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THIS ISSUE'S THEME:

God the Son (PART 2)

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God the Son: Why It Matters

Thayer Salisbury

It is hard to say if the congregation where I grew up was typical or not. Of course, I thought that it was typical, but it may not have been. I always chuckle when I hear others describe a “typical” congregation of forty years ago. Most of the time their typical is not what I experienced. I suppose that others would chuckle if they heard me describe what I remember as typical. Maybe someone’s memory is at fault. Maybe there was more variety back then than we wish to admit.

It is also hard to say what the brothers and sisters in my home congregation really believed. My memory is hardly perfect, and I may not have always been a good listener. It makes me ill to hear a “more-educated-than-thou” speaker belittling his supposedly “holier-than-thou” home congregation. Does it never occur to these wise guys that in another forty years they will be parodied by the next generation? And why not? They are teaching unfair parody by the way they belittle their elders.

So I want to be perfectly clear. I am not claiming that those who taught me were confused about the godhead. I was confused, but they may not have been. I was confused, but the fault may lie as much with my listening as with their teaching.

It does seem, however, that our movement has been ambivalent about the godhead. Some of us have not been clear in our teaching regarding the Trinity. I think that a couple of brothers in my home congregation tried to make the matter clear, but I left home

with no clear understanding of the matter. My study at two of our Christian universities did not help. The matter was addressed; the Trinity was explained; scriptures were given that seemed to demonstrate the deity of Christ and the personality of the Spirit. The proper doctrine of the godhead was taught. But somehow I saw no point to the whole matter. I learned the doctrine of the Trinity, but I did not learn why it mattered.

Somewhere along the way I purchased a copy of *Historical Documents Advocating Christian Union*. This book is a historical treasure. Published by Old Paths Book Club, it brought together some of the fundamental documents of the Restoration Movement.¹ It contained “*The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*,” the “*Declaration and Address*,” the “*Sermon on the Law*” and other foundational documents. It also contained documents of a later date, such as, “*Our Position*” by Isaac Errett.

Errett was adamant, and in this I think he followed Stone, in insisting that our view of the godhead was not a matter of importance. The creeds and confessions had gone too far in trying to explain and define and categorize things that the Bible had not spelled out. We must not do that. We would simply teach the gospel and not

Footnote 1. Yes, I know, some of you have been taught never to use that term, but to say instead “Stone-Campbell Movement.” I disagree. Although no term is perfect, Restoration Movement comes closer to being correct than this newer term. To speak of the Stone-Campbell movement is often an anachronism, especially in Canada. But that is a matter for another article.

bother with explaining the Trinity. I accepted that position. It seemed to work well.

A Moment of Truth

For nearly twenty years I preached the gospel as well as I could without ever coming to grips with the matter at the heart of it. It was not a theologian who finally pulled me up short. It was not even a Christian. A simple question from a Muslim brought me face to face with the inadequacy of what I had been teaching. After I explained the gospel to him he simply asked, “OK, you say that Jesus took your place. You say that He died in your place because you, as a sinner, had forfeited your life. You say that He, as a sinless man, could substitute for you. That is all well and good; but now who is going to substitute for me?”

I knew that Jesus had to become flesh to substitute for me. I knew that the “blood of bulls and goats” could not atone for the sin of a human (Hebrews 10:3). I had understood that almost from childhood. In college I had learned to emphasize His humanity. But how was I to answer this? What had I missed in the church’s Bible classes? What had I missed in my study at Oklahoma Christian and at Abilene and in my own Bible study? How is it that one life could substitute not only for another life, but for thousands, millions, even billions?

I could evangelize the typical Westerner of forty years ago without coming to grips with

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When God Lived Here

George Mansfield

It was the shock of their lives. They had been following Jesus around, magnifying glass in hand, observing and dissecting every move. Now (listen for the drum roll) the plaster and dirt fall from the ceiling into the already crowded room where Jesus is teaching interested listeners. The debris was only the signal of more to come, not more of the same but more. Down, down, down came a man. He is horizontal and lying on a mat. He settles into the only breathing room to be found—right in front of Jesus.

While the paralyzed man was brought to see Jesus by four men of faith who believed Jesus could make his body better, the words of Jesus come as a complete surprise to all. Listen to these words ring out, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Here is what we next read “Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ‘Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?’”

Great observation Scribes! You may be bothersome, critical and legalistic, but the question you formed in your minds represents a truth. Nobody can forgive sins but God alone!

God was teaching there in that crowd teaching and now healing people. Jesus was God in person!

While this nugget comes out of Mark, the bulk of this article will be tied to the Gospel of John.

The first recorded words from John the son of Zebedee are these: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

This being did not simply represent God, He WAS God and earth is a God-visited planet.

“The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the

right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

No prophet, priest, king, preacher or apostle had the power to pass on the right to become God’s children. Only God can do that. That is what Jesus did.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, ‘This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’) And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.”

A Christian family went camping. Dad and mom slept in one tent and the two children were to spend the night in the other. All was okay until a large clap of thunder shook the earth and that was just the beginning of a horrific thunderstorm. The boys came running to the parents’ tent and asked if they could bring their sleeping bags and sleep in with them. They said they were afraid.

Dad calmly assured the boys that they had always learned that God is with us, in all circumstances. Together the boys replied, “Yes dad, we know and



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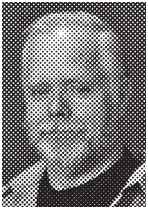
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Christ Is All

Wayne Turner



What is your favorite scriptural gem? Sometimes, as we read the Bible, we notice passages that seem to rise above their contexts and stand out on their own. For many people, Hebrews 13:8 is one of these gems. It says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

In the previous verse, the writer encourages his readers to remember their leaders, consider the outcome of their lives and imitate their faith. Comparing verses 7 and 8, there seems to be an implied contrast between these human leaders and Jesus Christ. Leaders within the church have an important role as teachers, mentors and examples. However, at best, they are mortal. They come and go. The ability of the readers to “consider the outcome of their way of life” suggests that the specific leaders mentioned may even be dead. His point is that while Christians should follow the example of these leaders, Jesus is the true constant—the anchor and foundation of their faith and hope. He will never waver or change. He will always be there.

