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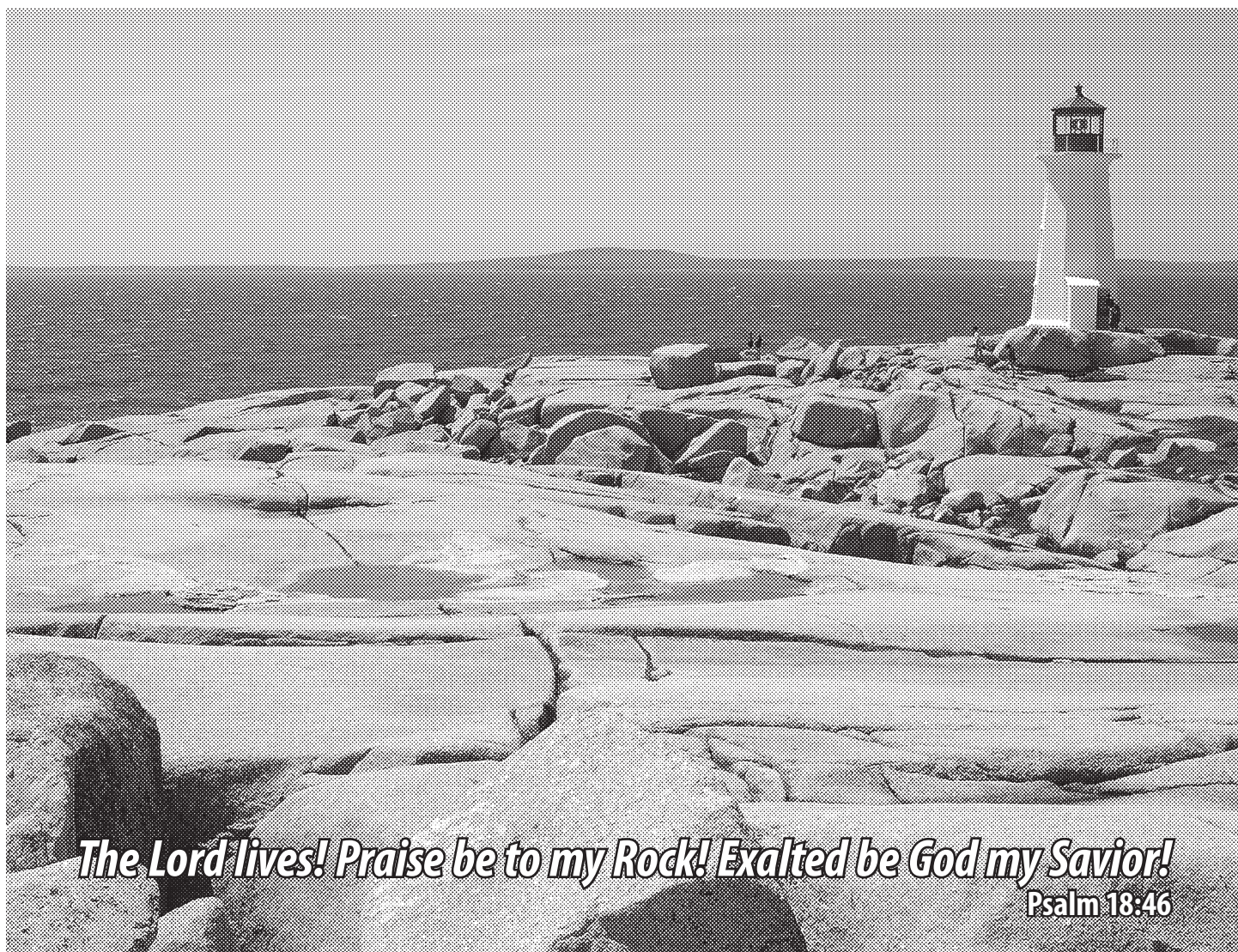
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Vol. 70, No. 3

BEAMSVILLE, ONTARIO

March 2005



***The Lord lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior!***

**Psalm 18:46**

**LATE BREAKING NEWS!** The CRTC has sent their letter of Certification for the Canadian production of Key To The Kingdom. This will allow the program to return to the Vision Network in March. See page 14 for details.

# From “Have to” to “Want to”

Don Smith

Two older preachers were reminiscing. One said, “I remember growing up in church, attending Sunday school, memorizing scripture, being baptized, teaching Bible classes, going to Bible college, preaching sermons and gospel meetings, baptizing people, but what I remember more than anything else was the day I was REALLY converted... it was the day I went from “have to” to “want to”. The Pharisees “had to” and Jesus “wanted to”. He showed the world that faith in God is a joy no one can take from anyone. His purpose was to give us “full life” and as he introduced that life, he did so with his own incredible joy. The Hebrew writer reminds us that Jesus was anointed with the oil of joy. (Hebrews 1:9)

Then, to top it all off, Jesus said he would be with us and in us forever. So will the entire Godhead. “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14)

This is great but it certainly isn’t the real test of faith, is it? Getting along with God is not that difficult. The real test is how to get along with each other. And, not only how to get along with each other, but how to love each other and “want to”, do so.

Zip back in time and reminisce with me.

Christ comes into the world and reminds everyone that God loves each one so much that He gave His only son, and whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have eternal life. This is so because God has not sent His son into the world to condemn it but to save it: each and every one. So, just before Christ leaves the earth, He says for us to do what He came to do... go into the world and make disciples of all, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son,

and the Holy Spirit. Then at Pentecost Peter stands up and preaches what Jesus told us to preach... repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of sins and we will receive the Holy Spirit. That is what Jesus has always preached, so Peter does a good job sharing that message. Peter goes on to say that this wonderful gift is for absolutely everyone... even people we don’t particularly know or spend time with. Again, this is what Jesus has already told us. (Jn.3:16; Mt.28:18-20) God

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## *The real test is how to get along with each other*

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is for all. Jesus is for all. The Holy Spirit is for all. Now, share Him with all and “get along”... just like we tell our children... “get along”.

When President Reagan stood at the Berlin Wall and said, “Tear down this wall”, there was an eruption of celebration throughout the world. But, after a few months, joy turned to confusion. Now that the wall of separation had been torn down, “How do people get along with each other... and want to do so?” As long as the wall was there people knew how to live, how to think, how to treat others, especially those who lived on the other side of the wall.

Peter preached what Jesus preached, but Peter couldn’t live it,

until many years later. The day he was really converted the fruit of the Spirit replaced his own spirit. It is the same today. When love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control replaces religious power, prestige and control, then God releases Himself into our minds and hearts. People then become more important than programs.

Peter preached it but he didn’t personalize it for a few years. Acts 2:38 is not the ‘swing verse’ in Acts. In fact it is a repeat of Matthew 28:18-20. The real test is found in Acts 10,11 and 15. It is getting out from behind the pulpit and “showing” the message... especially now that the Holy Spirit is demonstrating the welcome of Christ to all people. The “far off” people, as Peter preached in Acts 2. Even though he preached it, as Christ did originally, Peter now had to confront his own preaching, and he struggled with it. If not for the Holy Spirit bringing about the Gentile conversions (I suspect the Holy Spirit is behind every conversion), Peter may have never personally and inwardly received the true message of the gospel. Christ is for all. Those who live differently. Eat differently. View life differently. Think of family and friends differently. Vote differently.

Christ has never changed. Nor has His offer... Himself. And He has never been a problem. It’s us. We have always been the problem. How believers treat each other. Think about each other. Believe about each other. The Holy Spirit brings unity, and we bring confusion and discord. Not very good news. Remember the beginning of 1 Corinthians? Paul reminds them that God has given them every spiritual gift. Yet, in chapter 3 he is quick to point out that they are anything but spiritual. Galatians is a repeated theme. The fact of

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their constant bickering proved their lack of spirituality. They refused to accept one another or embrace diversity. Nothing has changed. We may know more Greek words but do we speak the Spirit's message of love? We know Christ is for all but what we show the world is that Christ is for all as long as they think, believe, and live exactly the way we do. This was the primary reason for the New Testament epistles. They were written by Paul, John, Peter and James specifically reminding believers to "get along" with each other. Some wanted to keep that wall of separation between them and other believers. If anyone climbed the wall to their side, then they could belong. But, they were not going to climb. It is easier not to climb. But Christ taught all of us well. When we separate, we segregate. When we label, we libel.

