

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN  
**TIDINGS**  
of the Kingdom of God

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# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

Peter Hemingray, Editor

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## Life of Timothy

*On Page 117 of this issue, we commence a new study on the Life of Timothy, by Bro. Ryan Mutter of the Baltimore, MD, ecclesia. Some of you might have heard his Bible Studies on the subject, and will remember how he brings out insightful details and illustrations from the life of this young, dynamic preacher of the gospel.*

*As Bro Ryan says*

*“One of the key lessons that emerges from the narrative of Timothy’s life is the contrast between the characteristics the world values, and those God values. The traits Timothy developed and the choices he made were valued by God, even though those around him did not always appreciate them.”*

*We hope this series will help us all, especially the younger brethren, find many examples and much to emulate in our walk towards the Kingdom.*

*Correction — Note on John Connally in January 2014 Tidings*

*The editor, by error, ascribed Sis. Susie Lange to the Champagne (sic.), IL ecclesia. She is a member of the Bloomington, Ill ecclesia, not the Champaign, IL ecclesia.*

## Editorial

### No Man is an Island

“No man is an island, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; any mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee....” (John Donne, 1624)

#### The ideal ecclesia

I know it is unusual to start an editorial in *The Tidings* with a secular quote, but this well-known passage, usually seen as a poem, illustrates my topic: we are all connected, we are all part of the whole, especially in an ecclesial setting. When any member leaves, either to the sleep of death or by transfer or any other way, we and the ecclesia are thereby diminished. Paul also emphasizes the interconnected way an ecclesia functions:

*“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;”* (Rom 12:4-10).

It is easy to agree to this: but the practical outworking is much more difficult. All too often, inter-personal conflicts arise, for any of a multitude of reasons. Sometimes we disagree over the finer points of doctrine: sometimes our personalities conflict: and sometimes our personal problems enter into our relations with others.

It is clear what the ideal is: we all walk in the Truth in a harmonious manner, “*in honour preferring another*”, as Paul says. Unfortunately, this rarely happens, as we can see from the New Testament, and as we can observe in all but a few of our ecclesias.

So what I want to consider is the conflicts that might arise, and some possible ways of dealing with them. I will not consider disagreements over what can be considered a violation of our common first principle beliefs. Such situations (as well as the one we are considering) were dealt with by Bro. Robert Roberts in his ecclesial guide over 130 years ago, and are as valid now as when he wrote them. He also considered many of the areas I will deal with, but my observation is that

we have a tendency to give lip-service to Bro. Robert's advice, but many avoid having to follow them for one purported reason or another.

### **The reality**

Most ecclesias, however peaceful and Christ-like they strive to be, are made up of all too human individuals. Down through the ages, conflict and problems have arisen. Paul dealt with

- Personality conflicts: disputes between followers of Apollos and Paul (1Cor 3:4-6)
- Arguments about conscience (over meats offered to idols) (1Cor 6:13 etc.)
- Terrible immorality (1Cor 5:1)
- Grave apostasy over resurrection of Christ (1Cor 15:15)
- Disputes about trivia: fables and genealogies (1Tim 1:4)

The list could be continued: but I might mention a sample of disputes that have, to my knowledge, divided ecclesias in these days.

- Colors of the walls of ecclesias
- Attitude for prayer: whether to stand or sit
- Precise forms of the baptismal formula
- Divorce and remarriage
- Who gets to hold what office, or who gets to provide food for fraternal
- Temperature of the meeting room
- Who sits where in the hall
- Length of sister's skirts, or whether it is necessary for brethren to wear a suit to meeting
- Brethren with beards: should they be on the platform

Again, this list could be endless: and the matter of divorce and re-marriage has probably split more ecclesias than any others, in my lifetime and before. But almost all of these purported reasons are in fact are colored, if not caused, by personality conflicts.

### **Ecclesia hopping**

But why do these problems, big or small, result in such conflicts that they cause disruptions, with members leaving? Only rarely are the steps laid down by Robert Roberts properly followed. None of the above would be considered by most to involve a denial of the Truth. I believe the major cause is that we have come to believe "ecclesia hopping" is acceptable. If we have a dispute, often it is not worked through, but instead members leave and join another meeting. Any area with a multiplicity of meetings sees this happens: and members often travel quite long distances as a result.

Robert Roberts does not deal with this problem: in his days, there was rarely more than one ecclesia within commuting distance. But I personally believe that leaving a meeting for any other reason than the formation of a genuine new light-stand, or a change in your location, should be considered to fall under the provisions

of “A time to separate...”, clause 40 in the ecclesial guide. As I commented in the start of this editorial, the departure of one member diminishes us all. It inevitably changes the dynamics of an ecclesia, usually for the overall worse. After all, conflict is not necessarily bad: “*Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another*” (Prov 27:17). If all the ecclesia is of the same mind in everything, I would suspect something. The only problem is when a disagreement becomes a conflict, and a conflict becomes so serious that the only resolution seems to be to go separate ways. So how do we avoid getting to that serious a situation?

### **Conflict resolution**

*“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3).*

The principle is easy to say, but hard to practice. With all the best will in the world, conflicts can escalate. We have dealt, and are dealing with, such topics in these pages, and I only have space for a few suggestions. These deal mainly with the problem of conflict with an individual, but this is usually the root behind what might be considered a dispute about conduct or doctrine.

- Pledge your commitment (Rom 12:18).
- Pray for yourself (Psa 139:23–24).
- Prepare before you ask for a meeting (Prov 16:21).
- Provide a private place (Matt 18:15).
- Purpose to be honest (Prov 12:17).
- Permit total forgiveness (Col 3:13–14).
- Perceive a future harvest (Gal 6:9).

Of course, the best way of resolving conflict is to avoid them. As Paul told Timothy “*Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels*” (2Tim 2:23 ESV). It is often said that it takes two to make an argument: just because you disagree with someone is no reason to attempt to change their mind. After all, even if you think you succeed, a mind changed against its will is of the same mind still.

Sometimes, we might unfortunately discover the conflict has made someone into what most would consider an enemy. We can, perhaps, run and hide, and move to another ecclesia so we can avoid the conflict. But what did Paul counsel? “*Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*” (Rom 12:20-21). Avoidance was not recommended: engagement rather. So that hopefully you can turn the one who has become an enemy back into a friend, and can walk united towards the kingdom.

*Peter Hemingray*

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**Submissions under 300 words are encouraged —  
the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.**

# Exhortation

## Kindness

### Use words with kindness

Breaking News! Did you hear that Scientists have finally found the cause of global warming? The cause has been determined to be Kindness!

