

Gospel Herald

For the promotion of
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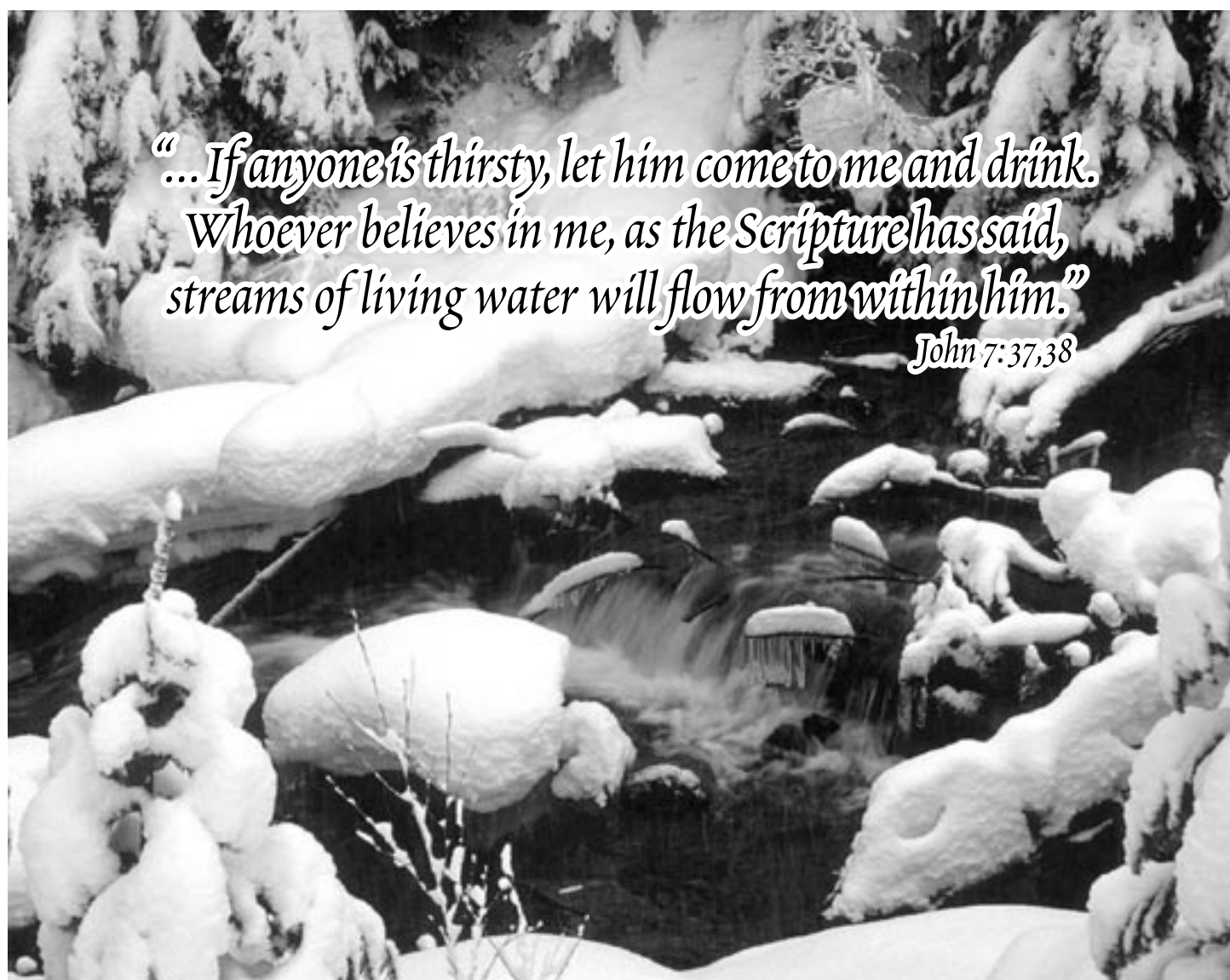
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“...If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”
John 7:37,38

All of us, at times, are faced with difficulties and problems that cause us to struggle with our faith, hope, and confidence. Sometimes these things are really very small in the larger view of life; however, they are important to us at the time. We can learn from others who have faced life changing problems but who have found peace and joy in Christ. The article by Paul Hotchkiss on page 2 should be helpful and challenging to us when struggles come.

Be Still – The Testimony of a Quadriplegic

Paul Hotchkiss

(Editor's note: The following was written by Paul Hotchkiss sometime over the last few months and was sent to us by his mother. Paul passed away on December 8, 2003. [See obituary on page 16.] Thank you for sharing this article with us.)

I was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease or Motor Neuron disease, in 1990. It is the wasting of voluntary muscles from the death of the motor neurons. The cause of the disease is unknown and there is no treatment other than managing the symptoms. The prognosis is death within two to five years, usually from respiratory failure. To avoid this, I had a tracheotomy in 1995 which provides access to my airway for mechanical ventilation. I am now on a ventilator 24/7 since I can no longer breathe without assistance for more than a few minutes. I am also virtually paralyzed from the neck down, hence, the phrase "be still".

The physical reality of being still

comes all too quickly. I had to make a decision four years after diagnosis, would "be still" mean death or the rest of my life trapped in a paralyzed body? I chose the latter, as evidenced by this testimony eight years later. Remaining alive with ALS is not difficult with adequate care. I require a few special devices and a care-giver with me 24 hours a day to survive. However, I realized early on that being alive and living are two very different things. To actually live life requires some purpose to live for; along with something to have faith in, something to hope for, and something to love. Most people with ALS have the primary purpose of survival. This develops faith in the technology and people that support living with ALS, hope for a cure, and love of self. While these things are good, there is a better way – living for God.

I came to this conclusion before I was diagnosed with ALS. Here is how...

I grew up knowing and believing the history written in the Bible. I remember that I was frustrated with all I did not understand and could not reconcile between the world around me and the Bible. I wanted to know the purpose of life, but could not determine what was real and what was fictional. I spent much time alone, usually fishing, in which I sorted through my thoughts. In August 1983 I, finally, understood or faced the reality of my position in relation to God. I was guilty of doing my will and deserved to die. So, I staked my life on the belief that Jesus is the Son of God and died in my place.

Living for God has not solved all my troubles; however. God has taught me to be still on the inside even though things on the outside are calling for me to panic. I know that He is the one, true, almighty God. Therefore, I have

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Baptism: A Conscious Cleansing

David Dunn

PART TWO: WHAT WERE YOU BAPTIZED INTO?

(Editor's note: Part one was in the December, 2003 issue.)

In Part One of this article we asked the question, "Does it matter if we understand the purpose of baptism?" Specifically, we addressed the question of fellowship with those who deny that baptism has anything to do with our salvation, and concluded that such teaching is a denial of one of the fundamental marks of our identity as discussed by Paul in Eph.4:4-6. We cannot have fellowship with those who deny the Biblical teaching on baptism, anymore than we can fellowship those who deny its teaching about Christ.

But even if we concede that those who hold such a position espouse fundamental error, some would still claim that their baptism could be regarded as valid. In other words, they didn't need to know the truth about baptism when they were obeying it, but their acceptance of the erroneous teaching on the subject since their baptism places them in error that affects fellowship.

This cannot be acceptable. This would mean that error which destroys fellowship does not prevent it occurring in the first place. At what point does the holding of such error affect fellowship? How would we know? If denial of its purpose destroys fellowship with others, surely that denial would also prevent fellowship in the first place. Therefore, in this article we want to look at some of the New Testament passages on baptism and see what they teach about our awareness of its purpose when we submit to it.