Lastly, Jesus responds to his critics. He was asked by the very religious

people of his day why he did what he did. "Why do you spend time with sinners? Why do you fellowship with them? Why do you eat with them? Why do you love them so? Why do you laugh and cry with them?" His life answered their questions. He is the gospel. He is for all. He welcomed all. He demonstrated God to every sincere seeker. He healed every broken heart. He still does. He broke down the wall. Some of the more "righteous" believers went about building walls instead of showing others how to live the way Jesus lived. Not much has changed in the past 2000 years. To keep the command that (as Jesus said) will change every person in the world is to love God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, with every fibre of our being. Then to put that same energy into loving every person God allows us to meet. Jesus said that if we did this then the world would take notice that we really do belong

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to Him. He even enables us to do this. He pours out His love into our hearts. He pours out His Spirit into our lives. He pours out Christ into our minds. (Romans 8) All this is from Him and for Him.

I remember the day I was really converted. It was the day I went from "have to" to "want to". How about you?

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## A Different Driver

Wayne Turner



**T**he only certain things in life are death and taxes, in that order." Right? Not necessarily. Someone has suggested that this statement should be amended to "the only certain things in life are death, taxes and change." (We might add, not necessarily in that order.) Canada is experiencing cultural and legal change at a pace that some people find confusing and alarming. Values that formed the bedrock of society are being challenged and replaced.

Public discussion about the definition of marriage has raised two issues that up until a few years ago were considered to be unthinkable: same-sex marriage and polygamy. On June 9, 1999, the House of Commons of Canada, by a vote of 216 to 55, affirmed, "That, in the opinion of this house, it is necessary, in light of public debate around recent court decisions, to state that marriage is and should remain the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, and that Parliament will take all necessary steps within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada to preserve this definition of marriage in Canada." Less than six years later, that same House is in the process of passing bill C-38 which will, according to Parliament's own website, "codify a definition of marriage in Canadian law, expanding on the traditional common-law understanding of civil marriage as an exclusively heterosexual institution. Bill C-38 defines civil marriage as 'the lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others,' thus extending civil marriage to conjugal couples of the same sex." Although the discussion of legalizing polygamy is only in beginning stages, the increasing inflow of peoples from areas where polygamy is accepted raises the possibility that it may only be a matter of time before polygamy will also be legalized. (Given the current practice of easy divorce and remarriage, North America already has "serial polygamy" anyway.)

What has caused the change? Why are some of the same people who voted to defend marriage as a male/female relationship in 1999 now voting to include same-sex relationships? Some citizens, maybe rightly, will see this as evidence of a lack of integrity and credibility among Canada's politicians. Perhaps we should see this as evidence of something entirely different. There is a different set of values driving the country.

For centuries, Europe and consequently North America were dominated by some combination of the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches. For centuries, European heads of state governed as members of one of these bodies, and with the needed support of their church. The rule of these leaders and their churches allowed some Biblical values to be entrenched in the cultures and laws of these nations.

The moral absolutes from the Bible have given way to a new set of absolutes – a "new morality" that is shaped by human rights. Little could Thomas Jefferson and the other framers of the Declaration of Independence envision the impact of their words on the world. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These words, rightly, have helped create toleration, social justice and protection for oppressed minorities. This is echoed and expanded in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:

...Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice...Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability." The leaders of Canada's government believe that one of their most important duties is to protect any and all minorities, and to ensure equal and fair treatment in Canadian law and culture. In their pursuit of justice and fairness, they are willing to lay aside literally thousands of years of custom and law to redefine marriage to include same-sex relationships.

As Christians, this should not surprise us. We have lived in a culture that, because of its Judeo-Christian heritage, has been more compatible with our values. Perhaps some Christians were lulled into a false sense of security, believing that our views had (or should have had) more influence than any other views. As our culture has become increasingly secular and tolerant of a broad diversity of belief (or non-belief) and lifestyle, there have been frequent reminders that the culture in which we live is described in the Bible as the "world." Jesus pointed to the tension between this world and God when he stated, "friendship with the world is enmity with God." He warned that in the world, we would have trouble; only in Him we would have peace.

With this shift in the values that are driving our society has also come a reversal in how Christians are seen. As "political correctness" and tolerance have become the guiding principles, those standing for Biblical values are portrayed as narrow and intolerant. Many see any attempt to evangelize others as wrong, as an attempt to dominate and control – to infringe on other people's freedom to believe whatever they want. Ironically, it seems that there is now toleration for all, except Christians.

Now, more than ever, with so many voices in opposition, we must faithfully follow and proclaim God's word. As Jeremiah 23:28,29 says, "Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?" declares the LORD. 'Is not my word like fire,' declares the LORD, 'and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?'"

### GOSPEL HERALD

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## Drifting to Death

**O**n a quiet Sunday afternoon in Ohio, two boys, 8 and 11 years old, are sent on an errand by their mother to a house a short distance away along a road with a view of the Ohio River. The river is at flood condition so the mother reminds them to stay away from its banks.

We will never know the full story, however, as these boys walk along they see two older boys who invite them to come down for a boat ride. These boys have an old flat-bottom "johnboat" with a small outboard motor. The younger boys gave in to the lure of the river and the invitation for a short ride, which would lead to their death.

They push out from the shore and begin to pull the rope to start the outboard motor. As they are doing so they are drifting down river toward some oil barges that are moored along the shore. About the time they arrive at these barges and the undertow begins to affect them the motor starts and the driver gives it a full throttle, causing the bow to lift out of the water. This combined with the undertow causes the boat to flip throwing its occupants into the water.

The driver survived. The oldest, a young married man, died from a fractured skull caused by striking the barge. The two young boys drowned. The body of the younger was found four weeks later and several miles down stream.

A sad story and a true one! These were two good boys whose mother was a member of my home congregation. My mother particularly remembered this day because the women's washroom door often locked and had to be opened from the outside. The 11year old had let my mother out of this washroom that very morning.

It is sad that these boys did not obey the instruction given by their mother that day. Psalm 1 begins, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the council of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners

or sit in the seat of mockers" (verse 1). This verse points out how sin often progresses. These boys listened to the council of those who encouraged them to disregard their mother's word. (The survivor of this tragedy experienced much sorrow for many years because of guilt over encouraging them to disobey their mother.) If these boys had not stopped to listen, accepted the invitation, or sat down in the boat, perhaps they would be alive even today.

Sin has a way of growing in one's life as he drifts further and further away from the safety of God's secure harbour. The Hebrew writer gives warning to those who would become discouraged and/or complacent in their relationship with God. "We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away" (Heb. 2:1). Vine in his Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words tells us the word "drift" literally means, "to flow past, glide by". He goes on to say that the significance in Hebrews 2:1 is to "find oneself flowing or passing by without giving due heed to a thing, here the things that were heard or perhaps the salvation of which they spoke.

The world today would attempt to press the Christian into the mould of worldly thinking (Romans 12:1,2) that sees evil as good and good as evil. This kind of thinking is fostered in very subtle ways. Few Christians make a giant leap away from God; rather they drift in their thinking from God's strict will to the "politically correct" thinking of the world. Morality is a good example. In the old days on TV even married couples were never shown sleeping in the same bed. Now, however, not only do couples appear in the same bed, they most likely are not even married to each other. Reality shows are sometimes simply immorality for profit. Getting what one wants is justified by using whatever means is necessary to achieve that goal. Some

are willing to justify a change in moral standards by saying, "We live in a more enlightened age". The Christian should never be afraid to speak up even when laws would allow moral standards that are contrary to scripture.

Consider the problem of drifting in religious matters. Denominations have long ago moved away from a major concern regarding "Thus says the Lord" and have turned to "Thus says the Annual Church Conference" or suchlike. That which is more acceptable to the people and/or the times often replaces clear directives of the Word of God. This should come as no surprise since Paul warned the Ephesian elders that even from among their own number would come those who would distort the truth. (Acts 20:30) In the 4th chapter of each of his letters to Timothy he warns that people would abandon the faith for more humanly pleasing doctrines.

There remains the potential for drifting to death even today. Therefore, we must give careful attention to the Word of God and guard our feet to walk in God's truth. In the words of Jude, "Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3).

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## “Forgive as the Lord Forgave” No.3 (What? No limit? Matthew 18)

When I seriously consider my relationships with others and with God I must face the fact that my sins, offences and estrangements are usually the result of my own characteristics, attitudes and weaknesses. With this knowledge, both myself and those whom I have offended necessarily anticipate the real possibility of repetitions. What if such occur? Again? Such being true, why bother trying to reconcile?