How powerfully the thought of verse 8 stands out! It assures us that the Christ we come to know through scripture—the one who existed before time, who had a primary role in the creation, who became flesh to give His life for our sins, who conquered death and ascended to be Lord of all—is the same today and forever. He is God’s Son, our Savior and Lord. He is the head of the church, the body purchased by His blood.

It is important for us, as Christians, to keep our focus on Jesus Christ. It is easy for us to be distracted by the ongoing routine of church and lose sight of our God given purpose. Jesus didn’t call us to manage and operate a religious organization or institution. He called us to be His disciples—to follow Him. This is why we want to know Him and everything we can about Him. Paul’s desire for himself was to know Christ (Philippians 3:10). His prayer for the Ephesians is that they might know Him better (1:17). Ultimately, as Paul wrote in Colossians 3:11, “Christ is all, and is in all.”

In June, Paul Birston put together a theme issue of the Gospel Herald about Christ, “God the Son.” Earlier in the year, as he was planning that issue,

Paul communicated his intent to those who frequently write for us. The response was such that there were more than enough articles to fill two of our quarterly theme editions (as well as some additional articles that have appeared in other issues). This showed the importance of Christ and the conviction and interest of these brethren to write about Him.

In this month’s theme issue, George Mansfield, in “When God Lived Here,” shows us many of the evidences of Christ’s deity and what that means for us, “Jesus was God in person!” In “The Magnificent Ministry of Jesus,” Tim Johnson reminds us how Jesus was closely involved with people, that “People needed Him there” and that “His ministry has become ours.” Thayer Salisbury shows the importance of the incarnation, “Jesus could substitute for us because He was one of us” in “God the Son: Why It Matters.” And, Paul Birston points out that the ministry of Jesus is ongoing today as he answers, “What is Jesus doing now?” We especially appreciate Paul’s work in planning and coordinating our theme issues.

All of the articles that were submitted for these issues share an important conviction and goal. Knowing about Jesus is not merely about the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. To borrow the words of the apostle John, “These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in his name.”

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The Magnificent Ministry of Jesus

Tim Johnson

My father-in-law ministered for fifty years—all at the same congregation! We admire such long-serving preachers. We wonder about the secrets of their persistence. Yet, the most powerful ministry in history lasted only three years. Such a record would be shameful for anyone else. For Jesus, it was all the time He needed to do everything He set out to accomplish. His ministry was perplexing, powerful—and short.

He exploded upon the Jewish scene, working wonders and amazing the crowds. There didn't seem to be any gradual build-up of reputation. Multitudes gathered around Him almost immediately. Early in Matthew's account it is said, "And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan" (4:24-25). His ministry was captivating and exciting. When Jesus said, "Follow Me," many dropped their tools on the spot and went. "And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him" (Matthew 4:22). No one had ever seen anyone as remarkable as Jesus.

What motivated people to drop everything and follow Him? Was it just excitement? Were people caught up in the frenzy of the crowds? Were they looking for a way out of daily responsibility? Perhaps. But all appreciated the way He determined to serve them. He made it clear to His ambitious disciples that, while the world competes for top spot He was in the world to serve people: "I am among you as the one who serves" (Lk.22:27). This is what

makes Jesus' ministry different from what the world has always seen in power-hungry, selfish, competing people. He would have none of it! He washed feet, prayed with the hurting, hurried off with the worried, and spent countless hours teaching people about God and His ways. He had remarkable stamina, sometimes helping the crowds all day and late into the evening. They wouldn't leave Him alone and He never seemed to tire of them.

He ministered to everybody and left no one out. He spoke kindly to the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22), answered the question of Nicodemus, the Sanhedrin member (John 3:1-14) and handled Pilate with great skill (John 18:33-40). The poor were not

neglected. Motivated by compassion, He fed thousands at a time rather than see them go home hungry (Mark 6:33-44). He stopped the noisy, adoring crowds so He could talk to the blind men sitting beside the road, quickly healing them (Matthew 20:29-34). He transformed a desperate, demon-possessed wild man into a sane, hopeful citizen (Mark 5:1-20). The elderly found hope in talking to Him, and He let little children sit on his lap (Mark 10:13-16). He served everyone, not just a favoured few.

His ministry was messy. His was not a sterile, hygienic world. He didn't seek safe, clean, nice-smelling places or people whom He could serve. He stumbled through the

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believe that, but right now we want someone who has skin on him.”

Out of the mouths of babes came the perfect illustration of what happened when Jesus appeared on earth. He was God with us. This is what we call the incarnation- God with flesh. While the Word was God, He now became one of us. But, notice, He then turned our attention back to heaven, in a way that only He could do.

We know these verses from John chapter one to be speaking of Jesus. This is crystal clear. But in John’s book he makes many references to this Jesus claiming and/or receiving the claims of being God! Here are a few of these claims:

Jesus Claimed that God Was Uniquely His Father

In response to the persecution by the Jews for working on the Sabbath, Jesus said, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” Yes, but could He not have been simply classing Himself with all God’s children, such as His

adversaries claimed to be? Perhaps if we didn’t have the very next verse we might think that. Read on, “This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God” (John 5:17-18 ESV).

When Jesus spoke of God as his Father, He did not use a magical or mystical word, instead He employed the same word they used when they said, “We have one Father—even God”(John 8:41).

What then, is the problem? Could He not be a son as the rest of us are? Yes, but that is not what He meant and they knew it. We need to know it also.

In the Bible we find “son of” used to mean “same as,” or “equal to.” Notice the verses: **Mark 3:17**– James and John got the name “sons of thunder,” Jesus gave them this nickname. It must have been because they were like a thunderstorm. See one instance of this in **Luke 9:54**. They said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” Jesus rebuked them for this. **John 17:12**– Jesus said in prayer “...I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction...” **Acts 4:36**– “Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement)...”

About as close as we come to using this language is to say, “like father, like son,” or “he is a chip off the block,” as we attempt to describe likeness.

Jesus Made Some Challenging Indirect Claims about His Godhood

The point is this: He equated their response to Him with that of their response to His Father.

Notice: **8:19**– to know Jesus was to know the father; **14:9**– to see Jesus is to see The Father; **12:44**– to believe in Jesus is to believe in God the Father; **15:23**– to hate the Son is to hate the Father; **5:23**– to honor the Son is to honor the Father

John R.W. Stott has concluded, “If Jesus is not God, then Christianity is exploded.”