A good place to begin is with Paul's question to the Ephesian "disciples" in Acts 19:3, "What then were you baptized into?" Without discussing the passage in detail we observe that Paul detected some defect in their original baptism, and that appears to have been because they submitted to

John's baptism after it had ceased to be in effect. However, regardless of the cause of Paul's concern, his question reveals a number of points. First, baptism was into something. In other words, baptism isn't simply an act without an object in view. But perhaps more importantly for our discussion, Paul's question expected the Ephesian followers to know exactly what this purpose was. In consequence, when he discovered that they had not been immersed "into" Jesus, which is exactly what he did.

Now their baptism appears to have been invalid because it was the wrong baptism – John's which looked forward to the Christ. But this anachronism wasn't the only reason it was invalid. It was invalid primarily because it did not immerse them into union with Jesus. Moreover, this was not something that was done to them without their consent, but something they had consciously submitted to. They admitted that they had been consciously immersed "into John's baptism" (Acts 19:3). Or, they had been immersed for the purpose John required – forgiveness of sins in preparation for the Messiah's coming. It would appear from this passage that both the baptism and the conscious act of the one immersed must be directed towards the right purpose – namely union with Christ.

Is this substantiated by other New Testament passages? It is patently obvious from Jesus' commission to the apostles in Matt.28:18-20 that they were to immerse people "into" union with the Godhead. This was their responsibility, but was the result accomplished simply because the apostles understood its purpose? What responsibility did the apostles place upon those who were being immersed? We have already noted that Paul seems to have expected those baptized to understand why they had been immersed. Is this

evident in other baptism accounts?

In Acts 2:38, Peter requires those who would be saved to be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." The argument is well established that proves that forgiveness of sins is the result of the conjoined acts of repentance and baptism. Whatever repentance is for, baptism is for. For our purposes, the question is, "What did those who were being immersed have to understand about their immersion?"

Peter modifies the command to be immersed with two equal prepositional phrases. The first is, "in the name of the Jesus Christ" and the second is "for the forgiveness of sins." The word "in" in the first phrase translates the Greek word which means "upon the basis of." In other words, their response was to be on the basis of who Jesus was (Lord and Christ – Saviour), and what he required. As we have often said, our baptism is a response both to Jesus' authority as our Lord and to his work for us as our Saviour.

The second prepositional phrase begins with the Greek word which means "into." This means that baptism would convey those immersed into the relationship so described – into the possession of forgiveness of sins. However, it is paramount to note that both these prepositional phrases were part of Peter's command to those who asked what they needed to do. They modify how the command is to be carried out. If we are to be immersed "upon the name of Jesus Christ," and we most certainly are, then, we are also to be immersed "into the forgiveness of sins." The command to the crowd was a passive one in the sense that they were to "be immersed" – that is they were to submit themselves to the action of another immersing them. But the command was to be submitted to with certain qualifiers.

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“One Lord, One Faith, Maybe Baptism?”

Wayne Turner



Few subjects can quickly generate as much heat as baptism. Doesn't it seem strange that something so clearly commanded by Jesus and the apostles should cause so much argument? There are disagreements over whether baptism is sprinkling, pouring or immersion; whether it is for infants or believing adults; whether it is for original sin or real sin; whether it is a sacrament that imparts grace through simple compliance with the ritual based on the authority of the church (as one catechism states, “the salvation of one without the use of reason depends on the efforts of others”) or is the culminating response of faith and repentance; whether baptism is merely an important but unnecessary “church ordinance” to be admitted into a local fellowship or essential for forgiveness and fellowship with God.

When our spiritual forebears in the Restoration Movement began asking questions about baptism and studying the scriptures, they came to some very significant conclusions. One of the key events occurred when Alexander Campbell's wife bore their first child. Coming from the infant baptism of Presbyterianism, it would only be natural to continue that tradition. For Campbell, everything was open to be questioned in the light of the Bible. As the story goes, he locked himself up in his study to search for the answer. He emerged with the conviction that the baby did not need to be sprinkled, but rather that he, himself, needed to be immersed as an adult believer. For him, all the evidence – linguistic, textual, theological and historical – pointed to this conclusion.

What must have seemed strange to Campbell is that those religious groups who believed in the necessity of baptism – the Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, etc. – denied what he saw as the Biblical mode or subject. Even Martin Luther, in his commentary on Galatians, had identified baptism as the new birth and vilified those who sought to empty baptism of its majesty and power, yet he had never questioned infant sprinkling. On the other hand, those who saw that baptism was the immersion of the adult believer denied that baptism was essential to salvation, that it was necessary for forgiveness. As often happens in religious debate, Alexander concluded that the truth lay in the middle.

Obviously, Campbell was not alone in his conclusions. Many people, before and after him came to similar, if not identical views after studying the scriptures. Similar views were held by some within the Anabaptists who suffered at the hands of both the Catholics and Protestants in the early days of the reformation. Hans Grimm tells of an ancestor, Gregorious Grimm who, many years before the reformation, was immersed in the river. One of the interesting, more recent contributions to this discussion came from noted commentator William Barclay in his book *Turning to God*, in which he looks at conversion in the book of Acts. He concludes that Acts shows that repentance (based on

faith) and baptism were demanded of converts. Further, that baptism was the immersion of an adult believer for the forgiveness of sins, reception of the Holy Spirit and admission into the community of the church. Many of us have had the privilege of meeting individuals who come from many diverse religious backgrounds who have come to a Biblical understanding based on their own study of the Bible.

In the past, it might have been assumed that this is preaching to the converted – that all within our fellowship agree, totally. Unfortunately, we are increasingly hearing rumblings that suggest otherwise – that there are some, possibly only a few, who are questioning and rejecting the necessity of baptism. In part, this may be in response to the harsh, exclusive and legalistic way in which others have approached the subject of baptism. Granted, it is unfortunate that there are some people who assume they are saved because they have submitted to a ritual with the right words being said when there has been no real conversion and little evidence of faith or transformation of life. Some of our religious neighbours put many of us to shame with their zeal and commitment for God, the strength of their character and service. The existence of the “pious unimmersed” does not negate that Biblical concepts of baptism nor the necessity for those who serve God to maintain this standard. Which early Christians exhibited more zeal for God than Saul or more character than Cornelius? Yet, both were confronted with the demand of baptism. Even the disciples Paul encountered outside Ephesus were taught the truth about baptism.

The language used in the New Testament shows that baptism was expected and essential for all converts. Peter, at Pentecost, commands “*Repent and be baptized, every one of you ...*” Which of his hearers would not be included? Similarly, Paul wrote in Romans 6, “*all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death...*” His clear understanding was that baptism is the means by which we come into Christ by being joined with His death, burial and resurrection. Those

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FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN

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Forgiveness

Sally Dunn

(Editor's note: This month's article, written by Sally Dunn of Sarnia, ON, should help us focus on a very important need in our life, that of practicing forgiveness. We pray that you will be blessed through her thoughtful discussion of this important topic.)

"And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you." Ephesians 4:32.

The same hand that killed his wife, now was used to direct singing. So the true story goes.

During fifty years in prison for the murder of his wife, this man repented and sought forgiveness. When several weeks of his release, he asked if he could lead singing as he had done before the murder. The church leaders granted his request and the following Sunday the man, now over eighty years old, led the congregation in singing. Several members of the congregation complained. The leaders explained that if God forgave this brother, they also should forgive him.

When I read this story, it made me seriously think how unforgiving we are. Yet, God being rich in mercy, forgives a repentant soul. It led me to consider how we should forgive each other as our heavenly Father forgives us.