While that may sound like a silly opening for an exhortation, Kindness can really accomplish much, and it has been said, “That just as the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to melt away.”

I believe the Apostle Paul described the opposite of kindness to us in the third chapter of Colossians when he said **now** is the time to rid ourselves of all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language. There is a lot in his words that should cause us to reflect on our own behaviors.

In our conversations, do we sometimes use words that we later regret? The easiest place for us to make such a mistake is when we are home with family members, whose everyday kindness we may take for granted.

And here, in the Ecclesia of God, when we believe our position on a matter is being challenged, we are wise to remember to be kind, even if our position is right, because we may sin in the way we treat those with opposite opinions. Paul tells us to clothe ourselves with kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. We should use those characteristics when interacting with others.

Paul also instructs us in Col 3 to avoid foolish arguments, because they produce quarrels. The Lord’s servants must not quarrel; instead we must be kind to everyone, able to teach and not resentful. We must gently instruct those opposed to us in hopes that God will lead them to accept the Truth.

Prov 15:1:4 (NIV ) tells us that a gentle answer turns away wrath...and that the tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. So please be careful with the use of your words. With the English language things are so often misunderstood...all the more reason to think carefully about our words before just blurting out the first thought that comes to mind.

Jesus came to heal the sick and those in need. We must follow his lead and understand that we have no permission to crush someone who is in need. Neither should we stand by, while rationalizing why we shouldn’t be the person to provide help. Even if we think the person should be able to help himself and is not REALLY in need of our help. We should be moved to take positive actions to help.

As you go through the week, please consider your ways and your words with a slant towards kindness. And pray that we may be kindly affectioned, one to another, putting the interests of others before ours, because that is what Scriptures teaches us to do.

## Application to our lives

So how can you apply this part of Scriptures to your life?

Well, if in the course of your daily conversations, you find yourself talking and thinking always about yourself or the things that interest you, then you need to regroup because, life is not supposed to be about us. It is about giving glory to God and praying that He will use us as an instrument of His peace.

As much as possible we are called to live at peace with one another and place their interests before ours.

There is nothing more purposeful about this message, except that I should heed its advice. At meetings, we all tend to be too quick to put forth our own opinions as forcefully as possible. We need to tone this down.

What about you? Have you heard anything so far that might change what you do this week?

The Bible is full of examples about kindness that we should consider. Naomi prayed that the LORD would deal kindly to her daughters in law, as they too were kind towards her. She cared so much for her daughters, so much that she prayed, asking the LORD to treat them kindly.

I once observed someone acting exactly opposite of Naomi. It was at a retirement party a few years back when the retiree's farewell address included the words, "I hope you all get what you deserve." He said these words in a negative tone of voice. Frankly, it was sad that he carried so much resentment instead of kindness.

The call to be at peace with each other means putting out the effort to go to your Brother or Sister and actively seek a positive relationship. That is so much better than saying, "As long as I stay away from so and so, things will be okay". Remember that Jesus taught us to proactively make peace. In Matt 5 he tells us to leave the gift at the altar and go make amends/reconcile with your brother.

In the OT, we read about Joseph, who had every right to treat his blood brothers the same way that they treated him, rather he told them to fear not... "I will nourish you". And we are told in Gen 50 that he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. Joseph knew that God's purpose prevails over the evil ways of men. He had his mind set on the things above (Col 3:2). He managed to overcome the natural tendency to carry resentment towards his brothers.

Nehemiah spoke of God's great kindness...if anyone should have lost patience with people it was God, who had the right to give up on His people but Nehemiah points out that He forsook them not.

*"[They] refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. Based upon these examples, we will hopefully conclude that we must be kind to others too. We shouldn't give up on anyone" (Neh 9:17).*

## Practical examples

Please try this simple thing during the upcoming week.

Listen to someone who needs to talk. Recently, when faced with a personal emergency, a friend found time to talk to me and advise me. In a show of kindness, this friend called me one evening... it was 9:05pm, and happened to be when I was writing this exhortation. He called to be certain things were going well. Ordinarily you wouldn't call someone so late at night, but under the circumstances, it was a very kind gesture. You remember that kind of kindness.

This week, please stop and listen to someone who needs your attention. Don't wait for them to interrupt you because most people won't do that. You may have to ask if they wish to talk about things that are troubling them.

It often hurts when we realize that an opportunity to be kind to someone was missed. At night when you're winding down and recapping things that happened to you, you sometimes realize that you glossed over a comment from someone who was crying for attention. Thankfully, when we fail, and we all fail, we can turn to God and repent, for He is merciful and of great kindness. And of course, nothing prevents us from circling back to people and following up with them to make sure their concerns are addressed.

Finally, Jonah was certain that the people of Nineveh did not deserve God's kindness. But he was shown otherwise. Jonah was made to recognize that God judges people, and that we should not judge others. We too must not condemn others with our words. During the upcoming week, please give someone a chance... lend them an ear and be careful about your tone of voice. Please remember to encourage others because we are all, from time to time, in great need of kindness, the same bountiful kindness that we saw evidence of this in the Scriptural passages that were referenced.

*"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:33-37).*

We must remember to be kind one to another, just as the Good Samaritan was kindhearted and helpful. Jesus tells us about the Good Samaritan for a reason, so as we approach the upcoming week, let us conduct ourselves in a similar fashion, by picking someone up who is in need of our kindness.

*Tony Pezzulo (Moorestown, NJ)*

## Bible Study

### The Way of Cain, (7) More Contrasts

#### Enosh versus Enoch

Enosh (or Enos), the son of Seth, was born in the 3rd generation. As has been discussed, his name means “mortal.” The word *enosh* or *enos* is rooted in the Hebrew word *nsh*, which is associated with man or mankind, while its derivatives, “mortal, frail, weak,” are an apt description of the human condition. As has already been discussed, Seth chose this name for his son in order to acknowledge mankind’s lamentable condition, and to seek from God salvation from death. This was also the focus of the first ecclesia’s worship, when “*men began to call upon the name of the LORD*” (Gen 4:26).

In contrast, Cain named his firstborn son after the city he was building: “*Cain was then building a city and he named it after his son Enoch*” (Gen 4:17). Cities are often thought of as permanent or eternal. For example, Rome is nicknamed the Eternal City. Thus, while Enosh’s name is a reflection of human frailty, Enoch’s name, in association with the establishment of the first city/settlement, speaks to a human desire for permanency, which, throughout history, has often been pursued through the construction of such edifices as cities, tombs, and monuments. The desire for immortality is best demonstrated in the example of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king (c. 605 - 562 BC) who lived during the time of Daniel:

*“As the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, he said, ‘Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?’ ” (Dan 4:28-30).*

In his moment of pride, God stripped Nebuchadnezzar of his senses and he wandered mad in the fields, like cattle. To a madman, the great monuments were of little consequence. Thus in an instance, Nebuchadnezzar lost all that he had built. This example demonstrates the impermanency of humankind’s works and their inability to achieve immortality through bricks and mortar.