Jesus Claimed Deity When He Simply Said “I Am”

Recall the lengthy discussion in John 8 between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. We pick up the debate in verse 48 and this finds its climax in verse 57 – So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” When Jesus replied, His answer was shocking. He said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am.”

This term “I Am,” signifies Deity as we can see from Exodus 3:14. Jesus was not making a claim to be slightly older than Abraham but that He was God before Abraham was born as a human being!

Again, His audience understood His intention completely much to their displeasure “So they picked up stones to throw at him...”

The gospel of John is unique in some areas. John is highly selective, choosing only a small number of the things Jesus did and said, including His miracles. For comparison Matthew touches on about 100 days of Jesus’ 12,000 while on the earth. Mark and Luke deal with about 50 days. However, John looks at some part, however small, of only 30 days of His life.

John is also the “gospel of the sevens,” where he chooses only seven signs or miracles that Jesus performed, seven witnesses to His deity and seven “I Am” statements. See these statements. Jesus said:

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6:35- "I am the bread of life,"
8:12- "I am the light of the world,"
10:7- "I am the door of the sheep,"
10:11- "I am the good shepherd,"
11:25- "I am the resurrection and the life," 14:6- "I am the way, the truth and the life...," 15:1- "I am the true vine.

While Jesus taught His followers to be humble he was constantly speaking of Himself. Other great leaders were self-effacing; Jesus was self-advancing. They pointed men away from themselves saying, "Here is the truth (as I perceive it,) follow that." Jesus boldly claimed, "I AM the truth, follow me."

**Is Jesus Christ
a Legend, Lunatic, Liar,
or Lord and God?**

In his famous book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis makes this statement, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg—or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us."

Jesus could only have been one of four things: a legend, a liar, a lunatic—or Lord and God. There is so much historical and archeological evidence to support His existence that every reputable historian agrees He was not just a legend. If Jesus were a liar, why would He die for His claim, when He could easily have avoided such a cruel death with a few choice words? And, if He were a lunatic, how did He engage in intelligent debates

with His opponents or handle the stress of His betrayal and crucifixion while continuing to show a deep love for His antagonists? Christ said He was Lord and God. The evidence supports that claim.

Jesus stated by His words and actions that He could bestow life, forgive sins; that He taught absolute truth to the amazement of those who had heard the best of the best of the religious teachers of

their day, and Jesus also said that He would judge the world.

Whatever image you have in your mind of God the Father, does it not seem comforting to know that Jesus is also the one who will judge us? Somehow "someone with skin" helps us realize that we are in good hands. And remember, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

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What Is Jesus Doing Now?

His Ongoing Ministry as Seen Through Hebrews and Ephesians

Paul Birston

In Jesus' three-year ministry, God worked in His world in magnificent new ways as Tim illustrated well in his article. Jesus showed God's love and compassion and confronted those needing to change. After His resurrection, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit and worked with the church to continue His ministry and carry the good news of His death, burial and resurrection for our forgiveness and salvation.

As His followers wrote the New Testament, they revealed things about Jesus' life before He came to earth. He was with God in the beginning. By Him God created all things (John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:1-4). Through Old Testament times, Jesus followed Israel as a "spiritual rock," a source of "spiritual food" (1 Corinthians 10:3-4).

The New Testament writers also revealed much about Jesus' future. It is thrilling to look forward to His promised return, His final victory over death and the arrival of God's eternal city where He will live with His people forever.

The past is clear to see; it's done. We can visualize a future hope vividly described, but what about today. What is Jesus doing now? There is no qualification as we seek to answer this question. It is true that the work of the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are so integrated it is often difficult to tell them apart: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:17,1). Careful study, however, on what Jesus is doing today will reward and encourage us.

Our Sustaining, Saving, Sanctifying, Perfecting Priest to God in Hebrews

Our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29; He lives in unapproachable light; He is light and pure love). How do we get near a God like this whose intense holy presence is deadly to the sin that so easily entangles us?

Hebrews affirms Christ made the world. Further, "He upholds all things by the word of His power" (1:3; as Colossians 1:17 says, "in Him all things hold together"). To live in God's world, and to get and stay near Him, we need sustained power. This power comes from Jesus today. Though "we do not see all things subjected to Him," Jesus, the source of this power, rules over everything in His creation. God has

"put all things in subjection under His feet" (2:8; cf. Ephesians 1:22).

By taking away the sin that cannot enter God's presence, Jesus sanctifies His brothers and sisters (Hebrews 2:11): "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (13:12). This is one among many ways "He gives help to the descendants of Abraham" (2:16). Jesus helps people come to God today. Sanctification prepares them. Jesus' daily sanctifying work includes cleansing our consciences so we can serve with Him freely: "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (9:14); "having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (10:22).

Jesus is "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession" (3:1). As Apostle He was sent to gather us; as priest He returns to God's sanctuary to represent us. To help those confessing Him become acceptable to God, He brings their confession to God, acknowledging each one to His Father (cf. Matthew 10:32). This adds meaning to our understanding of Hebrews' exhortation to "hold fast our confession" (4:14).

As our High priest, Jesus represents us today in the very presence of God where we could not go alone. We would be dead strangers without Him. His work of representing us to God "continues forever." He "holds His priesthood permanently" (7:24):

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“Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (7:25). Hebrews stresses that it is through Jesus we draw near to God. He is our shield and guide into the realms of holiness. To further help us along the pathways of holiness, Jesus sees the needs of hearts laid open before Him (4:13) and intercedes on our behalf with God now as every need arises.

An additional benefit of Jesus’ action for us now is confidence, not from ourselves, but from Him as the living way into God’s presence: “we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith” (10:19-22).

Having “His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (8:1) is thus not a passive position. It is the ideal place from which Jesus represents people to God.

He is “a minister in the sanctuary” (8:2). “He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises” (8:6; cf. 9:15). While the covenant is inaugurated once, every sinner’s case requires mediation with God. Jesus is our constant mediator to whom we come (12:24). 1 John 2:1 affirms this by saying “we have an advocate with the Father.” Advocacy is an active ongoing role particularly in the “propitiation for our sins.” This will cease only when we are finally perfected by Him.

Jesus’ ongoing work includes perfecting those who have come to God through Him, who have died and graduated as it were into God’s eternal presence. Through Him we have access not only to God but “to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in

heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect” (12:23).