The offender, humbly aware of the weakness and truly penitent, will take measures to avoid a repeat performance. Although these certainly involve personal resolve and determined effort, such is not usually enough for success. These can be supplemented by guidance and encouragement from fellow Christians, help from professionals, the influence of the Word and the Spirit and prayer to the Father that our hearts might be moulded in the likeness of the heart of Jesus.

The offended, perhaps because of personal experience, realizes that the offence could very well be repeated. Why forgive? Why leave myself open to further pain? How many times should I be expected to forgive? Surely there should be a limit!

The startling truth is that there can be no limit.

Matthew chapter 18 begins with a question about who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus’ response calls on each disciple to become the greatest by humbling himself. He then deals with our responsibilities towards others. It is a serious thing to cause others spiritual harm.

We must by all means avoid being the cause of such harm. The self renunciation involved to avoid offending others is likened to the amputation of a hand or foot or the gouging out of an eye. Pretty serious business! This whole section is about relationships among brethren and especially warns us to avoid causing others to sin, to wander away or to be lost. It ends with, “In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost (v.14).

Obviously, Jesus understood that the way we treat each other could have very adverse, long-term results. God is very much concerned and seeks after “those that wander off”. Am I concerned? Do I seek after them? What about you?

Offences have, do and will happen

even (sometimes it appears more so) among brethren. Jesus next addresses the procedures for correcting such offences. Although it is likely that most of us can list the steps and procedures involved, I fear that very few manage to do them. Therefore we will examine them once more.

The first step is a private one, evidently to avoid magnifying the problem by making it public. Such can be embarrassing to the parties involved, a blot on the church and cause resolution to be even more difficult. Although Jesus’ instruction is to go to the offender we tend to go in another direction. We go to others and share our hurt with one or two or several. The matter becomes public and thus more complicated and difficult. Much harm is done. We thus, perhaps inadvertently, commit a serious offence against the offender. Jesus says to “go” to him and “show” him not someone else. It may be difficult but it is so much better to do it Jesus’ way.

The onus here is on the offended, the person who has been hurt. In hindsight most of us can look back on situations where failure to quickly take this first step has seriously worsened a situation.

If step one is successful “you have won your brother over” (v.15). In the context I believe that this means more than that you have regained your relationship with him. But, disappointingly, this first step is not always successful. He may not be convinced by your effort to “show” him his fault. Jesus teaches that one or two others now be involved. The story is now to be shared but only in a limited way. It is still contained.

Perhaps the one or two will help you to see the offence differently, perhaps less seriously. These should be people who are respected, especially by the offender, and who have shown wisdom. Hopefully, together you will be able to convince him and he will be “won”.

*continued on page 14*

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## Set an Example for the Believers

### 2. What Do Your Words Say About The Condition Of Your Heart?

**F**or out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned." Matthew 12:34-37

"Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." Perhaps the most troubling aspect of evil words is the condition of the heart that said them. Controlling the tongue is a discipline. Thinking before we speak, not responding when we are angry, or at least counting to ten before we respond are all good ways of helping us control what we say. However the real solution is in filling our hearts with what we want to come out of our mouths.

How do we set an example for the believers in speech? We set a positive example when we ensure that the words that we speak, write or otherwise communicate are always kind, gracious, good and give glory to God. That is certainly a tall order! James said that anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect and has the ability to keep the whole body in check. (James 3:2) Indeed James could give us the idea that controlling the tongue is simply impossible. In fact in James 3:8 he writes, "But no man can tame the tongue." If no one can tame the tongue, why should we try? If no one can tame the tongue why do we feel such guilt when we say or write the wrong thing?

No person on their own has the ability to tame the tongue, but with God working in us all things are possible. If we are to tame the tongue, and show a positive example in our use of our

tongues, we must ask God's help and work hard in two key areas. We must work at disciplining ourselves, thinking before we speak, not speaking in anger or at the least counting to ten before we speak. We must work hard at filling our hearts with Jesus, filling our hearts with what we want to come out of our mouths. Jesus' own words assured us that what is in our hearts will eventually come out of our mouths, so we must ensure that our hearts are filled with what we want to come out of our mouths.

Garbage in garbage out! What we allow to enter our hearts will eventually find its way coming out of our mouths. We may say that we are allowing the gossip, hurtful comments, obscene language, etc... to go in one ear and come out the other, but too often we find ourselves using the language we hear and passing on the gossip. We must guard our hearts with great care so that the purity of our hearts will be seen in what we say. We will not find pure hearts simply by ensuring that nothing evil enters our hearts, but we must also work hard at filling our hearts with what is good, positive and uplifting. Daily Bible reading and prayer are essential here, attending worship, Bible study and fellowship opportunities with other Christians are also helpful. When we fill our hearts with what is good, there will be no room for anything else.

We must also discipline ourselves so that we can take steps at controlling what we say. Careless words are spoken when we speak before we think, thinking before we say anything is important here. Speaking when we are angry, hurt or discouraged is dangerous. We must either take the time to think carefully before we speak or not speak at all. We may think that gossip is harmless talk, until we have

been the target of the gossip. Fires go out when there is a lack of fuel. Gossip stops when we stop talking. Try this sometime when you are in a group where everyone is talking about someone, gossiping and putting them down. Say something positive about the individual and you may find that the entire tone of the conversation changes. Many years ago I was in a group where we were all putting someone down, when one more mature than the rest of us suggested that we take a minute to pray for the individual that we were talking about; we did and never spoke about him that way again. We usually don't make those kinds of interventions because we fear becoming the target of our friends, because we stopped their gossip. We cannot let fear stop us from doing what is right. Have you ever wondered if your friends gossip about you the same way they gossip about others when you are not around?

Purify your hearts, discipline your tongue and be an example for the believers in your speech.

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## (2) Baptism for the Forgiveness of Sin

*Edwin Broadus*

Our first article promised a closer historical examination of the relationship between baptism and the forgiveness of sin within the Restoration Movement. Since Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone were once Presbyterians, they began with the Reformed view of baptism set forth by Huldreich Zwingli and John Calvin in the Protestant Reformation. Prior to that the Christian consensus for 1500 years had been that baptism is for the remission of sins, and after the Reformation the Lutheran and Anglican churches retained this view. While Luther is remembered for emphasizing salvation by faith alone, he also taught that baptism “effects forgiveness of sins” (Small Catechism), and he reconciled this with salvation by faith by explaining, “Yes, it is true that our works are of no use for salvation. Baptism, however, is not our work but God’s” (Larger Catechism).

But for Zwingli baptism is an outward sign of forgiveness already granted, and he consciously repudiated baptism for the forgiveness of sins. Calvin embraced this view, for although he said that God “wills that all who believe be baptized for the remission of sins,” he explained that baptism is only “a token and proof of our cleansing” and “like a sealed document to confirm to us that all our sins are so abolished, remitted, and effaced” (Christian Institutes). Calling baptism “an outward sign of an inward grace” has popularized this. When Stone and the Campbells began their work this view was held by most Protestants in America, including Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, so it is not surprising that these men originally subscribed to the same position. It is also not surprising that they changed only with reluctance and some trepidation, not only because change is often difficult, but also because they wanted to unify Christians, and they were well aware that immersion for the forgiveness of sins separated them from nearly all their religious neighbors. As it turned out, the same convictions and practice about baptism distinguish us even now from most denominations

around us and have been an obstacle (albeit, we would say, a necessary one) to Christian unity.

The evolution of Alexander Campbell’s views on this matter began shortly before he debated William L. Maccalla, a Presbyterian, in 1823. Campbell said that after he accepted the challenge to debate he decided to study the design of baptism “with the zeal of a freshman.” Fifteen years later he recalled that in the debate “I contended that it was a divine institution designed for putting the legitimate subject of it in actual possession of the remission of his sins – that to every believing subject it did formally, and in fact, convey to him the forgiveness of sins. It was with much hesitation I presented this view of the subject at that time, because of its perfect novelty.”