What is it with us today that we cannot forgive? We somehow can't see beyond each other's failings. We expect others to forgive the sins we commit, it's because we have struggles they don't understand. Can we not extend the same

compassion to others that we give to ourselves? Can we not accept that others too may have their own personal struggles and weaknesses? Will we not believe that they are trying to serve God just as hard as we are?

Remember what the latter part of Jer. 31:34 tells us, *"For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more."* Here God isn't only willing to forgive sin, but to forget sin. Perhaps we think God's not doing His job the way He ought to? So, what do we do? We try to take over for God. We will make sure that we will remind people of their sins, even if God won't. Why is it so hard for us to forgive each other? Are any of us without sin? Jesus asked this very question Himself in Jno.8:7

Now let us go back to Eph.4:32. Ask yourself, "Am I kind to others? Am I tender hearted? Do I forgive others as God in Christ forgives me?" I leave this thought with you from Matt.6:14-15, *"For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."*

I find this a very serious and sobering statement.

Sarnia, ON

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The Power of the Good Confession (1 Timothy 6:12-13)

Paul Birston

When we hear the word confession, two situations often come to mind. In one case, people accused of crimes may make confessions of guilt to legal authorities knowing that punishment may still await them but with the hope of receiving lighter sentences. In the second case, we think of the confession of our sins to God. We admit we have done wrong and seek His forgiveness. The Bible speaks of a third kind of confession which is related to but somewhat different than these two. Jesus made this third kind of confession before Pontius Pilate. Paul added the adjective "good" and called it the "good confession" (1 Timothy 6:12-13). When Pilate said to Jesus "So, You are a king", Jesus agreed and answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is born of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37). The words for confession and confessing are like "same word" and "saying the same." The good confession is like an agreement about something good. Jesus agreed with Pilate's statement about who He was. When we make the good confession we agree with God about who Jesus is: His

Son, King of Kings, and the Lord and Saviour of the world. When we come to be immersed in water for the forgiveness of our sins, we make the good confession by agreeing with God that Jesus is His Son.

This good confession has amazing power in four ways. First, Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). Jesus has promised to confess our names before God in heaven if we will confess Him before others here on earth. Since it is through Christ that we come to God, our confession is part of opening up

The good confession is like an agreement about something good.

and building our relationship with Him (Romans 10:8-10). Isn't this how it is in human relationships too? We get to know one another and build relationships by talking to one another and most often it is because of things we agree about that we become closer.

This leads right into the second area where the power of the good confession and confessing our faith work in a wonderful way. That is, in our relationships as brothers and sisters in Christ. When I hear a brother or sister telling me about their faith, or how God, through His Word, prayer and providence, has helped them through a difficult situation, it is encouraging to me. When someone tells me they have noticed something new in the Bible, though they have read over the passage before, it is encouraging. It's not that we don't have fellowship talking about other things. It's just that when we tell each other about our spiritual struggles and victories, our insights into God's Word, and how our faith is growing, we build each other up spiritually in a special way. Confessing our faith to one another is encouraging.

Third, confessing our faith also works powerfully within us as individuals. It is voluntary; it is a choice we make. It comes from our hearts. Before we voice any words, we usu-

ally think about them. Making the good confession before others not only builds them up, it is good for us too. It confirms for us what we believe, and the more we do it, the easier it becomes. It reminds us of the solid foundation of our faith and helps us, as Paul told Timothy, "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:12). God's Words define who we are. We must watch our vocabulary and be careful not to dilute our confession. If God's words are not on our mind, what is? Paul reminded Timothy about his good confession and the eternal life that comes with it.

Finally, the confession of our faith is a light to the lost. How will they believe if they do not hear (Romans 10:14-17)? How can they agree with God about Jesus if they don't learn about Him through word and example? We talk about things that matter to us. When we have opportunities to talk of Jesus in ways that are appropriate and meaningful to others that don't know Him, they have an opportunity to respond to Him. Some will respond in favour and some against, just like they did when He walked on the earth among people.

What about the risk? There is really no risk in making the good confession to God, His church, and ourselves. We have eternity to gain. Yes, there is some risk in our confession before the lost. It takes courage. We could be rejected, like Jesus often was. In the big picture, however, Jesus confesses us before God so we have everything to gain. It is a wonder of the gospel (the good message) and the good confession that, not only do we find relief from the penalty we deserve; we find that the penalty is gone. Christ took it for us on the cross. Confessing our faith transforms our relationship with God, encourages His people, builds confidence, and gives the lost an opportunity to hear about Jesus. We can make it with conviction. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23). We've got nothing to lose and everything to gain. There's power in the good confession. There's power in agreeing with God about who Jesus is!

Winnipeg, MB



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March 22	Dofasco Chorus Performance
Mar. 29 - Apr. 2	Bible College short course: <i>The Psalms in Personal and Congregational Life</i>
April 5	Bible College Preachers' Day
April 23 - 25	Youth Rally
April 30	Bible College Graduation and Promotional Dinner
May 4	Community Service Day (Work-a-thon)

The Power of the Resurrection

Edwin Broadus

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings...” (Paul, Philippians 3:10).

Paul speaks of power. No one wants to be weak and powerless. We want our lives to be effective and meaningful. We want to rise above weaknesses that keep us from being and doing our best. The power Paul speaks of is resurrection power – Christ’s resurrection. This is described in Ephesians as God’s “mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come” (1:19-21). It far exceeds all other power, and anyone who possesses it needs not fear any other power, now or ever. It can be ours, for Paul says there is “incomparably great power for us who believe,” “like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead” (Ephesians 1:19-20). He also says we can “know (experience) Christ and the power of his resurrection” (Philippians 3:10).

But what is this resurrection power? It is first of all **victory over death**. Christ’s resurrection was unique, because he was raised never to die again. There were other resurrections – Elijah raised a widow’s son (1 Kings 17:17-24), Elisha raised the Shunammite’s son (2 Kings 4:32-37), Peter raised Dorcas (Acts 9:36-41), Paul raised Eutychus (Acts 20:7-12), and Jesus raised a widow’s son (Luke 7:11-15), Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8:49-56) and Lazarus (John 11:38-44). But these all died again, so none of them impresses us as a victor over death. Death was only postponed, like cancer gone into remission, only to flare up again. Christ’s resurrec-

tion was different, for he was raised, “never to decay” (Acts 13:34, 37). He was “raised from the dead” and “cannot die again” (Romans 6:9). He emerged from the tomb as the mighty Conqueror of death who “has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Timothy 1:10).

His victory is our victory, for “Christ has indeed been raised, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.... For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:20, 22). When this happens, “the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’ ‘Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?’ ... thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

Christ’s victory over death not only guarantees our own resurrection; it also means we no longer have to fear death like those who have no hope. The Bible reminds us “fear of death” holds people in slavery (Hebrews 2:14-15). Those who fear death give up their fortune to save their lives and often betray family and friends and sacrifice principle to do it. Satan says, “A man will give all he has for his own life” (Job 2:4). But the testimony of thousands of Christian martyrs shows that because of Christ’s victory over death the fear of death has been removed, and people like these are not afraid to die for what is true, right and eternally important.

The power of Christ’s resurrection also means **victory over sin**. Although “Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3; cf. Romans 5:6-8), and his blood was shed “for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28), victory over sin was impossible without his resurrection. “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification”

(Romans 4:25). We cannot be justified (made right with God) apart from his resurrection. Without the resurrection Christ’s death has no power to save, for if he had remained in the grave, Satan was the winner. Paul linked the resurrection and forgiveness; “The one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay,” and, “Through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you” (Acts 13:37-38). Atonement for sin was not complete until Christ was raised from the dead and returned to his Father (Hebrews 1:3).

