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THIS ISSUE'S THEME:

Families and Singles in the New Testament Church

FROM:

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The Christian Family

Dave Knutson

The story of the Bible is all about family from start to finish. It is the story of a human family that was part of the family of God. It begins with a man and a woman who were the children of God and who walked and talked with God (Genesis 5:1; Luke 3:38). When the day came that they stopped walking with God they went right on as a human family and after a time, that alone seemed good enough.

Now the earliest families knew who God was but parted company with him. Over time, rebellion against God turned into ignorance about God. The story of the human family is about a family with amnesia. It's about a family that lost touch with its roots. This family did not know that it had a heavenly Father and concluded that it must have arisen from the earth. It is the story of a family that did not know where it had come from or how to get back home.

The story of salvation then is really all about going home. God sent His Son from heaven to lead us back to our heavenly Father. Jesus came to earth to tell us about the family that we did not know that we had... the family of God. He came to tell us that our heavenly Father loves us and to pay the price for our journey home. The journey home is a journey back into the family of God and it is a journey as a member of the family of God.

Now in the most general sense, we are all surrounded by family. The family of Adam and Eve is up into the billions. But God has always had something more personal in mind. It was His design that a man and a woman would leave their families of origin and come together in marriage to form a new family (Genesis 2:24). He intended the same sort of permanence in each human family that characterizes His own (Matthew 19:5-6).

In many ways, our sense of rootedness and origin is shaped by family. There is something within each of us that wants to discover just who we are. We want to know all about the people to whom we owe our lives. So we thrill to hear stories about the old days when dad and mom were little... how they grew up, met and married. We long for stories from the past, stories about our grandparents and their parents before them. The intent of the Bible is to satisfy that thirst. The Bible takes us back in time to the beginning... to our beginning. It traces our story back to a heavenly Father who had a plan. And it is the story of that plan that satisfies our need to know who we are and who God wants us to be in His family.

Now a Christian family is a human family that has come home to its heavenly Father. It is a family that knows where it has come from and where it is going. It is a family that is living on earth but on its way to heaven.

That family is led by a husband and father who is a man of God. He provides for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of his family. He is a man under God's control and for that reason, in control of himself. He teaches his children about God and godliness, setting an example that they can follow, all the way to heaven. He disciplines his children because he loves them. He loves his wife and serves her as Christ does the Church. More than anything else, he wants her to stand before God, blameless in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is a godly father and husband who loves his family and puts their needs ahead of his own.

The Christian family is also led by a wife and mother who is woman of God. She loves her husband and submits to his leadership out of respect for Jesus Christ. She encourages in

him those things that are good and godly. She knows the word of God and teaches it to her children. She nurtures her children so that they know that they are wanted and loved. It is a love that they don't have to earn. She brings her own kind of order to the home. Life in the family bears the stamp of her personality. While the world is not a safe place, she teaches her children that the family is. Her children know that they can always depend on family. She is in tune with the needs of her family and sees to each one of them.

When mom and dad are the people that God wants them to be, then their children are blessed. They know that they are loved, accepted, forgiven and cherished. They have a deep sense of belonging and rootedness. They know who their family is and they know all about the family of God. They feel secure because their parents love each other and God. Children in a Christian family learn very early in life that there is a big difference between right and wrong. They know that dad and mom love them too much to let them persist in bad behaviour. And having experienced that kind of love they learn what love really is. Having grown up as the objects of love, they love their parents in return and the God who blessed them with a Christian family.

Christian families are a basic building block of the church. To the degree that families are what they ought to be, the church will be what God wants it to be. The leadership that God has put in place in the family extends to the family of God. The qualities of leadership that make for godly homes, make for godly churches (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). The roles that men and women fulfil at home are in many ways carried over into the church. It seems impossible then to

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Singles in the New Testament Church

Paul Birston

We all live at least part of our lives as singles. This is how we are born into God's world. Many of us will be single through choice or through events along life's pathway. In all cases, God loves and cares for all of us whatever our marital status, and whatever the health, or lack thereof, of our families of origin. While from the beginning God has clearly defined the parameters surrounding the covenant of marriage, He has also found special places and avenues of service in His kingdom for singles. This valid option receives more specific attention in the New Testament than the Old and our goal in this article is to begin to better understand and make room for the gifts and opportunities for singles in God's New Testament church.

While He grew up in a family, did His first miracle at a wedding and upheld marriage as a permanent covenant of God, our Saviour Jesus lived His life as a single man despite what popular media say about Him. He is the preeminent example of one living the single life, "one solitary life," but one that was incredibly full, eternally rewarding and thoroughly connected to people of every walk of life. Singleness was God's will for Him and He fulfilled this will in a way that set an inspiring example and benefited humanity for all time.

In a way that was new to God's people, in the New Testament Jesus and the Apostle Paul introduced singleness and its opportunities for single-minded devotion to God as a gift *equal to* the way that God's people had considered marriage and children to be gifts (Psalm 127:3-128:6). These are not miraculous spiritual gifts or powers per se as described in 1 Corinthians 12-14, but rather different avenues of living and enjoying the larger gift of life in God's presence as He has given each one grace to do so. While teaching on God's will for the permanency of marriage Jesus said, "Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way

from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it" (Matthew 19:11-12). While Jesus speaks metaphorically of those making themselves eunuchs in the physical sense, one legitimate understanding of the word eunuch in the ancient world is one who abstains by choice. There are those who have the ability to accept this kind of sacrifice with contentment for the greater good of God's kingdom. Jesus' main point is that a life of dedicated devotion and service to God as a single Christian can be a conscious and valid choice that Christians make and that God accepts as pleasing in His sight.

Paul reveals that, like Jesus, He served God as a single man. He upholds the idea that *both* marriage and singleness are gifts when he writes, "Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that" (1 Corinthians 7:7). Clearly in Paul's mind, living a wholesome and dedicated single life is a gift from God. Whereas Peter was an elder (1 Peter 5:21) and took a believing wife with him on his missionary travels (1 Corinthians 9:5), Paul remained single and references to him as an elder are absent. Paul used the time and focus afforded by his singleness to great advantage for the church in his day and ours. His output of preaching and writing are prodigious and have had profound effects not only in the history of the church but also on the history of the world. He had more to say than any New Testament writer on the nature of Christ's church and as much as any on the eternal cosmic nature of Christ.

Jesus and Paul also bring new dimensions to our understanding of what God Himself said in Genesis 2:18b, "It is not good for the man to be alone." In its original context, Adam, "the man," was literally alone. Certainly from Adam and Eve on mar-

riage is always good, yet if marriage were always necessary in God's mind as the human race grew from a couple to multitudes, then as singles Jesus and Paul were not in a good state. This surely cannot be so. In their singleness, they surely were not alone. Both were highly connected and heavily invested in others as part of the family of God and in their interests in and sacrifices for the unbelieving world as well. God's family is a fellowship where all people, married and single, find they are not alone but connected to others in ways that fulfil God's desire for people to thrive in wholeness and unity (cf. Psalm 133:1-3).

Paul's main interest for Christians, married or single, is freedom from concern, contentment in one's relationship with God and single-minded devotion to Him: "But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate

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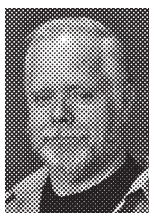
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The Church in Your House

Wayne Turner



Over the past fifty years, few words have expanded their meaning as “family.” To the classic nuclear family—mom, dad and the kids—have been added the single parent, blended and other “non-traditional” families of today.

For many people today, the family experience falls far short of the ideal. Broken homes and family dysfunctions take many unfortunate forms, leaving family members, often children, to carry emotional and physical scars for the rest of their lives. Despite the problems, abuses and the variations in family structures, one thing is clear—the family is still the basic building block of society. People still want and need a place where they can belong—where they can find security, acceptance and identity.