Obviously, Campbell believed he had arrived at a new view about baptism and forgiveness of sins. John Mark Hicks, who traces the evolution of Campbell’s thinking

in two incisive articles in “Baptism and Remission of Sins” (see endnote), maintains that Campbell changed his views after his debate with Maccalla, for then he carefully distinguished between what “really” cleanses us (the blood of Christ) and what “formally” does this (baptism), whereas in 1838 he said that baptism puts the subject “in actual possession of the remission of sins.” Hicks argues that in 1823 Campbell still held the Reformed view that baptism is only symbolic, but that in 1838 he was either unwilling or unable to recognize that he had changed his position. But since Campbell always maintained he had not changed his mind, it is more charitable to think he was struggling (as many do) to clarify his views and to reconcile biblical statements about the relationship of salvation to the blood of Christ and baptism, and that it took him awhile to fine tune those views. He said in the debate, “I know it will be said that I have affirmed that baptism ‘saves us,’ that it ‘washes away sins.’

Well, Peter and Paul have said it before me.” It was in this context that he distinguished between the “real” cause and the “formal” one. The problem may not seem that difficult for those of us with the benefit of 180 years of reading, thinking, writing and preaching on baptism, the blood of Christ, and forgiveness, but Campbell was plowing new ground and trying to fit all this together in 1823. Many years later he used different wording, distinguishing between what is “pardonprocuring” (the blood of Christ) and “pardon-certifying” (baptism), and by then he believed that the procuring and the certifying were simultaneous, since he unhesitatingly affirmed that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins.

After the Maccalla debate some began immersing believers for the remission of sins. Then in 1827 Campbell’s coworker, Walter Scott, who had already influenced Campbell’s emerging views on baptism, participated in an event he later identified as the restoration of baptism to its original New Testament teaching and practice. A seeker named William Amend heard Scott end a sermon with

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Acts 2:38 and asked to be baptized. He had long waited to hear someone preach what this passage teaches, and as he listened to Scott he edged to the front. Years later, Amend reminded Scott of his closing words that day: "The Scriptures no longer shall be a sealed book. God means what he says. Is there any man present who will take God at his Word, and be baptized for remission of sins?" Amend recalled, "At that moment my feelings were such that I could have cried out, 'Glory to God! I have found the man who I have long sought for.'" After this Scott preached with great success in the surrounding area, baptizing hundreds of people for the remission of sins, and with this baptism became integral to the Campbellian wing of the Restoration Movement.

Barton W. Stone and those with him reached similar conclusions about baptism. He preached baptism for the forgiveness of sins once in 1807, but he did not repeat it for many years because in the revivalist atmosphere of the time it "was like throwing ice water on the people; that it froze all their warmth out, and came well nigh driving vital religion out of the country." After he met Alexander Campbell in 1824, he said he saw no difference in what each of them taught "except on baptism for remission of sins." He added, "Even this I had once received and taught...but had strangely let it go from my mind, till brother Campbell revived it afresh." In 1826, with objection from Stone, an associate, B. F. Hall, who was influenced by Campbell, began preaching baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and by 1832, when those working with Campbell and those working with Stone united, there was agreement on baptism. Stone said in 1833 that "I know of few among us that deny baptism to be a divinely instituted means for the remission of sins, and for the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Stone, like Campbell, confronted the question of how forgiveness can come by faith and the blood of Christ and yet require baptism. Part of Stone's genius was the ability to state his views in terms the common man could understand. He explained in 1828: "Baptism saves us and washes away our sins, in the same manner that the waters of Jordan washed away Naaman's leprosy.... None are so ignorant as to think that the literal water washed away his leprosy; but it was Naaman's obedience to the divine order. So in baptism, none are so ignorant as to imagine that water washes away sins or saves; but it is the grace of God through obedience to his ordinance." For Stone

this was explanation enough, and this is largely the way it has been left in the Restoration Movement.

Both men were troubled by the way some pressed their views about baptism. Stone criticized the spirit of some who argued over the purpose of baptism, saying in 1835 that people on both sides had "indulged in hard feelings and speeches," and that instead of "attempts to heal the wound, they have caused it to bleed afresh, till division has been the result." In another article the same year he said that "such antisectarian-sectarians are doing more mischief to the cause, and advancement of truth, the unity of Christians and the salvation of the world, than all the skeptics in the world. In fact, they make skeptics." Campbell wrote in 1840, "Some of my brethren, with too much ardor,

through the force of strong feeling, and without all the premises before them, have transcended this view and these bounds and given to baptism an undue eminence – a sort of pardon-procuring, rather than a pardon-certifying efficacy. But such has never been my reasoning or my course."

Because the views of Stone and Campbell on this subject rested on solid biblical ground, baptism for the forgiveness of sins became an identifying mark of Churches of Christ. Their understanding of the design of baptism charted a clear course between the erroneous sacramental view of baptism of Christian history and the relegation of baptism to mere symbolism by today's Evangelicals.

Burlington, ON

Jack W. Cottrell traces the development of Reformed theology on baptism in two excellent articles in *Baptism and Remission of Sins*, David W. Fletcher, editor (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1990). Because the Reformed position on baptism has been almost universally embraced by Evangelicals, many are unaware of its comparatively recent roots.

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

**Reminder:** To be published in the following month's Gospel Herald, each congregation's information should be sent to Walter Straker before the third last Tuesday of the month. Please clearly mark the email or the envelope: "NewsEast."

### ONTARIO

Since this is annual meeting time, many congregations held their annual meetings during January and February.

**Beamsville:** Geoff Taylor has agreed to work to evaluate, coordinate and promote small group ministries in the congregation. The ladies' group has been studying Isaiah 40 with Ruby Ford leading the discussion. Janet Cope left on January 23 to look after her ailing father in Wales.

**Bramalea:** The Bible Bowl on the gospel of John is scheduled for March 5 at 1 p.m. The congregation recently began a book club, which will meet every six weeks to read and discuss eight books during the year. February 13 was designed as a "Bring a Friend" day. International church of Christ/Church of Christ dialogue meeting is planned for March 21 at

Milton, Ontario, in the Ramada Inn. An initial discussion took place between 10 brethren on January 15, and a second meeting was scheduled for February 26. Albert and Mary Atta-Yeboah, formerly of Harding Avenue, Paul Neves, formerly of Strathmore, and Jovy Lopez, from the Philippines, recently placed membership at Bramalea.

**Brantford:** The ladies had a Secret Sisters brunch Saturday, January 22. Guest speakers have been Kevin Cleary, Wayne Whitfield, George Mansfield, Scott Mansfield, and Jamie Azzoparde. The men held their monthly devotional on February 16. Taylor Knight and Nancy Stevens were baptized recently.

**Hamilton (West Side):** Dan, Don, and Andrew Page moved from California to Hamilton recently and worship with the congregation.

**Newmarket:** The Picchiottino family were leaving for Athens, Alabama, the first part of February. In their honour, a contribution was collected to aid Third World countries. Various neighbour congregations were invited to join the congregation the last Sunday evening of February.

**Owen Sound:** Megan Kennedy was baptized into Christ by her father, Scott, on January 20. Ten of the congregation's young people attended the Sundridge youth rally in February. Preacher exchanges among the Georgian Bay area churches began this year in February with the Walkerton church included. Quarterly recordings of their church service by CFOS began in February. Perry and Judy Baker from Newman, Georgia, gave an excellent presentation of the China Mission/ Chinese Agape Foundation. Its website is: [www.china-mission.org](http://www.china-mission.org). If you have any questions about supporting the orphans in China, Perry can be reached by email at [perrybak@bellsouth.net](mailto:perrybak@bellsouth.net).

**Sundridge:** Their youth rally, "God Made You," had an attendance of about 250 young people. Samson Ling, of Huntsville, presented practical, soul-searching lessons. The weather was perfect for their dog sled races, hayrides and other outdoor activities. The ACTS group from Waterloo presented Bible-based skits and Brad Boland, of Niagara Falls, led the singing.

**Toronto (Strathmore Blvd.):** Recently welcomed to the Strathmore family were Marissa Suse and Len Tianchon from the Philippines and Jessica Kail from the US. Jimmy Pang, a young man who has been attending services and taking part in the Young Adult activities, was recently baptized by Dexter Philip. Dexter has been doing an excellent job in leading the Young Adult activities. At the time this news is being written, we have strong hopes that Key To The Kingdom will be back on Vision the first Friday in March.

**Waterloo:** Debbie Lombardo recently placed membership with the Waterloo church. Eleven years ago she was baptized into Christ through the International Church of Christ in Toronto. The congregation received a letter from China

Missions, and a smiling picture of their adopted child, Chi Hui, and a thank you for long underwear, gloves, hats, scarf, and chocolates. Perry Baker has taken over leading the mission from Ron Brown, who is in poor health. Perry and his family worshipped in Newmarket for a long while before moving to Newman, Georgia, a number of years ago. Their second sponsored person was Xiao Quiang Sheng. Walter Hart recently had surgery to insert a stent in his artery so his blood could get through more easily. Duane Stuart will teach a short course, "The Psalms in Personal and Congregational Life," March 7-11 at GLBC for 2 hours credit or audit.

