Ajax: At a special meeting, held in April, the congregation decided to discontinue its search for a full-time minister. Edward Jermakowicz, recently returned from seven years as a missionary to Belarus, will be serving in that capacity. The ladies had their meeting at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 6.

Barrie: Larry Deal, of Western Christian College, held a meeting here, March 31 - April 1.

Beamsville: On Sunday, May 7, the congregation hosted an area-wide evening service. Laura Mackenzie and Katrina Courson graduated from Harding University. Don Smith preached a meeting in Collingwood April 28-30.

A Zambia mission trip is being planned for the first three months of 2001 by five young people of church families in the Niagara Peninsula. They are: Amanda Boland, Terral McBay, Amanda Whitehead, Lee Whitfield and Matthew Whittington. Donald and Dianne Perry have accepted the invitation to sponsor/chaperone these young people.

Earl Clint went with his father, Bill Clint from the Harding Avenue congregation, to Holland for the special occasion of the Canadian World War II veterans being honoured for their help to free that country.

Ed Broadus sent an open letter to the congregation resigning as an elder, effective June 1 since he and Virginia are moving to Burlington and plan to attend one of the congregations in the Hamilton area.

Brantford: A bulletin from Rick and Susan Gamble reports the baptism of David Dandie on April 22.

Bramalea: Spanish classes are being offered on Sunday evenings at 5 p.m. getting ready for the Ibero-American Encounter on October 10-15. Elias Korah was baptized on Saturday, April 22. He is married to Desiree and they have two children, Farrah and Rueben. Elias moved here from Dubai. Afua Oti, daughter of Sam and Esther Asamoah, was baptized following Sunday morning worship on

April 23.

Allison Knutson graduated from Rochester College in Michigan, and Jonathan Straker from York College, Nebraska. Jonathan, Joel Osborne and two other young people plan to go to Japan in August 2001 for five years. Building upgrading has continued this spring with the renovation of the washrooms, making them wheel-chair accessible. Patricia Redwood has moved to Toronto and placed her membership at Harding Avenue.

Fenwick: "The gospel meeting with Earl Greene was a great success. Attendance was wonderful with a high of 110 on Sunday night. Many of our members are aging and ailing and we request prayers on their behalf.

Grimsby: At the Bible Bowl on the book of Judges, Mildred Glover received the first place trophy along with her team. The amazing part about this was, she had suffered a stroke just days prior and eye surgery the Friday before the "bowl".

Guelp: Guest speakers have been Neil Prokop and Keith Thompson. Jo Huddleston is going on a mission trip to Hungary where she will be working with the "Let's Start Talking" program. Paula is going on a mission trip to Brazil. She was to leave May 16 for approximately a month.

West Hamilton: On May 7, the congregation celebrated with Bev Ward who confessed Christ as Lord and put him on in baptism.

Meaford: "We rejoice over the baptisms of two new sisters; Betty McPhee and Marie Pelkie. On May 13, one hundred mothers and daughters attended the fifth annual Mother and Daughter Luncheon. The guest speaker, Brenda Snow of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Big Bay, Ontario, delivered a wonderful message on prayer. In the afternoon, Living Water inspired us with their singing program. The youth are in the midst of "selling soap," a fund raising project to support trips they will take. A pictorial directory of the congregation will be photographed on May 24 and 25." - J. Knight

Newmarket: The congregation is planning for a Vacation Bible School mission trip to Nova Scotia. Plans are progressing nicely. On May 28, Great Lakes Christian College Chorus was to sing. E-mail devotionals are sent out each Wednesday to more than fifty recipients. The names of Everett Kent and Keith Thompson have

been put before the congregation to serve as elders. Fifteen participants in the 30-hour famine raised \$2,094. On May 7, Keith Thompson preached at Pine Orchard.

North Bay: Bruce and Laurie St Clair arrived safely from Scotland.

Ottawa (Spanish): On April 21-23 Spanish churches in Ontario held their third annual Spanish Lectureship hosted by the Ottawa congregation led by Eduardo Penelozza.