Jesus is the “author and perfecter of faith” (12:2; and life; Acts 3:15) and the constant object of our faith. Hebrews exhorts us to be “fixing our eyes on Jesus” (12:2). He deserves our full attention. Hebrews affirms Jesus’ promise to always be present with us, to “never leave you or forsake you” (13:5; Matthew 28:20; cf. Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5). His constant presence is possible because “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (13:8). He is perfect, faithful, compassionate, concerned, all-powerful, able to meet every need, God forever; past, future, now.

As we look to Him, Jesus is a conduit not only for our confession and prayer to God, but also for our praise and thanks: “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name” (13:15).

In a profound intersection with Ephesians, Hebrews ends affirming

it is through Jesus that God equips and shepherds His church: “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (13:20-21; cf. Philippians 1:6). Through Christ, God works in us that which is pleasing to Him now.

Ephesians: Living, Growing and Serving in Jesus, the Head of His Church

Ephesians stresses the ongoing relationship of Jesus and His church through whom His ministry continues. God “put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (1:22-23). The kindness Jesus showed in His earthly ministry continues according to God’s purpose “so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches

continued on next page



GREAT LAKES PARTNERSHIP DINNER September 24, 2011

We invite you to join us at our major fundraising event of the year.

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Dinner: 6:00 p.m.

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of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (2:7).

Hebrews emphasizes our connection with God through Christ who represents us to God as our High Priest. Ephesians stresses our progress through growth in this relationship which Jesus causes now: “but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (4:15-16). The way Jesus works with each Christian is individually tailored to their gifts and aptitudes that in turn function to compliment the specific gifts and contributions of others.

Both Hebrews and Ephesians affirm that God works through Christ in the lives of His people to accomplish His will. Christ works along a glorious “two way street.” He represents us to God; God works through Him in us to continue His ministry to His world.

Like Hebrews, Ephesians underscores the ongoing saving and sanctifying work Jesus does now. Note the delightful image in this call to repentance: “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you” (5:14; cf. Isaiah 26:19; 51:17; 52:1; 60:1; Romans 13:11). Life outside of Jesus is a sleepy death. Waking up to Christ is experiencing His light shining. In this light Jesus sanctifies: “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word” (5:25-26).

Summary Reflections on Jesus Now

The Hebrews were tempted to return to an old ineffective covenant, the Ephesians to polytheistic pagan idolatry. Both needed to know Jesus

is alive and active in His ministry of representing people to God and God to people through His church. We face the same temptations. We likewise need to grow in our awareness of what Jesus is doing now for us in God’s presence and what He wants to do through us.

Right now Jesus holds all things together and sustains the life of the universe and His church. He fills all in all. Right now He continually mediates the covenant of love between unholy people and a holy God. He shines on everyone who awakens to Him. He intercedes for us. He sanctifies us continually as we consciously walk in His light in preparation for the time we will enter the fullness of God’s blazing holy light. He perfects all those who pass through this veil, making the final finishing touches of the work He started. He carries our praises and thanks to God. He causes and directs the nourishment and growth of His body in love and service. He equips and works in and through His people. It is a humbling privilege to have God work through us to continue Jesus’ ministry of salvation, caring and compassion.

Hebrews and Ephesians are two places to find answers to the question “What is Jesus doing now?” I encourage you to look elsewhere in the New Testament and seek to be an answer to Paul’s prayer that we comprehend Christ’s love which is beyond knowledge: “so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:17-19).

Winnipeg, Manitoba

reeking porticoes alongside Bethesda pool, where desperately sick people sought their last hope, to find and heal a dejected lame man (John 5:1-9). He stood before the tomb of Lazarus to call him out of the gloom into life again (John 11:1-46). He made clay out of mud and applied it to the eyes of a blind man so that he could regain his sight (John 9:1-7). He touched those with leprosy (Matthew 8:1-3). His service to man exposed Him to the dirt, germs and filth of the world. People needed Him there.

To the powerful of Palestine, He was both a threat and a failure. They were jealous of all the attention and respect the common people gave Him. All of their schemes and tricky questions were decisively answered by Jesus so that “no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question” (Matthew 22:46). There is no shame greater than being caught in your own trap. At the same time, they couldn’t understand what Jesus was up to. If He was attempting to become an earthly king, why did He repeatedly fail to grab opportunities? When the people tried to make Him their king, He hid himself (John 6:14-15). When they glorified Him as He entered Jerusalem, the Pharisees saw Him cry, then clean the merchants out of the temple (John 19:36-48). He puzzled them. They didn’t know His

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real purpose and didn't try to find out. All they wanted was His death. He would soon comply.

His ministry was focused. Who could wade through such wrenching times as Roman-held Palestine and not become distracted, outraged or politically polarized? Jesus avoided all of that and kept working toward His goal to redeem man at the cross. Nothing would stop Him: "And after He had said these things, He was going on ahead, ascending to Jerusalem" (Luke 19:28). If we knew death lay ahead, most of us would do anything possible to avoid the place. Jesus walked right in. He'd come to serve, and His ultimate act was to give Himself.

Jesus was dead. The religious leaders thought they'd won. Many of His followers shook their heads in grief. Two of them walked to a nearby town and said, "We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21). Hope dimmed; joy vanished. But then everything changed: Jesus rose! The prophets predicted it; Jesus had clearly said it; the disciples just couldn't get it. It took personal visits and many proofs before they became convinced: Jesus had returned. His ministry was victorious.

His ministry has become ours. People will misunderstand us, but we're to keep our focus. Some will think we're failures, but we're following a unique Master. We serve with compassion, leave no one out and determine not to shy away from the messes of humble service. Jesus lived these things before us. If we follow Him, we too will be victorious.

Edmonton, Alberta

God the Son: Why It Matters... continued from page 2

the godhead, but my first effort to evangelize a Muslim crashed because I had not grasped the full significance of the Trinity and incarnation. I knew the importance of the fact that Jesus became "fully man." I had never grasped, or even thought about, the significance of His remaining "fully God" while becoming man.