**Windsor (West Side):** Small groups resumed on "The Call of Family," looking at each of us as a parent, spouse, etc., and learning about our relationships in our homes as well as our relationship with God. The Keenagers meet monthly on Thursday mornings. \$3,600 was sent to tsunami relief to be matched with the government-matching fund. "Monday Nights for the Master" is a new monthly ministry of the church with a wide range of activities, from card writing to the sick, to calling those who need encouragement, to marking the Key

### QUEBEC

**Verdun:** On January 21-22, Dayton Keesee, former instructor at Sunset School of Preaching, and presently serving as an elder in the Choctaw congregation in Oklahoma City, conducted an advanced Bible study of the book of Ephesians. Members of congregations around Quebec attended the weekend sessions. January 27-28, George Little, from San Diego, California, conducted a seminar entitled: "Searching for God: Reasons to Believe." This was a local outreach campaign with over 12,000 flyers mailed out, 500 posters, and local advertising. 20 non-members from the community attended. On Sunday, February 6, Christina Dunkley was baptized. On March 23 the churches in Quebec will have the "1st Annual Conference of the Quebec Churches of Christ," to bring together representatives of every congregation in the province for the first time in a decade. The theme: "The Power of Unity." The Charland Street congregation (Frederick Feruzi, evangelist) will host this event, which will rotate locations from year to year. It will be patterned after the Good Friday meeting held in Ontario each year. The Verdun Bible talk website had so much traffic for the videos on marriage that the site crashed. Consequently, the congregation purchased a server and will host their own website so they can handle the traffic. Their websites are [www.verduncoc.org](http://www.verduncoc.org) and [www.bibletalk.ca](http://www.bibletalk.ca). Also, Sylvio Caddeo ([caddeo@sympatico.ca](mailto:caddeo@sympatico.ca)) recently returned from an extensive missionary trip in Italy, and planned to make a presentation at a missionary workshop in Kentucky on February 25. His email reports from Italy were very interesting. (He might possibly be agreeable to send you one or two of them. Walter.)

#### Church in beautiful

## Salmon Arm, B.C.

is seeking a full-time evangelist and his family to join our families in serving God and this community. Of primary concern to us is a love for the word of God and a reverence for the authority of the scriptures. We are looking for a friendly, hospitable teacher who will work with our eldership towards the spread of the gospel.

Contact: Church of Christ  
c/o Gordon Parmenter,  
[parmente@shuswap.net](mailto:parmente@shuswap.net),  
(250)833-5633



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

**Edmonton:** Kyle Coutu responded to the Gospel message and was baptized into Christ on January 30, 2005. We currently have 18 other one on one Bible studies in progress. Our Bible talk on Campus, which is currently being lead by Dean Anderson, has been blessed with many visitors, as many as 8 visitors at each Bible Talk. Our Annual Alberta Spring Fellowship is coming on the last weekend in March, (Easter Weekend). Please look for the advertisement in this issue of the Gospel Herald. Our speakers are Steve Higginbotham from Kentucky and David Spiece from Georgia. Our theme this year is "Conquering Heart Diseases". All are invited to come and spend this weekend in the feeding and nourishment of God's word, learning how to humble our hearts so that He can mould them into the hearts He wants them to be. February 6 is the annual Edmonton Ladies Retreat. Besides this being a time set aside for concentrated study of God's word, the ladies are looking forward to a great weekend of fellowship. The Men's Retreat is cancelled this year due to lack of interest. Dick Brant and his wife Deanna from Prince Rupert B.C. are visiting us the weekend of February 6. Dick will preach on Sunday and Deanna is going to take in the Ladies Retreat. In February Tom Millar presented a teaching seminar for the congregation. The goal was to better equip our members for teaching Bible School and in all other situations as well. February 18-21, eighteen of our youth travelled to Missoula Montana for their annual youth Retreat. - Submitted by Dave Friesen

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Abbotsford (Central Valley):** A First Nations woman from Fort Ware, who required a partial lung removal in January, was met at the airport by Norm and Jen Weir. As it was the first time she had ever been here, they gave her a tour of Vancouver the day before her operation, and made several trips to visit her at St. Paul's Hospital. Doctors felt all the cancer was removed. The Weirs have also been to visit another woman from Fort Ware who is in prison in Agassiz. She has been taking Bible correspondence courses. The lady was very appreciative and surprised, as she has had few visitors in the year she has been here because all of her people live so far away. A sister was to visit in February. Plans for a dinner-auction on May 28 to bring Missionary-nurse Velma Forman home in September was held on February 6. Velma is completing her 12th year in Papua New Guinea, and has come back home to BC on furlough only every third year. The Central Valley congregation is soliciting items, either new or used, to sell at the auction. A table of children's items will also be included this year.

**Burnaby:** Some 184 people, an all-time record number, were present on January 30 for our potluck and annual general

meeting. A survey conducted showed that most of the membership has been satisfied with the split-service arrangement we have been using for the past several months to take care of our overflow crowds on Sunday morning. Harvey Wood, elder for the past 30 years, tendered his resignation due to health problems. Other elders and deacons are being sought. Two people have initiated a program to make sure all visitors and members are welcomed, and that members missing the services are contacted in a follow-up each week. With photos taken by Brother Wood, a pictorial directory has been made in order to encourage members to become better acquainted with each other. A program of ministry to university-age young adults which is called STEPS has been meeting for their own Bible classes on Sunday morning and Wednesday nights, ministry-module classes on Sunday afternoon once a month, a women's study on Monday evenings, and weekly men's meetings for the past year. The group attended the Pepperdine Lectures last April, and enjoyed a special retreat called "Ignite" in October, with Randy Harris from the ACU Bible department as guest speaker.

**City Church (E. Vanc.):** When English Bible classes resumed after the holidays, there were not as many students as we had in December. Some are on vacation in China for Spring Festival (Chinese New Years) and most pre-registered for classes before the Christmas break. Steve Hasbrouck has been invited to speak at the Pepperdine Lectures again this year. His subject will deal with the way to approach Muslims with the message of Christ.

### MANITOBA

**Winnipeg:** A collection taken was directed towards the Tsunami Relief Fund. The Grades 5 & 6 Bible School Class generously gave money they had saved for themselves and /or their Christmas money to the relief fund. Glen Knutson has become an elder of the congregation. Dave Quilliams has stepped down as a deacon. Plans are being made by the college and youth group for a mission trip to Mexico City. Bernard Krogsgaard will be the main coordinator. We rejoice with Carmen Rajic who was recently baptized into Christ.

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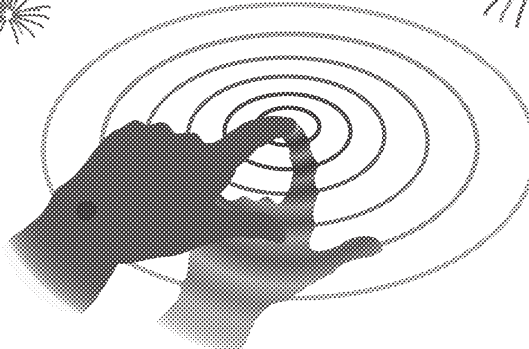
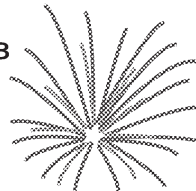
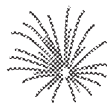
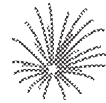
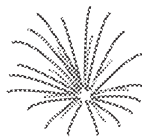
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# MISSION NEWS

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

**Indonesia:** Bill McDonough, director of Partners In Progress, who was in Medan in January to meet with non-government organizations, UN agencies, government officials, etc., learned that there was not only lots to do, but lots with which to do it. He said that governments and agencies are sharing millions of dollars worth of supplies with those who have local people on the scene to distribute them. He found that there are over 45 congregations of the Lord's church on the island of Nian, one of the two directly hit by the wave. He reports that PIP is working through capable brethren, who are helping others in spite of the loss of some of their own homes. The church members are widely distributing food relief, pots, pans, dishes, lanterns, and cooking fuels, while also meeting with local officials to aid in the rebuilding of small homes. A house that 10 to 15 people can live in can be built for \$2400 to \$3,000. Some small livestock, most families' livelihood and food source, will also be replaced, as the salt water so severely damaged the soil that all of their crops were lost. Bill reports that the brother directing the local efforts is very capable, as he has worked as a government auditor, understands both people and money management, knows the local officials, and has worked with the Nias church since its beginning in the 1970s. He believes that many can be reached with the Gospel through these relief efforts, and is helping the local churches see the possibilities.

