That White-Haired Man on George Street

As a man from London walked down George Street in Sydney, Australia, a white-haired gentleman stepped out of a doorway, gave him a tract and asked, “If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?”

“I was astounded by those words,” said the man. “Nobody ever asked me that before. All the way back to London, I thought about what he said. I told a friend about it, and he led me to Christ.” This man went on to become a preacher.

Years later, at a conference in Australia, he asked a woman he was counseling about her relationship with Christ. She said, “I used to live in Sydney. A few months ago, I was back there, and while shopping on George Street, a white-haired gentleman stepped out of a doorway, offered me a tract and asked, “If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?” I was so disturbed, I went into a nearby church, talked to a minister, and he led me to Christ.” The London preacher wasn’t surprised, because he had experienced the same thing.

After the conference, he went on to preach in Perth. After the service, he joined a prominent man from the church for a meal. During the conversation, the preacher asked the man, “How were you saved?”

The man replied, “I grew up in this church, but never made a commitment to Christ. While on a business trip to Sydney three years ago, a white-haired man stepped out of a doorway on George Street, gave me a tract, and asked, ‘If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?’ I told him that I was a church elder, but that didn’t impress him. When I returned to Perth, I told my pastor about this man’s question, and he led me to Christ. He told me he’d been concerned about my relationship with Christ for a long time.”

The London preacher then flew back to England to speak at the Keswick Convention in the Lake District. He mentioned these testimonies about the white-haired man on George Street. At the end of the meeting, four elderly pastors came to him and said, “We got saved 25 years ago through that same white-haired man on George Street.”

He then flew to the Caribbean for another conference, and again told how he and others got saved through the work of this man on George Street. After his message, three missionaries came to him and said, “We also got saved 15 years ago through that same man on George Street.”

From the Caribbean, he went to Atlanta, Georgia to speak at a chaplain’s convention. During a meal with the Chaplain General the London preacher asked how he got saved. The chaplain said, “It was a miracle. I was on an American ship in the Pacific. We docked in the Sydney harbor and, as usual, we sailors got drunk. We got on the wrong bus and ended up on George Street. As I stumbled off the bus, a white-haired man confronted me with a tract and a question: “Sailor, if you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?” The fear of God shocked me sober. Back on the ship, I talked to the
chaplain, and he led me to Christ. I went into the ministry and now I’m Chaplain General over one thousand chaplains, all bent on soul-winning."

Six months later, the London preacher went to a convention of 5,000 Indian missionaries in northeast India. At the end, the Indian missionary in charge took him to supper in his humble home. During the meal, the preacher asked him, “How did you, a Hindu, come to Christ?”

He answered, “I traveled worldwide for the Indian Diplomatic Mission. While in Sydney, I did some last-minute shopping for gifts for my family. As I walked down George Street, a white-haired man offered me a gospel tract and asked, “If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?” I thanked him for the tract, but his question disturbed me.

“When I returned to India, I went to an Indian priest. He couldn’t help, but said, ‘To satisfy your curiosity, talk to the village missionary.’ I did, and he led me to Christ. I quit Hinduism, left the diplomatic service and began to study for the ministry. Now, by God’s grace, I am in charge of all these missionaries and we’re winning thousands for Christ.”

Eight months later, this London preacher was again preaching in Sydney. He asked the minister there if he knew an elderly, white-haired man who handed out tracts on George Street. He said, “Yes, his name is Genor, but he doesn’t do it any longer. He’s too frail.” The preacher wanted to meet him, so they went to his apartment. An old man welcomed them and offered them tea. The London preacher told of his own conversion, and of all the people he’d met since then who were saved after their encounter with the white-haired man on George Street.

The old man listened with tears running down his cheeks. Then he told his own story: “I was an immoral sailor on an Australian battleship. In a crisis, one of my mates, a Christian whom I had ridiculed many times, was there for me, and led me to Jesus, and my life changed from night to day. I was so grateful that I promised Jesus I’d witness for Him to at least ten people a day. I’ve done this for 40 years. In my retirement, the best place was on George Street because of the crowds. Many people took the tracts, but in 40 years of doing this work, I haven’t heard of anyone coming to Jesus, until today.”

By my calculation, that little white-haired man influenced at least 146,000 people to come to Jesus. I believe God was showing that London preacher just the very tip of this Gospel iceberg. Only God knows how many more were won to Christ and went on to serve Him. Mr. Genor died just weeks after receiving this encouragement. Can you imagine the reward he received in Heaven for his faithful service? During his life, his story never appeared in any Christian magazine. He was only known by a few believers in Sydney, but I assure you he’s well-known in Heaven. Just imagine his welcome when he heard these words, “Well done, good and faithful servant ... Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matthew 25:23, NKJV).

—Dave Smethurst from The Evangelist, June 2008
(Contributed by Paul Canner)

From the Editor

I encourage you to try to approach even strangers, like the white haired man on George Street did. Give them a tract, and ask: “If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?” I have tried this approach a few times since I read the story above. The first person I addressed that question to was the lady who cuts my hair. After getting my hair cut and paying the bill, I asked her, “If you died tonight, would you go to Heaven?”

She answered, “I hope so.”

I gave her a tract and said, “God wants you to know so, and this tract will tell you what
He says!” She was quite pleased and impressed. I look forward to seeing her again when I need another haircut.

Try this simple opening to reach precious souls even if you don’t see any results. It worked for the white-haired man on George Street even though he didn’t know the amazing results for many years. Remember that this is the Lord’s work and that He is in charge of results, and He has promised: “So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

—Dave Johnson

Notes

Young People’s Meetings at Iowa Conference — June 17-20, 2009

The Young People’s meetings at the Cedar Falls, IA conference this year were very good. With a growing number of young people each night, there were 37 in attendance the last night.