Fully God and Fully Man

The incarnation matters. "Trinity" may not be a biblical term, but the concept represented by the term is biblical and it is of the utmost importance. "The Word was God" (John 1:1). "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14). In becoming flesh He "emptied himself" of certain divine attributes (Philippians 2:6-7). He did not maintain His omniscience (Matthew 24:36). He made himself subject

to hunger, thirst and weariness (Matthew 4:2; John 4:6). Yet He remained the author of life (Acts 3:15). It was He through whom all had been made (John 1:3-4; Hebrews 1:2), and He continued to be worthy, even in His earthly state, of worship from His creation (John 9:38; 20:28; Matthew 28:9).

Jesus could substitute for us because He was one of us. When Jesus died in my place, it was not the case of something fundamentally different, like a bull or a goat (Hebrews 10:4), dying for me. He was a human and could take the place of a human. But Jesus was more than an ordinary man. He was (and is) divine. He created all, gave life to all. Possessing, as man, human nature, He could take the place of a human. Possessing, as God, divine nature, He could give His life for all because He is the possessor of infinite life.

It Really Matters

If Jesus was not fully God, as well as being a sinless human, then we have no atonement. When we deny either his sinlessness or His full divinity, we deny the heart of the Gospel; and are left with no adequate means of reconciliation with God. This is not a matter of indifference. We must not fail to preach Him as "God with us" in human form. Without affirming Him as God the Son, we have no good news for the world. We must not be indifferent to this doctrine. It is central to the faith. Those who neglect it are undermining the faith at a critical point. Those who contradict it are denying the faith.

Toledo, Ohio



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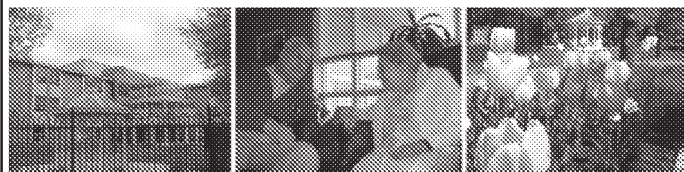
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NEW YORK (Central)

Niagara Falls: We held our 41st Anniversary and Gospel Meeting from Saturday to Wednesday, August 13-17. The theme this year was "To God Be the Glory" and taken from The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:13). Guest Minister was Willie J. Tucker from Dallas, TX. Joining the celebration was guest vocalist Michele Williamson and praise leader Curtis Williamson, along with other members of the Leading 7 Singers of Indianapolis, Indiana. They were supported in song by the Greene Family of Newark, NY; the Central Senior Choir; the Central Youth Choir; local Church of Christ Choirs; and other special guests.

Barrie Ladies' Day

In His Time
"Rising for God"

Saturday, October 15, 2011

Registration 10:00 am

Barrie Church of Christ
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Please register by September 28, 2011
with Debbie Klemm

E-mail: klemmfamily@rogers.com

There is no cost to attend
and lunch will be provided.

Sardinia: Seventeen of our Sardinia family, and a count of 53 from 7 other congregations, a total of 70, came together in fellowship last Lord's Day (July 31). All went smoothly and the day's highlights of singing and devotionals were an encouragement to everyone! Devotion speakers were: George Kohlbacher—Southtowns, John Vleminckx—Bradford PA., Merritt Hanks—Amherst, John Smiley—Linwood, Ken Hicks—Amherst, Mike Boler—Southtowns, Ed Cornelius—Niagara Falls.

ONTARIO

Barrie: "Rock Solid," a young adult weekend, took place May 27-29 and was well attended. Both speakers did excellent work: Jamie Azzoparde (Waterloo) and Kevin Cleary (Meaford). Shawn and Donna Redding moved back to Edmonton at the end of July. We honoured them at a farewell barbeque on June 11; they will be greatly missed. He has been replaced as Barrie's evangelist by Tim Johnson, formerly of the South Edmonton, AB, congregation, as of June 1. Our youth group put on a free car wash on the Friday of Canada Day weekend and invited people to attend on Sundays.

Beamsville: The contribution from one Sunday, of \$2,505.00, was sent to aid fellow church members in Joplin, Missouri.

Bramalea: We rejoiced with Ainslie Mitchell, who was baptized into Christ on Sunday, July 10, 2011. Ainslie is a student at Great Lakes Christian High School. The congregation welcomed Allen Garcia, one of our own young people, to serve as summer intern working with our youth. Allen did a great job and we thank God for his efforts. Several gathered in late June to perform some needed cleaning up around the building. A special prayer meeting for the physically ill and those with other needs was held on June 30. Fred and Thora Whittington celebrated 60 years of marriage on Sunday, July 24, 2011. Dennis and Wilma MacKay were married the same day 60 years ago.

Fenwick: Singing on the lawn and Friends Day were both disappointing events due to low attendance. The Good Neighbour BBQ was held on August 20. Kids For Christ kicked off with a Fun Fair on August 29. Classes began September 9. Coat collection will take

place this month for our give-away in October. We look forward to a fall meeting with Dale Jenkins of Springhill, Tennessee, October 23-26. The theme is: Refresh, Revive, Restore.

Stoney Creek: Since the Bible classes that meet in homes during the week are not conducted during the summer months, families who are willing were invited to take part in "Serendipity Summer Days" by hosting a gathering of their choosing. Activities so far have included a "Backyard Fellowship," a family-oriented Christian movie night, and a games night. One of the objectives has been to encourage congregational fellowship. During July the congregation enjoyed hearing two visiting speakers. Stephen Johnson of Abilene Christian University spoke at a Friday evening meeting to explain what it means to be a missional church. Harold Parker, former minister of the congregation who now lives in Murphreesboro, Tennessee, preached at a Sunday morning service.

Toronto (Strathmore Blvd): For the last several months, Steve Chubry, of this congregation, has been doing the regular preaching and mid-week Bible class teaching for the Oshawa congregation. Pat and Bernie Coleman expected to celebrate their wedding anniversary apart. Pat had been in hospital for nearly 6 months but was able to return home a few weeks before their anniversary. Oh yes, it was their 69th!