Genesis shows that God created marriage and family when he created Eve to be Adam’s companion and helper. Throughout the Bible, we see the importance God places on the family. He used Noah and his family to repopulate the earth after the flood, and the families of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to create the nation of Israel. In His covenant with Israel, the family was set apart as the place for teaching and instruction as well as important religious observances, like the Passover.

In the New Testament, the significance of the family for God is seen in the description of His relationship with His people as a family—father and children. Also, the family is given a vital role in the church as a place where children are taught and trained, and leaders are developed. The ultimate demonstration of the importance of family is seen in the parallel between the relationship of husband and wife to Christ and the church. The family and church are so closely connected that it seems appropriate to refer to “the church that meets in your house.”

In a Christian family, husband and wife are co-heirs of “the gracious gift of life.” (1 Peter 3:7) Their relationship with each other directly affects the effectiveness of their relationships with God. As in the church, each is inseparably involved in the spiritual life and growth of the other. The primary responsibility of Christian parents is the spiritual teaching and development of their children—bringing them up in the “training and instruction of the Lord.” (This means that the Bible School is a supplement to the home and family, not vice versa.) The home should be a place of “whole life” spiritual train-

ing. In the words of the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9), “Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

Whatever our marital or family status may be (even if we are single), our homes are important platforms for our service to God. We all, likely, realize how home and family can help or hinder our work for the Lord. It is important that we continue to teach and challenge each other to build our homes on God’s word and to make them as effective as possible.

This month, we are again indebted to Paul Birston, one of our associate editors, who has conceived and coordinated this issue of the Gospel Herald. Dave Knutson, in “*The Christian Family*,” introduces the main theme. He writes, “*The family is God’s plan for the world. It is our origin and destiny.*” Paul Birston, “*Singles in the New Testament Church*,” provides us an important reminder that married and single Christians are vital parts of the life and ministry of the church. Both Jesus and the Apostle Paul were single. “*Single Christians bring many gifts and strengths to the church.*” In “*The Household Codes as Guides for Families*,” George Mansfield examines some of the passages that teach various members of households how to conduct their lives and treat others. Tim Johnson, “*A Fortress of Faith*,” challenges us to raise our children to “live life based on faith and God’s word.” Tim offers several suggestions to help parents do this consistently and effectively.

Hopefully, these articles will remind us that healthy families require time and conscious effort. The results are worth it! Our prayer is for the church in your house.

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and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). Paul had earlier said that those who marry “will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you” (1 Corinthians 7:28). It is a fact of New Testament teachings borne out by Christian living, as Jesus, Paul and others promise, that Christians will have trouble in this life. These outweigh promises of peace and prosperity popular today. As Paul also reveals in the context of Corinthians and elsewhere, singleness is not an iron-clad life-long obligation. God does not require vows for it, He in fact discourages them. Paul leaves the door open. Circumstances change, marriage partners sometimes do come into life’s picture unexpectedly. In this regard, many singles are open to whatever the Lord brings their way. In the meantime, singleness is a valid and worthy status that can take advantage of time and open doors for service. Paul clearly validates the single life as one with potential to limit distractions and secure undivided loyalty to God.

Paul is also clear that married and single Christians do not occupy separate camps. They live, worship and serve together. This is evident in his commendations of Christian servants which contain both couples and singles. While we lack information to confirm their precise marital status, Paul commends many Christians individually for their service and value to the church and cause of the gospel, for example from Romans 16, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well” (16:1-2); “Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia... Mary, who has worked hard for you... Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord... Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved... Apelles, the approved in Christ... Herodion, my kinsman... Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord... Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also

his mother and mine... Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them... Nereus and his sister, and Olympas” (16:5-15). And not least of all is Timothy, Paul’s “beloved and faithful child in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 4:17) who served in many trying circumstances as a single young adult as far as we know. Though he had no title of office, it was through him that Paul gave many important teachings for church leadership, families, old and young men and women, widows, children and single young adults.

Paul commended these individual servants for their faith and valuable contributions of service without attaching any formal titles to them. They are celebrated for who they are in Christ. They are equally members of the kingdom and valuable to God as those who are married and have titles. There is nothing to divide them from Christ’s body as a whole. They are part of the world-wide family of God, sharing in His mission. As Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life” (Mark 10:29-30).

In the New Testament church, single-

ness was considered as valid an option as marriage since each had their gifts from God, including self-control. Though marriage was honoured in the New Testament church, Scripture gives no record of elaborate wedding ceremonies, showers or wedding anniversary celebrations. The church today, however, honours married Christians in various ways without parallel for singles. Singles, especially women, may often feel like fifth rate citizens of the kingdom after elders and deacons and their families, married couples with children and married couples without. Yet, singles form an often surprisingly large percentage of our congregations and our culture. Research indicates this percentage is growing. Surely, the church is a place where all people, married or single, need to feel that they are a valuable part of God’s kingdom. Plans for ministry, evangelism and missions need to include singles both as servants and as recipients of service. Singles need to be, and feel that they are in fact, equally important in the community of God’s church today as they did in the church of the New Testament.

Single Christians bring many gifts and strengths with them to the church. They often have flexibility and freedom of time and energy that parents of young children find hard to come by. Singles are often freer to engage in short and long-term missions. Singles have expertise in their careers that can contribute significantly to the various

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The Household Codes as Guides for Families and Singles

George Mansfield

The words of God were indelibly etched on the inward parts of the original hearers. They say: *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."* Deut 6:4-9.

For this instruction to be carried out year after year and generation after generation, there would need to be families who are committed to a strict vertical relationship with God as well as dedication to perpetuating these necessities on the horizontal plane by reaching out to others.

And it happened... for awhile.

But hear again the word of God: *"And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel."* Judges 2:10

They went from faithfully following to lacking knowledge of God and all the wondrous works he had done for them. The saying is true, *"We are never more than one generation from apostasy."*

We are working under the umbrella of *"Families and Singles in The New Testament Church."*

Any given household in the first century could be comprised of parents, grandparents, children, slaves and other types of servants, married people and singles.

Those springing from Jewish roots would surely be well indoctrinated in the value of families as outlined by God in the Scriptures of the Old Covenant.

A family should know: how to relate to one another, how to recognize the chain of authority, how to react to criticism, what part age plays in these relationships, how to behave under civil law, who shoulders the responsibility for training and teaching in the family and much more.

We find in our New Covenant Scriptures several extended passages that have been called *"Family Codes"* or *"Family Tables."*

With the positive assertion of Deuteronomy 6 and the undoing fact found in Judges 2 firmly before us, we move to an overview of...

The Household Codes as Guides for Families and Singles

It would serve the reader well to stop and read in their entirety the

following texts: Ephesians 5:21-6:9; Colossians 3:18-4:1; Titus 2:1-15 and 1Peter 2:18-3:8.

It should be noted that many years before Christ or Christianity appeared there were codes in place to regulate households. One thing was consistent: the father was always the authority figure. The best known writer in antiquity on this subject was Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. His *"codes"* included instructions about how the family head should manage his wife, his children and his slaves. There is often wisdom given about how to manage wealth. Most codes articulate the importance of the household head dutifully fulfilling his role for the good of society.

When you read the Bible passages suggested for this article you noted that they too were looking out for the highest good of all. But upon examination, there is much more.

We find, in the Bible, an egalitarian standard to be upheld in the midst of differing roles to be lived out. Is a slave on the level with a free person, a single person with a married person? Are men and women equal? God, through Paul brings to our attention that *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* Not only is this so, listen to the verse that follows, *"And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."* One does not even have to be a Jew to be a recipient of these blessings!