Owen Sound: "The congregational budget for 2000 was set at \$1140.66 per week, up from \$1030.20 last year . . . "The Story", by Robert Oglesby in video by Robert Oglesby was shown for five Sunday evenings beginning March 5. We recommend the series for basic teaching on the Biblical story . . . One-time assistance was sent to Trevor Laycock, Brazil; Tim Johnson, Moncton; Key to the Kingdom; and Rick Pinczuk, Ukraine . . .

Eleven teachers and speakers are scheduled to present five Key Lessons and sixteen classes at the 20/20 Vision 2000 Soul Winning Workshop, which will be on the campus of Great Lakes Christian College, August 11 and 12 . . . Betty Breeden of Mesa, Arizona, will be the speaker for the Owen Sound Ladies' Renewal September 29-October 1. The theme will be "God's Plan for Women." Contact us for more information about either 20/20 Vision or the ladies' program." - Walter Hart.

Sarnia: "Congratulations to a promising young lady, Heather Halls, who has been accepted by Western University in London, Ontario . . . Guest speaker on Sunday, April 30, was Bethel Bailey from Sudbury, Ontario, who was the evangelist here many years ago. Spring Gospel Meeting with Max Craddock: "Power for Living," May 7-10. Call for times." - Skip Francis

St. Catharines, (Ontario St.): Campaign: June 16-21, Jerry Jenkins and Bill Brown will arrive with 50-75 teens and adults to work in an outreach effort. On the 16th, there will be a welcoming barbecue. Working with us on the 17th, the group known as the Ambassadors, will begin going door to door and offering the residents of the community a free Bible correspondence course and inviting them to come and hear Jerry speak. The gospel meeting featuring Jerry Jenkins as the speaker begins on June 18th. There will be a pot-luck meal following. On the 19th and

(continued on page 16)

NEWS

- FAR WEST -



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

ALBERTA

Edmonton: On April 9, Brenda Ball was baptized into Christ. Brenda first heard of the gospel through her supervisor at work, Lynn Butler. Lynn and her husband, Evered, along with Dave Friesen studied the Bible with Brenda. What a joy to see Brenda obey the gospel!

Also in April, we held our annual Alberta Spring Fellowship. The theme this year was, "Jesus the Way." Dan Wieb of Weyburn and Frank Worgan of Scotland brought challenging and insightful lessons on our Lord and Master. The weekend was well attended, with 360 attending Sunday worship. Thank you to all who traveled from Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Montana, and all over Alberta.

On April 9, we said farewell to Cliff and

Vilmarie Turner. They have moved to Richardson, Texas for a short internship with the Waterview Church of Christ. In July, they will move to Klaipeda, Lithuania, where Cliff will commence work as a missionary. Cliff will be working with Kevin Carson, also formerly of Edmonton. Cliff delivered the Sermon on April 9. We held a farewell potluck and gift presentation following services. Our prayers and thoughts go with the Turners as they undertake this new challenge.

A quarterly Men's Meeting was held on April 8, followed by a maintenance work bee.

A number of ladies from the congregation are planning to attend the annual Gardom Lake ladies retreat, May 4-7.

A bridal shower for Suzanne Richer was held on April 30. Gary Poon and Suzanne will be united in marriage on Saturday, May 13.

Our youth retreat was held May 12-14. Our speaker was Rolland Bouchard from Winnipeg.

Coming June 2-4 is our annual College/Career Retreat, a time for our teens, college-aged, and young professionals to have a spiritually recharging weekend.

We are also looking forward to having Bob Lewis come to Edmonton to present a

"Family Enrichment" seminar June 16-18.

David Ford

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Oakridge: The B.C. to B.C. on Friday, April 21st was one of the greatest spiritual feasts we have been privileged to be a part of for several years. Brother Jim Hawkins kicked the day off with a call to prayer and repentance. Many tears were shed and Christians embraced, relationships were healed and God was asked to heal even more. Then, Brother Bob Jackson from Sunset International Bible Institute brought us straight to the importance of being a people of the Word of God, reading our Bibles and getting into deep Bible study, whether in small Bible classes or the SIBI classes we now have courtesy of Sunset's hard work. We finished the day with more prayer, praying especially for those who are in personal need of God's help in their homes, in relationships and a call for God to heal Maggie Roberts who suffered a heart attack while on her way to spend a couple of months in our area.