Windsor: This fall we are going to have our first annual 'Back to Church Sunday'. September 26 will be the date. We are going to make this a special effort to ask those we know and those around our neighbourhood to consider coming 'back to church'. Missional Church: the weekend of September 9, 10 will be the kick-off of this program. We are hoping that as many who want to have a part in this will be able to over the next three years. We are hoping with this to energize our sense of being in the community around us and be the salt and light that Jesus calls us to be. So many in our world have no idea of what church life is supposed to be really like and they need to see living examples to break down some of the barriers that have been erected over the years.



by Marion Waugh
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(BC news supplied by Barbara Lewis)

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford (Central Valley): While enduring a painful back sprain, Norm Weir did a study on pain, and although he had to preach sitting down, he sermonized it, not the physical kind, but “heart” pain. Using David as one example, he pointed out his laments in the Psalms about the pain he had caused others and God. Both Jeremiah and Isaiah cried because of the pain God’s people were causing Him by their disobedience and idolatry. This led to the pain we cause God, and the pain Jesus suffered on our behalf, not only physically, but emotionally and mentally. The following week, he and Jen left for the first three legs of their 800-mile trip to the Indian villages. After they arrived home from the June trip, they heard that the road had washed out again, but since they are usually repaired as soon as possible for the logging trucks that cannot afford to waste time, they expected to find it passable. The Weirs were hoping the weather “would settle down and act like August” by the time they and their Tintern team arrived on July 30. They did last minute shopping in Prince George after meeting the six from Ontario and driving to McKenzie for the night, then left early for the villages on Saturday. The day camp in Fort Ware was done first, from Sunday through Wednesday, and repeated for the children in Tsay Keh the remainder of the week. They felt blessed to know that there is now a washer/dryer in Tsay Keh, as well as in Fort Ware, which caused Jen to write “Life is good!”

Burnaby: “Living Beyond Yourself: Exploring the Fruit of the Spirit” is the theme for a study written and taught by Beth Moore, which will be available on

alternate Thursdays, beginning October 6. Workbooks provide in-depth personal study time to prepare for each class and a DVD lesson taught by the author is shown each evening to supplement the study material and introduce the next lesson. One (or two) additional locations are being considered in order to offer the Bible Studies every second week, beginning the week of October 10–14.

Oakridge (Vancouver): A new class for both members and non-members after worship service was begun last month. Described as an exciting and challenging class, Milton Diaz expected to see teachers and new members participating—especially those who attended the Training for Service series.

Surrey: Picnics were the order of the day when some warmer temperatures finally arrived in BC in August. We chose the first available Saturday, arriving early to get a choice spot for eating, races and games. Shared food and recreation are two things understood by all nationalities, of which there are approximately 16 different ones in the Surrey membership.

Vernon: Some of our families planned to participate with members of the Salmon Arm church at a Family Camp in Cherryville, BC, September 2–5.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg (Central): A farewell presentation was made to Walter and Margaret Johnson. They are moving to Stony Plain, AB. Key to the Kingdom broadcast has encountered some financial difficulties and the congregation is helping them financially. Those in the Mexico Mission group were Chris and Betty Johnson, Billy Leung, Jake and Andrea Wiebe, Erika Hannah, Richard and Meghan Wiebe. Donations were accepted for 3 weeks for relief from the drought and famine in Africa. The money will go to Healing Hands International. This program specializes in providing safe drinking water through filtering systems and the digging of wells. Wherever possible, local Churches of Christ and Christians do the work.

SASKATCHEWAN

Gravelbourg: (submitted by W. Bailey) From July 18–22, the Gravelbourg church of Christ carried out yet another success-

ful Vacation Bible School. With the help of fellow workers from Winnipeg, MB, and Red Deer, AB, we once again saw children and young people flock to our facility to experience a program that introduced the realities of God’s love and His concern for them. Each day our program ran from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. with the children experiencing many different activities in the learning stations located throughout the building. In the evening, a program was arranged for teens from our congregation, the Red Deer group and teens from the community who have been attending our “drop-in” program during the year. All in all, the week was very successful. On July 23 members of the congregation gathered by a pond in a local sheep pasture to witness the baptism of Dayne and Alyson Shultz. Dayne and Alyson have been attending worship for some time and chose to be baptized in open water. They have two young daughters. We rejoice with their decision to put on Christ in baptism. The congregation is in the midst of selecting deacons to be appointed by the end of the summer. Through various ministries, doors continue to be opened in our community. God is good.

Regina: The Mission 6:10 camp was held July 16–22. This camp, in the heart of Regina, was for both adults and teens. It had many facets of ministry including: painting a wall mural, construction projects, addictions workshops, training in how to begin and lead a Christ centered addictions support group, VBSs in the inner city, and a middle school camp.

Weyburn: Lois and Roland Olson spent a week in Mexico to help with True North Helping Hands. Jared shared a presentation on their work in the Malindi Medical Mission in Kenya, Africa. Welcome baskets were prepared for our new members. The VBS was entitled Pandamania and was based on Psalm 139. Topics were God made you, God listens to you God watches over you, God loves you, no matter what and God gives good gifts. Afternoon activities included a work project at Family Place, trip to Regina, singing at the nursing home, visiting shut-ins, BBQ at the Petersons and closing program with a hot dog lunch. Bill Schwarz and John McMillan were Sunday morning guest speakers in July.

MISSION NEWS

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CAMBODIA: Partners in Progress has launched a new door of opportunity for teaching children in this largely illiterate country. Struck by a recent graph put out by the Nazarene Growth Research Institute which paints a very vivid picture of the ages at which people become Christians, they realized that 85% make the decision to follow Christ between childhood and 15. Only 10% obey the Gospel between the ages of 15 to 30, and 4% after age 30. In order to reach children at a young age when few know how to read, picture tracts telling the Good News story are being developed. With very few words, the pictures are designed to dramatically give even the young child views of Jesus' life and mission. These will be given to the 483 children currently in the "Back-to-School" program, another 1600 in the Nutrition Program, and the thousands who visit the Ship of Life every year for healthcare, not counting the many more who watch its activities from the banks. Also, as of August, the Ship of Life has added to its ports of call some 30,000 families living in the floating fishing villages on the Mekong River which wanders through six countries. Starting in China, it becomes very wide in the southwestern corner of Laos as it enters just east of Central Cambodia. In addition to transportation, the river is used for multiple purposes, including irrigation, power generation, fisheries and industrial and domestic supply, since it flows the entire length of Cambodia from north to south before it enters the tip of Vietnam and empties into the South China Sea. The river affects the lives of some 60,000,000 people, many of whom are among the poorest in the world.