The roles remain intact while codes of conduct for each level differ for those equal in God's sight. This is to say, that when a woman is instructed to submit to her husband, it is for her good, her husband's good and is best for society, as it is when



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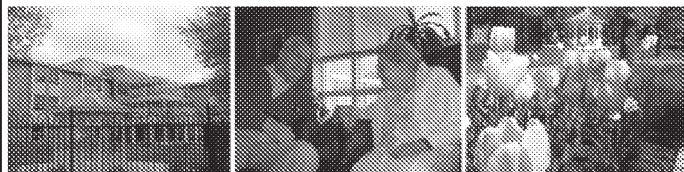
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slave or free as employees, married or single, submit to those in authority over them. They are in no way inferior persons nor should the language be so construed to suggest that.

Reading the verses found in Ephesians 5 we are struck with the love that flows throughout the passage. Christian ladies, would you find it anything but pleasant and rewarding to submit your life to one who is in total submission to Christ himself? This person is to act as your head, so you submit to him as the church submits to Christ.

The husband described here is one who loves his wife. This love is agape and means *“to desire the highest good for another.”* It is other-person centred. This is the word found in John 3:16.

How could it possibly be arduous to live in submission to one who loves you as he loves himself? He cares for and looks after his body as Christ takes care of the church. The husband being described is one who has left the environment in which he grew up to take you as his wife. You are now one flesh. It should be easy to respect this model husband.

Did you see anything that pointed to a tyrant husband to whom you must bow for everything? No, God’s household codes are not built that way. Does this allow for mental, emotional, physical or sexual abuse? Not at all. This is a loving relationship with directions to make the oneness of the marriage work in society... and in the church.

Continuing on in the same passage, children are in the process of maturing and need guidance, therefore, they must obey their Christian parents *“in the Lord.”* The father as head of the house, in an ideal set-up, must help his children to grow to maturity in Christ. The very wording of the Ephesians text, v. 4, points out that while discipline and instruction *“of the Lord”* must be front and centre, he needs to be careful to not overdue it lest his good intentions become unfruitful.

Paul upholds Moses’ command, the Fifth of the Ten, as Jesus did, “Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),

so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth” (6:2-3; Exodus 20:12; Matthew 15:4; 19:19). There is no time limit on this honour that comes with a promise and affects life’s outcomes. Spiritually mature adults, married and single, continue to honour their parents after leaving their houses to set up their own.

Please reflect upon the Bible verses cited at the beginning from Deuteronomy and Judges. Allow me to say that while you may not have seen the relevance of this line of reasoning at first, perhaps it means more at this point. When a strict immersion in God and His Word is adhered to; when all decisions are brought to the Lord for help before they are made; when dad and mom reverence God more than anyone else and impart this to their children in words, acts, influence, choices, values and where they hang out, the utterance of Deuteronomy 6 would not end up in the recycle bin

of Judges chapter 2.

One is much more likely to stick with God if he or she knows about God, and possibly, in proportion to the depth of knowledge the person has. Household heads in that ancient context used every available opportunity to tell their children of the wonderful acts of God on their behalf. This would include the stories found in Exodus chapter 12 and Joshua chapter 4. If you have never noticed the question, *“What do these stones mean?”* or *“What do you mean by this service?”* please read the chapters again.

To this point, does your family know and adhere to these household codes? Does the church where you attend speak of these as a model for the family, both biological and spiritual?

We have long operated out of a sense of godly fear when it came to adding to, subtracting from or substituting for the Word of God. Usually, however, our field of endeavour is

continued on next page

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related to God's plan of salvation from sin. But upon further investigation we find that God is not only interested in and satisfied with that important but small area of our lives, He wants us to know how to honour Him in our conduct with those socially above and below us in the strata of society and those carrying out different roles in our families. God's plan for our lives, as outlined in the Bible is not totally bound by custom and culture. He has a purposeful plan for the modern family. Of course, when one begins to put into practice the nuggets mined from the Good Book, he or she may come under close scrutiny, even harsh and unfair criticism from well-meaning fellow travellers on the journey.

Just suppose a father and husband in Bible times is a follower of Christ along with his family and he has slaves and/or household servants who are also part of God's heavenly family. How should the master of the house treat the servant and what should be the response of the slave to his master who is a Christian? What should be their conduct, as married or single, in relating to masters outside of their own households? Remember, we are speaking of those slaves and master who live to honour Christ. Read on in Ephesians chapter 6, "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and

trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him" (Ephesians 6:5-9).

Reiterating, while the levels of service differ, the relationship to Christ is the same. Try to imagine the extremes in duties, responsibilities and even social standing presented to us in the picture of the master of the house and the lowest servant. Paul writes, you both have the same master who sees impartially so when you serve do so as to the Lord, no matter what your place in the household is.

When Peter deals with this subject he seems to be pointing to a non-Christian master and a Christian slave. See 1 Peter 2:18-20. Paul is speaking of what we might call an ideal arrangement in the household chain. Peter says, "Be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust..." The role stays the same when circumstances change because it is to God that service is rendered and not to any individual role-player on earth. This is seen in verse 13 of this text regarding how family members are to view their role under humanly appointed officials. "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution... this is the will of God." He then inserts this enlightening addition, "... by so doing you put to silence the ignorance of foolish people... live as servants of God."

The fulcrum of Peter's version of household codes is found at the end of 1 Peter chapter 2 and offers the best possible incentive: *look to Jesus and do likewise.*

It seems correct to speak of the Ephesians 5 citation as "ideal" in that the if the instructions are carried out

all will "live happily ever after," in spite of some challenges along the way.

A reading of 1 Peter 2:18 through 3:8 brings with it the distinct impression that something has slipped. There may be a slave who steals from the master, a husband who does not act responsibly, a wife who oversteps her bounds or a child who fails to fully obey his parents.

This is beginning to sound much more like present day relationships with which we are familiar. What is the ultimate answer to imperfections? Allow me to suggest you refer to Jesus in Matthew 5:43-48, then read 1 Peter 2:21-25. For some good reason these 1 Peter verses were inserted exactly where we find them. When things don't go as well as you know they should go, turn to Jesus who remained faithful under the worst circumstances one can imagine. A reading of 2:21 through the end of the chapter should cause us to think many good thoughts about our Lord. This, incidentally, is the only place we are specifically told that Jesus "left us an example." Don't you suppose that this was the most needful place to insert this? Here, there is evidence that into the ideal situation, from which Paul spoke, has crept imperfections. Perhaps there are those masters who are taking advantage of their unsuspecting servants or it could be that slaves were taking unfair advantage of the equality found in Christ and forgetting or forsaking their proper station in life.

God has spoken about households. It would be healthy for all of us to listen for and march to the beat of that different drum. The world has its way that is in constant need of overhaul in a futile effort to please everybody of every stripe. Sincere people, even of the Lord's family, are enticed to put their faith in organizations, books and electronic media that contradict rather than corroborate the Bible.

It is fitting that we close where we opened. Please read and digest Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Judges 2:10. Now pray to God for insight and assistance as you attempt to get back to the future.

Grimsby, ON

EVANGELIST WANTED

The congregation in
Prince Rupert BC

is seeking a full-time evangelist.
Must be a capable preacher, teacher
and personal worker.

The congregation is stable with no real problems. We have a new building in a prime location (that is paid for) and are seeking a family that is willing to make a long term commitment. Our current evangelist has been with us for 20 years.

Please reply by e-mail at
prchofch@citytel.net

Partnership for Missional Church (PMC) Preview Weekend

Friday October 22nd – Saturday October 23rd

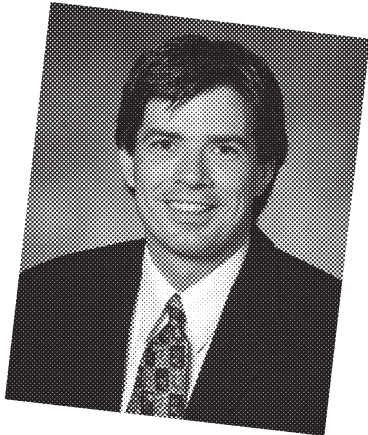
9: 30 am – 4:00 pm. Hosted by the Tintern and Beamsville churches of Christ
4900 John St. Beamsville ON

Spend a weekend connecting with other church leaders and be inspired to join in the mission that God has for you and your church family.