The guest speaker for April 23 was Bob Jackson.

More video tapes have been purchased for the satellite school. We are steadily reaching
(continued on page 15)

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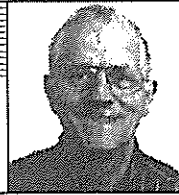
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BOOK REVIEWS

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) email: adelaide@netcom.ca



Soul Saving: Doing What Comes Naturally by K. C. Haddad, 117 pages, \$8.00, Cdn.

Most church members find it very difficult to reach out to the lost and win them for Christ. It is encouraging to read about other Christians who have been able to do this great work.

Sister Haddad, who lives in Windsor, Ontario has written and published a number of books that are helpful to Christians. In this book she gives many ideas about teaching others the gospel of our Lord.

She asks, "Have we ever seen each other heartbroken over the lost? Do we even have any idea who we are heartbroken over? Do we keep it all hidden from each other. It is also an insult to God. Neglected prayer says we have confidence in our flesh and can operate our spiritual life on a do-it-yourself basis. Neglected prayer is a neglected soul.

(continued from page 2)

the Law. Change of month was allowed, change of the day of the month would have been "an illegal and arbitrary innovation, which we cannot suppose Hezekiah capable of" (C.F. Keil).

Sadly, many of those in the territory of the northern tribes laughed and mocked at the invitation, although a few did come. The people of Judah were more enthusiastic and cooperative "to do what the king and the officials commanded by the word of the Lord" (30:12).

Even then there were problems. The priests and Levites were ashamed enough to sanctify themselves and do their duty "according to the law of Moses the man of God" (30:16). But a number of the people, especially from the northern tribes, were not ritually clean when they arrived. So the Levites had to slaughter many of the lambs, standing in for heads of families who would ordinarily do such but were unclean. Then these ritually unclean ones ate the Passover, "otherwise than as prescribed" (30:18).

It was then that Hezekiah prayed for these people, that God would accept what they were doing on the basis of the sincerity of their hearts, even though it was not in

"How can we expect the lost to awaken spiritually if we ourselves are not awake? How shall we beget life through Jesus if we ourselves are not truly filled with life? A friend of John Smith of Cudsworth near Barnsley, England wrote, "I have often seen him come downstairs in the morning after several hours in prayer, his eyes swollen with weeping. He would soon introduce the subject of his anxiety by saying..." "I am a brokenhearted man; yes, indeed, I am an unhappy man, not for myself but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of precious souls that I cannot live if souls be not saved. Oh give me souls, or else I die!" May this be the prayer of every one of us, and the prayer of every congregation."

To which we would like to add our "Amen".

The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart And 1501 Other Stories by Charles Swindoll, word

exact accord with the rules of cleansing for the Passover. And the Lord accepted Hezekiah's intercession (30:20).

In no way does this incident endorse a casual approach to the will of God. Throughout, in a very difficult and unique situation, there was a real concern to do the will of God. Hezekiah not only had a good heart, but he was also careful to do things "in accordance with the law and the commandments" (31:21). In the matter of the eating of the Passover, Hezekiah acknowledged the irregularities and felt the need to pray about it.

Jesus taught that human need and mercy take precedence over ritual and ceremonial regulations (cf. David and the showbread, Matthew 12:1-8). Hezekiah seemed to recognize the same in regard to this Passover observance, with all of its unique problems and yet so important to the restoration he was leading.

What was obviously extraordinary and exceptional must not become the standard for dealing with God's will. I cannot believe Jesus would approve of setting aside the showbread regulations as a regular matter for convenience purposes! And the next year when Passover time rolled around I cannot imagine Hezekiah asking

Publishing, 650 pages, \$29.97 (U.S.).