**Indonesia Special:** Dave Carruthers has been asked to assist the small congregation in Limbangan, Indonesia, to raise funds to construct a building. Land purchase and construction can be realized for \$5,250 US. The members there already have some of the materials, as well as the expertise to build the building themselves. In addition, the St. Catharines congregation feels that Dave should make a trip following the fund raising to see the new building and encourage the members there, as well as to visit the

three congregations with which he was previously involved. The cost of a ticket is approximately \$2,000. The goal is to raise the money quickly and have a contract to build, signed by Indonesian brethren. St. Catharines has agreed to accept the funds and issue receipts. Cheques may be made out to: /Ontario Street Church of Christ, 439 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2N 4M9, marked "Indonesian Building" or "Carruthers Travel." For more information, contact Dave at carrdl@vaxxine.com

**Thailand:** The president of RAPHA International, Dr. Sid Allen, and his two sons, David, a missionary in Chiang Mai, and Steve, working in Bangkok, took 24 people from their two Thai congregations to the island of Phuket for four days of hands-on relief in one of the fishing villages. They cleared debris, dug footings for new foundations, and showed compassion to the largely Muslim population in every way possible. The teams were made up of American missionaries, missionary interns, Thai interns, and visiting Americans. Sid, along with Lorne Hollingsworth, long-time missionary to Thailand, delivered orthopaedic surgical instruments which had been sent by RAPHA INTERNATIONAL via FedEx from Ft. Worth, TX, to a provincial hospital in the area. They assessed what other medical needs were urgent that could immediately be provided by the RAPHA warehouse, also considering those in the Andaman Sea/Bay of Bengal area. RAPHA workers sent medical supplies with a group from "BREAD FOR A HUNGRY WORLD" to a children's refugee camp north of Colombo on Jan. 19. RAPHA is a worldwide medical supply relief ministry based in the Ft. Worth/Dallas Metroplex area.

**Ethiopia:** A peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army representatives signed on Jan. 9 will have brought an end to the 21 years of civil war which has devastated all of the Southern missions.

**Sudan:** Although some of the thousands of refugees have made it to Western countries, many more fled into Ethiopia, Uganda, and other nations along their border. The United Nations hopes to repatriate them back to their own country some time later this year. Among them will be several hundred members of the church

and all the trained preachers remaining in Ethiopia. Thirty-two men have graduated from the Level One Nenemte Preacher Training School. Fifteen to 20 of these will attend the Level Two School in July, providing them with a firm foundation in Bible study that they will need as they return to their homeland to teach others. Our Ethiopian brethren, also, are committed to helping take the Gospel to their neighbours in the same way it was brought to them in 1961. Over 2,000,000 people lost their lives as a result of the war. Many of those who survived to return to South Sudan will need the same kind of help that is being given to Tsunami victims in Asia.

**Sendai Japan:** Paul and Mitsuyo Mawatari are scheduled to be in Ontario on March 22, and will be at the Training for Service meeting on Good Friday. After 40 years as Sendai's preacher, Paul resigned in 2004 and is now in North America raising funds for his personal support, and reporting on plans for the new Christian school at Mt. Zao, and on the work the Sendai mission team is doing. Please ask God's blessing on the Mawatari's efforts and assist them with funding, if possible. Contact bramaleaocfc@bellnet.ca if you have questions or can assist the Mawatari's.

\*Classes & ministries in Sendai: **1.** "Bn'B" (Bento & Benkyo, or "supper and study") – taught by Ben and Joel using the book of Mark. **2.** Children's/women's classes – taught weekly by Crimsen. **3.** "Sendai Bible Challenge" (see this month's reading on side panel) – a new adult Sunday a.m. class based on these readings, with accompanying questions. **4.** Cooking class – Each week the first half of the class is taught by Joel Osborne on cooking (in English); Michiko Straker teaches the second half - a Bible class – in Japanese. **5.** "What is the Lord's Supper" – a new Sunday a.m. class series recently begun by Ben Berry. **6.** "What is the Church?" – a 6-week preaching series recently begun by Jonathan Straker. **7.** 1-on-1 studies & contact with Yusuke Tanaka, Gaku Oosugi, Chihiro Tao, and Akiko Kawamura. **8.** Crimsen Ruhnke recently happily turned over the mission team's finances to Michiko Straker, a native Japanese speaker with a business background. However, the other team members wish to express their deep gratitude

to Crimsen for her efficient handling of these finances over the last 2½ years in spite of language difficulties. Summer Activities: **a.** Let's Start Talking teams – city of Sendai and city of Hachinohe. **b.** Let's Start Talking FriendsCamp – Sendai. **c.** The York College Concert Choir tour. 40+ members of the choir will sing in Sendai and various other Japanese cities. Pray that this will be a wonderful outreach for Christ. Please pray for the all the team's ministries. Your ongoing prayers and financial assistance are appreciated. (Thanks, also, from the team for the Christmas packages! Ben says they "encouraged their hearts during the holiday season.") May God be glorified in Japan. To receive information or reports, contact: Bramalea Church of Christ – 905-792-2297, bramaleacofc@bellnet.ca; Joel Osborne, joelosborne@yahoo.com; Jonathan and Michiko Straker, jstrake@yahoo.com; or the website at www.sendaimissions.com. – Walter Straker

**SENDAI BIBLE CHALLENGE**

March 2005					
1	Tuesday	Leviticus	15-16	Acts	7:1-21
2	Wednesday	Leviticus	17-18	Acts	7:22-43
3	Thursday	Leviticus	19-20	Acts	7:44-60
4	Friday	Leviticus	21-22	Acts	8:1-25
5	Saturday	Leviticus	23-24	Acts	8:26-40
6	Sunday	Leviticus	25	Acts	9:1-22
7	Monday	Leviticus	26-27	Acts	9:23-43
8	Tuesday	Numbers	1-2	Acts	10:1-23
9	Wednesday	Numbers	3-4	Acts	10:24-48
10	Thursday	Numbers	5-6	Acts	11
11	Friday	Numbers	7-8	Acts	12
12	Saturday	Numbers	9-11	Acts	13:1-25
13	Sunday	Numbers	12-14	Acts	13:26-52
14	Monday	Numbers	15-16	Acts	14
15	Tuesday	Numbers	17-19	Acts	15:1-21
16	Wednesday	Numbers	20-22	Acts	15:22-41
17	Thursday	Numbers	23-25	Acts	16:1-21
18	Friday	Numbers	26-28	Acts	16:22-40
19	Saturday	Numbers	29-31	Acts	17:1-15
20	Sunday	Numbers	32-34	Acts	17:16-34
21	Monday	Numbers	35-36	Acts	18
22	Tuesday	Deuteronomy	1-3	Acts	19:1-20
23	Wednesday	Deuteronomy	4-6	Acts	19:21-41
24	Thursday	Deuteronomy	7-9	Acts	20:1-16
25	Friday	Deuteronomy	10-12	Acts	20:17-38
26	Saturday	Deuteronomy	13-15	Acts	21:1-17
27	Sunday	Deuteronomy	16-18	Acts	21:18-40
28	Monday	Deuteronomy	19-21	Acts	22
29	Tuesday	Deuteronomy	22-24	Acts	23:1-15
30	Wednesday	Deuteronomy	25-27	Acts	23:16-35
31	Thursday	Deuteronomy	28-29	Acts	24

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

# The Land of the Rising Sun A Land of the Risen Son

**J**oel 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](http://www.sendaimissions.com) or contact the

Bramalea church of Christ  
750 Clark Blvd. / Brampton, ON L6T 3Y2  
(905) 792-2297  
Or you can clip and mail the form below.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Province/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal code/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to support:  
 (Circle) Joel / Jonathan / Both  
 for (CDN / US) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / Mo. / Yr.  
 beginning \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to the Bramalea church of Christ.