ISRAEL: Ecclesiastes 3:1 "There is a time for every season" sums up the reason for the visit this past summer of Erol and Debra Dogan to Israel. Unlike their trips in the past, very little time

was spent in Jerusalem, but rather to the north, near the SE shore of the Sea of Galilee. After a two-day visit with friends in the Jerusalem church, they went to Poriya East. He writes, "We met with some of the brethren to find out what news there was in this area and how we could personally get involved, as well as to find out more about another work going on here. It is a local version of the 'restoration movement', similar to what happened in the US back in the 1800's, when people decided they wanted to be N. T. Christians only and lose the denominational titles. This caught the attention of the Independent Christian Churches' and they are supporting the movement in several ways, financially as well as with personal involvement here in Israel and in the US. Debra and I met with some of their local members to get a feel for what they are doing. From what I have found out in personal conversations with their US leaders and local people here in Galilee, they are reaching out into the Arab communities here and have at least eight different "house church" groups in this area. It appears to be similar to the situation in the US, where Christian Churches seem to be growing and doing well, while churches of Christ are struggling to hold their own. One thing they asked me to do was to get their people in Nazareth together with the church of Christ in Nazareth, to see if we can sit down over coffee and a falafel (bagel) and engage each other in respectful dialogue." A friend of the Dogans from Jerusalem has been coming with them on a lot of these excursions, as his fluency in Arabic makes him very useful.* Erol also noted that the Jerusalem church is still active in evangelism and making an impact in all areas of society. They have a youth minister who is coming up with ways to engage the young people in getting them involved in the life of the body. As the membership is getting on in years and, realizing it, they want to make sure that the work and congregation continue to thrive and be faithful to God. (Ed. Note: Thanks to Erol for this report in August. Although he has spent several years learning the Arabic language, Erol feels he still cannot talk easily enough in conversation, though people who do speak it are impressed with his efforts.)

USA: The Spokane Valley church in the state of Washington decided to put the word SERVE into the Sunday evening service this summer. Meeting at 5 p.m., after receiving their assignments, a prayer sends whatever number is required on their way to any home where they can be of service to friends, relatives, neighbours, co-workers, visitors, etc. If yards need weeding, houses painted, fences mended, flowers watered, groceries carried, repairs made—in whatever way their work can take care of a need, it is done. If the job cannot be finished that Sunday evening, they come back the next week. In the meantime, some of the ladies remain at the church building with children and teens to make cookies, bake bread, make cards, and other items to be taken the following week to shut-ins, elderly people or the discouraged and lonely. As the news has spread, the number of requests has increased, providing plenty of places to go for all those taking part, as well as opening new doors for teaching and/or bringing former members back into the church.

JAPAN: (Note from Walter and Shirley Straker) We did want to remind Canadian Christians of how they can access reports on the Japan relief work - and to thank them wholeheartedly for their donations amounting to over \$104,000! That's pretty fantastic. Japan Relief: Missionaries and others involved in the Japan relief work remind us that, though the earthquake/tsunami was five months ago, there is still much devastation in Japan and prayers and financial assistance are still needed. Updates of Mito's East Japan Relief committee's activities can be found on its blog: <http://eastjapanrelief.wordpress.com>. Joel Osborne: Joel and others from Mito participated in this year's Asia Mission workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Jonathan and Michiko Straker: They request your prayers for God to guide them to their future place of ministry now that Jon's completed his M.Div in Missions. For more information about Japan mission work or Japan Relief, check Facebook: "Working and Praying for Japan Earthquake Victims;" Joel Osborne, or Jonathan Straker, or go to joelosborne4@yahoo.com; www.strakerhouse.com; sashainsendai@yahoo.com; bencberry@gmail.com; or mail@bramaleacofc.ca.



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Keoughan, Avril M. (Tolcher)

Avril passed away suddenly, on Monday, June 27, in Ghana, West Africa, as the result of a tragic accident. She was 62. Beloved daughter of Edith Tolcher of Dunnville and the late Milford Tolcher. Loved sister of Cheryl (Bert) and Brian (Gail). Cherished aunt of Jeff, Matt, Melissa, Andrew and Cameron. She was “special mother” to Kwame in Ghana. Interment was in Ghana and a memorial service was held at Wellandport, ON on July 22. In recent years, Avril was a part of the Fenwick church of Christ.

A story has been circulated saying it doesn't matter about the year of birth or the year we leave this earth, it's the dash between these dates. We would all agree that Avril's dash has made us thankful to God for our loved one and friend.

Avril took her nursing course in Hamilton and upon graduating worked at the Hamilton General Hospital. She was a nurse in the Emergency Ward for 18 years and then was a head nurse for two years.

Following Avril's conversion to Christ, she decided she wanted to serve the Lord full time. Ralph Perry suggested mission work and the rest is history. In 1990, Avril Keoughan, a member of the West Hamilton church of Christ, went to Ghana to work in a church of Christ Mission Clinic, in Kumasi established by IHCF African Christian Hospitals. She served there five years, then returned to Canada, convalescing from malaria and other health issues. Her heart was in Ghana and she returned in 2001.

She was in charge of the medical clinic for two years at Village of Hope, a children's orphanage. Avril then returned to the Mission Clinic where she had begun her work in Kumasi. Among Avril's duties was providing primary health care training to young preachers in the Bible Schools. They were able to use this knowledge when

touring villages, especially in northern Ghana. She welcomed into her home many visitors who came for a month or less to do mission work in Kumasi, including some U.S. congregations who would send groups for a short period of time. Avril began to pray for a home large enough to comfortably accommodate those visiting to work in the clinic. “The Lord has given me a tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak to him who is weary” (Isa. 50: 4).

The Oppong family “adopted” her as a member of their own family. They were of royal descent and Avril was always invited to sit with the family when dignitaries visited Kumasi. Kwame Oppong called her “mother” and she, along with his biological mother, had to show acceptance to the wife he would choose before he could marry her.

Kwame was as a true son to Avril and together they set out to build this missionary house on the property donated by the Oppongs. Avril and Kwame used personal funds plus monies from local congregations, and other help she received. The house is large with many bedrooms and bathrooms. It was Avril and the Oppong family's joy to be able to offer appropriate hospitality to Christian brothers and sisters.

Avril was loved and respected by the Ghanaians, and she loved them back! Avril often remarked that should she die in Ghana, she wanted to be buried there. When home, she made sure her family, and those close to her, knew her wishes. Avril was very close to her Ghanaian brothers and sisters with whom she served for 15 of the past 20 years.