Recently I taught a class on anger. I looked up the topic in this book and found a couple of humorous stories. One was on the theme of having anger in one's heart: An ad appeared in the paper, "Wedding dress for sale; never worn; will trade for .38 caliber pistol." "A doctor told a man he had rabies. The man began writing. The doctor thought the man was writing his will and said "This doesn't mean your're going to die. There's a cure for rabies." "I know that", said the man, I'm making a list of the people I'm going to bite." These are just a couple of the shorter stories in this very useful book. Swindoll has been preaching and writing for many years. He has compiled some of the best stories he has used in this book.

Here is one story he tells about health: "My children pulled a fast one on me one Christmas. They teamed up, pooled their vast financial resources, bought me a small, framed motto to put on my desk. It read, 'Diets are for people who are thick. . .and tired of it.' At first it made me smile. Then I became angry, especially when I realized I wasn't thick of being thick!"

God for concessions, where there had been adequate time and normal circumstances for preparations! As Cecil May has well stated, "It is one thing to acknowledge that a violation of the biblical order has occurred or is occurring, ask pardon for it, and be forgiven, as Hezekiah and his people did. It is another thing altogether to say that a violation of the biblical order is all right and may be used as a norm for later practice, as some calling attention to this incident today seem to be doing."

I shudder to think that we would presume on the grace of God! Our goal must always be to do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21) as revealed in His Word; to obey everything Jesus commanded through the apostles and prophets (Matthew 28:20). We need to listen to the Word of God and act in all sincerity to keep it (Revelation 1:3). If our hearts are right we will not look for excuses or exceptions, for the Father has told us what pleases Him and we will do all we can to act accordingly. Even then, of course, we will sometimes find that we fall short and will have to ask God's forgiveness, just as Hezekiah did.

Owen Sound, Ontario

OF INTEREST:

WWW

The GOSPEL HERALD can be found on the World Wide Web by merely searching for gospel-herald or beamsville. We are currently found on websites as follows:

For publication information: www.geocities.com/~centralcofc/gh.html

For bookstore information: www.ontariotowns.on.ca/gospelheraldbookstore.shtml OR: www.gospelherald.callme.ca

The callme site enables the viewer to download a program which enables free phone access to our store by merely clicking on an icon while on screen. You can thus make inquiries and/or place orders as you wish. Readers are encouraged to try this new technology and enjoy its convenience. *ecp*

CCCHS

The Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society has been formed and is expecting to be registered to receive charitable donations soon. Its purpose is to gather organize and preserve historical materials and to encourage studies of Restoration efforts in Canada.

Photos, books, periodicals, church records, letters, family histories, diaries, minister's records, oral histories and such may be donated. Membership is encouraged at \$25.00 per year.

Participation in the first annual meeting, following the Inaugural meeting, on Saturday August 19th is invited. Evert Ferguson has agreed to speak on a Restoration subject.

Inquiries may be addressed to: Dr. Geoffrey H. Ellis, 120 Moccasin Dr., Waterloo, ON N2L 4C3: 519-885-3702; gellis@golden.net or to the Chair: Dr. Claude Cox, 18 Roslyn Rd., Barrie, ON L4M 2X6; 705-737-2272; c.cox@sympatico.ca

MISSION NEWS:

Key to the Kingdom

Although the details are not yet available, Michael Tackett has stated, "We stand on the verge of the biggest announcement we have ever made in the history of the KEY program. . . it may be bigger than all the works we have done combined.

In India over 2000 request for Bible Studies are received each week. When lesson series are completed they forwarded to preachers in the field for follow-up. "Six thousand trained men scattered around the country make personal visits to students to teach, baptize and assist in finding local churches.

Zambia - Merritt

Roy Merritt and helpers are engaged in efforts to plant churches in isolated parts of the Northern Province and have been encouraged by some suc-

cesses. A recent report gives some details of a trip on which some nine places were visited. One was Masansa, where he says, they work harder "than anywhere, yet adult attendance ranges between 10 and 15. Three baptisms this time should help."

Ukraine - Pinczuk

The Pinczuk family will soon have completed their three-year commitment to serve in Ukraine. Their plan is to leave in early July for a furlough and to return for another tour "as soon as possible in the New Year."