This victory over sin becomes our victory when we are united with Christ in his death to sin and in his resurrection to life (Romans 6:1-10). This victory comes because sin has been done away with so it can no longer enslave us (verse 6). Without Christ and his resurrection, sin defeats and enslaves us. We fight sin in vain if Christ has not been raised, for then we would still be in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17-18). But in Christ and through his resurrection we have victory over sin. Thus there is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

Finally, the power of Christ’s resurrection means **victory over Satan**, both for Christ and for us. The death of Christ resulted not merely from the sentence of the Roman governor, the act of the soldiers who nailed him to the cross and the conspiracy of religious leaders who pressured the governor to carry out their malicious plan. It was a deed of cosmic proportions, part of the epic battle between God and Satan. John tells us that “the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work” (1 John 3:8).

Thus, while Christ was on earth he not only dealt with human sin, disease and unbelief, but he confronted demons and Beelzebub, the prince of

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demons (Luke 11:14-20). The devil's intent from the time Jesus was born was to get rid of him (see Revelation 12:4-5, 9, where Christ is the "male child, who will rule all the nations" and the devil the dragon, "the ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray"). When Christ was crucified it seemed Satan had won. But when he was raised from the dead, it was obvious Satan was defeated. As Genesis 3:15 foretold, Satan struck Christ's heel, but Christ crushed Satan's head. Because he overcame death by his resurrection, his death destroyed Satan by stripping him of the source of his power – the power of death (see Hebrews 2:14).

We need this victory over Satan

because our battle is not only with sin and death but with the devil himself. Paul said, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." At the head of these "spiritual forces of evil" is "the evil one," the one the Bible calls Satan (Ephesians 6:12, 16). Contrary to modern, secular thinking, the Bible fully recognizes spiritual forces of evil, arrayed against God and his people. But it also tells us Christ has defeated Satan and his allies and we need not fear their power, for Christ's power in us is far greater. The Bible's message is that "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am

persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:37-39).

We marvel at Christ's power, demonstrated by his resurrection, never to die again, and by his victory over death, sin and Satan. But a greater marvel is that his power can be our power and that in him and because of him we, too, are victors over death, sin and Satan. "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Burlington, ON

continued from page 3

It would not be enough simply for the apostles to immerse them "upon" Jesus' name if the one immersed did not share the same purpose. Neither can we immerse people "into" forgiveness if they are not submitting to the act for that purpose. What applies to one of these qualifiers surely applies to both.

It is this act of "into the forgiveness of sins" which parallels "into Christ" (in the sense of the effect for the cause) in Acts 19 and Matt.28, and of course in other passages such as Rom.6 and Gal.3. The consistent witness of the New Testament is that people were immersed "into Christ" and that this was a conscious act. It is true that they may not have always understood the full theological significance and nuances of this act – but do we? Nevertheless, the arguments of Paul and others are consistently built upon the premise that the early Christians knew very well what they had done when they were immersed, and that such conscious knowledge was a part of their submission in baptism. Paul's question in Romans 6, "Do you not know that when you

were immersed into Christ, you were immersed into...", and his assertion in Gal.3, "all those who have been immersed into Christ have..." are built upon this understanding.

We will conclude with the conversion of Paul himself. In the account in Acts 22, we have this command by Ananias to Paul, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The important point to notice here is that the command to Paul to be immersed and wash away his sins was placed in what is called in Greek, the "middle voice." This means that Paul was to do the actions specified on his own behalf, or with personal benefit resulting from those actions. In essence he was told to "baptize himself," and "wash away his own sins." Now we know, and Paul knew, that this was impossible. What then did the command mean? It simply meant that Paul was to submit to the action of being immersed with a purpose or consciousness of why he was doing it. Even though he was being baptized by someone else – the action was ENTIRELY HIS. Paul was to be active both in being immersed and in having his sins washed away. He was

to submit to a "conscious cleansing."

Peter summarizes the New Testament teaching regarding our response in baptism when he declares in 1 Pet.3:21, "...an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)." The Greek word for "answer" means primarily, not answer, but an "appeal." It was a legal term used by the Greeks for a demand or appeal to a judge. Peter says that baptism is our "appeal" to God. And what is it an appeal for? – for a good conscience. The Hebrew writer tells us that our evil conscience is removed when our hearts are sprinkled (his term for blood cleansing – Heb.10:22). Hence baptism is our conscious appeal to God for cleansing from sin.

In the New Testament baptism is a "conscious cleansing." Not only does denial of baptism's place in conversion affect our fellowship within the body of Christ, it also prevents that fellowship occurring in the first place since we have failed to be immersed into Christ. Paul's question remains, "What were you baptized into?"

Sarnia, ON

When the instruments fell silent

Erik Tryggestad

(From the Web site of the Christian Chronicle (www.christianchronicle.org). Used with permission.)

I'll be the first to admit it. I've always been a little embarrassed by our acappella tradition. It's not because I disagree. I believe it's a powerful form of worship. I've been moved and humbled many times by the powerful union of voices in praise of our Creator.

But explaining the tradition to people outside churches of Christ is difficult. Inevitably it's the first thing they notice about us, and it almost always leads to awkward discussions about theology and doctrine that don't focus on the Cross.

I love our music, but it's always seemed to make us look "backwards."

That was a belief I held until age 30. But something happened — just a few weeks ago — that has reshaped my thinking. I witnessed firsthand the power of acappella music.

On Aug. 29, contemporary Christian group Caedmon's Call played a show on a Christian university campus at the end of freshman orientation. Caedmon's — on its first, independent release — did a live version of a song called "There's a Stirring" that really caught on. It's the reason many music fans hunt down the band's first album, and (I believe) the Caedmon's version was the inspiration for the acappella version of "There's a Stirring" that's making its way into the rotation at several churches of Christ. It's frequently requested at our local congregation.

But since the success of that first album, the band has released many other contemporary Christian hits, including "Hope to Carry On" and "God of Wonders". The band rarely performs "There's a Stirring" in concert.

The band was having an "off" night because some of its equipment didn't arrive. They had to borrow amps and other equipment from the university. But the crowd was

really energized, and when the band started into a sing-along version of a worship song, "Warrior," off its "In the Company of Angels" album, the audience sang back — LOUDLY.

Cliff Young, Caedmon's lead singer, took the cue and started playing "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High," which got an even louder sing-along response.

"That's right, I forgot that y'all are the denomination that doesn't use instruments, so you can really sing!" Young said. The audience roared.

"Let's keep singing," he said, and started playing the Rich Mullins anthem, "Step By Step." The audience's singing overwhelmed the band. The volume was so great that they stopped playing entirely.

The band's keyboardist said, "That's the most awesome thing I've ever heard."

Then Caedmon's got ready to pick up its instruments, but the crowd started yelling requests for "There's a Stirring."

"Do y'all even KNOW that song?" Young asked, and the crowd shouted, "YES!"

"This isn't the right guitar for that song," he said. The audience roared back, "WE DON'T NEED IT!"

So, Young's wife, Danielle (who sang "Stirring" on the album) started the song. One of the guitarists picked up a 'shaker' percussion instrument they used on the album version.

Once again, the audience response was so great, so loud, so overpowering, that the band just stopped and listened, in awestruck silence. Cliff Young motioned for the guitarist to put down the shaker.

So there we were, performing for the performers. I don't believe that the band had ever heard the acappella version of "Stirring" before. They just stood there and listened, as the audience transitioned into a song with the lyrics "May my steps be worship."