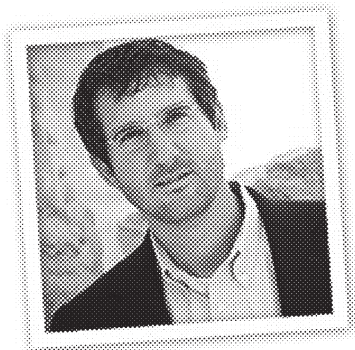
Through PMC your church can develop:

- A God-centered, Biblical vision for mission;
- A greater sense of God's activity in their congregation and community;
- Ownership of the mission of the congregation by more members;
- Members committed to and capable of making disciples;
- Both a vision for mission and a practical action plan to achieve it;
- Practical skills for managing change and attending to conflict;
- Dramatic expansion of lay involvement;
- A decision-making process for planning activities and budget;
- A faithful and hospitable congregation;
- Relationships with other partner congregations and partners in the broader community;

Sessions on Friday and Saturday will be led by:



Dr. Mark Love, Director of the Resource Centre For Missional Leadership at Rochester College. Mark has experience facilitating PMC groups in the southern as well as the north-west United States. Mark will be leading the workshop with the help of Dr. Stephen Johnson.



Dr. Stephen Johnson, assistant professor at ACU's Graduate School of Theology. One of Stephen's passions is exploring the intersection of Christian faith and contemporary culture.

For registration information contact
southern.ontario.pmc@gmail.com or call the Tintern Church of
Christ (905) 563-6311

A Fortress of Faith

Tim Johnson

Modern families are struggling. Christian homes are being pulled in a host of directions. We exist in a selfish society that refuses to miss out on anything, and confuses the pursuit of wealthy advantage with one's personal rights. How can Christians raise their children to love God and sacrifice for Him and His church when we live in communities with mixed-up morality and constant exposure to worldly relationships in the media? From the earliest times, faithful homes have struggled with the world.

God places so much weight on good homes that teach good principles. Our homes are to be more than pit-stops for food and rest between a host of structured activities for our children. They are to be more than caves for our televisions and computers. They are to be more than warehouses for collections of our possessions. They are to be a base where children learn about sincere faith and service to Jesus Christ. They are to be places that train children how to function well and make good decisions in a sinful world. They are to be schools where children are shown how to live life based on faith and God's word. They are to be loving places that demonstrate healthy relationships and caring for people.

Timothy grew up with some disadvantages. While his mother and grandmother were Christians, his father probably wasn't. In the sole New Testament verse that mentions his father, he's simply called "a Greek." This means Timothy's family was probably a mixture of nationalities and religions which didn't go over very well in Jewish circles. We don't even know his father's name, but we know that of his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5). It's clear who the godly influences in his life were.

Lois and Eunice, two Christian women who loved Jesus Christ, set out to raise Timothy so that he would do the same. They worked with him day by day and built within him a sincere faith. In the New Testament, "sincerity" meant something that could be judged in the sunlight, like a piece of pottery. The strong Mediterranean sun could easily expose cracks that had been filled with wax. Timothy's faith was not play-acting, nor was it an exercise in pleasing people. He believed. As an aged apostle, Paul appreciated this about Timothy and missed him dearly (2 Timothy 1:3). They'd spent many years together preaching for Jesus Christ, Paul being his mentor.

Back to Lois and Eunice: without their own written copy of the Scriptures, they managed to teach him "the sacred writings" which gave him knowledge of God's will (2 Timothy 3:15). Their own solid examples as

faithful sisters in Christ gave him the determination to be unwavering in his service to Christ and His people. To put it concisely, close relatives, faithful congregations and training by a great preacher produced the evangelist we know as Timothy. But it all started at home.

How can we build into our children at home the desire and wisdom to serve the Lord and be concerned about teaching the lost? Our homes are to be like little schools where the important things of a faithful life are taught and demonstrated. The few verses we've just considered give us some clues how to do this. How do we apply them to our busy modern lives and homes? Let me offer the following.

1. The commitment of parents needs to be clear. Kids should know who is Lord of the family. How will they see this in you? Ponder this.

2. Unity and agreement of parents about faith and service. It won't do for one parent to serve the Lord and the other to refuse. Maybe this difference didn't affect Timothy, but it has many others.

3. Constructive communication with children about all aspects of life. Eunice must have discussed all sorts of things with her son. Talk to your children. Help them learn to sort things out.

4. Kids need to see their parents shouldering responsibilities for the church. Are they learning that faith really isn't practical, or that faith demands interesting sacrifices. Young people want healthy challenges.

5. Parents need to be mature, but are they fun? Timothy's mother and relatives must have had a lot of joy. No teen respects a life that is only serious and stern. Faith must have joy to be attractive.

6. Parents should care for

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the lost and be seen studying with them. Evangelism is like a virus: kids catch it if they are around it. They'll care for the lost if they see you trying to help souls. Eunice and Lois were soul-winners.

7. Be creative teachers at home. If those two great ladies taught Timothy the word without owning their own printed copy, they must have been innovative teachers. Teaching the word of God at home takes creativity. There's no single sure-fire way to do it. Some families can handle a daily devotional, others can't. Some parents read the Bible to their young children at bed time or after a meal, urging them to do it themselves when older. Other parents create contests and reward achievements in Bible knowledge. We can use our creative minds to teach theirs. Never let exhausting jobs eliminate your responsibility to teach your children at home in some way, at some time.

8. Remain a willing guide for the rest of your life. Be willing to offer advice, answer questions and discuss things with your adult children long after they leave home and get on with their lives. If they know you will give them your time, attention and careful thought long-distance, they'll contact you when they need some guidance. Don't you think Timothy had some important conversations about the faith and the church with his mother anytime he could get home to see her? If she was willing when he was a child, she was also willing when he was an adult. Do that for your grown kids.

Your home shapes and matures your children in the faith and prepares them to make wise decisions in a complicated, sinful world. Satan has a whole line-up of worldly people ready to do it for you if you don't. Take your home, whatever shape it's in, and do your best to fashion it into a fortress of faith. Eunice's home was handicapped, but look at what she and her own mother produced: Timothy, one whom the entire ancient brotherhood knew as a man "of his proven worth" (Philippians 2:22). What will your home produce?

Edmonton, AB

The Christian Family... continued from page 2

neglect the health and welfare of the family yet expect the church to be strong.

The family itself remains the basic social unit of society. It is the place where community starts. It is all about intimacy, fellowship, nurture and care. It is the one place where being and belonging go hand in hand. Membership is not earned and you are loved simply because you are.

The family is God's plan for the world. It is our origin and our destiny. But our destiny is not really a place at all. Family is all about people; it's about relationships. We came from God and God wants us back. He wants us back in His family where righteousness is the most natural thing of all. For that to happen, God has made it so that we may have a new nature. The task then for every member of God's family who has been made new, is to be, by choice, the people that we have already become by the grace of God. This is what life is like in the family of God... when you know that you can always come home but you never plan to leave.