On Wednesday, the first night, Sean Davis opened the meeting by leading us all in singing and then praying before turning the meeting over to Charles Carter for an overview of the book of Hebrews. Some of the major points of the outline were:

Who wrote this book? Some think that Barnabas wrote it. Some say Timothy. Some say Paul. Hebrews 13:23 and 2 Peter 3:15 may be good clues that Paul wrote it. We know that the Lord really wrote this book (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Reasons this book was written to the Jewish Christians: To encourage those who were being persecuted; because things that had been taught in the Old Testament had now passed away; to show the Excellency of Christ to Old Testament law, prophets, Moses, and angels; and to establish Christ’s superior priesthood and sacrifice.

We then went through each chapter with a couple of thoughts from each one. Some of the questions that were asked throughout the study were: Who was the first Hebrew? How was the Lord made perfect through sufferings – wasn’t He already perfect? Hebrews is the only book where Christ is called an apostle – what is an apostle?

Which Jewish tribe was the Lord born into? How is Christ’s priesthood fashioned after the priesthood of Melchisedec? If the Lord had no pleasure in the burnt offerings and sacrifices, why did He institute them? How many times in the Bible do we read that the “just shall live by faith”?

On Thursday, Ian Henckel opened the meeting with singing and prayer. Then, Tom Wright passed out copies of “Statement of Faith” sheets from the websites of several assemblies. Tom passed out a question sheet to each person. The questions were: Does your assembly have a website? What does it say about “What We Believe”? Could you defend the statements? Do you agree with the statements? Paul the apostle talked about bringing another Gospel in Galatians 1:6-10. What is he talking about and why does he consider it important to “not bring another Gospel”? How important to you are the teachings in Hebrews 11 and 12:1,2? What part does obedience have in the study of Hebrews 11 and 12:1,2? How can I personalize the teaching and make them more than a list of things to do? In other words, how do I make them important enough in
my life that they change me completely? Do you have any other thoughts which may help your fellow believers? Give practical examples of how it works in your life.

The group was divided into small groups and asked to use their Bibles to answer these questions. The groups came back together and a spokesperson from each group presented their group’s answers and ideas. This was a very good exercise.

On Friday, Eric Scheidecker opened the meeting with songs and a prayer. A copy of the book, “What Christians Believe” was given to each young person. Nathan Anderson guided the group, asking Eric to present a chart showing the importance of core convictions. Using a diagram of a spider web, Eric showed how that the center of the web represents our strongest (vital) beliefs. The outer parts of the web represent truths, but not those vital to our faith. Our own understanding is a filter for our beliefs.

Nathan reminded us all that we should be ready to give an answer for all we believe (1 Peter 3:15). He talked about how important it is that we have determined our ‘core’ beliefs for ourselves by using God’s Word. Nathan had everyone break into small groups and work on a “Belief Web,” determining what our core beliefs are or should be. Later, the groups presented the results of their discussions to everyone else. Some of the core beliefs given were: 1. God exists; 2. There is one God; 3. God is love; 4. Jesus is God’s Son and is perfect; 5. Jesus died and rose again for our salvation; 6. God is One, but exists in the form of the ‘Trinity’; 7. Through Jesus, we can be saved by faith; 8. Jesus is the only way to Heaven; 9. Jesus is coming again for us; 10. The Holy Spirit is given to every believer to help and guide us.

(Submitted by Doris Carter)

**Northern Minnesota Summer Retreat — June 28 - July 1, 2009**

We were at Gooseberry Falls State Park to camp, and then, during the day, we went hiking and canoeing on separate days.

The first evening we had the question before us: Why should we love God and where do we read about our love for God? Verses that were given as to why we should love God were: Psalm 139:14: “I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works,” and John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” Some reasons that we should love the Lord are because He made us, and He gave His Son to die for us. The ultimate reason that we should love the Lord is 1 John 4:19: “We love, because He first loved us.”

The second question was answered with Deuteronomy 6:5: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” The Lord should come first in our life just as He put us before Himself.

The first day we covered the question: Why do we love the Lord? Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:8: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” We love the Lord because He has given us this peace, and we know that we are made right with God through the blood of His Son. Some other references were Ephesians 2:4-8; 1 John 3:1; and 1 John 4:19.

The second day was about loving others.

John 13:34,35: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” By loving others we are a good testimony to the world.
and are a shining light for the Lord, and by following His commandments for us we are loving the Lord. We can show that love to others by putting them before ourselves as in Philippians 2:3: “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.” We also talked a lot about walking in the light rather than darkness so that we can have fellowship with the Lord. 1 John 1:7: “But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another; and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.” We are supposed to do as it says in Romans 12:1,2 – present our bodies to God as a sacrifice, and as in 1 John 1:9 – confess our sins before Him in order to have that fellowship restored.

That evening we had the five things that the Lord wants from us: to first be saved, then baptism, to worship Him, grow spiritually, and to serve Him. Those are all ways of us showing our love back to God by following His commandments or requests for us. In 1 Corinthians 11:24 the Lord asks us to break bread in remembrance of Him. In 1 Peter 2:2 we are to long for the Word so that we can grow closer to Him. Galatians 5:13: “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” We are not supposed to take the freedom that we have and just use it for us, but use it to serve others and the Lord.

The last morning Mario spoke on the journey the Lord has taken Him on by opening his eyes to the way scripture says things are to be done. Romans 12:1,2 was brought up many times, as that is the basis of how we are brought to the ways of the Lord, by presenting ourselves before Him and putting our ways behind us.

By the end of the retreat it had us challenged to really think about these questions: Do we really love the Lord? Would we really give our wants up for His wants? Or would we rather live the life we have planned for ourselves?