Finally, when our voices went silent, a stunned Cliff Young told the audience, "You make me want to change my doctrine ... Almost."

The whole evening gave me goose bumps. As we were singing, I began to realize that acappella music is far from a liability for churches of Christ. In fact, it may just be our gift to the rest of Christianity.

It was an amazing thing to be able to take a song that Caedmon's Call made popular, change it into an acappella version, and sing it back for the people who made it famous.

In a broader sense, the whole experience gave me a better understanding of the free agency God gives us. He created us, and we took the voices that he created and crafted our own songs of praise that we sing back to him.

That must be an amazing feeling, hearing what your children have done with the gifts you've given them.

Great Lakes Christian College
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Arsenic

Friday, March 5
&
Saturday, March 6
7:30 p.m.

Admission:
\$8 Adults
\$6 Seniors/Students

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by Walter R. Straker
750 Clark Blvd.
Bramalea, ON L6T 3Y2
Fax: 905 792-8623
E-mail: bramaleacofc@bellnet.ca

ONTARIO

Beamsville: On December 17, the congregation had a hymn singing at the building with Wayne Whitfield leading. Roger and Katherine Perry collected new and used toys to take to an orphanage in Jamaica in January. Beginning in January, George Mansfield was scheduled to begin discussions on "Relationships." The congregation's annual meeting was scheduled for January 18. Art and Ruby Ford plan to leave on February 16 to visit mission points in Papua New Guinea where they formerly served with their family. They will be gone about a month.

Bramalea: Isidro and Rudy Dela Cruz's mother, Therade, passed away on December 15. She was 79 years old. She had become a Christian in the Philippines and brought her family to the Toronto area. Kurt Whittington graduated from Oklahoma Christian University with a mechanical engineering degree and is back in Brampton looking for a job. He preached for the congregation Sunday evening, January 11. The women of the congregation gathered 3 boxes of scarves, mittens and hats to be sent to the orphans in China.

Brantford: The brethren plan to purchase a Stair Lift Kit and install a stair lift in their building to enable one of their members to negotiate the stairs and attend services. The congregation continues its Friday evening youth nights with a good number of teenagers in attendance.

Hamilton (Fennel Avenue): The congregation rejoiced in the baptism of Adam Tubman on November 22. Mike McCabe moved with his family (wife Merri, and children Jessica - Grade 4, Jonathan - grade 3, and Heather - preschool) the first weekend in January to begin full-time work with the congregation. His address is Unit 18, 25 Redbury Street, Hamilton, Ontario, L8W 1P7. Mike is also taking a class at Great Lake Bible College to con-

tinue his education. The congregation wishes to acknowledge each of those from various area congregations who filled in over the last few years preaching for them.

Grimby: A seminar: "Become a Good Steward of God's Money" was scheduled to be conducted by the MacDonalds on January 17. A very successful second annual community dinner was recently held. A banquet honouring the congregation's teachers was planned for January 24.

Meaford: Members shared in a co-ed fellowship breakfast on November 29, a come-and-go reception and open house at the home of Merv and Grace Risk on November 30, and numerous year-end activities in December. Peter Dale was guest speaker on January 4. The congregational annual meeting was planned for January 25. Its annual youth rally is scheduled for February 27-29. Bruce Morrith, son of Randy and Lois Morrith, was baptized Sunday, January 4, 2004.

Owen Sound: Norm and Rose Coach celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on November 26. Ten friends from the neighbourhood came to the congregation's November 30 "Bring a Friend" service. Scott Kennedy leads the young people in bi-weekly activities. The GLCC Chorus

presented its program on November 16.

St. Catharines: Preparations are under way for the FriendSpeak Program to begin early in 2004. Shirley Straker was here for a training seminar on January 17. We are also making preparations for John Clayton to be here on April 24-25. More details to follow.

Tintern: Sister Hazel Perry passed away December 20 and the funeral was December 23. Sister Perry was in her 90s.

Toronto (Strathmore): The congregation recently welcomed Florence Aradanas to the church family. She is from the Philippines. The Jean Volcy family were in Fonds-Parisien, Haiti, Jean's home town, during December for a campaign with the congregation that was established there in December, 2002, under Jean's leadership. There were four baptisms this year and several days were spent in teaching the brethren there, helping to ground them in the faith. The support of all who have helped with the expenses of this mission effort is greatly appreciated.

Waterloo: Beginning January 6, Great Lakes Bible College is offering a "Restoration History" course on Tuesday evenings taught by Geoff Ellis. Javier Cuarezma has resigned as of the end of June after 10 years work with the Spanish-speaking brethren in Waterloo.

The congregation supplies a meal for its university and Bible college students once a week. A drive to supply knitted hats, scarves and mitts for 600 Chinese orphans was spearheaded by the congregation.

Windsor (West Side): The congregation has begun its new events for the year, including Keenagers, Men4Jesus, and ladies' night out. On January 18, they conducted their annual New Beginners' Celebration to celebrate the new births they witnessed over the past year. Their Wednesday evening adult class is studying Ezekiel. They recommend that every Christian should see the movie The Gospel of John, an excellent production in the Visual Bible series that brought the gospel of Matthew and the book of Acts. Katherine Maddox Haddad is available for ladies' day presentations. She requests \$1 donation per attendant to be sent to Great Lakes Bible College. She has a brochure of topics, her background, and words from those who have heard her speak, or you may contact the Owen Sound women for whom recommendations. She may be contacted at haddad1940@yahoo.com.

Calling all Church Leaders and Ministers!

to the
Swiss Chalet
50 Market Drive, Milton

Monday, April 5, 9:00 a.m. to noon

with
Michael Mazzalongo
Point Claire, QC

"What's Old and New in the Gay Rights Movement"

Lunch to follow: Duch Treat

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or 905-792-2297 **by March 17**

Sponsored by Great Lakes Bible College



by Marion Waugh
6931 Farrell Bay
Regina, SK S4X 3V4
Phone: (306) 545-0550
E-mail: waughr1@sasktel.net

(The help of Barbara Lewis in gathering news is appreciated.)

ALBERTA

Calgary: Jay Don and Mary Lee Rogers, missionaries from the Ukraine were with the church on December 14. An update of their work was followed by a potluck and fellowship. Kevin Bonde, Ali McTavish, Grant McDonald, and Hoa Tan Truong were all baptized in December. Norm and Nefia Holgrem celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on December 15. Bill and Elsie Harrington celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on December 31.

Edmonton: Monday December 8 Paul Hotchkiss passed away at the age of 34. Paul was the son of David and Verna Hotchkiss. We have added a second worship service Sunday mornings. This second service is in Korean and has grown out of a desire on the part of the Korean speaking members of the congregation to have a worship service to invite their friends to who do not speak English. Two Korean men, members of the Edmonton congregation, lead the service, doing the song-leading, prayers, presiding etc all in Korean. Then one of our evangelists delivers the sermon in English with live translation into Korean being done by an interpreter. Kerstin Bolseng was baptized into Christ on December 28. She had been attending one of our evangelistic Bible Talks as well as studying one-on-one for a number of months. We rejoice that the Lord has added 21 souls to His church in Edmonton in 2003.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford (Central Valley): Norm and Jen Weir's trip to Prince George over the holidays proved to be disappointing in that they were unable to baptize the two teachers from Fort Ware as they had expected. One was not able to get to Prince George, and the husband of the other felt that they must get on the long road back immediately following the service on Sunday. She appreciated the opportunity to attend and was made to feel welcome by the Prince George congregation. She was excited about the shoe boxes that our Sunday school children had filled for the children in the Bible class she is teaching in Fort Ware. We gave her a disposable camera to take pic-

tures to send to us as they were opened. We feel now that the best plan is to try to make a trip into Fort Ware in the spring when we will be able to spend several days teaching and baptizing those who are ready to become children of God. The First Nations people living there are the Kwadacha Tribe. They have an interesting website, which may be accessed at www.kwadacha.com. Fort Ware is approximately 570 km (355 miles) north of Prince George.