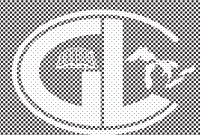
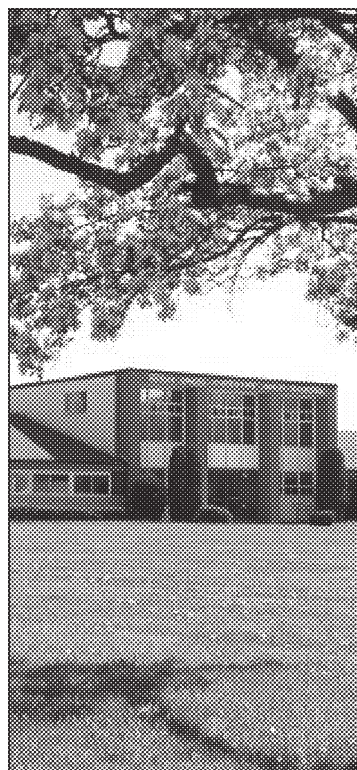
Waterloo, ON

Singles in the New Testament Church... continued from page 5

ministries of the church. Evangelism is one paramount responsibility of the body of Christ together for which marriage is not a prerequisite. Singles are best suited and equipped to reach other singles. Churches need to make opportunities for singles, take advantage of their gifts and fully integrate them into their communities, making them feel a part of their church families who make vibrant contributions. Preaching, classes and special events should consider singles' contributions, perspectives, sensitivities and potential in light of God's Word. Not the least of these considerations is the congregation's outreach to single visitors who are new to the church. Singleness is not a sentence or a missed opportunity. According to Jesus and Paul it is a gift, a state in which one fully enjoys God's presence and a doorway to many opportunities of service in God's worldwide kingdom.

Further reading for Biblical backgrounds and suggestions for churches: Steve McLeod, *Assimilating Singles into Family Churches*.

Winnipeg, MB



GREAT LAKES PARTNERSHIP DINNER

September 25, 2010

Please join us in honouring
Brian and Mary Boden for 40 years of service to GLCC at our major fundraising event of the year.

Reception: 5:00 p.m.
Dinner: 5:30 p.m.
Tickets: \$20.00

Tickets must be purchased by September 20 and can be purchased by calling 905-563-5374 Extension 210.



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

Reminder: To be published in the following month's Gospel Herald, each congregation's information should be sent to Walter Straker by the 10th of the month preceding the date of issue, which is the first of each month. Please clearly mark the email or the envelope: "NewsEast."

NEW BRUNSWICK:

Saint John: Shawn & Chieh LeBlanc are anxious to have their new home completed by the end of August. The June mail drop of 4470 postcards, have resulted in one phone call and two visitors to Sunday services in July. Their website, www.saintjohnchurchofchrist.org has received 67 hits. The land they bought for their house, 2.22 acres, turns out to be 4.26 acres!

ONTARIO

Beamsville: Congregation adults are studying Psalms this summer. In the evening a house church model will meet at John and Glynnis Fleming's home. Ann Hildebrand's 100 year old mother passed away in Manitoba. Max and Prisca Dauner (from France) visited and Max report on their work August 8. The elders have accepted Josh Hunter's resignation effective August 31. Josh will be a full time student in University. On September 5 the Beamsville and Tintem congregations plan to worship together at Charles Daley Park.

Bramalea: Fredua Kwarteng is spearheading a challenging study on "Assessing the Growth of Christ's Church." Nine of our members attended the Ghanaian Maryland Lectureship, July 16-18. Baptisms on July 18 were Clifford Wright, 98 years young, his teenage granddaughter, Candice Mason and Elesa Palmer whose mother, Patricia, was baptized in 2005. Greg Toohey, of Waterloo, gave an excellent lesson on July 25. If you are looking for a preacher, he is interning at Waterloo this summer.

Brantford: The congregation has been blessed by giving six different men the opportunity to speak for them: Wil Maddeaux, Wayne Whitfield, Curtis

Thompson, Greg Toohey, Robert Moore and Guy Stopard.

Fenwick: A well-attended "Singing on the Lawn" was held July 16. Members from several congregations attended as well as visitors from the community.

Oshawa: The Oshawa, ON, congregation is looking for some hymnbooks that are now out of print. The one they are seeking is "Songs of The Church" from Howard Publishers. Perhaps your congregation has changed from those books to a new one and would have of the old ones to donate or sell. You can contact the brethren at Oshawa at 566 Simcoe St. N., Oshawa, ON, L1G 4V3 or by phone at 905-668-3346.

Owen Sound: September 17-19 is the dates for the 2010 Owen Sound Ladies' Renewal at Riverview Bible Camp, Chesley, Ontario. An encouraging gospel meeting was held August 8-11 with David Srygley of Corpus Christi, TX, speaking.

St. Catharines: Joel Osborne, who is from St. Catharines, visited from Japan for a weekend in July.

Toronto (Strathmore Blvd): July 26 - August 4, Santiago, Marlon and Mayra Molina along with Isaac Persaud, traveled to Grecia, Costa Rica, for the Central America mission. They had to deal with a good bit of rain but were able to complete their planned program. The congregation welcomed Gilrita Tangcalagan who recently moved to Toronto from Ottawa. Also welcomed was Daniel and Ruby Suresh with their children, David, Sarah and Stephen. Another three more barrels of food and supplies plus five bales of clothing is being sent to Haiti. The congregation welcomed Lorena Molina's husband, Juan Cruz, from Nicaragua. We rejoice that this fine young couple can now get on with their life together.

Tintern: The Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society's 2010 annual meeting, entitled "A Virtual Tour of Restoration Sites in Southwestern Ontario," was enjoyed by a good number on Saturday, August 14. July 5-9 sixteen teens from Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, helped teach the Bible Day Camp 2010. One hundred eighty children from 92 families attended at least one day. The Junior High Mission Team went to Thessalon with Noel and Julie Walker August 7-14 to work in a VBS there. The BC Mission Team raised \$2,100.00 from 120 people from a meal in the GLCHS on August 4. Six of them joined Norman and Jen Weir from Abbotsford, BC, to hold four day VBSs in two Native communities in the

Interior (Fort Ware and Tsae Key Dene). Praise God for recent baptisms: Mitchell Tallman, Brad MacLean, Sandy Kiestra, Matt Kralt and Josh Warren.

Waterloo: The 31st Annual Ontario Men's Retreat was scheduled for September 10-11, and is entitled "Rediscovering Our Roots: Looking Back, Moving Forward" with Geoff Ellis (Waterloo) and Glen Robins (Montreal) speaking. Donations for the China Mission came to \$270.00.

Camp Omagh: The camp's swimming pool is being renovated and is in use; donations are requested. About \$20,000.00 still will be needed to complete the work next year.

Owen Sound Ladies Renewal

Date: September 17, 18, 19, 2010

Theme:
In Everything By Prayer

Speakers:
June Heuston - Tillsonburg
Margaret Hibbard - Thessalon
Michelle Toohey - Waterloo

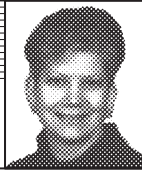
Location: Riverview Bible Camp
Near Chesley

Cost: \$35 per person
\$10 per daughter
in high school

Optional:
5 km walk/run with funds
going to support
Ruth Zimmerman

Registration Deadline:
September 8
Accommodations are limited

Contact: Mary Zavitz
(519) 363-6952



by Marion Waugh
3427-82 Street
Edmonton, AB T6K 0G7
Phone: (780) 637-0867
E-mail: waughr1@shaw.ca

(BC news supplied by Barbara Lewis)

ALBERTA

Edmonton (North Side): We rejoice with 4 recent baptisms: Michael Wu, Shantel Krajci, Brittany Taylor and Stephen Johnson. The theme of the annual youth retreat was "The Invitation desire, deny, take, follow, lose, find. Guest speaker was Greg Parks of Rockwell, Texas. Summer plans are an ongoing VBS. It started with a BBQ on June 27. There are 10 VBS lessons. On August 29 there was a picnic, carnival and garage sale give away. The VBS theme is "Finding Jesus." Some of the lesson titles are: "Finding Jesus—Where Do We Look?" and "Finding Jesus at the River (Acts 16: 12-14)." Classes included adult studies. Bible Class on Sunday mornings is watching a series "The Parable of Jesus". The teacher is Wesley Simons, elder and preacher for the Stony Creek church of Christ in Elizabethton, TN. This is an in-depth study of the parables, including an introduction and a detailed treatment of 28 different parables of the Lord. Each parable is approached in a systematic way. Elements stressed include practical lessons for today as well as specific false doctrines that are refuted by the parables. Back to school bible school and adult bible study will be over 5 Sundays and 4 Wednesdays. Before going to Cambodia, Kevin Carson led a Teacher Workshop reviewing the WEI material.