(Notes taken by Katie Thomsen)

Living Waters Bible Camp
Eleuthera 2009 — July 2-5, 2009

While not quite as large as last year’s turn-out, we had a great group of 31 campers and 8 adults coming from Nassau, Freeport, Eleuthera, and even the USA. Despite some ominous clouds on Saturday night, the weather all week was beautiful, if a little hotter than some of the northerners would have liked it. The topic this year was on the importance, responsibility, and benefit of prayer in the Christian’s life.

Thursday, July 2

Those departing from Nassau left early in the morning from the docks on the Seawind and arrived a few hours later in Governor’s Harbour, Eleuthera. Once fed some tuna and chicken sandwiches, the campers were split into 4 groups for the purposes of chore distribution and activities, each led by a counselor. Though there were many returning faces, we ran through some simple group name exercises to help familiarize everyone. The first day was busy with setting up camp and getting everything organized, but we still had a chance to relax in the clear waters by the beach after getting work done.

After hamburgers, the gospel meeting that night was held by Sean Davis. The topic was on how faith in Jesus is more than a “Get Out of Hell Free” card, but brings us closer to God and our original purpose. It changes our lives right now in the best way possible, towards the way we were designed to be. This concept was illustrated by an analogy of humans, God, sin, Hell, and Jesus to computers, the internet, viruses, the dump, and an antivirus program. In the same way a computer is designed to connect
to the internet and will be discarded if unable to do so, a human is designed to be in a relationship with God. In short, the idea was that if we only see Christianity as a series of hoops to jump through in order to get to heaven, then we are missing the point.

Friday, July 3

Friday morning devotions were led by several volunteers, and began early at 7:30 a.m. They were punctuated with Michael prompting the question of why we pray to God when He already knows our thoughts. Many good points were raised, including the effect that prayer itself has on the person praying, and the importance of communication for any relationship. Once breakfast was cleared away, we began the day’s Bible lesson, following along with the sheet Charles Carter had brought for everyone. Friday’s focus was on the importance of prayer, and outlined many of the basic functions of prayer found in scripture. These included making requests, thanksgiving, worship, confession, acknowledging our dependence on the Lord, and replacing worry and stress. Many of the Psalms, such as Psalm 20:5, were illustrative in the manner in which we are to give thanks and worship God. Examples were given to demonstrate all that we have to be thankful for, and how God gives us what we need, not necessarily what we want. When wondering what the difference between thanksgiving and worship is, we surmised that thanksgiving is a reaction to what God has done, and worship for who He is. The group was particularly attentive when discussing confession in prayer, seeing as how we are told that God “heareth not sinners.” The immediacy of confession and totality of God’s forgiveness were stressed at the end.

The annual trek through the Hatchet Bay Caves started much as it ever does, by pulling up alongside an unassuming pipe sticking out of a field to mark the entrance. The bats were in force, but most everyone was too relieved by the marked coolness compared to the surface to pay them much mind. After walking past some more of the Lord’s handiwork (and a few human afterthoughts in the form of graffiti) we turned off all the lights to contemplate the stark contrast of being in the sun’s light and being cut off from it. Needless to say, this provided another image for those considering what it would mean to be apart from God for eternity. From the caves we were carried to a shallow beach for some group vs. group volleyball, though the clear jellyfish were notably absent (though not for lack of searching). The locally baked hot-dog buns made quite an impact on people, but already it was time to head back and begin preparations for the infamous ‘buried food.’ Once the fire pit was dug and each group’s chicken appropriately seasoned, it was time to let the foil packs of dinner cook while we got ready for gospel meeting.

Friday’s Gospel message was given by Charles, who opened by asking us what God couldn’t do. Bringing up that it is not in His nature to fail, lie, sin, break promises, or abide evil helped set the stage for the core of the message, centered on Ephesians 2:8,9. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus found in Luke 16 further defined the reality of death and its consequences for us, after prompted by a story of Charles explaining to his daughter what happens in death. The point that any of us can die
at any time was expounded on with his account of the suddenness of his own father’s passing. This, however, was punctuated by the joy and relief at being able to recount evidence of his salvation before death, particularly regarding his favorite verse, Ephesians 2:8,9.

The question and answer session that night had no lack of attentive and thoughtful questions, such as eternal security, backsliding, and people who die ignorant of the Gospel. While it was great to see everyone taking an active interest in their faith and the queries they come across in their journey, both the zeal of the participants and the moderation of the discussion could have been better handled. After a lengthy debate and evening snacks, it was time for bed (or at least sleeping bags if no beds were available).

Saturday, July 4

During morning devotions Barry made a point of how important the choices we make are to our faith. Matthew 5:28-30 and 6:22,23 provided more ideas about how our choices can have a dramatic impact on our lives, and that we should take care to see that we consider our choices with regards to God’s will. Saturday’s Bible lesson dealt with both the responsibilities and benefits for prayer in our lives. The preeminent prayer would of course be the prayer one makes for salvation, but 1 Timothy 2:8 made it clear that the Lord expects us to pray, and people were urged to find someone to exchange prayer requests with. Prayers for one another, for the salvation of non-believers, and even for our leaders were all addressed. Worries about overburdening God with our prayers were allayed with Philippians 4:6 and an analogy of a man carrying a bag while riding a horse, instead of putting it into the cart behind the horse, as the horse carries it either way. Overcoming worry, enacting tangible changes, being a ministry, and obedience to God were all detailed as benefits of our prayers. As expressed by those unable to move due to diseases, prayer enables us to serve God no matter our circumstances. Lastly, we went over different reasons why our prayers may not be effective, such as praying with a sinful heart (James 4:2,3), or asking outside of God’s will (1 John 5:14).