As for Enoch’s name itself, it is derived from the Hebrew word *hanak*, which means “begin” or “dedicate,” suggesting that either he was born when Cain *began* building his city or upon its completion, when the city was *dedicated* — but dedicated to who is the obvious question. Did Cain dedicate the city to his son, Enoch? Or to himself? Or to, perhaps, the fiery cherubim, which was to him God?

#### Kenan versus Irad

Kenan, the son of Enosh, was born in the 4th generation. He shares a name that is similar to Cain, since both are derived from the Hebrew word *qyn* or *qana*, meaning “to acquire” or “get.” Unlike Cain’s name, however, *kenan* has a double emphasis on the Hebrew letter “n” or *nun*, a difference that may aid in identifying the meaning of his name. Typically, however, Kenan’s name is translated as “pos-

session,” (derived from Cain’s name, “acquire” or “get”) or as a derivative of the verb *qin* (similar to *qyn*), which means, “lamentation” or “sorrow.” “Possession” perhaps refers to Kenan’s relationship with God, i.e. he was God’s possession because he gave himself up (devoted himself) to the LORD. Or perhaps “lamentation” is a better translation, which may reflect his father’s name, “mortality.” In this way, Enosh and Kenan’s names represent a sort of cause and effect: mortality (Enosh) *caused* lamentation or sorrow (Kenan) — the *effect*.

Another possibility may be the slight, but significant difference between Kenan and Cain. As noted, the extra “n” in Kenan’s name may be there in order to *emphasize* the verb. Thus Cain’s name, “acquire” or “get,” becomes “increase” (acquire or get more) when the “n” is emphasized in Kenan’s name. It strongly suggests that Kenan’s name, therefore, means to increase or increased.

But what might “increase” refer to? If Kenan was a descendant of Cain — a man and his descendants who reflect the status of human progress on the earth — then we might be tempted to see in his name a reflection of the earth’s population in the 4th generation, in that the number of inhabitants *increased*. However, the names of Seth’s descendants relate to heavenly matters, and so Kenan’s name must reflect the status of faith on the earth. As such, his name “increase” may refer to a growth in the number of people who *called upon the name of the LORD* (*Gen 4:26*). This increase in the number of the faithful in the 4th generation was likely the result of Seth, Enosh, and others, who proclaimed, called out, or cried out to God for salvation from death in the 2nd and 3th generations.

Regardless of which translation is used, Kenan’s name, within the framework of this study, must be a commentary on the status of the faithful in the 4th generation: as “possession,” he belonged to God; as “the lamenter,” Kenan’s name reflects the sorrow humans may have expressed in recognition of their own mortality; and as “increase,” his name suggests that the message of salvation from death was received by many, and the ecclesia grew for a time.

Although there is more scholarly evidence for the translation of Kenan’s name as “possession,” or “lamenter,” rather than for “increase,” contextually, an increase in the number of worshippers of God at this period in time would better reflect the work of God when it’s in its initial stages of being proclaimed and established. For example, the ecclesia in the first century AD experienced — after a short time from the moment of being introduced — a similar period of growth or increase.

Peter and the other apostle’s proclamation of the good news (Acts 4:11-12) so resonated with people that it caused *“the word of God to spread and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly”* (Acts 6:7). Thus it seems that after the apostles had spent some time preaching the good news, the “seed” fell on good soil and *“yielded a crop a hundred times more than was sown”* (Luke 8:8). Likewise, it is possible that, according to the alternative meaning of Kenan’s name — “increase” — the work of Seth, Enosh, and others in the 2nd and 3rd generations, resulted in a similar period of spiritual growth in the 4th generation.

Irak, the son of Enoch, the son of Cain, was also born in the 4th generation. His name is a construction of two words, *ir* or *ur*, which means “city”, and *ad* or *ud*, which means “repeat” or “return.” Thus Irak’s name is translated as “city repeated,” which suggests that either he or his father built a second city. Its construction establishes a pattern of city-building among this particular branch of Cain’s descendants.

Cities, with their walls and fortifications, provide protection against animal and human predators, while resources can be more easily shared, and knowledge can be quickly disseminated amongst those living in closer proximity. Thus for practical reasons, cities aided civilization’s progress — which may be one of the meanings behind Irak’s name.

As will be shown, the establishment of cities by Cain’s descendants was part of the process, whether deliberate or not, to forge new homes, new tribes, to corrupt God, or replace the idea of God altogether, and to vainly seek immortality by constructing monuments, edifices, and tombs. Their activity was in stark contrast to the kind of permanency Seth, Enosh, Kenan, and others sought by taking refuge in the Lord, who alone they recognized as having the power to grant salvation from death.

### **Mahalalel versus Mehujael**

Two men with similar sounding names were born in the 5th generation: Mahalalel and Mehujael. Like Kenan and Cain, the difference in their names testifies to the dissimilar relationships they shared with God and thus supports the contrasting framework — spiritual versus earthly.

Mahalalel was the son of Kenan. The spelling of his name is made up of two elements: *halal*, which in Hebrew means “praise” (i.e., hallelujah), and *el*, the name of God. As such his name can be translated as “praise God” or “praised of God.”

Likewise, Mehujael’s name is composed of two parts: the former comes from the root word *machah*, which means “to wipe out,” “strike,” or “smite,” while the latter part, *el*, refers to God’s name. As such, his name may be interpreted as “smitten of God.” *Machah* is used 36 times in the Bible, usually in association with God blotting out the memory of the wicked from His “book of the living.”<sup>1</sup> From this we can surmise that Mehujael was particularly wicked — so much so that he was singled out in Genesis to be remembered as a man “struck down” or “blotted out” by God.

Moreover, that Mahalalel and Mehujael have such similar but opposing names — praised of God/smitten of God — suggests that these two individuals, who lived in the same generation, may have shared an experience that was similar to what transpired between Cain and Abel. For, just as God praised Abel’s offering and rejected Cain’s, it is possible that He may have, similarly, praised Mahalalel and rejected (smote) Mehujael’s.

Given Genesis’ omission of the details surrounding these two individuals, the only thing we can say for sure about them is that their names well reflect the contrasting framework for the study of Gen 4 and 5: Mahalalel, a faithful man, a man “praised by God,” and a descendant of Seth, is clearly to be identified with

the *sons of God*, while Mehujael, a wicked man, a man “smitten by God,” and a descendant of Cain, is clearly to be identified with the *sons of men*.