They invite "generous contributions to their traveling and temporary relocation expenses".

Lesia Markiv'ska was recently baptized and five others are quite interested in the same. One brother has transferred from Eastern Ukraine and is proving to be a help. A larger auditorium is being renovated to serve the needs of the growing congregation in Kyiv. It will accommodate up to 150 and also provide additional classroom and storage space. Donations are requested towards the \$6,000 this will cost. The Bible distribution work is active with 3000 shipped out in one week and a similar shipment being prepared for the next week. There are about 100 churches in the country that can be helped in this way.

It is urgent that those wishing to help with the travel fund do so soon to enable ticket purchases.

You are invited

to join students, their families, and staff at Great Lakes Christian College for their year-end activities:

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

7:30 p.m. **Baccalaureate Service**
- to honour graduates of Class of 2000
Church of Christ, 4900 John St.,
Beamsville

Friday, June 16, 2000

3:00 p.m. **Court of Honour**
— all students participating with
recognition of outstanding
contributions
Outdoors on Campus

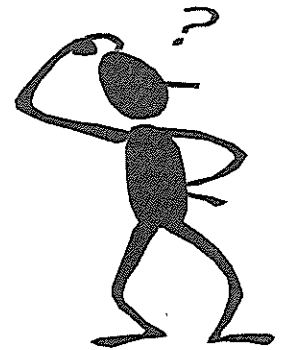
4:15 p.m. **Luncheon**
— Tallman Auditorium

6:00 p.m. **Graduation Ceremony**
— Tallman Auditorium

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OBITUARIES

S. Janet "Jennie" Hobbs

On Monday, February 14, 2000, at the Carman Memorial Hospital in Carman, Manitoba, Jennie Hobbs, aged 92 years, beloved wife of the late Harold Hobbs of Carman, Manitoba, passed into the arms of her Lord. Jennie leaves to mourn: two sons, Jim (Wanda) Hobbs of Winnipeg, MB, their children, Curtis, Melanie, Terrel, and Natalie; Gordon (Vivian) Hobbs of Kelowna, BC, their children, Nicole and Jackie; one daughter, Mildred (Marvin) Johnson of Toronto, ON, their children, Kerry, Dianne and Scott; and fifteen great-grandchildren. Jennie is also survived by her sister Edna (Jack) Smith of Chilliwack, BC; daughter-in-law Michelle Dickie of Winnipeg, her children, Shawn, Christine, and Aileen; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jennie was predeceased by her husband, Harold, by one son, Bruce, by two sisters, Ruth and Annie, and one brother, Ken.

All her children and their spouses were present as she left this world to be with God. Jennie was well liked in the community where she lived, never having lived more than twenty miles from her birthplace. Many people have expressed thoughts of how she always had a bit of humor to pass on, along with other words of wisdom. She liked to tease others, especially her grandchildren, and that will be among the fond memories they have of her.

She had a strong faith in the Lord and did not like to miss the services of the church, although in later years, her failing health did not allow her to attend as much as she would have liked. Jennie also had a strong commitment to her marriage to Harold. The family noted that Jennie never took off her wedding rings until they had to be cut off by the hospital. It is almost fitting that she joined Harold in death on Valentine's Day.

Funeral service was held from the church of Christ in Carman, on Thursday, February 17, at 2:00 pm. with Hugh Gannon officiating. She was laid to rest beside Harold in Greenwood Cemetery, Carman.

In her honor, contributions may be made to Western Christian College, Box 5000, Dauphin, MB, R7N 2V5, or to the Palliative Care Unit, care of Carman Memorial Hospital, Box 610, Carman, MB R0G 0J0.

John Nelson

John Thomas Nelson passed away on March 22, 2000. He is survived by his loving wife, Marjorie, brother Calvin (Ieleen) Nelson of Newmarket, Ontario, nephews, Murray and John; niece, Barbara and great-nephew Kevin. He was predeceased by his parents, Robert Nelson and Ellen Robertson.