At the Ocean Hole later on, people either played some basketball or tried to perform increasingly impressive feats in the water such as flips, underwater swimming, or just learning to dive. Just in case not everyone had their fill of activity, a series of competitions between the groups was held by the Thompson brothers involving ball tossing, soccer skills, and water balloon filling/throwing. We ended with last year’s favorite, the “group ski walk” where each group had two huge planks with foot-straps to (attempt to) navigate to the finish line together.

Once the earlier-prepared pork dinners had been dug up and eaten, we listened to Ben give his Gospel meeting. The topic was, “What Does it Mean to be Saved?” Instead of a casual acceptance, a persistent attitude such as the one shown by the foreign woman toward Jesus in Luke 7 was promoted. Continuing with this thought was an admonition to learn from the parable of the seeds in Luke 8 and allow the message to change your life, and not continue in sin. Finally, Jesus’ entreaties to Simon similarly tell us that when you confess that you love someone, you will want to do what they ask, and so we should strive to please the Lord in our lives. The evening wrapped up with a few rounds of Psychiatrist and similar group games in which everyone was heartily engaged.

Sunday, July 5

Javier and Tenille used the parable of the wedding from Matthew 22 to expound on the importance of being prepared in our lives, especially as many of us were getting ready to go from school to the ‘real world,’ and putting God first now will affect our future. Sunday’s Bible lesson finished the
series on prayer by examining the prayer Jesus tells His disciples in Matthew 6:9-13. This was explained as a form to base our prayers on, and provided many insights into the attitude and mindset to have in prayer, as well as what to pray about. After the invigorating singing led by Jason, Doug began Sunday school by talking about miracles. While many of Jesus’ miracles, showing His mastery over nature, sickness, and even death, were looked at, we were reminded that seeking miracles for their own sake was not God’s will and that it is faith, not sight, which leads on to salvation.

While tearing down and packing up was a lot of work, we thankfully did not have to drive all the way up to Current Island this year for our return trip, and so we were afforded with a bit more time to relax and eat before heading out. Despite some air of competition and pride, many people were seriously considering their walk with the Lord during the camp and remained inquisitive.

—Sean Davis

THE BIBLE—Its 66 Books in Brief (Continued)

Nehemiah

“Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; for the day is holy to our Lord; and be not grieved, for the joy of Jehovah is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10, JND).

Nehemiah (his name meaning “comfort of Jehovah”) writes the history of his connection with the remnant of the returned captivity. He followed Ezra by about thirteen years in going to Jerusalem, stirred through news he had received of the decayed condition of the city. God gave him favor with Artaxerxes, king of Persia, whose cupbearer he was. He obtained authority to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

A man of faith and energy and a capable administrator; he was able to organize the Jews for the labor of rebuilding the wall and imbue them with willingness both to work and to fight for God’s interests in the city. His firm decision, his wise avoidance of the enemy’s cunning snares, and his short, earnest prayers cannot fail to attract every interested reader. Yet the authoritative influence of the Persian government is felt throughout and cannot be ignored.

Nehemiah is a book specially helpful in our own day. It illustrates the fact that true devotedness to God on the part of His saints, and their purpose of heart to build a wall of separation from the world and its evils, will meet with bitter opposition from the enemy. Yet however small and despised such a testimony may appear in men’s eyes, their firm, lowly faith in a day of confusion is precious to God.

Esther

“For Mordecai was great in the king’s house, and his fame went forth throughout the provinces; for the man Mordecai became continually greater” (Esther 9:4, JND).

Esther means, “I will be hidden,” and the book deals with the Jews during the time of their captivity, outside their own land, hidden among the nations, yet cared for providentially by the God whom they had disobeyed. Yet God’s Name is not found in the book: He is also hidden. He cannot link His Name publicly with them, for their dispersion is His chastening because of disobedience. Moreover, these had chosen to remain in Persia despite God’s having opened the way for them to return to Israel: they had no real concern for returning to God’s
place for them when others had done so. Still, His overruling hand in mercy and protection is beautifully seen here. It is typical of the blessing that is to come to the now scattered children of Israel after much cruel affliction and persecution.

Esther herself may remind us of the beauty that God sees in His people in spite of their failure and departure; and Mordecai is a type of Christ, first, in protecting the Gentile king from those who plotted his death; and then in becoming greater and greater among the Gentiles after having first been marked out for death.

How well this illustrates, too, the dealings of God with any true believer who becomes careless and disobedient in his ways. He has no real communion with God, no joy in the Lord’s presence, yet God cares for him by means of trials that have in view his restoration in submission to the Lord.

**Job**

“I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5,6, JND).

Job (meaning “the cry of woe”) is poetic, and has long been honored for its superb language. Job evidently lived about the time of Abraham. Though the most righteous man on earth, he was allowed by God to suffer intensely under the hand of Satan. His three friends assumed that to merit such suffering Job must have been guilty of flagrant hidden sin, and in their speeches they seek, gently at first, then more cruelly, to extort some such confession from him. Job protests his own innocence, and feels that God’s dealings with him are without reason.

This very feeling indicates the reason, however, for it was necessary that God should bring down Job’s proud self-righteousness. After his three friends are silenced, Elihu, a younger man, speaks truly for God such words that so affect Job’s conscience that he has no answer. Elihu is a definite type of the Lord Jesus, the Interpreter of God’s ways. Then God Himself speaks to Job out of a whirlwind. He points to many marvels of creation which demonstrate that the Creator’s wisdom must be infinitely higher than man’s conception, and that in comparison, man’s wisdom is pathetic ignorance. Job takes to heart the lessons involved in this and says, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” This is the grand turning-point, and Job is afterward blessed more greatly than ever before. Job is a most valuable book to teach us true self judgment and submission to the hand of God.

**Psalms**

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, and standeth not in the way of sinners, and sitteth not in the seat of scorners” (Psalm 1:1, JND).