### **Jared versus Methushael**

The first ecclesia may have flourished during the 4th generation, as indicated by Kenan’s name, which may mean “to increase.” This trend likely continued into the 5th generation, a time when Mahalalel was “praised of God” — his name a clear indication that he was faithful, and which may also suggest that “faith” was still very much alive at the time of his birth, and during a portion of his life.

However, by the 6th generation, the ecclesia fell into decline. This may be the meaning of Jared’s name, which is derived from the Hebrew word, *yarad*, and means to “descend, decline, pour out,” or “go down.” Thus his name may be an indication that 6th generation was a period of spiritual decline. This decline corresponds to events in Gen 6 — verses which present a narrative of conditions on the earth leading up to the Flood from the 6th generation on:

*“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the LORD said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years’” (Gen 6:1-3).*

Contained within these verses is the cause of the ecclesia’s decline: intermarrying between the righteous and the unrighteous. The 6th generation marks the *beginning* of this decline, a trend that continued throughout the 7th generation, and reached its zenith in the 8th generation. Thus Gen 6:1-3 chronicles a period of *decline*, which took place over three generations, beginning in the 6th generation.

The reference to intermarriage in Gen 6:2 suggests that prior to the 6th generation, the sons of God did not marry the daughters of men. While this separation may have been the result of geography, it is far more probable that the sons of God, like the children of Israel during the time of Moses, remained separate so that their faith would not be influenced (corrupted) by the women they married; women who inevitably introduced pagan beliefs and philosophies to their husbands, and who subsequently brought these beliefs into the ecclesia. Moses warned the Israelites about the catastrophic effect intermarrying with the surrounding nations would have on their faith:

*“Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you” (Deut 7:1-5).*

Likewise, this was true of those living in the 1st century AD, for Paul said to the Corinthians: *“For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (2Cor 6:14).* Thus, if this was true of those living in the days of Moses, and also in the 1st century AD, then it was also true for antediluvians living in the first centuries BC.

Jared's contemporary was Methushael, the son of Mehujael. His name is composed of *mat*, which in Hebrew means "mortal," and *shael*, which is similar to *sheol*, meaning "grave." Like Jared, Methushael's name also corresponds to events in Gen 6, in particular verse 3, "*My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.*"

The decline in those who called upon the name of the LORD, and the increase in wickedness angered God such that He shortened human life spans to 120 years. For a people accustomed to living upwards of 800-900 hundred years, God's pronouncement<sup>2</sup> was akin to a death sentence. Given God's decision to drastically reduce the life span of humans, Mehujael's choice to name his son, "grave," was an appropriate one.

The shortening of human life was a gradual process. In his book, *The Science of God* (1997), Gerald L. Schroeder makes a similar observation:

Following Noah, a trend is clear. Lifespan becomes shorter through the generations. The Biblical concept is that change takes place over time and through generations.<sup>3</sup>

Although the pronouncement of human's shortened lifespan by God occurred in the 6th generation, like the progress of Adam's curse, the process of reducing human lifespan was gradual; it did not come to fruition until well after the Flood.<sup>4</sup>

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**Notes:**

1. Exod 32:32-33; Psa 69:28.
2. Although God may have communicated His decision to shorten life spans through a prophet, this "pronunciation" need not be taken literally.
3. Pg. 15.
4. Noah — 950; Shem — 500; Arphaxad — 403; Eber — 430; Peleg — 209; Reu — 207; Serug — 200; Nahor — 119, the grandfather of Abraham — the trend is one of a gradual shortening over a period of eight generations.

## **Life of Timothy**

### **(1) "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures"**

What character traits do we value? It is a question we might not think about often, but our answer is important. It affects our decision making, which, in turn, impacts our development.

Is physical appearance particularly important to us? If so, we may invest in how we look, perhaps to the point that our spiritual growth is limited because so much of our time and attention is going to our exterior. Valuing looks can also affect our choice of friends - perhaps even who we marry.

The characteristics we value also influence those around us. We share with people what we think is important through our conversation and how we spend our time. The signals our words and actions send can impact others. If a father loves to talk about football and never misses a game, his son will probably come to think football is important too. A brother who loves to share his business exploits and usually greets others at meeting with a question about what is happening at work,

might cause some in his ecclesia to question whether they should have the same fervor for their careers that he does. A mother who organizes a summer beach trip instead of getting her family to a Bible school teaches her children to love leisure and the pleasures of this life.

Our words and actions show what characteristics we value. What do they say? Do we act like Isaac at a spiritual low point in his life and overvalue physical attributes and the skills the world prizes? Or are do we care about and seek to cultivate obedience, teachability, humility, self-sacrifice, and a love of God?

### **“Valued of God”**

The life of Timothy is the subject of this series. One of the key lessons that emerges from the narrative of Timothy’s life is the contrast between the characteristics the world values, and those God values. Timothy’s name is a reminder of that distinction. It means “valued of God.” The traits Timothy developed and the choices he made were valued by God, even though those around him did not always appreciate them. The record of Timothy’s life reminds us that we should always be aware of the difference between what the world values and what God values.

The Bible’s record of Timothy’s life is the story of a young man. But the lessons from it apply equally well to all believers. We should all continue to grow spiritually, like Timothy, *“and to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men”* (1Thess 3:12), regardless of who we are or our stage in life.

### **Growing up in Lystra**

The society in which Timothy was raised had a vision of what young men were supposed to be like. They were to be athletic, vigorous, and versed in the thinking of the philosophers. Reminders of this vision were everywhere. It was given physical form in the statutes that dotted the cities of the ancient world. It was celebrated in the games, like the Olympics, which were such an important part of public life.

Timothy did not look like the statues that were on display in the cities. He bore little resemblance to the heroes of the games. The Bible suggests he was sickly and somewhat timid. It also indicates his natural limitations sometimes weighed on him.

Yet Timothy possessed some wonderful traits, which he used to help establish and encourage ecclesias in many lands. People from all walks of life embraced and continued in the faith because of Timothy’s example. He brought people hope. He taught them about the Lord Jesus. He changed lives. His contributions, therefore, were of far greater and lasting value than anything done in the games or commemorated by a statue.