Burnaby: The last person to be baptized here in 2003 made his decision to become a child of God on Dec. 30. He is Chris Lyons, who had been attending the Burnaby meetings about a month, and studying privately with Kirk Ruch. He was introduced to the church by a friend visiting here from Vernon. Long-time member Doug Beckett, who died on Dec. 19 of double pneumonia after a brief term in the hospital, is greatly missed.

Deep Cove: The group meeting for worship here started the New Year with two big projects: the first, to supply a "pipeline" of clothing, medicines, and other needed items from B. C. to the country of Ukraine for our missionaries there to dispense in the hospitals and orphanages they visit. Each member is trying to obtain a commitment of \$20 per month from five people to fund the purchase and shipment of containers on a regular basis. The second, to work with young addicts in Vancouver. This is the result of the death of the son of Marcelle Grice, who was killed in a car accident caused by a police chase. Marcelle is determined that Michael Brown's death at the age of 28 will serve a purpose. His funeral service on Jan. 5 was an outreach to the drug community, with Dan Keeran officiating. Some 40 or so of Michael's friends were present for the open-casket service, and listened to words of wisdom not only from Dan, but pleas from his step-father, Don, his mother, his brother, Ryan, and his first girl-friend, who told how Michael had been her protector since early school days as she expressed the hope that they would not repeat his mistakes.

City Church: "There are more non-Christians than members now at each of our services," according to Steve Hasbrouck. As most are Chinese, the excellent videos in both English and Mandarin Chinese titled "Does God Exist?" sent by John Clayton are being used to teach them. A Chinese professor likes to take the floor and tell the assembly what he has learned through the films each week.

Delta: The meeting place was full on Dec. 23 as a number of visitors from other congregations came to hear Jay Don Rogers, our preacher for 20 years, tell about their work with the Ukrainian Bible Institute in the Ukrainian city of Donetsk. He also showed graphic pictures of the children in the hos-

pitals and orphanages he and Mary Lee visit to share gifts of clothing, toys and medical supplies sent to them from Canada and the U. S. Starting in January, the congregation was offered three "Christianity 101" courses that are designed to introduce people to the Delta church in order to reach out to others. These are being conducted in homes and include a fellowship meal. A new class for children, ages 8-11, had their first sessions with Alex Popov teaching through this month. The adult class started the New Year with a nine-week series on "Children of the Church", which addresses the biblical view of the place, importance, and status of children in our fellowship. Topics such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, baby blessings, the age of accountability, and others, are being covered.

Victoria: Martin and Denise Moore, who moved from a congregation in Arlington, Tx., to begin full-time ministry here in December are settling into Canadian life.

SASKATCHEWAN

Regina (Northwest): A large percentage of the congregation is involved in weekly cell groups. Activities such as benevolence, fellowship, and set-up at the leisure centre where we meet are organized through the cells. On February 1, we are beginning a series called "Look At the Man." Sunday sermons and weekly cell group discussions will centre around this study of Jesus. Once per month there is a "cell-abration" time when all of the cell groups come together to share exciting things going on in their cells. There have been some visitors. Teen cell groups and activities for teens are being organized. We are currently searching for a full-time worker and will be interviewing some of our applicants in January and February. (submitted by Carolyn McMillan)

Church of Christ Sudbury On

is seeking a full time
evangelist to work with this
congregation and Elders.
Membership of 45 members
Please send resume and, if
possible, a video/audio tape to

Sudbury Church of Christ
2663 Bancroft Drive
Sudbury On P3B 2T7
attention: Elders

MISSION NEWS

Barbara Lewis
1478 Mary Hill Lane
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 4C3
E-mail: rayel@lightspeed.ca

China: Two out of three men in China are smokers. If the government ratifies the UN Anti-Smoking Treaty, there are going to be large outcries from the populace. China is behind other top countries in getting an educational outreach started to warn their people of its dangers to health and loss of life.

Papua New Guinea: Velma Forman sent a picture of a group who met for a missionary retreat in October which included a couple from the States, an Australian visitor, and three interns for Leslie and Loopie Williams. The group spent a week in the guest house in Alotou. They had classes part of the time, and also a day was set aside for fishing, though Velma reported no one caught anything edible!

Donetsk, Ukraine: Jay Don Rogers visited a number of States last month as he told the story of the Ukrainian hospitals and their needs while here on furlough. Meanwhile, Mary Lee was quite content to have a long visitation period with their son, Brandon, and his wife, Mary, as they awaited the arrival of their first child, which will be Jay Don and Mary Lee's first grandchild. The Rogers will probably return to Donetsk some time this month.

Ethiopia: Preacher training continues to be the focus of the gospel outreach to this country. A total of 78 preachers graduated from the three Level One schools in 2003. At least one congregation was established by each graduate. Every student has participated in raising a drip irrigation survival garden during his four months of studies so that he is able to go back to his area and teach his people how to raise food using a minimum amount of water. The church in Ethiopia continued to grow at a rate of 15% during 2003. This year, a total of 95 men will graduate from these schools, and a minimum of 10 from the Level Two school. Teachers for the Level One schools are selected from the Level Two graduates. A training and counselling service for the families of deaf children was introduced this past year at the School for the Deaf in Addis Ababa, with 23 graduating from a sign language class. An organization called AC International Child Support underwrites the costs of this entire project, which includes family plan-

ning courses, and classes on the dangers of AIDS. The other most important achievement for the year was the drilling of 12 new wells located in areas where churches were already established. Thirteen were drilled in places where there were no congregations, but by October, five new churches had been planted in those locations. Another agreement was signed in December to drill 25 more wells.

Sendai, Japan: "This holiday season we sang at the Sendai Gospel Singing Festival (to the Japanese 'gospel' means acappella or black choral style singing - religion not connected), a Senior Citizens neighbourhood get-together (complete with origami Santa Claus ornaments), and even a Harley Davidson motorcycle shop's year-end get together. Funny to sing 'Jingle Bells' for 200 spiky-haired, leather-garbed, Japanese bikers. Lots of fun. We are tremendously blessed with family, friends and church family" (Jon Straker). "On Sunday evenings, we three guys (Joel, Ben and Jon) have begun a series on the gospel of John. Essentially, we are doing this in Japanese on our own, with Mawatari-sensei (the local preacher) just correcting phrases or wording that is unclear or incorrect. It's actually pretty exciting for us. Family, friends (including Moses Velasco and Judith Alexander from Canada), and sponsoring churches were wonderful about making this another great Christmas. Thank you, everyone!" (Joel Osborne). "We had quite a few guests this December (including) my dad, a missionary in Ukraine, who came to spend Christmas and New Years. This was his very first time in Japan so it was fun seeing his impressions about different things (like sushi). Already there have been so many blessings through this (the gospel of John series) as Christians and non-Christians are getting to know Christ better. Our sponsoring churches, families, and friends helped make this another incredible Christmas. Praise God!" (Ben Berry).