Psalms, like Job, is poetic, a collection from the pens of various writers inspired of God — David, Asaph, Moses, Heman, Ethan, and possibly others unknown. Yet they are arranged in perfect order by the overruling of the Spirit of God. How full of comfort they are, in dealing with the feelings of the heart in circumstances of every kind, bringing the answer of God to every need of the soul. Preeminently they speak of Christ, and here we find His own feelings, in concern for the glory of God and for the blessing of souls; in suffering as the lowly Man of sorrows, as persecuted by men; in suffering the anguish of the cross, the forsaking of God; in the joyous results of that cross; of anger, too, against the wickedness of man – indeed, feeling as various as the circumstances with which He deals. To consider His feelings is a marvelous balm for the feelings of our own hearts.

It must be remembered, however, that the Psalms are written from a Jewish point of view, and the blessing of Israel, together with her afflictions, sorrows, and chastening, is most prominent in the book. Thus it is prophetic of the history of Israel through all her troubles until she is established in the glory of the millennial kingdom. Yet this does not in any way detract from the spiritual blessing to be found there for ourselves: it is a book of infinitely sweet values and comfort for our souls.
Proverbs

“He that is wise will hear, and will increase learning; and the intelligent will gain wise counsels: to understand a proverb and an allegory, the words of the wise and their enigmas” (Proverbs 1:5,6, JND).

Proverbs is also poetic, written by King Solomon in his younger years, a book of wise instruction in reference to every department of personal life and conduct. Its great outstanding truth is simply this: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Its warnings against subtle evils are accompanied by instruction as to the means of avoiding these evils.

It presents things in their true light, so that the reader may form a proper, clear judgment. It goes to the root of matters also and shows the motives that produce certain actions, thus exposing to the reader the actual workings of his own heart. It deals with the thoughts, the mouth, the lips, the tongue, the ear, the eye, the hand, the foot, as all connected with the conduct of the individual. It shows faithfully the results of thoughts, words, or actions, good or bad; that is, the reaping of what is sown. And how clearly it teaches that only the true knowledge of the Lord Himself can preserve the soul in ways of truth.

These things therefore are principles becoming to the kingdom of Solomon, established in peace, and therefore closely related to the principles of the Kingdom of God, as in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. Chapter 25, however, begins with proverbs copied by the men of Hezekiah, and is therefore a provision of God for times when the kingdom was in a state of division and ruin. They are thus particularly precious also for our day, the kingdom of heaven being in a state of degeneration. The book provides an excellent course in psychology.

—by Leslie M. Grant, used by permission

On the Lighter Side

Pecans in the Cemetery

On the outskirts of a small town, there was a big, old pecan tree just inside the cemetery fence. One day, two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts.

“One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me,” said one boy. Several dropped and rolled down toward the fence.

Another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate.

Sure enough, he heard, “One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me.” He was very sure he knew what was happening. He jumped back on his bike and rode off. Just around the bend he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along.

“Come here, quick!” said the boy. “You won’t believe what I heard! Satan and the Lord are down at the cemetery dividing up the souls.”

The man said, “Beat it kid, can’t you see it’s hard for me to walk.” When the boy insisted, though, the man hobbled slowly to the cemetery.

Standing by the fence they heard, “One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me.”

The old man whispered, “Boy, you’ve been tellin’ me the truth. Let’s see if we can see the Lord.”

Shaking with fear, they peered through the fence, yet were still unable to see anything.

The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the fence tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of the Lord.

At last they heard, “One for you, one for me. That’s all. Now let’s go get those nuts by the fence and we’ll be done.”

They say the old man made it back to town a full 5 minutes ahead of the kid on the bike.

(Contributed by Leonard McNiece)
Today’s Oneliner
The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail and not his tongue.

— The Cybersalt Digest – Issue #3275, April 1, 2009

Poem
God’s Bountiful Harvest
We plow the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by God’s almighty hand.
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

He only is the Maker of all things near and far;
He paints the wayside flower, He lights the evening star.
The winds and waves obey Him, by Him the birds are fed,
Much more to us, His children, He gives our daily bread.

We thank Thee, then, O Father, for all things bright and good,
The seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, and food.
No gifts have we to offer, for all Thy love imparts,
But that which Thou desirest—our humble, thankful hearts.

— Matthias Claudius (1740-1815)
(Contributed by Leonard McNiece)

Points to Ponder

Faith
“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith is implicit trust in the Word of God. It is confidence in the trustworthiness of God. It is the conviction that what God says is true and that what He promises will come to pass. It deals primarily in the realm of the future (“things hoped for”) and the realm of the invisible (“things not seen”).

Whittier said, “The steps of faith fall on the seeming void, and find the rock beneath.” But not so! Faith is no leap in the dark. It demands the surest evidence, and finds that evidence in the Word of God.

Some people have the misconception that if you just believe a thing strongly enough it will come to pass. But that is credulity, not faith. Faith must have some revelation of God to lean on, some promise of God to cling to. If God promises something, then it is as sure as if it had already happened. If He foretells the future, then it is certain to be fulfilled. In other words, faith brings the future within the present and makes the invisible seen.

There is no risk in believing God. God cannot lie, He would not deceive, and He cannot be deceived. To believe God is the most rational, sane, logical thing a person can do. What is more reasonable than that the creature should believe the Creator?

Faith is not limited to possibilities but invades the realm of the impossible. Someone has said, “Faith begins where possibilities end. If it’s possible then there’s no glory for God in it. If it’s impossible, it can be done.”

Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees
And looks to God alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, “It shall be done.”
Admittedly there are difficulties and problems in the life of faith. God tests our faith in the crucible of trial and affliction to see if it is genuine (1 Peter 1:7). We often have to wait long to see the fulfillment of His promises, and sometimes we have to wait till we reach the other side. But, “Difficulties are food for faith to feed on” (George Muller).