Timothy’s background helped shape him into the man he ultimately became. He was from Lystra, a frontier outpost in the province of Galatia. Timothy might have grown up in a mud brick house. They were common in that area during Roman times.<sup>1</sup>

Lystra was situated on a highland plateau with mountains on two sides. The nearby mountain tribes were known for being wild and unruly. The Emperor Augustus placed a Roman garrison in Lystra to try to tame them.<sup>2</sup>

Timothy's mother was Jewish. His father was Greek.<sup>3</sup> The natives of Lystra spoke Lycaonian (Acts 14:11),<sup>4</sup> so Timothy's father was probably not from there. He may have moved to the city because of the Roman garrison.<sup>5</sup>

The language of Acts suggests there was tension in Timothy's family: "*Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek*" (Acts 16: 1). The phrase "*but his father was a Greek*" indicates there might have been conflict in the home.<sup>6</sup> That suggestion is supported by other details provided about Timothy's upbringing.

Acts also records Timothy was not circumcised as a baby: "*Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek*" (Acts 16:3). The fact Timothy was not circumcised was probably due to his father's objections to the practice. Paul observed that Timothy's mother tried to raise her son in harmony with the Old Testament Scriptures. Towards the end of his life, Paul recalled: "*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*" (2Tim 3:15). The Greek word rendered "child" means "an infant."<sup>7</sup> The word is rendered "a babe" in the Revised Version. Timothy's mother instructed her son from the Scriptures from a very early age. She would have wanted him circumcised. Circumcision was an ordinance given to Abraham and his descendants (Gen 17:11-12) and a command under the Law (Lev 12:3). It was an important part of Jewish identity and symbolized profound spiritual lessons.

Timothy's mother was named Eunice (2Tim 1:5). It was an appropriate name for her in the context of Timothy's life because it means "good victory."<sup>8</sup> Timothy's godly development was a good victory to which Eunice contributed. As with many achievements, however, her work was not always easy. There would have been many difficulties during Timothy's early years that she had to faithfully overcome.

The Bible's brief record of Timothy's upbringing is a reminder of several important lessons.

- First, it illustrates the conflict and unhappiness that can arise from marrying outside of the Truth. The Bible does not give the reason that Eunice married an unbeliever. It could have been her choice or it might have been due to circumstances beyond her control. Either way, being married to someone who did not share her faith brought added challenges to her life and the life of her son.
- Second, the information we have about Timothy's early years illustrates that believers can move past a challenge in their background, even if it is a major one. Eunice was faced with a real difficulty when Timothy was born, and she and his father had different views about how he was to be raised. But she was persistent. She was determined to do right in God's sight to the best of her ability despite the obstacles that confronted her. Eunice did not allow a challenge from her past — marrying an unbeliever — to ruin her future or the future of her son. She was still faithful. She still managed to raise a young

man who loved God and who wanted to dedicate his life to serving Him. (It is worth noting that although certain aspects of Timothy's personality created challenges for him as an adult, lack of persistence was not one of them. Timothy had a determination to follow God's commands. He also possessed a resiliency in the face of dogged opposition from opponents of the Truth. Those are traits he may have developed from observing his mother and learning from her example as she raised him.)

- Third, the Bible's record of Timothy's upbringing is a reminder of the impact we can have on our children by teaching them from the Bible in our homes starting at an early age. It is worth noting that Timothy's spiritual instruction during his early years occurred primarily in his home.

There is no record of Paul preaching in the synagogue in Timothy's hometown of Lystra, even though that was the Apostle's usual practice. That suggests that there was no synagogue in the city, which is a conjecture supported by secular history. Even if there had been a synagogue in Lystra, Timothy would probably not have been permitted to participate in its activities because he was uncircumcised. Acts 16:3 records that the Jews in the area were well aware that Timothy had not undergone circumcision. Consequently, they probably would have discouraged other Jewish young people from mixing with him.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the wonderful foundation in godliness Timothy received as a boy, which he was able to draw on for the rest of his life, was probably due in large measure to the loving instruction from the Scriptures he received in his home. Timothy's spiritual development is a wonderful illustration of the principle that is so important to remember as we decide how to allocate our time and energy in our homes: *"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"* (Prov 22: 6).

- Fourth, Timothy's grandmother played an important role in helping him to develop into a godly young man. Paul mentioned her by name: *"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also"* (2Tim 1: 5).<sup>10</sup> Lois followed the guidance of Scripture and recognized that her role in child rearing did not end when her own children were grown. She knew she had a Scriptural obligation to help instruct and guide her grandson in the ways of God: *"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons"* (Deut 4: 9). The wonderful influence Timothy's grandmother had on him is an illustration of the important role God has given to grandparents.

The details provided about Timothy's background suggest he would not have "fit in" very well in Lystra as a young person:

- First, Lystra was a military frontier town in the Roman Empire. Its people would probably have prized strength and athleticism. Timothy, however, was not physically robust.
- Second, the conflicts in Timothy's home, especially those related to how he was to be raised, were probably unsettling to him. They could have contributed to his shyness.<sup>11</sup>

- Third, Timothy had a Jewish heritage and Jewish training in a town without many Jews. Plus, the few Jews that might have been there, probably would have avoided him.
- Fourth, Timothy's father could have been an immigrant to the area, which might have made Timothy feel like even more of an outsider.
- Fifth, Timothy's relationship with his father was probably not close. It appears Timothy's father was not supportive of Judaism, so he probably would not have appreciated the spiritual qualities Timothy had developed based on the Scriptures. He might have wished Timothy had chosen his way of life instead of his mother's. Timothy was also emotional and given to shedding tears (2Tim 1:4). Consequently, his father might have viewed him as somewhat of a disappointment.

But Timothy's Heavenly Father saw much that was of great value in the young man. One day an event occurred that had a lasting impact on Timothy's life. It ended up giving Timothy a tremendous sense of purpose, a wonderful community to truly belong to, and the opportunity to harness the guidance he had received and the spiritual traits he had begun to develop to change many lives and bring glory to the Father. That event was the arrival of two missionaries in Lystra.