John was born August 26, 1920 in Allan Township (Ice Lake) on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. He served in the army for four years

before attending The Laurentian University in Sudbury and Carleton University in Ottawa.

John worked for the Federal Government and then upon taking an early retirement he accepted a position with the United Nations. He and Marjorie were fortunate to have postings in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. They moved to Victoria in 1995. John will be remembered for his kind and gentle spirit. He was a faithful member of the Church of Christ.

A memorial service was held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church on April 24, 2000 in Sidney, BC. His longtime friend, George Snure of Ottawa, delivered the eulogy. George spoke to the large audience about John: "In the years I interacted with John I never heard him speak negatively of anyone. John was a kind, gentle man with a good word for everyone. His Christian commitment in the fellowship of the Church of Christ, was consistent throughout his life. Wherever they lived, John would seek out the local congregation and faithfully attended services."

George added: "Unfortunately John's career came to an end when his eyesight suddenly left him almost blind. Even though he was unable to do many things he had previously enjoyed, I never once heard him complain. He could no longer drive. He could accept no overseas assignments. But there was no complaining from John."

John was a loving and caring Christian. He will be missed by family and friends.

Viola Preston

Our sympathy to the Preston family in the passing of sister Viola Preston, who died on her 97th birthday, Monday, April 17 in the Sundridge area. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Alec, but is survived by her six sons, Grant, Clare, Eugene, Don, Fred and Alec and daughter, Mrs. June Kent and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The funeral was held on Thursday, April 20 at 2 p.m. in Sundridge.

from the Bramalea Banner

(continued from page 12)

our goals. God has been good to us. The administrator's workshop for Edmonton, Oakridge, northern Washington and Oregon will be held at the Sauk River Camp in September. After that, Brother Bob Jackson will return to do the final certification of our school. Oakridge and Edmonton will be the only certified satellite schools in Canada.

For the next few months our lessons will focus on prayer.

Campbell River: The Campbell River B.C. church of Christ is planning a mortgage burning celebration May 28, 2000. Former members or others interested are invited to attend.

Burnaby: A youth retreat was held in May

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(continued from page 11)

20th there will be continued outreach and canvassing door to door.

Congratulations to Derek Griffiths who was baptized Sunday afternoon, April 23. A ladies appreciation breakfast was held on Saturday, May 13 at 8:30 a.m. The GLCC Chorus sang on Wednesday, May 10 at 7:30 p.m. Joel Osborne graduated from York College in Nebraska. He plans to spend five years in Japan, beginning in August 2001.

Stratford: On Friday, April 7, "Wayne Pfeiffer gave his heart to the Lord Jesus and we baptized his body in water and watched as Wayne was raised a new person."

George Mansfield

Smithville: Chris (son of Jim of South River) and Julie Nicholson are settling into the work with this congregation. John Hains returned recently from his new location in the U. S. to preach in a gospel meeting.

Tecumseh (North Shore): (Meeting at the St. Clair Beach Community Centre) On April 9, brother Jim Dawson from West Side church of Christ preached for the congregation. Elspeth Kitchen was baptized into Christ April 16 at the Leamington Sherk Pool Complex.

The congregation has celebrated their first year anniversary. a week long Vacation Bible School for children, with outreach and teaching for adults is planned for June. Workers coming up from Sikeston, Missouri will have assistance from the West Side church of Christ.

Thunder Bay: Eric and Erica Bailey attended the Spring Renewal in Regina. The congregation was planning a fellowship meal following worship May 14 in honour of the women in the congregation.

Tintern: Tintern is looking for a second staff member to work in the areas of member involvement, children's youth ministry and family ministry. Their family retreat is planned for the first July weekend at Omagh Bible Camp. An area wide Sunday night worship service is scheduled for June 11. The congregation rejoiced with three young people being added to the family on April 24th: Terral McBay, Amanda Whitehead and Shanna Whitehead. Megan Smith (Papua New Guinea) and Dave Pierce (Thailand) plan to work with "Let's Start Talking" this summer.