"Greetings from the land of amazing technology - and no central heat (in Sendai)! We continue to pound away at the language. I love the kids so much and, as my language has increased, this class has become more of a blessing. May God pour out his Spirit on you, your families, and your churches. Thank you for being a part of this work" (Crimsen Ruhnke). "God bless you. Thank you for everything" (Pamela Keese, LST intern). If you wish to receive the team's reports (by email or regular mail), contact Sendai Missions, Bramalea Church of Christ at bramaleacofc@bellnet.ca.

continued from page 2

faith in Him to provide all I need for this life; I have the sure hope of eternal life with Him (which, by the way, includes a new body), and I love God and people.

God has given me purpose for living. He has made me a minister of reconciliation which gives me the purpose of reconciling myself and others to God. This is a challenging and abundant life.

"Be still" continues to mean a paralyzed body for me, but it also means that I am still inside as I wait upon the Lord Almighty to save me from the things that overpower me; and I trust Him with my life to use it for His glory and for my good.

I invite you to believe in Jesus for your salvation and then live for God so you can have peace and joy, whatever your circumstance.

continued from page 4

who reject the necessity of baptism have yet to show, from scripture, any other way this can be done! In Galatians 3:27, Paul uses similar language. "all of you who were baptized into Christ Jesus have been clothed with Christ." (This is where Luther defends the majesty and efficacy of baptism as the new birth.) What other way is there to put on Christ? Words like "every" and "all" are universal. They do not leave loopholes or exceptions.

If we really want to be the New Testament church today, we must maintain the teaching and practice of the Bible. Human reasoning may lead some to conclude that somehow there must be a way for those who have not been immersed to be saved, or that "our" demand of immersion with the right understanding is too narrow and limiting. However, this is only human reasoning, not scripture. Our task is to preach the truth of God's word - that only through faith in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross can we find forgiveness. Baptism is an essential part of this, not as a magical ritual, but as the culminating point of a total conversion to Christ. As Paul wrote Timothy, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:16)

What's our real prison?

Claude Cox

Seeing Pierce Brosnan in the latest version of Robinson Crusoe piqued my interest in the story again, principally because I thought the ending had been changed to make it more exciting. So I read the book.

It's quite an adventure story. You'll recall his ship is wrecked and he finds himself the sole survivor, marooned on an island otherwise uninhabited except for cannibals (!) who visit once in a long while.

The wreck sits off shore and over weeks and months Crusoe is able to salvage this and that for his use. One of the articles he recovers is a Bible. After he had been there about ten months, and following a serious illness, he began to read it in earnest. This gives the whole story a decidedly religious meaning, portraying as it does one person's spiritual journey through self-searching to a kind of wholeness and peace.

He reads, "All these things have not brought thee to repentance," and "He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance, and to give remission." Now he says he read the words "Call on me, and I will deliver you" in a different sense than he had ever done before. He writes:

"... the island was certainly a prison to me, and that in the worst sense in the world; but now I learned to take it in another sense. Now I looked back upon my past life with such horror, and my sins appeared so dreadful, that my soul sought nothing of God but deliverance from the load of guilt that bore down all my comfort: as for my solitary life, it was nothing; I did not so much pray to be delivered from it, or think of it; it was all of no consideration in comparison to this."*

Yes, he comes to the conclusion that his real imprisonment is not the island, but the sins of his past. His stay on the island would last more than twenty-eight years, yet, through his reading of the Bible he arrived at a kind of peace with God and himself long before that.

His journal gives one pause, doesn't it? Sometimes we feel our imprisonment is one thing (loneliness, illness, financial ruin, broken relationships, less than ideal housing) when really there is a more serious prison within. Further, dealing with the prison within can be the means of coming to terms with the imprisonment without: it may not take it away, or it may not take it away for a long time, but we find we can live with it.

Barrie, ON

*Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Penguin Classics; London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1985). First published in 1719. The citation is from p. 111.

Please help the Sendai team in God's work to make

THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

A LAND OF THE RISEN SON

Joel Osborne and Jonathan Straker are still in need of support for the mission work in Sendai, Japan. If you would like to find out more about this work and how you can help, you can check out their website at www.sendaimissions.com, or contact the

Bramalea church of Christ:
750 Clark Blvd. / Brampton, ON / L6T 3Y2.
(905)792-2297

Or you can help by cutting-out and mailing-in the form below.

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Make cheques payable to the Bramalea church of Christ.

“The Emergent Church”

Donald Perry

A weekly email newsletter, dated Tuesday January 13, 2004, from the editors of Leadership journal makes reference to the “Emergent Church.” They had recently published a column, by Christianity Today online assistant editor Rob Moller, asking the question, “Has the emergent church emerged? Are the post-modern expressions of the Body of Christ becoming mature viable communities.” He wanted to pursue whether what first emerges as alternate eventually becomes (or at least modifies) mainstream. The editors published in the newsletter some of the responses to these questions.

One would hope that there might be some degree of independence realized in the “emergent church” which would be refreshing and positive. An independent community church could perhaps shed some of the baggage of the traditional church. We would assume that a priority on the agenda of such churches would be an in-depth, pervasive study of the Bible and a reevaluation of what would honour and glorify God. In a postmodern world in which truth is relative, a clear cut knowledge of the absolute truth of God would, need to be pursued and effectively communicated to the present generation. An evaluation of how best to minister to one another in Christ and to the needs of society would be a challenge. It should be possible to more effectively do the work of God in this day with the assistance of the means of mass communication and the versatile computer.

The responses in the

newsletter express disappointment in the “emergent church.” One response suggested that “it’s funny” that a well publicized emergent church had come to them, a megachurch, asking for financial support. The suggestion was that the problem was that young people don’t give to the “church” and those “churches” can’t support themselves.

Another response informs us that in the “postmodern services” they light candles, recite some poetry, drink coffee, feel ‘emergent’ and teach only the same bland middle of the road evangelical message their parent church does. The conclusion is that most of what they do is a “growth strategy for the boomer age pastoral staff who realize they aren’t hip enough to reach the youngsters.”

J. L. Collins writes from Tennessee: “It appears to me that the ‘emerging

church’ has the Burger King mentality: ‘I want it my way.’ We live in a society that degrades any part of the Bible that calls for commitment, the Lordship of Christ, living for Jesus in any manner that is not comfortable, and the respect for delegated divinely appointed authority. Still, like all human beings we are incurably religious. The so called ‘emerging church’ is ‘emerging’ but it is not ‘church’ as defined by the Bible. Church is where people meet ‘in the name of Jesus.’ The ‘emerging church’ meets to find friends, spouses, games, recreation, a good time, and comrades who share the ‘let’s get together and throw some Christian terms around so we can legitimize our rebellion; clothe our rebellion in religious terms. While I agree that methods of reaching people ought to be modified to meet the needs of the emerging culture,

most of what we are seeing today in the ‘emerging’ religious movement is just ‘rags of religion in the best rags that money taken from the traditional church can buy.’”

There may be a temptation for some, especially the younger generation, to see greener pastures on the other side of the fence. If they do not join such movements themselves, they may want to incorporate some of these fringe practices into the church of God. Our churches may need to improve the quality of our spiritual relationship to God, our loving relationship to one another, and the quality and quantity of our outreach ministry, but some popular self centred behaviour pattern is not where it’s at.

Beamsville, ON



Gospel Herald

WEBSITE IMPROVED

Recent changes have been made in the Gospel Herald Website, including an on-line catalogue for use in ordering materials from the bookstore. (Orders can be phoned, faxed, or e-mailed to the bookstore.)

The site has been redesigned by David Perry and is being updated to provide better service. The website address is:

www.gospelherald.org

Visit the Gospel Herald there soon.

Back on the Vision Network!



**Friday mornings at 8:30 Eastern Time
Beginning February 6, 2004**

We are thankful that Key To The Kingdom is going back on the Vision Network. This channel is available all across Canada and provides an opportunity to reach a very large viewing audience.