(To be continued)

Ryan Mutter, Baltimore, MD

Notes:

1. "Derbe and Lystra." Bible Places. <http://www.bibleplaces.com/derbelystra.htm>. Accessed March 6, 2012.
2. D. Hagner. 1986. "Lystra." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans), page 193.
3. The Greek word used to describe him is *Hellen*, which is Strong's Number G1672. It can be used to describe a Greek national or in a wider sense for a non-Jew. J.H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. e-Sword 9.9.0.
4. Commentators disagree on what this language was. Some claim it was a corruption of Greek, perhaps with Syriac influences. The events of Acts 14: 11-15 and some historical sources indicate Lycaonian was not easily understandable to Greek speakers. A. Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*. e-Sword 9.9.0.
5. T. Benson. "Let No Man Despise Thy Youth<sup>1</sup> - A Study of the Life of Timothy (1) Early Life and Conversion." *The Testimony*, 1969, page 339.
6. S. Kingsbury. *Teenagers of the Bible: Growing Examples of Godliness*. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), page 425.
7. The Greek word is *brephos*. It is Strong's Number G1025. See D. Smith. "Young People Who Put God First." *The Testimony*. Volume 61, p. 316.
8. J.H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. e-Sword 9.9.0. "Eunice" is Strong's Number G2131. It comes from the Greek words *eu*, which is Strong's Number G2095, and means "good" and *nike*, which is Strong's Number G3529 and means "victory."
9. T. Benson. Op cit.
10. Lois' husband is not mentioned. Does that suggest that she, like her daughter, also married an unbeliever? Was a mistake she made repeated in her daughter's life? We are not told, and the two women ultimately became exemplary believers.
11. H.P. Mansfield. 2006. *The Story of the Bible*. Volume 8. (Findon, South Australia: Logos), page 168.

## Youth Speaks

### Jonathan the Faithful Prince: (11) More Than a Friendship

#### Jonathan and David

As Jonathan looked at the man standing before his father, everything seemed to fit. David was a man after God's own heart. He had been a captain and a deliverer over God's people. He was from the tribe of Judah. When he heard David's lineage, all of the pieces fell into place — and Jonathan knew that he was in the presence of Israel's future king.

*“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1Sam 18:1).*

Immediately after the short conversation between Saul and David, Jonathan loved David as his own soul. He saw that all of the prophecies — both Samuel's and Jacob's, fit together and pointed towards the young Bethlehemite who was in front of him. Thus, in a selfless acknowledgement of what he knew to be true, Jonathan made a covenant with David and gave him his kingly possessions.

*“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle” (1Sam 18:3-4).*

How astonished David would have been as the prince of the nation called him over, took him to a quiet place, and handed him his prince's robe! David had hardly even known Jonathan! He was the king's son, and here he was, holding out his royal apparel to him. Can you picture it? At first David would not have wanted to take it — it was Jonathan's, and David was no prince. But Jonathan would have urged him, saying that it truly belonged to David. David was the rightful heir to the throne, not him.

Yet as David abashedly took the robe from Jonathan, Jonathan gave him his garments, (or as the word is rendered in other translations (NKJV, ESV, NASB), his “armor”), David would have simply been stunned. First the robe, then his armor — then even his sword. What a gesture this would have been! As has been noted before, only Jonathan and his father had iron swords out of everyone in the nation (1Sam 13:22). But Jonathan, in selfless humility, held his sword out to the shepherd boy.

As David took the sword, Jonathan continued to give him his most treasured possessions. The next thing that he handed to the future king was his bow; and again, this would have had a special significance. For Jonathan's family, the bow was the special weapon of choice and one at which they were particularly skilled in using (1Chron 12:1-2). He gave even this to David.

## Mentorship

There David stood, holding the possessions of the king's son. What a moment it would have been! Jonathan, the one who for years had believed that he was going to be the next king, the one who had the same types of talents and abilities as David — here he was, giving these treasures to the young shepherd boy! It was another demonstration of Jonathan's beautiful character. Just as he had poured out his desires and his dreams in trying to serve his father and help him turn his mind back to Yahweh, Jonathan did the same type of thing with David. He didn't resist David's kingship, but gladly submitted to it and encouraged it. He gave his entire life in support for his friend. His story and his example is a powerful reminder to the way in which true disciples of Christ should be living. Their focus should never be on their own glory, like Jonathan's vain father, but on humbly submitting to God's plan and on giving all of their time and energy to helping others grow nearer to God and His son. In doing this, Jonathan forged a lasting friendship with the new king and played an essential role in shaping David's character for his new role.

And really, that's exactly what Jonathan did. Often when we think about "David and Jonathan," we think about two men who were *best friends* and who did everything together. Nevertheless, it would seem as though their friendship was a bit different from what is typically portrayed.

While Jonathan and David *were* good friends, their relationship would seem to have been more of a *mentorship*. All throughout their activities with one another, Jonathan guides David.

Just think about the covenants which the two men made. Jonathan made the first covenant with David, not the other way around (1Sam 18:3). With their second covenant, it was the same situation:

*"So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies" (1Sam 20:16).*

The first covenant was initiated by Jonathan, and so was the second. It shouldn't be surprising, then, to see that the third and final covenant made between the two men came about through Jonathan's encouragement:

*"And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God...And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house" (1Sam 23:16, 18).*

Jonathan came to David when David was struggling and strengthened his faith. He lifted up David's mind to heavenly things and reminded David of God's plan — ending their time together with another covenant between the two of them. Over and over, Jonathan initiated these covenants. He was the one who took their friendship and set its focus upon heavenly things. Such was Jonathan's role in the relationship. Jonathan wasn't just a best friend, he was a *spiritual leader* to David. He was a mentor. Jonathan was the one who led this relationship and who set its focus upon the principles of Yahweh.

## Jonathan's love

Again, this is emphasized in the way that Scripture describes the love that the two men had for one another. Almost always, Scripture states that *Jonathan had love for David* — not the other way around:

*“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1Sam 18:1).*

Jonathan loved David in the beautiful type of love that God had sought to teach His people (Lev 19:18). He loved him as his own soul. If David succeeded, then to Jonathan, that was as though he succeeded. If David became king over Israel and led the people in Godly ways, then Jonathan would be overjoyed. Nevertheless, notice that the passage didn't say anything about David's love. Again, when Jonathan's love for David is expressed just two verses later, the record doesn't mention David's love for Jonathan:

*“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul” (1Sam 18:3).*

Jonathan loved David. Again, this is how it is recorded just a few chapters later:

*“And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul” (1Sam 20:17).*

After Jonathan realized that David was to be the next king of Israel, Jonathan had a deep love and affection for him — loving him as his own soul. Three times this is said of Jonathan's love for the young king. Yet it isn't said about David towards Jonathan — only once, after Jonathan died, did David speak, in a rather elliptical way, of his love for the man who had helped him so greatly:

*“I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (2Sam 1:26).*

In the Song of the Bow, David was distressed over Jonathan's death. It's almost as though it's here that David finally realized the depth of Jonathan's love for him — *“thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.”* Even as David sought to show his affection for his brother, he couldn't help but speak about the immensity of Jonathan's love.

This isn't to say that David *didn't* love Jonathan — but more to emphasize that the relationship wasn't necessarily reciprocal. Just like the relationship between a mentor and their apprentice, Jonathan gave himself for David, while David graciously received from his friend.