## Great Lakes Bible College Graduation and Promotional Dinner

Mark your calendar!  
Saturday, April 30, 2005  
Carmen's Restaurant, Hamilton

**Guest speaker: Walter Straker**

For information & tickets contact:  
Joe Woodford, 905-563-5374  
E-mail: [studybible@glbc.on.ca](mailto:studybible@glbc.on.ca)

*Points by Perry continued from page 6*

If, however, this also fails, Jesus instructs us to "tell it to the congregation" (v.17). It sounds simple. Just make a public statement. As in Paul's instruction for the treatment of the immoral brother at Corinth, the brethren are to be "assembled in the name of Jesus" (I Cor.5:7) to take the necessary action. Hopefully, the whole congregation being in agreement, this will suffice to bring about repentance and reconciliation. If not, OUT! (V.17).

The disciples, having heard all this teaching about our responsibilities and the actions to be taken when relationship problems occur, evidently wonder about reoccurrences. Peter, their spokesman, asks how patient we should be in such cases. Surely there must be a limit. Three times was evidently considered generous. Three times and out does not just apply to baseball. Trying to be magnanimous, Peter suggests seven times. The response must have been a startling surprise. Not seven but "unto seventy times seven". Phew! What does this mean? Should Evelyn and I have kept records (We have been married 58 years) so that when we had checked off the 491st time we would be justified in separating?

No! Even the most legalistic of us know that Jesus was not teaching us to keep records (count) of offences. It seems obvious that Jesus was teachings us that rather than keeping records we should be prepared to forgive without limit.

If, perchance, this seems to be too much to ask, think. How many times have you needed God's forgiveness? Is it possible that you might need God to forgive you several times more? What if He is counting and has a limit?

These studies are about the requirement that we forgive AS God has forgiven us.

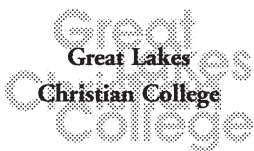
The chapter closes with a very easily understood parable about a king who forgave his servant an impossible debt and then discovered that the servant, afterwards, refused to forgive his brother servant a very small debt. The result illustrates the attitude and action we can expect from God if we refuse to forgive anyone anything. The king delivered the unforgiving servant "to the jailor to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed" (v.34). This, of course was impossible as it is for us.

"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart" (v.35).

## MATHAMATICS TEACHER NEEDED FOR FALL 2005

A position is available for teacher of mathematics or related disciplines, qualified at the Secondary School level, beginning September 2005.

For more details or to apply, please contact:  
**Brian Boden, Principal**



**Great Lakes  
Christian College**  
4875 King St.,  
Beamsville, ON  
L0R 1B6

Tel: (905) 563-5374 x.205

Fax: (905) 563-0818

Website: [www.glcc.on.ca](http://www.glcc.on.ca)

E-mail: [academic@glcc.on.ca](mailto:academic@glcc.on.ca)

**Building Foundations  
of Faith**



## Back on the Vision Network

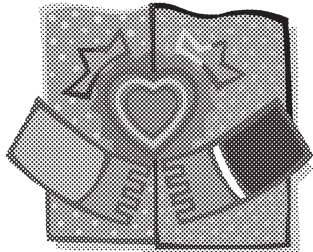
on Friday mornings at 8:30 am  
(Eastern Time), beginning on  
March 4, 2005

The program is being produced in Toronto and the speaker will be Max Craddock. While the speaker and format of the program have changed, we pray God will bless the continued outreach of Key.

Your support is needed to carry on this work. Please contact us with questions or comments.

(Questions and/or support can be sent to Elders,  
Strathmore Blvd. Church of Christ, 346 Strathmore Blvd.,  
Toronto, ON M4C 1N3 • phone: 416-461-7406 • e-mail [maxc@strathmorecofc.ca](mailto:maxc@strathmorecofc.ca))

# 2005 Alberta Spring Fellowship



## Conquering Heart Diseases

"Submit yourselves then to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands you sinners and purify your heart you double-minded." James 4:7,8

**March 25-27, 2005**

The bar has been raised! Join us this weekend as we look through the scriptures to learn how to prepare to reach the highest heights!

Our speakers,  
**Steve Higginbotham** (*Glasgow, KY*)  
and **David Spiece** (*Columbus, GA*)  
will be presenting lessons  
on how to conquer spiritual  
heart diseases.

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a pencil, pointing towards the right. The hand is rendered in a simple, line-art style, and the pencil is held in a writing position. This graphic is positioned to the right of the speaker information and above the contact details.

To register, or for more  
information contact:

Brochures available  
Billeting upon request  
Exciting classes are planned  
for the children

Edmonton Church of Christ  
13015 - 116 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
(780) 455-1049  
church5@telus.net  
www.edmontonchurchofchrist.org

# Substance and Evidence

Bob Hibbard

For scholars and scientists who do not accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, the absence of concrete proof (especially archaeological proof) of the existence of Jesus is most significant. Any support for the Biblical record is for most Biblical archaeologists, dependent on extra-Biblical evidence (evidence outside scripture). In an article in the local newspaper, copied from the Washington Post, Hershel Shanks, editor of the Biblical Archaeological

Review says, "We don't even have much archaeological evidence that Jesus walked this earth." In an effort to marry archaeological discovery with the gospel record of Jesus walking on the water, archaeologist Richard Freund, upon finding evidence of a shallow marshy area of water on the Sea of Galilee near the supposed site of Bethsaida, says: "It would have been possible for a person to walk in the water but appear to be walking on the water."

Much could be observed in such dismissal of the Bible record. One of the most profound things to be seen is the belief of followers of Christ which is established through internal evidence (evidence of scripture itself), in contrast to those dependent on evidence outside scripture, (i.e. archaeological substance), to support Biblical text. As evidenced by Richard Freund's conclusion above, even archaeological findings in support of Biblical places or events do not establish faith for those dependent exclusively on external evidence. They in fact see the faith of the one who believes in Jesus as the Son of God, belief in the miracles of Jesus, and in the Bible as God's inspired word, as belief, which is based on insufficient evidence.

The nature of faith, however, according to scripture is both substance and evidence. The writer of Hebrews in chapter 11:1 says that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen as yet." KJV. Modern translations of the same verse, such as the NIV, say faith is both surety and certainty of what we believe. "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." In a tribute to James A. Harding, a prominent figure in the Lord's church in the latter part of the 19th century, Jessie P. Sewell wrote: "With him God was as real as James W. Harding, his father in the flesh. To him Jesus

was as real as his fleshly brother, Walter. To him the Holy Spirit was as real as the spirit in his own body. To him the Bible was as literally a personal message from God as were letters from his earthly father. To him heaven was as real as Nashville."

What do you suppose established such a faith? Certainly external evidence of God as testimony of his existence, his glory, power and love, can promote faith. Evidence that perhaps David had in mind when he wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." Ps.19:1 (NIV). Yet an appreciation of the wonders of our world and universe, which affirms a creative force, is by itself insufficient to create the kind of faith described by bro. Sewell. Only God's revelation of himself to us in his word can provide the building blocks upon which our faith is built. Awareness of being created in his image and likeness, awareness of our need, awareness of his plan and provision for us, awareness of the glory of his person which includes his matchless grace, mercy and love for us all! This is the substance, this is the evidence, and these are the tangibles. Of such is our faith.

Hamilton, ON

## Convoy Avenue Church of Christ,

a congregation of approximately 22, needs a preacher/evangelist.

We are located within the picturesque City of **Halifax, Nova Scotia**, Canada. Halifax is a community of approximately 343,000 bordering on the Atlantic Ocean. Several colleges and universities offering a variety of disciplines are within close proximity to our church building.

Resumes should include: leadership qualities, experience in preaching, teaching, work with youth, outreach and general congregational involvement. The candidate should be mission-minded and interested in promoting growth within the congregation. The congregation will provide partial support and a three-bedroom house.

Interested parties should submit their resumes to:

**Convoy Avenue Church of Christ**  
48 Convoy Avenue  
Halifax, N.S. B3N 2L5  
c/o Dennis Peters  
or e-mail to  
hfxpeters@yahoo.com

### Advertising Rates

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It is best to reserve space well ahead of publication time. Copy must be in our hands early in the month previous to date of issue.