In Kumasi, a plaque will be placed at the Mission Clinic where she worked so “every missionary and person who comes to Ghana will know the work Avril did”. On August 27, Avril laid in State in the Bible College Park, in Bomso and was honoured by her Ghanaian brothers and sisters.

We can only thank God for the life she has lived honouring our Father in heaven. We will miss her, but are thankful she lived the life she wanted—serving her Lord! In honour of Avril, donations may be made to any CIBC branch to Avril Keoughan (in trust with Cheryl Nieuwold) account number 06672/7587988. The monies will be sent to African Christian Hospitals and on to Africa to purchase infant and prenatal equipment for the clinic where Avril served.

Information provided by
Avril's family

Whitfield, William Robert (Rob)

We greatly mourn the loss of William Robert Whitfield (Rob) at Toronto General Hospital on August 1, 2011, after a hard fought battle for many years with heart problems. Born March 18, 1951, in Blind River, Ontario. Much loved husband of Marilyn (Wood) and loving father of Ken of Sault Ste. Marie and Tricia Walker (Jordan) of St. Catharines, Ontario and Grandpa to our precious Zachary Walker. Son of Mervyn and the late Jean Whitfield formerly of Thessalon. Much loved and missed brother of Goldie Whitehead (Morris) of Thessalon, John (Diane) of Thunder Bay, Elwood (Shirley) of Little Rock, Arkansas, Charles (Linda) of Sault Ste. Marie, Ruby Ford (Art) of Beamsville, Diamond Rancourt (Jason) of Sault Ste. Marie and Lawrence (Lily) of Beamsville. Loved son-in-law to Irene Wood (late Ken) of Surrey, BC. Brother-in-law to Shirley Wood of Surrey, BC, Mitch Wood (Barb) of Kelowna, BC, Karen Roufousse of Coquitlam, BC. Uncle to a myriad of nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews.

Rob spent his whole working career at Algoma Steel (now Essar) and retired in 2007 partly due to ill health. He fought so patiently with his health difficulties for so many years but now is safe in the arms of God.

Thanks to the many doctors and nurses on 5th Floor and CICU at Toronto General Hospital for their wonderful care and for the prayers of so many all across Canada and the U.S.

continued on next page

Haiti Mission Update

At the memorial service on August 9, Charlie was asked to speak of what Rob meant to the church family in Sault Ste. Marie. What follows is an abbreviated version of those remarks:

“Rob was many things to me—he was my younger brother by birth. As adults, we lived in the same city, worked for the same employer and shared many things—both good times and bad. We worked together on many projects at our homes and at the church. Rob, Marilyn, Ken and Trish were an integral part of our lives and Rob became one of my best friends. However, best of all we shared a common faith—we were twice brothers because we were brothers in Christ. For many years, we were together as a part of the church family here at Pinehill.”

At the memorial, brother Phil said that a person is defined not by what they do but by who they are. I believe Rob was best described as a humble, fun loving man with a servant's heart. This was illustrated by the things he did. For a number of years he served, as Garry Bailey put it, as the “youth minister” and touched the lives of many young people. He served as the behind the scenes camera man and production manager when Phil lead a Bible discussion program on community TV.

For 20 years Rob was the Treasurer responsible for the bookkeeping and managing the finances of this congregation and kept us on solid financial ground through periods where our expenses could easily have outstripped our income. Rob also was the “de facto” maintenance person for the building for many years and was heavily involved in planning for major upgrades. It distressed him greatly when illness prevented him from helping with the construction work on the new addition. Rob & Marilyn together handled many calls for benevolence.

Rob's desire to serve his Lord was evident. He loved to teach Bible classes. His death has left a huge hole in the fabric of our church family and he will be missed.

Submitted by Art Ford
and Charlie Whitfield

Greetings! As many of you are aware, every year or so, I and my family and/or some brethren go to Haiti to assist with the Lord's work down there. And last year, due to the terrible impacts of the the January 12 earthquake on Haiti, we went there twice and helped as much as we could. From April 27 to May 11, 2010, brother Howie Taylor of Newmarket, my family and I visited many of the victims, especially in the greater Port-au-Prince area, and in Leogane where we shared the goods that we had with them. We also encouraged the brethren down there and as usual managed to include 4 evenings of gospel meetings, two of which were in two new neighbourhoods in Fond-Parisien. Thank you for your unfailing support; we couldn't have done it without your help. I went back in December to again encourage the brethren and I spent the new year with them. Despite all the challenges, I am glad to report that the church there is going strong in the faith and commitment to the Lord. Please continue to pray for the work in Haiti.

Orphanage — As previously advised, considering the situation in Haiti, especially for many of the children, we thought it would be very helpful to have a place where we could provide some assistance to some of these needy children. Thankfully, God has blessed us with \$36,000 and we are now looking at the possibility of buying a prefab steel building that we could use for that purpose. The church in Fond-Parisien has graciously donated a portion of their land to this project. We hope that with this amount we will be able to buy a 30'W x 18'H x 100'L shell building (with no end walls) and ship it to Haiti by December 15, 2011. This would allow us to complete phase one of this 2-phase project by April 2012. If all goes as planned, some brethren will accompany me to Haiti (April 2-14, 2012) to install the building

and build the end walls. Please plan to join us if you can; the more, the better. Phase 2 would follow later in the year with the mission to divide the building into rooms and complete the necessary interior works, including insulation, etc.

Wells/Pump — To help with the water shortage and hopefully prevent another cholera outbreak in the area, we dug a well and installed a manual pump on the church's land and future location of the orphanage in Fond-Parisien. Unfortunately, the need for water is so great that the people overused the facility and broke the pump, etc. The plan is to do all repairs, build a pump house strong enough so that we can place a reservoir on top of it, and secure the land with a fence and barbed wire. Then we will pipe the water to the main road where people may come and get water without a need to come inside. This project will cost about \$6,500 and we are grateful for having received \$3,700 toward it so far. The needs are great and we continue to ask for your ongoing prayers and financial support as we move forward.

Any who requires further info or would like to help can contact any of the following brethren:

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In His service,
Jean Volcy

Lectureship 2011



*Finding God
in the Storm*

Psalm 55:8

OCTOBER 7-9, 2011
Keynote: John Mark Hicks



For more information, visit westernchristian.ca