Such was the situation. Jonathan was the initiator and Jonathan was the leader. Jonathan was the one who gave of himself for David. It typically wasn't the other way around. And really, this would make sense, because when a bit of time is taken to work out the numbers, it would appear as though Jonathan was quite a bit older than David. Thus, the elder was teaching the younger how to effectively be a captain over God's inheritance.

## Jonathan's age

Working out Jonathan's exact age is difficult, and perhaps even impossible. But, by putting together a bit of the chronology, a rough age can be approximated. In fact, at one end of the Jonathan's approximate age can be deduced.

After Saul had reigned for two years, he made Jonathan one of the commanders of his army (1Sam 13:1-2, KJV). According to the Law of Moses, men could not go to war until they were 20 years old (Numb 1:2-3; Numb 26:2). Thus, when Jonathan took his troops and led them against the first Philistine garrison, he would have been at least twenty.

Saul continued to reign over Israel for another 38 years (Acts 13:21). So, by the time Saul died on Gilboa, Jonathan would have been at least 58. This is quite a contrast to David's age at Saul's death. At that point, David was only 30 (2Sam 5:4-5).

However, this chronology can be difficult to say dogmatically, particularly because most modern versions read differently in 1Sam 13:1-2, and conclude that the verse is the conventional account of the age of Saul at kingship and the length of the reign. For example, the NIV has "*Saul was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel forty- two years*".

On the other hand, another possibility (and one that would seem to be more probable) is that Jonathan was older than David, but not quite 28 years older. This idea is substantiated by Ishbosheth's age. Ishbosheth was Jonathan's youngest brother (2Sam 2:8). When Saul died, Ishbosheth was 40:

*"Ishbosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David"* (2Sam 2:10).

Ishbosheth, the youngest of Saul's four sons (and two daughters?), was 40 when Saul died. Jonathan was the oldest out of the four sons, so he could have been quite a bit older than forty. Regardless of the exact age, based off of Ishbosheth's age, Jonathan had to be at least in his mid-40s when Saul died.

Thus, when Jonathan and David made their first covenant together, Jonathan was a good deal older than David. If David was 17, Jonathan was at least 30. As the elder member of this friendship, Jonathan acted as a mentor and leader. Throughout their time together, Jonathan used his wisdom and experience and helped the youngest of Jesse's sons to keep his faith throughout extremely trying times. Yet even more, Jonathan showed David what it truly meant for someone to give their life for someone else.

## A final contrast

Thus, the son of Jesse and the son of Saul created an eternal friendship. It was a friendship that had largely been initiated and begun by the prince — and David likely even resisted when Jonathan tried to give him his robe and his sword and his bow — but it was a friendship which was focused on preparing David to be a wise king over Yahweh's people. Jonathan had been the one whose soul had first been knit to David's. Jonathan had been the one who suggested that the two make a covenant together. Jonathan had been the one who gave his kingly apparel to David.

Such was the love that Jonathan had for the shepherd who was so much younger than he. He would give up all of his dreams and all of his ambitions in order to see God's plan fulfilled and David exalted to kingship. He loved him as he loved his own soul.

When Jonathan first began to recognize David after the battle with the Philistine, the prince could have created so many different reasons as to why he wouldn't submit to him. He could have said that he himself was the rightful heir. He could have said that he was a man of faith. He could have said that he was older and thus he could rule first and then David could rule after. The justifications that Jonathan could have created — as his father did — were plenteous. But he didn't do that. That was the beauty of Jonathan's character. As can be seen in his attack on the Philistine garrison, in his interactions with his father, and in his mentorship with David, Jonathan's actions were characterized by a Godly humility. Jonathan esteemed others better than himself (consider the parallels to an even greater king; Phil 2:5-9). He gave what he had all of the time so that he might make an effort to bring others nearer to salvation.

Unfortunately, as has been shown so often throughout Jonathan's story, his reaction was a stark contrast to the reaction of his father. While Jonathan gladly recognized David as the next king, Saul too realized that his suspicion of Jonathan had been misplaced — but his realization was characterized by a very different emotion than that which had characterized Jonathan's. For Saul, this young man who had suddenly begun to steal the hearts of the people wasn't a joyful thing at all. It was terrifying. The paranoia which had once been focused upon Jonathan, soon found another target:

*“And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward” (1Sam 18:8-9).*

While his son had come to love the king as his own soul, Saul's reaction was tragically different. Thus Saul's vain and prideful spirit — as a contrast to the humble and selfless spirit of Jonathan — would cause him to eye David from that day and forward, until the envy and fear which had once prompted the attempted murder of his own son would soon do the same to the son of Jesse.

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*... the opening of 1 Samuel 13... is generally agreed should read: “Saul was ... years old when he began to reign, and he reigned... and two years over Israel” (see RSV). No-one knows why the numbers are missing, but attempts to harmonize the original Hebrew text as it stands are unconvincing. The Septuagint version does not offer much help, as most Greek manuscripts completely omit the first verse of the chapter. The NIV inserts the figures of thirty years for Saul's age when he became king, and forty (two) years for the duration of his reign.*

*Michael Ashton, Samuel the Seer, Christadelphian 1994 p 247*

# The Joy of Sunday Schooling

## Have you tried this? (3)

Bible games are educational and fun, and this gives them a special value. When education and fun are combined in Sunday school, positive attitudes can develop. Bible games also give children an opportunity to put life lessons into practice. Teamwork, fair play, rejoicing in the success of others; these and other life skills are part of a game that is well played.

There is no end to the kinds of Bible games that creative teachers come up with. A few are described here, with thanks to the Sunday school teachers who shared them with me. Have you tried any of these? Take a look at the ones that follow and plan some educational fun for your children!

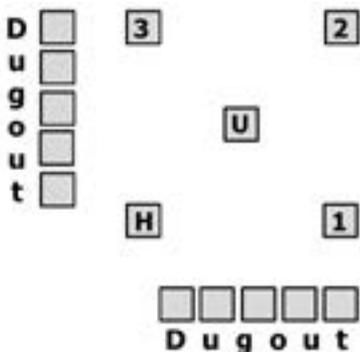
### Seek and Find

When our kids were little, they each had a file folder of Bible cut outs: a harp, a bow, a sheep, a boat, a fish, etc. From time to time, especially on rainy Saturdays, the cut outs were hidden around the house, and the kids had great fun trying to find them. Who would be first to find all their cut outs and return them to the file folder? If they got stuck, they could help each other find a missing item. When this happened, everybody was a winner.

You may not have a lot of room to hide things in your Sunday school area, but with a bit of imagination it may be possible to play a “seek and find” game in the space that you have. In the process, think about ways the Bible objects can be connected with the children’s Sunday school lessons.