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6). When we refuse to believe Him, we are saying that He is a liar (1 John 5:10), and how can God be pleased by people who call Him a liar?

(One Day at a Time by William MacDonald, April 29, used by permission)

Power for Living for Christ

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his path? by taking heed according to Thy Word” (Psalm 119:9, JND).

Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He has the power required for holy living and does not need to plead and wrestle, as some do, for “more power,” and “more of the Spirit.” What is required is submission to the Word that one may walk in the Spirit.

The believer may be likened to a locomotive engine, in working order and filled with the propelling steam—a fit symbol of the Holy Spirit. But an engine thus equipped becomes a source of terrible destruction if it goes off the rails. The rails are the Word of God. How many Spirit-indwelt people have created havoc by wild, uncontrolled emotionalism, not in accordance with the Holy Scriptures! To have the Spirit indwelling us does not guarantee that we will be guided in the right way unless we search the Scriptures and allow them to mark out our course—any more than to be well-equipped and full of steam guarantees that an engine will proceed in safety to its destination unless it is upon the rails.

“But the three must never be separated. “A threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Christ Jesus has borne my sins, and lives in glory to be my heart’s loved Object. The Spirit dwells in my body, to be the power of the new life and to guide me into all truth. The Word is the medium through which I am enlightened, directed, and cleansed.

—H. A. Ironside
(The Lord is Near, December 24, 2008, used by permission)

Studying the Scriptures

(A Word to Young Christians)

We are living in a period of the world’s history when things are moving along at a great pace. There are so many things which claim our attention that, unless we are on our guard, we can easily crowd out the one thing which is so necessary if our lives are to be lived for God, namely, the reading, studying, and meditation of the Scriptures.

The writer received a letter from a nine-year-old sailor in the South Pacific, who had a good deal of leisure time, and which he turned into good use. He wrote as follows: “I have just finished studying carefully the book you loaned me. I found the book most informative and revealing. I took notes throughout and accumulated quite a few, which I am sure will be of value to me in the future. The knowledge acquired from this exposition leaves me with an insatiable desire to learn more of the truth which abounds in God’s Word. The
more I read, the more I find I have to learn; and the quicker I want to plunge into the depth of the truth. Reading along in Isaiah today I encountered many passages which had reference to things found in the Book of Revelation. This only goes to prove the harmony of Scripture.

“All of my spare time I have been putting into study, which has become an unquenchable fascination. I intend to accomplish much before I leave this field of desire. I am in hope that someday the Lord will find it in His favor to use me in full-time service. The world needs a great spiritual awakening, and I hope that in my span of life I shall be able to at least sound a trumpet.”

Is it not good to see a young man so interested in the Scriptures that all his spare time is used in going over them? The late Samuel Ridout once said to a young laborer in the Lord’s service: “What are you doing with your time?”

The young man said to us afterwards: “He took me by surprise, and made me think.”

Dear young believer, may we ask you the same question? What do you do with your time—your spare time? Is it not a solemn thing to realize that much of our time has been wasted upon things in which there is little or no profit? And let us not despise those little moments of leisure we have, as though they did not amount to much. The late B. C. Greenman told us that when he was working as a clerk in a store, and was sent down for coal oil, that while the container was filling he would read what he could in his Testament. No wonder that later in life he was saturated with the Word of God, and became such a faithful servant of the Lord.

Some might say, “I will wait until I get more time.” This is one of the means the enemy uses to keep us from a careful study of the Word. If we adopt an attitude like that, it is more than likely we never will have more time for it, but rather less. The devil will see to that. If the little moments are not used right, we can be sure the greater ones will not be either. The Lord tells us that in Luke 16:10, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”

The study of the Scripture is necessary for a healthful, spiritual life. It is for our souls what food is for our bodies. If it is done in a humble, prayerful spirit, it will not only enlighten our minds, but will guard us against the attacks of the devil. If we neglect the Word, how can we learn to distinguish between what is Scripture and what is not? We will then be depending upon others for things which we ought to know ourselves. A child soon learns to walk without the help of its parents. So we should learn to walk by the Word of God, instead of just following some man, or men. Not that we have no need of fellowship with other believers like-minded, or that we can do without teachers; we surely cannot, and should never attempt it.

A man once said to a servant of the Lord: “I don’t need to read Mr. Darby’s, Mr. Kelly’s or Mr. Grant’s works any more. I can read the Hebrew and Greek for myself.”

The servant of the Lord replied, “Do you not realize that these men were gifts from God to the Church, and you cannot afford to ignore them, unless you wish to remain ignorant yourself?” No indeed; we should be glad to listen to those whom God has raised up to instruct us in His Word in order that we may know His mind more perfectly. Apollos was a man mighty in the Scriptures, yet he was humble enough to sit at the feet of two plain people, Aquila and his wife Priscilla, and learn “the way of God more perfectly” (Acts 18:24-28).

Shall we not then make the study of God’s Word, as it were, an appointment with Him? This year is now nearly gone, and what have we learned of Christ? And what have we done for Him? His coming draws near. When He comes shall He find us in an attitude of neglect—neglecting His Word, neglecting prayer, neglecting gathering...
together with His people? Let it not be so, but may we rather develop a hunger and a thirst, an insatiable desire, as the young sailor, to learn more of God’s Word, and as he said, be fascinated by it, reading and studying it with the intention of retaining it, not in our minds alone, but in our hearts, so that we may not sin against Him. This is “that good part” which the Lord speaks of in Luke 10:42, and which He calls “needful.” Thus we shall be a blessing to others and be blessed ourselves, also.