Contact: Gospel Herald, 5 Lankin Blvd.,  
Toronto, ON, M4J 4W7,  
Ph: 416-461-7406, Fax: 416-424-1850,  
E-mail: advertising@gospelherald.org



# OBITUARIES

## Hoff (Nee Hoffman) Ruth Amelia

Ruth, was born April 11, 1917, in Williston, North Dakota, to William and Emily (nee Snook) Hoffman. She was the seventh of 11 children. She died on January 13, 2005, in Richmond, BC. Her husband, Ernest Hoff, and a daughter, Lorna Lackey, who died of cancer in 1997, as well as six of her siblings predeceased her. Ruth is survived by her son, Larry (Martha) Hoff, Tsawwassen, BC; daughter, Bonny (Larry) Sawyer, Naniamo, BC; eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren; two sisters, Jenny Finney of Richmond, B.C., and Annie Strom Vancouver, WA; and two brothers, Eldon Hoffman from Phoenix, AZ., and Harold Hoffman, Abbotsford, BC.

Ruth's family moved to Havre, Montana, a few months after her birth, then to Muir,

Pennsylvania, in 1918. In the spring of 1919, they took up a homestead near Gladmar, Sask., where they lived in a sod house on a hill until a house across the road from a small lake could be built. Sixteen years later, the family again moved, this time to Radville, SK. Ruth quit school after completing grade 10, but returned two years later to finish grades 11 and 12 at the top of her class.

She met Ernest Hoff in 1936, who introduced her to the church. They were married on October 29, 1937, at the Hoffman home in Radville. D. H. Perkins, following the Radville Bible School in 1933, baptized Ernie. After also attending several of the summer Bible Schools, Ruth was baptized by J.C. Bailey in 1937.

Five years after their marriage and the birth of a son and a daughter, the Hoffs moved to British Columbia where a second daughter was born in 1947. Ruth worked for many years at the Vancouver General Hospital. In 1970 they moved to Tsawwassen, a suburb

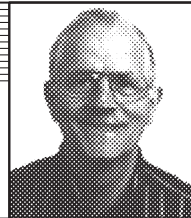
of Vancouver, and were part of the founding membership of the Delta church in 1982, the first meeting being held in their home. Ruth lost Ernie to cancer at age 68 on December 27, 1983. They had always been a very close couple, going everywhere and doing everything together. They enjoyed life, their family, going to church, having people over, gardening, traveling, visiting, fixing things, and just sitting or walking together. Ruth was a quiet, unassuming, hospitable, and warm person.

During her lifetime, she was a faithful member of the Radville, 12th & Carolina, Oakridge, West End, and Delta churches of Christ. She taught Sunday morning children's Bible classes, and especially enjoyed hosting weekly Bible studies in her home. Ruth always put her hope and trust in the Lord, in whose mansion she has gone to stay eternally.

Submitted by her son, Larry Hoff, elder in the Delta church

# 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



*The Barnabas Factor, Realize Your Encouragement Potential*  
by **Aubrey Johnson**, *Gospel Advocate*,  
Nashville, TN. 160 pages, \$8.99 (U.S.)

This is the best book I have received from any source in some time. The author, a Gospel preacher, has produced a book which will be extremely helpful to all Christians. He describes the contents of his book: "First comes the need for knowledge. Chapters 1 through 4 describe the dynamics of encouragement. Second comes the practical matter of mastering the skills necessary to be an effective encourager. Third comes incentives to encourage action. Fourth we have motivational examples of encouragers at work.

Talking about "The Power of Courage" he refers to the many examples the Scriptures give us of men and women who overcame great obstacles in life. In contrast, the next section deals with "The Problem of Discouragement" which all of us can find a great problem indeed. The next part of the book is also very helpful as he describes the "Anatomy of an Encourager" and looks at the mind, eyes, ears, lips, and hands of such a person.

The final section of this great book is on "The Activity of an Encourager" and illustrates these lessons through the examples of such men as Nehemiah and Barnabas and through the guidance of the Father and the Son.

*A New Kind of Christian*  
by **Brian D. McLaren**, *Jossey-Bass*,  
San Francisco (2001). 173 pages,  
\$34.00 (Cdn.).

This book challenges our firmly held beliefs of modern Christianity and begins to explore a "new kind of Christianity" within a "postmodern" sense. As this new kind of Christianity is explored we begin to think of what necessary transformations must take place in order for the church to exist within the 21st century.

An example of what the church will look like in the 21st century according to McLaren will be the ongoing relationship between community, spirituality, and mission. Community will be a place where people begin to learn and live the good news of Jesus Christ. Spirituality focuses on how the community will grow in holiness, while mission will be seeking, receiving and manifesting the kingdom of God (156-57).

McLaren understands how it is a struggle for us to think of some necessary transformations to take place in our theology of church. Therefore in order to help us with this struggle he writes this book in such a way as to allow the reader to be listening in on a conversation between a minister and his daughter's high school teacher. Through this method of writing the reader is caught up in the conversations taking place on paper and is thus able to

interject themselves into the discussions.

This is a must read for those who are grappling with the idea of moving into a postmodern church (world) and for those who want a better understanding of what the postmodern people are pushing for. It is also a must read for ministers and for non-ministers who are struggling with a faith that modernity cannot support anymore.

Reviewed by Nathan Pickard

*Narrative Reading, Narrative Preaching*,  
by **Joel B. Green & Michael Pasquarello III**,  
Grand Rapids, MI. 198 pages, \$16.99 (US).

This book is a collection of scholarly essays by biblical scholars who challenge the reading of scripture and trying to decipher what it meant two thousand years ago. Instead these writers provide a new perspective of reading the Bible by asking the readers of scripture to "inhabit" the story of scripture. Scripture is not an ancient document written to ancient churches; rather scripture is alive and constantly calls the church to become the people of God and to become a community of disciples who live the very words scripture proclaim.

The book is divided into four parts: reading and preaching the gospels and Acts; reading and preaching the letters of Paul; reading and preaching Revelation; and an introduction and concluding essay on narrative reading and narrative preaching. Each part has an essay on how to read scripture that is illustrated by an essay on how to preach scripture along with a sermon as an example.

I recommend this book to all people who are concerned with true biblical preaching and who desire to effectively help people become a community that faithfully lives out its faith.

Reviewed by Nathan Pickard





## 43rd ANNUAL TRAINING FOR SERVICE



# We Belong Together!

9:00 a.m. – Registration

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Singing

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

“Map Quest: Where Are We Going?” – *Gailyn Van Rheenen (Adults)*  
“Abraham Walks With God – Overcoming Doubt Through Faith”  
– *David Owens (Teens)*

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 noon

“Who’s Driving Here?” – *Gailyn Van Rheenen (Men)*  
“The Reluctant Warrior” – *Becky Van Rheenen (Women)*  
“Jacob Walks With God – Overcoming Selfishness Through Surrender”  
– *David Owens (Teens)*

1:30 – 2:15 p.m.  
Singing

– *Congregational and Choruses*

2:15 p.m.  
Sendai Japan Report

– *Kazuyoshi (Paul) Mawatari*

2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

“More Ready Than You Realize!” – *Gailyn Van Rheenen*

### FEATURED SPEAKERS:

**Gailyn and Becky Van Rheenen (Adults)**  
**David Owens (Teens)**  
**Paul Mawatari (Sendai Japan work)**



Gailyn Van Rheenen

Gailyn and Becky Van Rheenen head “Mission Alive” in Dallas, Texas, an organization dedicated to planting churches. They spent 14 years as missionaries in Kenya, then for 17 years Gailyn taught missions and evangelism at Abilene Christian University.



David Owens

David Owens has been an evangelist and equipper for Jesus for the past 20 years. He and his wife, Diana, work for the Wetzel Road Church of Christ in Liverpool, New York.

Kazuyoshi (Paul) Mawatari recently retired as Sendai’s full-time minister to raise funds and build a Christian school at the foot of Mt. Zao in Japan. He and his wife, Mitsuyo, worked with the Sendai church for 40 years.

## Friday, March 25, 2005

### 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Cawthra Park Secondary School**  
**1305 Cawthra Road**  
**Mississauga, Ontario**  
*(2 blocks south of QEW)*

### OTHER WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

– an extension of our time together at Training for Service.

**Saturday, March 26** – Bramalea Church of Christ, Brampton  
5:00 p.m. – Youth Time –

“Joseph Walks With God – Overcoming Temptation” – David Owens

**Sunday, March 27** – Bramalea Church of Christ, Brampton

10:00 a.m. – Men’s and Women’s Classes – Gailyn and Becky Van Rheenen

11:00 a.m. – “From Caterpillar to Butterfly” – Gailyn Van Rheenen

Questions? Contact Bramalea Church of Christ (905) 792-2297.