Edmonton (Southside): (submitted by Tim Johnson): We are grateful for the baptism of Lien Tiet in May, a former neighbour of a member of the congregation. We had our 3rd annual "Friends Day" on Sunday, May 30 with a wonderful 98 people present, just shy of our goal of 100. We're very grateful for these blessings, and for your prayers for progress here.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg: Canada Day Youth Night included a sleep over at the church building, barbecue, devo, movie and watching the fireworks. Bible school manuals, resource packs and unused student material have been donated and sent to congregations in Jamaica and Trinidad to use in their teaching programs. A get well card, signed by several members of

the congregation, was sent to a friend of Paul Birston's. He had never received anything like that and was pleased and appreciative. The little things do count.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford (Central Valley): Having no space in our new facility for a children's class, it was decided to try the Weir's camper on Sunday mornings until better accommodation for them can be arranged. The crew from Tintern, ON., flew to Prince George on August 6, where they were met by Norm, Jen and Willodene Wedler to enjoy (?) the logging-road drive on to Tsey Kay and Fort Ware on Saturday. The Bible Day Camp was started the next day with Willodene and Jen teaching the youngest children in a separate classroom, which made the older classes much more effective. In preparation for the trip: food, cooking appliances, sleeping bags, air mattresses, all class and craft materials, a screen tent for use as a classroom, items for the thrift shop, (not to mention bug spray), for eight people had to be packed and carried from Abbotsford. Prices in the one grocery store in each of the villages are so exorbitant that only necessary things like fresh milk are purchased while there.

Burnaby: Furaha Kimwemwe has started a ministry of collecting clothing for people who need them. She welcomes contributions of used clothing, particularly articles for children. Donations are brought to the church building where Furaha collects and distributes them.

Delta: Jon Waddell gave a report of his summer mission trip to Mozambique during a July service.

Nanaimo: Three young people have given their lives to Christ by being baptized this year. They are Jill Sickovich, Conrad Wetten and Brandon Moes. A Spruston Road Bible Camp Reunion to celebrate 40 years of Christian camping in this location took place July 30–August 2 with Jim Hawkins from Delta and Kelly Carter from Calgary as the principle speakers.

Oakridge (Vancouver): A new attempt to bring the congregation together mentally, if not physically, during the week was started in July. Since none of the mid-week evenings tried for meetings at the church building have been successful in bringing a substantial number of people together, Brother Diaz has initiated a devotional-type program over the internet to give Oakridge members connection during the week. Each family is asked to participate at home at the same time on Wednesday evenings. The devotional contains a song, short study, prayer, a brief update on members and a personal question or two about the subject of the study. Oakridge members are welcome to submit comments, questions and suggest or

write topics they would like to have considered. It is hoped that all will be united in spirit and mind if not in body during this period of time. The interesting name of "OAK" is not a shortened version of the church's name. It stands for "Oakridge Assembly Kairos" (the Spanish word for 'Time'). Several special items were included in the worship service on Fathers' Day: Alan Hidalgo read a thank-you note to all the fathers in the congregation for their support and faithfulness to their families, our ladies apologized for their nagging and our children claimed that they were perfect because of the example set by their "papas". The favourite part for most dads was the serving of cake afterwards.

Salmon Arm: Ray Fisher and his wife, Laurie, were given a farewell dinner on July 27. On August 21, a celebration in honour of Maurice and Marie Taylor's 50th Wedding Anniversary was hosted by their children at the Taylor's home in Salmon Arm. Invitations carried a picture of the couple at their initial wedding. Families from Salmon Arm and Vernon were invited to spend the Labour Day weekend together at a DVD camp that has been reserved.

SASKATCHEWAN

Weyburn: WCC alumni sponsored a Country Blend Concert on June 22. The concert was a fund raiser to assist with student's tuitions at Western. A crowd of 230 people attended, larger than expected, raised \$2,640. VBS was held July 5 to 9. The theme was "Heroes in the Making". The lessons were: Hero in the Making (David the Shepherd), Understanding the Mission (David meets his giant), How a Hero Knows What is Right (David and Jonathon), Heroes Help Others (David's compassion towards Mephibosheth), Handling the Pressure (Saul pursues David). There were daily activities as well. The VBS team was from Southside church of Christ of Lawrence, Kansas and the Central church of Christ in Topeka, Kansas. Nathan McBroom the youth minister at Topeka was the leader of the group. Russell Bell (a missionary in India and other places for many years) taught the VBS adult class on the book of James. The VBS was well organized and well received. Allan and Karen Caldwell put Christ on in baptism. Case for Christ series is the adult class. It is based on the book Case for Christ written by Lee Strobel. The 10th Annual Christian Men's Retreat and Trail Ride was held June 18-20 at "The Camp" south of Glenworth on the Mitchell Ranch. Dr. John Reese was guest speaker. The annual Christian Women's Retreat and Trial Ride was held June 25-27, at the same location. The speaker was Jeanene Reese. Activities included riding, rest and relaxation, toe-nail painting with Treena Blake and stone art with Shelly Harden.

Barbara Lewis
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Spokane, WA 99206-4475
e-mail: ray-bjl@comcast.net



ETHIOPIA: Since 1991 Denmark's Adoption Center International (ACI) has been sponsoring a number of children at the Makanissa School for the Deaf. A few months ago they requested an evaluation of the entire school program in order to find out if their donations were being used appropriately. Their evaluation team carried out an investigating procedure from April 1-8, 2010, spending time with students, teachers, other staff members, school employees and the administration. A few families of our deaf children were asked to come to the school to participate in helping with their evaluation process. The focus of our school is twofold: 1) to provide the best quality education possible for each student and 2) To help the spiritual development of each student toward a faith in God and to understand that the Bible is God's Word. The focus of ACI is to promote a social agenda and a welfare base for the families of deaf children. Although we will not waver from what we believe our focus must be, we have agreed to employ a full time social worker to work with families and students to help them in their respective relationships, and to teach them more fully about issues that include health and HIV aids education as requested by ACI. Makanissa School for the Deaf is the pioneer in the field of teaching deaf children in Ethiopia, established nearly 50 years ago. The school offers first and second cycle education (grade 1-4 and grade 5-8, respectively), and has grown from 10 to 281 students. The local education office monitors the school and its activity twice monthly, awarding a certificate for meeting the required quality standards. In a meeting with the government education office, officials expressed their appreciation for the school, assessing it to be the best school for the deaf in Ethiopia. Many students say they regard the school as their second home, and that they are happy when there because they can communicate with their peers, have access to computers etc. It is clear from both former students and teachers that these are major assets and a great advantage as compared to other schools which have congested areas and fewer facilities. The quality of our education is measured by evaluations from the educational bureau as well as an annual

national examination. Last year 40 out of our 41 deaf students passed the 8th grade national "leaving" examination. ACI is now in the process of determining if they will continue to work with our school. Brother Behailu Abebe, who was present for the ACI examination, asks that Christians pray that they will recognize that more than 5000 deaf and destitute children have been helped over the past 47 years and continue their association with the school. - (Report from Woodward Park church in Fresno, CA.)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: "Every other year, we are honoured to welcome a team from Brisbane, Australia, for a few weeks. Usually six or seven led by Tom Bunt come, with new members each time as well as others returning. Tom, and his wife Rens, worked in the Waria Valley and Wau in the 1980's, and have remained passionate about and active in the work. This year's group arrived in August. to spend three weeks working with us. As we prepare for the group's one-week trip to Indagen (a 45 minute flight from Lae, which left July 31), I've accumulated such items to take along as a bucket, packages of instant coffee, toilet paper, a carton of Tok Pisin Bibles, rice, cooking oil, along with dish paste, matches, and an umbrella. Overall, it is a pretty eclectic mix! These kinds of staple foodstuffs we use, not only on patrol, but also in town." - (Report from Ruth Zimmerman in Lae)