Note: While we do not believe in a stereotyped method of studying the Bible, because there are no two minds alike, and what may be easy for one may not be for another, yet we can be helped much by the experience of others, and should welcome suggestions as to help in Bible study. We ought to study it earnestly and methodically, and not in a slipshod manner. This takes time and patience, but is good for us.

—J. F. P.

(Things New and Old, 1943, page 284)

Counsels to Young Christians

Cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Depend on Him. Some are allowed a long season of joy on first believing. But God knows our hearts, and how soon we begin to depend on our joy, and not on Christ. He is our Object—not the joy. Sin no longer remains on you, but the flesh is in you to the end: the old stock will put forth its buds, which must be nipped off as they appear. No fruit can come of it. It is the new nature that bears fruit unto God. But though the flesh is in you, do not be thinking of this, but think of Christ. As you grow in the knowledge of Christ, a joy comes, deeper than the first joy. I have known Christ about forty years, and I can truly say I have ten thousand times more joy in Him now than I had at first. It is a deeper, calmer joy. The water rushing down a hill is beautiful to look at, and makes the most noise; but you will find the water in the plain to be deeper and calmer, more fit for general use.

Cleave to Christ with purpose of heart. A distracted heart is the bane of Christians. When we have something that is not of Christ, we are away from the source of strength. When my soul is filled with Christ, I have no heart or eye for the trash of this world. If Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith, it will not be a question with you, “What harm is there in this and that?” but rather, “Am I doing this for Christ?” “Can Christ go along with me in this?” Do not let the world come in and distract your thoughts. I speak especially to you who are young. They who are older have had more experience in it, and know more what it is worth; but it all lies shining before you, endeavoring to attract you. Its smiles are deceitful; still it smiles. It makes promises which it cannot keep; still it makes them. Your hearts are too big for the world, it cannot fill them. They are too little for Christ. He fills heaven. He will fill you to overflowing. You will indeed have to learn what is in your own heart. Abide with God and you will learn it with Him, and with His grace. If you do not, you will have to learn it with the devil, with bitter sorrow, through his successful temptation.

But God is faithful. If you have been getting away from Him and other things have come in, and formed a crust, as it were, over your hearts, you will not get back the joy right away. God will have you deal with this crust and get rid of it. Remember Christ bought you with His own blood, that you should be His, not the world’s. Do not let Satan get between you and God’s grace. However careless you may have been, however far you may have gotten away from Him, count on His love. It is His joy to see you back again. Look at the sin with horror, but never wrong Him by distrusting His love. Talk much with Jesus. Never be content without being able to walk and talk with Christ as with a dear friend. Do not be satisfied with anything short of close communion of soul with Him who has loved you and washed you from your sins in His own blood.

—J. N. Darby

(Things New and Old, 1949, page 120)
Prayer Requests

Emergency Telephone Numbers
These are more effective than 911.

When:
You are sad, ................. phone John 14
You have sinned, ............ phone Psalm 51
You are facing danger, ...... phone Psalm 91
People have failed you, ...... phone Psalm 27
It feels as though God is far from you, phone Psalm 139
Your faith needs stimulation, . phone Hebrews 11
You are alone and scared, ........... phone Psalm 23
You are worried, ................ phone Matthew 8:19-34
You are hurt and critical, ........ phone 1 Corinthians 13
You wonder about Christianity, ... phone 2 Corinthians 5:15-18
You feel like an outcast, .......... phone Romans 8:31-39
You are seeking peace, ............ phone Matthew 11:25-30
It feels as if the world is bigger than God, ........ phone Psalm 90
You need Christ-like insurance, ........................................ phone Romans 8:1-30
You are leaving home for a trip, .phone Psalm 121
You require courage for a task, phone Joshua 1
Inflation and investments are hogging your thoughts, ........................ phone Mark 10:17-31
You are depressed, .............. phone Psalm 27
Your bank account is empty, . phone Psalm 37
You lose faith in mankind, ........... phone 1 Corinthians 13
It looks like people are unfriendly, ......phone John 15
You are losing hope, ..........phone Psalm 126
You feel the world is small compared to you, . phone Psalm 19
You want to produce fruit, .. phone John 15
You want Paul’s secret for happiness, ......phone Colossians 3:12-17
You seek big opportunity/discovery, ....................... phone Isaiah 55
To get along with other people, phone Romans 12

ALTERNATE NUMBERS
For dealing with fear, ... call Psalm 47
For security, ............. call Psalm 121:3
For assurance, .......... call Mark 8:35
For reassurance, ........... call Psalm 145:18

ALL THESE NUMBERS MAY BE PHONED DIRECTLY.
NO OPERATOR ASSISTANCE IS NECESSARY.
ALL LINES TO HEAVEN ARE AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY.

(Contributed by Lee Seeley)

We trust you pray every day for each of the requests below. Please let us know if any of these prayer requests need to be updated. If they have been answered, please let us know so we can rejoice and thank the Lord with you. [Note: In order to keep the Prayer Requests up-to-date, those that have been in In Touch for longer than 2 years will be removed from the Prayer List in the next issue unless we receive updates about them.]

(1) We’re doing well here in Edwardsville. Our first child, a little girl named Audrey Jane, was born on February 24, 2009. After 2.5 years of remodeling projects, our house is in good shape. My health has been very good and I feel good too. The doctor has extended my check-ups to every six months. We continue to praise God for his healing mercies on me. Thanks for your continued prayers — Matt Rutherford.

2) Update: I am currently enrolled at SCSU working on finishing in two years with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Thanks for your continued prayers — Ben Prigge.
(3) Please pray for Gary Bohn, son of Dave and Ann McNeil of the Minneapolis, MN assembly and Nathan Hauer, son of Steve and Priscilla Hauer, of the Queen, PA assembly, who are both in the Marines. Thank you —Dave Johnson.