Please pray for those who will watch the program and call in for the Bible study. Advertise in your community, giving the date and time of the broadcast. Your support of the program, through prayer, follow up, and financial contribution are needed and appreciated.

For information or comments, please contact:

Strathmore Blvd. Church of Christ
346 Strathmore Blvd., Toronto, ON M4C 1N3

- Phone: 416-461-7406
- Fax: 416-424-1850
- E-mail: maxc@strathmorecofc.ca

Att'n: Max Craddock

(The broadcasts over **The Miracle Channel** have been discontinued as of the end of January. Response to these programs was very low, only an average of 5 calls a week.)

OBITUARIES

Michael David Brown

With the conviction that their son's life and death must have meaning, Don and Marcelle Grice planned an unusual funeral service for Michael David Brown on Jan. 5th. As Michael was killed as the result of a high-speed police chase on Dec. 28th, they were determined that his death should serve as a warning to other young people who become involved in drugs. Not only was the speaker's remarks geared to a plea to the many young people with whom Michael associated to choose a better way of life, but also the remembrances by his father, mother, brother, and girl friend voiced the same appeal.

Daniel Keeran, preacher for the Deep Cove church, pointed out that at times when he was in prison; Michael struggled with the idea of God, a desire to do what was right, and to show his friends. He had been sent to a Christian school until trouble caused by his attention deficit disorder in his early teen years caused his change to an alternative school. This meant that he was placed with peers who had similar behavioural problems, which, in turn, lead to his being influenced to try drugs as he struggled with understanding his high level of energy and

propensity for getting into trouble. As he became addicted, Michael turned to petty theft to support his habit, eventually being sent to prison. This pattern was repeated over and over, with a few attempts in rehab centres to help him being of little value.

Copies of Brother Keeran's remarks were given to each person attending the funeral, along with a sheet asking for responses to the memorial service. The open casket was flanked by mementoes and pictures of Michael's childhood. His family wanted those present to realize the potential for good that Michael had as a caring and protective person, even in the midst of his addiction. At the same time, their prayer was that the shock of his death would cause others to reconsider the path that their own lives are taking and make a change before they have a similar or worse fate. It was emphasized that Michael would want to be remembered in this way. Free counselling was offered, as well as information about God and the Christian life.

Michael was 28. He was released from prison for the last time in November, and had looked forward to a happy Christmas with his family. In addition to his father and mother, he leaves a younger brother, Ryan, and his grandmother.

Submitted by Barbara Lewis

Paul Hotchkiss

After a brave, thirteen year battle with ALS (Lou Gerhig's disease), Paul Wayne Hotchkiss left us in the wee small hours of December 8, 2003 at the age of 34. He graduated from this life with loving family and friends at his bedside. A celebration of Paul's short life on this earth was conducted on Friday, December 12 in Barrhead, Alberta. Internment was at the Rich Valley, AB. cemetery.

Paul was born on August 4, 1969 in Listowel, Ontario. On July 23, 1988, he married his best friend, Sherri-May Miller in North Bay, Ontario. When Paul was diagnosed at the time of the birth of their first child, he and Sherri-May decided to move to Edmonton, Alberta to be near the ALS experts. They received much support from these experts and especially from the staff at the Barrhead hospital. Through the Muscular Dystrophy Association, Paul and Sherri-May had opportunity to meet with Stephen Hawking, from whom they received encouragement to keep on keeping on. Stephen is a world renowned scientist who has had ALS since age 21 and still teaches at Oxford University.

From the Eulogy of one of his caregivers: "It didn't take long for his trademark grin to surface either. One day I couldn't seem to pick up his electric shaver without turning it on accidentally, and after hearing me buzz several times in the bathroom, he caught my eye from where he was sitting in the living room, and with a big grin remarked, 'If you want to play, all you need to do is ask.' When asked how he was feeling, he would sometimes reply, 'Not a day over 80.'"

Besides his loving wife, Paul is survived by their three children: Jonathon (13), Katryna (12) and Mikaela (10); his parents, David & Verna Hotchkiss; seven brothers and sisters and their mates: Margaret (Vern) Hibbard, Bernice Raben, Linda (Bob) Haskayne, Gary, Nancy (Chris) Moore, Keith, Tom (Susan) and many nieces and nephews. Paul leaves to mourn his passing, a very large host of friends whose lives have been greatly touched by his dedication to God.

Verna Hotchkiss

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:bookreviews@gospelherald.org



***Yet Will I Trust Him,
Understanding God in a Suffering
World by John Mark Hicks, College
Press, Joplin, Missouri, 337 pages,
\$19.99 (U.S.)***

The author is a teacher at the Harding Graduate School of Religion and a Gospel Preacher. Allan Black, a teacher at the same school says, "This book has changed my own views of God's providence and human suffering. It reflects an amazing combination of theological scholarship, teaching experience, personal experience in suffering, and clarity in thinking and writing."

The sudden death of his wife caused the author to give the most serious study of this subject. Each chapter is written in answer to such questions as these: "Where Is God?", "How Involved Is God In His World?", "Why Does God Do What He Does in a Fallen World?" "How Does Faith Endure?", "Where Is the Victory?", "How Does Faith Question?"

These are questions that will challenge all of us at some time in our lives. This book will be of tremendous value in dealing with them.

Additional material on this topic can be found on the internet (Details given in the book).

42nd ANNUAL TRAINING FOR SERVICE
FRIDAY APRIL 9, 2004

BODY BUILDING

Discovering and Developing Our Spiritual Gifts

Session 1 **All for One, One for All**
Session 2 **Finding My Place in the Body**
Session 3 **Leading & Serving Our Family**

*"... to prepare God's people for works of service,
so that the body may be built up ..."* (Ephesians 4:12)



Peter Morphy: For the past five years Peter has been serving as the Involvement Minister in the Mesa Church of Christ in Mesa, Arizona. Before moving to Arizona, Peter preached in Sudbury, Hamilton and Toronto. His primary responsibilities in the Body include assisting, training, motivating and encouraging the deacons and ministry leaders who serve the church and encouraging and mentoring members to be more active in the work of ministry. Currently there are 30 different ministries led by at least one of our 28 deacons or ministry leaders. Peter's work predominantly involves teaching Bible classes, leading seminars, training for soul winning, and conducting personal Bible studies. Peter also helps the church cast and develop a vision and strategy for future growth and direction, which includes increasing spiritually, and adding souls. The Mesa church planted a new congregation in May 2003 with about 180 members just 10 miles away. Peter and his wife, Judy, have three children: Robert (13); Christopher (11); and Kaitlyn (9).

Location:

Cawthra Park Secondary School –
1305 Cawthra Road, Mississauga
(South of Q.E.W.)

Time:

9:30 am – 4:00 pm
Singing – 9:30 am

- Bring your own lunch
- Beverages Provided

**Meaford Church of Christ
Winter Youth Rally
February 27, 28 and 29, 2004**

THEME:

**“In moments
Like These”**

*Heaven's prepared for us;
how do we live here?*

Activities: Ice Skating, Ice Sculpture, Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides,
Sports, Talent Show and Loads of Fun



Cost: \$20.00 per person – Max: \$40.00 per family
All Inclusive



**Registration is required prior to Feb. 14th
grade 7 & up**

To register or for more information

Contact: Nita Irwin at 1-519-538-2782 or email: mirwin@bmts.com

or

David Cramp at 1-519-538-4870

or

Meaford Church of Christ at 1-519-538-1750

Fax 1-519-538-5486