CUBA: It took only one trip to visit some of the churches in this country to be made to feel at home. Tim Archer and Steve Ridgell had been there many times before, but for Bill Brant, it was his first. The trio were on the Island this time to celebrate the 15th year that the Herald of Truth, the Matanzas church of Christ and Tony Fernandez, Herald of Truth's representative on the Island have worked together. Although the plane was three hours late, arriving at 12:30 in the morning, and the procedure of getting through customs and immigration took more time, the three found Tony waiting for them. After a few hours' sleep in Havana, a two-hour drive northeast carried the group to Matanzas. Brant wrote that he felt he now understood how Abraham had felt when he said he was "a foreigner and a visitor among you" (Gen. 23:4). Or, as in Ex. 2:22, the loneliness of Moses expressed in the naming of his first-born "I have been a stranger in a foreign land". Realizing that he could not speak the language nor understand the customs, Brant said that he was both "anxious and eager on Sunday morning, wondering how an old white-haired Yankee would be greeted". Although the last of the group to

enter the room, he was given hugs, kisses and smiles—in short, treated like a distant relative returning home. It didn't matter that he was different, and when he made a second trip to Cuba this year, it really felt like he was no longer a stranger or a foreigner. All three men spoke during this meeting that brought some 300 preachers and leaders of the Cuban churches together.

HONDURAS: Local churches in this country were so encouraged by the success of a nation-wide TV program sponsored by the Herald of Truth last year that they have agreed to sponsor it themselves in order to keep it on air. The local coordinator, Rigoberto Vargas, and other preachers, who had handled follow-up, met with Tim Archer and Steve Ridgell in Tegucigalpa this summer where they received reports of numerous visitors and those continuing with the Bible studies offered. Since many of these students have been utilized in the Baxter Institute of Biblical Studies project headed by Howard Norton, Archer and Ridgell also met with him while in Honduras.

JAPAN (Mito): Joel Osborne enjoyed the Osborne family retreat in Northern Ontario. Jonathan Straker visited the Sendai congregation while visited his in-laws with his family. He asks for all of us to continue to pray for this small struggling congregation.

MINISTER WANTED

The church in **Carman Manitoba**

is seeking a full time minister to work with the elders and deacons, to serve our church family as well as to work in the community to share the gospel with those around us. Dale Elford is retiring in 2010. Carman is a community of 3,000 with a full complement of health, recreation and education facilities. We are a 1 hour drive from Winnipeg. Interested applicants please forward resume to:

Carman Church of Christ
Box 955, Carman,
Manitoba R0G 0J0

FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN

Articles for publication and/or reactions to this page should be sent to Linda Hammett, 507 S. Main, Kingfisher, OK 73750.
e-mail: forwomen@gospelherald.org



The 6th Act of Worship

by Lois (Lock) Voyles

Growing up, I often heard people talk about the five acts of worship (singing, praying, Bible reading, communion and collection.). However, recently I was struck by the thought that there is another act of worship which, in my opinion, is extremely important. God brought that thought to mind recently when I was meditating on Romans 12:1 which says, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

I believe that every day when we wake up it's a good idea to offer ourselves anew to God: "Here I am Lord. I give myself to You to do whatever You want me to do. I don't call the shots—You do. You decide what people You want me to minister to today. Here I am—ready to do Your bidding. I will do whatever You want me to do. Open my eyes to see the opportunities You put in front of me." And when we offer ourselves to God, it is our spiritual act of worship.

At the end of the day, we can take "inventory"—to see how God was working in our lives—bringing opportunities to us. If this is new for you, be prepared for some adventures.

When I was about 17, I heard Marge Green at Great Lakes Christian College speak on this same idea. Several of us girls began to gather each morning, praying that God would use our lives any way that He wanted. I had no idea what He had in mind for me. I certainly had NO clue that He was going to make me into a missionary!

About a year or so later, in January 1974, Val Fleming approached me and asked me if I would be willing to go on a mission trip to Switzerland with their family for three weeks that summer, and they would pay all the expenses! Would I go?! Are you kidding?! I practically had my bags packed minutes

after her proposal! So, I went, and what a mission trip that was! I loved it so much that I asked the missionaries, Doyle and Barbara Kee, if I could live with them the rest of the summer, working with the church. Just recently, God arranged it so that I bumped into Doyle Kee at the Harding University Lectureship where we shared some hugs and remembrances of days gone by. What a foretaste of heaven!

But that wasn't all. Before I left for Switzerland, missionaries Joe and RosaBelle Cannon, and friends of Dad and Mom's came to visit them in Toronto, Canada. (Of course, I had no way of knowing then that they were my future husband's aunt and uncle—God is awesome!) Joe was encouraging my parents to join them in the work in Papua New Guinea. My dad is an accountant and my mom a teacher by training, but no one seemed to think it was odd that Joe was asking them to be missionaries. God can do whatever He wants with whomever He wants whenever He wants—He is just so incredible! My parents were a bit reluctant, even though interested and had thought of doing mission work later on in life when all of us children were grown. My brother, David, was soon to be married to Karen Vine, I was about to graduate from Grade 13. Michael was 16, Becky, 12 and Bethany, 8.

When I heard about the Cannon's visit, I got so excited; I just KNEW in my heart that God was calling me to be a missionary to PNG. I all but begged by parents to go. I said, "If you go, I'll go for a year." And now, here's the most wonderful working of God Almighty. They actually listened to an 18-year old, sold their house, most of their possessions, put our belongings into 14 boxes and shipped them overseas, raised support and by October 1974 Dad, Mom, my two sisters and I

were missionaries in PNG.

Dad began preaching and teaching, Mom started a school and I became her assistant. Soon we were teaching women and children about the Lord every day as well as bettering their lives through literacy, sewing and cooking classes.

Of course, we missed my brothers and Karen terribly, but we wrote letters non-stop about how we all loved what we were doing and how powerfully God was working, and within a year, they joined us. At the end of the year, I couldn't bear to leave (God working on my heart for His own reasons that only later would become clear to me) and decided to stay one more year. It was in the second year that God convinced a wonderful man, Larry Voyles, to visit his aunt and uncle, Joe and RosaBelle Cannon, in Papua New Guinea, where we met, fell in love and were married within four months on my 21st birthday, June 26, 1976.

How God arranged all that is pretty remarkable. Joe had been asking Larry to come to PNG, but Larry kept putting him off. (I wasn't there yet; so, of course Larry had to say No for a few years! It just all fits—God using ordinary people and their desires and at the right time, God brought it all to pass!) Instead, Larry went to Africa in 1973 to teach biology for three years. While Larry was there, the headmaster, Eugene Perry and his

continued on next page

Moncton, NB

Preacher/evangelist needed for the Riverview Church of Christ in Moncton, New Brunswick. Congregation is small but we have our own building. We can help a bit with support. Moncton is a booming town, full of souls to save. We pray that God will bless us with who He deems we need. For information contact: Roger Leger (506) 852-4143 or Christian Maillet (506) 860-6177

... continued from previous page

wife, Evelyn, from Great Lakes (my alma mater), also went to Africa and became Larry's principal. At the end of Larry's three years, he bought a ticket and came to PNG to visit the Cannons, and by the hand of God, I had decided to stay a second year. Now, the Perrys knew all our family, and Evelyn did a bit of match making and told Larry to look me up. Not hard to do since we just lived around the corner from the Cannons.