Stories

Nails in the Fence

Once there was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn’t lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, “You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won’t matter how many times you say, ‘I’m sorry’; the wound is still there.” A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one.

Friends are very rare jewels, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share words of praise and they always want to open their hearts to us.

Please forgive me if I have ever left a hole.

(Contributed by Lee Seeley)

“Clay Balls”

A man was exploring caves by the seashore. In one of the caves he found a canvas bag with a bunch of hardened clay balls. It was like someone had rolled clay balls and left them out in the sun to bake.

They didn’t look like much, but they intrigued the man, so he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, he would throw the clay balls, one at a time, out into the ocean as far as he could. He thought little about it, until he dropped one of the clay balls and it cracked open on a rock. Inside was a beautiful, precious stone!

Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining clay balls. Each contained a similar treasure. He found thousands of dollars worth of jewels in the 20 or so clay balls.
he had left. Then it struck him. He had been on the beach a long time. He had thrown maybe 50 or 60 of the clay balls with their hidden treasure into the ocean waves. Instead of thousands of dollars in treasure, he could have taken home tens of thousands, but he had just thrown it away!

It’s like that with people. We look at someone, maybe even ourselves, and we see the external clay vessel. It doesn’t look like much from the outside. It isn’t always beautiful or sparkling, so we disregard it. We see that person as less important than someone more beautiful or stylish or well-known or wealthy. But we have not taken the time to find the treasure hidden inside that person.

There is a treasure in each one of us. If we take time to get to know that person, and if we ask God to show us that person the way He sees them, then the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth.

May we not come to the end of our lives and find out that we have thrown away a fortune in friendships because the gems were hidden in bits of clay. May we see the people in our world as God sees them!

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

(Carmel Hills Tidbits, October 2007)

The Dead Sea Scrolls

Two boys, Muhammed and Ahmed, discovered one of the greatest manuscript treasures, which became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. One of the scrolls contained the book of Isaiah and was thought to have been written out before the Lord Jesus was born.

These wonderful manuscripts were found in 1947—so think how long they may have been in the cave. If a goat had not been lost, they might never have been found. More manuscripts were found in other caves nearby, and experts think that the manuscripts were hidden by the people when the Romans invaded that area.

Now we know how secure that hiding place had been. God had preserved the scrolls from harm just as through many hundreds of years He protected His Word from being destroyed so that we have it whole and complete in our day. Let us read and study our Bibles every day. God’s Word is the only thing that will remain after this earth and the people in it have all passed away. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall NOT pass away” (Matthew 24:35).
Asking the Blessing

Christians should always bow their heads and give thanks before they eat. Surely our hearts are thankful for God’s many blessings, including the blessing of good food.

A Christian man went into a restaurant one day. He quietly bowed his head and gave thanks for the food before he began eating. A waitress came over to his table and said, “Pardon me, but I see you must be a Christian! I have been watching for three months for a Christian to come in here, because I want to become a Christian myself!”

How astonished the Christian was! He knew at least 15 professing Christians who regularly ate in that restaurant, but apparently not one of them had bowed his head before eating, and said, “Thank you, Lord!” In a few moments, this Christian man explained to the waitress how to be saved.

“The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing” (Zephaniah 3:17).

E-Mail Address List

You may access the September 2009 issue of In Touch at http://www.scel.com/InTouch/. ARE YOU ALREADY READING IN TOUCH ON THE WEB?

Please let us know if you no longer wish to receive In Touch as a printed copy, or as an e-mail attachment. We will still send you an e-mail telling you when the next issue is available. Be sure we have your correct e-mail address.

If you desire to receive In Touch by e-mail please let us know at <In.Touch@scel.com> by October 31, 2009, and let us know the e-mail address you want us to send it to, in order to receive your December issue by e-mail. We trust that using e-mail may be easier for many of you to read each issue and also to store them.

Only e-mail changes (#) and additions (*) since the last issue are in this issue of In Touch. If you do not have your back issues of In Touch, write to <In.Touch@scel.com> for any address you might need. A complete address list will appear in the next issue.

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Announcements

**Boyertown Assembly PA Bible Conference – October 15-18, 2009**

The Boyertown, PA Assembly announces a Bible Conference to be held at the Riveredge Conference Center, 2017 Bernville Rd. (PA Route 183) in Reading, PA, about a quarter mile east of the Reading airport. Phone number: (610) 736-0400 (Quality Inn, Riveredge).

The conference begins at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 15, 2009 and concludes with the evening meal on Sunday, October 18, 2009.

Call Drew or Deanne Johnson at (610) 987-3311 or e-mail <drewisa4031@scel.com> to sign up for meals.

Call the Quality Inn at (610) 736-0400 to reserve your room. (Mention you are attending the Boyertown Assembly PA Bible Conference to obtain the special night room rate.)

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**2009 Year End Meetings for Young People**

Meetings for young people 13 years old and older will be held, Lord willing, Monday evening, December 28 through Thursday evening, December 31, 2009. The meetings will be held at Trott Brook Gospel Hall, 17301 Nowthen Blvd. NW in Ramsey, Minnesota.

The schedule of meetings and activities will be similar to previous years and are especially aimed at the 13 to 23 age group but there is no upper age limit. Visitors will be assigned a place to stay in the homes of believers nearby.

For more information and on-line registration, go to www.trottbrook.org/ypm. For information and registrations forms if you don’t have internet access, write or call:

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Remember:
— To let us know if you wish to receive In Touch by e-mail.
— To update the E-Mail Address Book. (Please let us know your e-mail address or any changes in your address.)
— To let us know of any changes in your “snail mail” address so In Touch will come to you without delay.
— To pray each day for the prayer requests in In Touch.
— To send your letters, questions, answers to questions, poems, stories, etc. to In Touch by October 31, 2009.