Matthew Walker left for England on May 12 to begin a new job. Happy Birthday to Edith Hannah who celebrated her 90th birthday on May 9 with an open-

house. Vacation Bible School is planned for July 3-7.

Toronto (Bayview): March 25 the congregation had an evening to say thank-you to Dave Knutson and his family for a year and a half of preaching at Bayview. This was held at Don and Vilma Whitfield's home. The congregation has been collecting for the Chester Public School's breakfast program. Guest speaker March 12 was Jamie Azzoparde from Guelph. Guest speaker at the Spiritual Renewal weekend June 4 is to be Don Smith, the topic being "Growing in Grace." Tony Lewis arrived on March 24 to begin work with the congregation. Ministry teams were signing up for the coming year.

Toronto (Strathmore): May 28 was to be "Bring a Friend Day." Annual church picnic is scheduled for July 15 and Michael Tackett will be holding a meeting, September 29 - October 1. The congregation had their annual talent show May 27. Claudette Fleming has completed her studies and was honoured with a farewell party as she prepared to return to her home in Bermuda. Guest speaker April 9 was Bob Hibbard.

Waterloo: A Men's Retreat is being planned for September 15-16 with the topic "Father and Son Relationships." The 25th Anniversary weekend was enjoyed by all.

After two months of studies Adam Vasquez, a 70 year old man from El Salvador, was baptized for the forgiveness of his sins on February 17. Every other Saturday gospel meetings are being conducted in the homes of members of the Spanish group.

Windsor (West Side): We had a six-week young men's training class. Sister Annie Keenan celebrated her 103rd birthday on April 20. John Bailey is scheduled for a meeting in September.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Moncton: Tim Johnson's support has been fully recovered through several congregations in Southern Ontario. They have a new outreach pamphlet, "Do You Want to Be Rich?" - rich in God. 2500 have been printed up to pass out around the building. A new window air conditioner has been purchased and donated by one family for the summer months. Several community people have visited the assemblies.

NOVA SCOTIA

Mill Village, Shubenacadie: David Hallett has retired. He has sent out his last report after 37 years of reporting: 1963-2000. Their new building debt is over half

paid off. The building will be used for gospel meetings and a Vacation Bible School this year. The ladies have enjoyed the kitchen in the lower level very much. David said he will continue with Mill Village until June 2001, while he works out various situations with the Canadian government and his pension. He said he's been having some problems with arthritis in his knees but otherwise is feeling fairly well.

QUEBEC

Quebec City: Danielle Poirier, Jean Marie Lalonde and Louise Disilets have been baptized. Four who had not been attending are now back. Jerrel Rowden, who spent 27 years here but is now in Dallas, TX, visited recently.

Shawnigan-Sud: Yvon Beaudoin, accompanied by Claude Marinian of this city made a mission trip to French Guiana last December. The churches Yvon serves in Quebec are contributing to help pay the rent on the building in Cayenne.

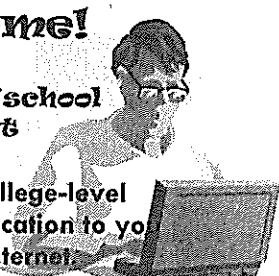
Sherbrooke: After nearly three years, three former members, Lucie Cayer, Solange Mercier and, more recently, her husband are "back home" and assisting in the meetings.

MICHIGAN

Marquette: Three elders from the church at Rochester Hills recently visited to provide this church help as it strives "to establish an eldership". Kim McGlone was baptized on March 22.

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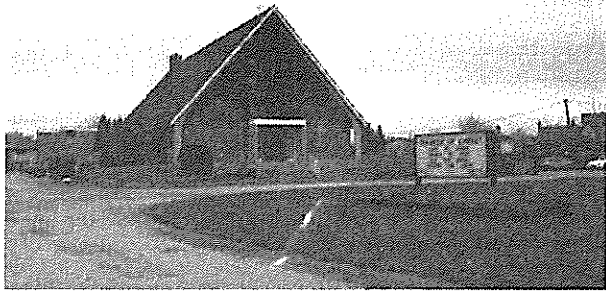


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