And on my end, RosaBelle used to read us Larry's newsletters from Africa, and I pretty much thought he was too good to be true!

Who would have ever thought that a young woman and a young man could go to two different third-world countries to serve God and that the Sovereign Lord would bring events to pass to bring them together in the fullness of time. Amazing! And after my two years, we ended up staying ten more years. Over the course of time, the Lock family grew to 16 members, all serving the Lord in that country from 1974-1986.

So, get ready for some adventures.

You may be thinking, "Well, that is never going to happen to me", and it won't, at least not exactly like that. God has your own adventures lined up for you with your name on them. I'm only telling this story to let you know that God does work when we offer ourselves to Him which is our spiritual act of worship.

I may need to define adventure for you—it is ANYTHING that the Sovereign Lord, Creator of the universe, All-Powerful God gives you to do. We don't have to dream this stuff up—He brings us the things He wants us to do. Our part is to be alert and prayerful, daily offering ourselves to Him—with no strings attached.

Some days, it may not "seem" like a grand adventure. It may seem hum-drum, faithfully going to work every day to support your family, making meals, washing clothes, saying a kind word, managing your home, spending time in prayer. Satan wants us to believe a lie that the "little" things are insignificant. If you're thinking that way, you need to adjust your attitude. We should just be in absolute awe that we have the free

will to offer ourselves to Him. It is so incredible that God would even take the time to give us assignments, each one tailor made for each individual, which is what Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 3. NOTHING that God gives us to do is insignificant.

Offering ourselves to Him on a daily basis is being ready for WHATEVER is good according to Titus 3. It's about being faithful to do whatever God has given you to do TODAY. There is nothing too small and nothing too big when the Lord of the Universe calls your name with a task for today. II Chronicles 16 tells us that the eyes of God are ranging throughout the earth looking for people whose hearts are fully committed to Him, people who will daily step up to the plate and give themselves to Him, for whatever He has in mind. It's all about being faithful day in and day out, regardless of the assignment.

And so, my dear friends, offering yourself to God is a 6th spiritual act of worship (but who's counting?!) that can be done any day of the week at any time.

Searcy, AK

The Salmon Arm congregation is praying for a full-time minister to teach, preach, continue community outreach and work with God's people in British Columbia. Although not required, it is desirable that the candidate have several years of committed experience as a minister. The successful candidate's wife will also be committed to the work of advancing the Kingdom. We would like a family that is ready to put down roots and "stay awhile." Is this your family?

Average attendance is in the 55+ range and has a good distribution of ages. We are a self supporting congregation that has been in the community for well over 50 years and we have an established Eldership. Salmon Arm is surrounded by outstanding natural beauty, clean waterways, provincial parks and an abundance of green space. There are many people in this area that need to know about Jesus and His church. Will you come and help us tell them about the Saviour?

More information is available by visiting our website: sa4Christ.com

Please send a resume, cover letter, and references to:

"Minister Search" P.O. Box 51, Salmon Arm, BC, V1E 4N2

OR e-mail sacofc@jetstream.net

May God bless you as you seek His will.

OBITUARIES

Blackwell, Maureen Sandra

Sister Maureen Sandra Blackwell, went to be with her Lord on Tuesday, July 13, 2010, in Grand River Hospital, Kitchener ON, after a 3 year fight against breast cancer.

A Funeral Service was conducted by Michael Mazzalongo at the Waterloo Church of Christ, on July 19. Maureen is survived by her husband, Chris, her sons, James and Austin; her father Austin; her brother William, (Lucy) and their two children Amanda and Elianne; her sister Cheryl, (Bill) and their children Kaleb, Seth and Meagan Rose.

Born in Montreal, QC, February 3, 1969, to Austin and Laverne Moran, Maureen grew up in St Laurent on Montreal island. Maureen came to the Lord through her Sister Cheryl in 1988 and was baptised into Christ in the Edmonton Church of Christ while visiting that summer. Maureen then returned to Montreal and was a faithful member of the Church in Lachine where Michael Mazzalongo was the evangelist. In Lachine she met and married Christopher in 1991. In 1992 both she and Chris were part of a Church plant, establishing an English congregation in downtown Montreal. This congregation is now the Greater Montreal Church of Christ.

The following year she would follow Chris to England to the British Bible

School. Maureen completed one year of biblical studies, then returned to Canada in the summer of 1994 to tend to her mother who was battling cancer. When Chris returned to become the evangelist at Lachine in 1995, Maureen worked alongside him, a great encourager to all who knew her. Many can testify to the generous hospitality that was enjoyed in her home. In 1997 she again assisted Chris in the planting of an English congregation in the Verdun area. This same year Maureen became a mother and committed loving parent to James and then, in 2001, Austin. Her boys were her pride and joy. In the summer of 2003 Chris and Maureen moved to Kitchener, ON, and became members of the Church in Waterloo. Maureen was a keen Bible student and she would talk about Jesus because He was the vital part of her life as was demonstrated so well in the last 3 years while battling cancer. She will be remembered as a cheerful source of encouragement by the church in Waterloo.

By profession, Maureen was a Registered Nurse and practiced nursing for 18 years. She worked at St Mary's Hospital in Montreal and then, after the family move to Kitchener in August of 2003 she continued her nursing career with St Mary's Hospital in Kitchener. During her career as a nurse Maureen was known for her caring and compassion and her "can do" spirit. She was admired by all who worked with her. This was evident at a special service of thanksgiving and remembrance held by staff at Montreal

St Mary's Hospital on July 28, where there was standing room only in the Chapel.

We commend her to the God of all grace and comfort, and look forward to the time when there will be no more goodbyes.

-In thanksgiving for her life,
Christopher Blackwell

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or klarocque@wildlaw.ca
for more info or to view.

LISTINGS OF INTEREST

Great Lakes Christian High School Alumni Association

4875 King Street
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6
School: 905-563-5374
Alumni contact:
Jodie (Codling) Cook '90—
905-563-9433
Email: alumni@glchs.on.ca

*For getting materials
some sources are:*

Gospel Advocate, Nashville, TN
www.gospeladvocate.com

21st Century Christian,
Nashville, TN
www.21stcc.com

Lambert Book House,
Florence, AL
www.lambertbookhouse.com

The Bible House, Inc., Searcy, AR
www.biblehousesupply.com

Foundation Distributing, Inc.
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Bibles, books, Standard Publishing
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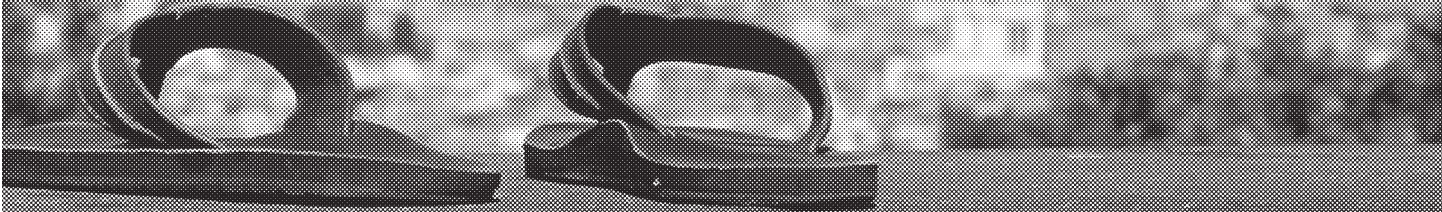
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"They sell the righteous for silver,
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