### Bible Baseball

Bible Baseball is an active indoor game that can be played several ways depending on how many players you have. Set up chairs to make a playing field as shown.



Prepare questions on four levels of difficulty: single, double, triple, and home run. Write these on four different colored file cards. When a batter comes to the plate (by sitting in chair H), he chooses the level of question he wants to try. The umpire (U) selects and asks the question. If the question is answered correctly, the batter moves to the appropriate base (and sits in chair 1, 2, or 3; a home run lets him touch all the bases and score!). When the batter gets “a hit”, players already on base move up the same number of chairs or score by touching home. If the

question is answered incorrectly, the batter is out and goes back to the dugout.

Bible baseball can be a fun way to review an entire year's worth of Sunday school lessons. (*Thanks to some game Sunday school teachers in the Meriden, CT, Ecclesia.*)

Ground rules. It probably won't be necessary to lay down many rules for Bible Baseball, but here is something for the umpire to keep in mind: (1) limit the number of easy questions a team may use during each turn at bat, or (2) agree ahead of time that a team must use questions on all four levels during its turn at bat.

Variations. (1) Play Bible Baseball with two bases instead of three. Use single, double, and home run questions. A two-base game makes it easier to score. It also works better with small teams. (2) Don't count the number of outs. Instead, a half inning ends when every player on a team has had one or two turns at bat. (3) If you have lots of players, form a third team. An inning lasts until all teams have had a turn at bat.

### Multiple choice Bible games

Organize small teams. Give each team four cards labeled A, B, C, and D. Read out a multiple choice question and its four answer choices. On the count of ten, each team holds up an answer card. Correct answers get a point.

Variations. (1) Seat the teams equidistant from you. Read out a multiple choice question. The *first* team to bring the correct answer card to you wins the point for the question. But be prepared. This is a very active way to play the game! (2) The same as (1), except *every* team that brings a correct card to you earns a point. This restores some sanity to the game!

More ideas. (1) Project the multiple choice questions on a screen using a data projector. This adds a visual component to the game and helps make sure that the questions are clearly understood. (2) Fast moving games keep things interesting. Occasionally, though, you might want to slow the pace a little and include questions that require teams to open their Bibles.

### A lesson review game

		LESSON							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Q U E S T I O N	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								

Prepare a chart like this on a piece of Bristol board or poster stock and laminate it.

The letters across the top stand for Sunday school lessons the children have had, and the numbers down the left side represent questions based on the lessons. Once the chart is ready,

it can be used over and over again. You will also need a few water soluble markers for the children to use.

When it comes time to review a set of Sunday school lessons, the children take turns requesting questions (e.g., C-4, F-1, etc.). The question is read, and if the child answers it correctly they write their initials in the corresponding box on the chart. When a child gets their initials in three boxes in a row (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally), they get a point.

This makes for an interesting review game; it can also be a study in human nature. Sometimes players choose questions to get points for themselves and at other times they choose questions to block the progress of someone else (a bit like playing tic-tac-toe). I think we allow this behavior by calling it *strategy!*

When the game is over, the board can be wiped clean with a damp sponge and it is ready to use again. Keep in mind that you do not have to use the entire board every time you play the game. If you want to review fewer lessons or have fewer questions for each lesson, just block off the boxes you do not need. (*Thanks to a Vernon, BC, Sunday school teacher.*)

### **How well do you know ...?**

How well do you know *Genesis*? How well do you know *Jesus*? How well do you know *the Acts*? How well do you know *the books of the Bible*? This game has many possibilities and is easy to prepare. Develop a set of questions on any Bible subject. Write each question on one side of a file card. Place the cards face down in a pile. The children take turns drawing the top card and reading out the question that is on it. If they answer the question correctly, they keep the card. If not, the card must be returned face down at the bottom of the pile. At the end of the game, the number of cards a child has determines his or her score. As an added incentive, let the children turn in their cards at the end of the game for treats or small prizes.

Variation. This game can also be played as a game of concentration. Spread out the cards, face down, on a table. The children take turns picking up a card and trying to answer the question that is on it. Again they keep the card if they answer the question correctly. Otherwise they must return the card to its place on the table. Another child who knows the answer to the question can pick up the same card when his or her turn comes around. (*Thanks to a Vernon, BC, Sunday school teacher for this idea.*)

### **Hang Haman!**

This is the well-known “Hangman” game with a Biblical twist, and it gets the children using their Bibles. After studying the book of Esther, give the children a homework assignment: supply each of them with four or five file cards on which to write questions and answers about the story of Esther. Assign different chapters of Esther for each child to prepare questions from. Prepare some questions yourself.

When it comes time to play the game, all you need is a black board (white board nowadays?) or flip chart and the prepared questions. Draw a set of gallows to get started and then let the children take turns asking their questions. Every time the class answers correctly, the questioner gets to draw a part of Haman on the gallows (head, ear, arm, etc.). The game continues until Haman is hanged!

Variations. (1) Get some noisemakers for the children! Tell them the story of Purim. Each year, at the feast of Purim, the Jews read the book of Esther. Every time the name of Haman is mentioned, the Jewish children hiss and jeer. Your children can enjoy their own variation of this. Every time they get a correct answer to an Esther question, let them celebrate with the noisemakers! (2) Playing Hang Haman does not have to be limited to the book of Esther. The game can provide an opportunity for the children to prepare review questions after any subject they have studied in Sunday school. Letting *them* prepare the questions is good educational practice. You may want to find a different way for them to celebrate their correct answers, though! (*Thanks to Melinda Flatley, Paris Avenue, OH.*)

Nearly all the games described above involve the use of questions and answers. There are other kinds of games as well. With an endless variety imaginable, please let me know about a game that your Sunday school kids like to play. I will be happy to tell others about it.

*Jim Harper (Meriden, CT): sundayschool@tidings.org*

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## ***Some Principles of Teaching The Teacher***

*Contemplation of the Great Teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ, must impress us with an important truth; namely, that a teacher must be bound up with his teaching... Let their lives reinforce their message, teaching with their persons as well as with lessons. It is an indispensable condition of success.*

*All the foregoing, it is hoped, will persuade us of the importance of the teacher in the great campaign of the Truth. Our Sunday Schools and Youth Circles require the best efforts of the best of our meetings. It is a pity this is not always realized. There is a disposition to treat these branches of our work too lightly, and to delegate them to any who are prepared to try. With our available numbers so limited the scope for careful selection is small, and this fact lays stress on the need for deliberate effort on the part of those who are serving, whether they be veterans or recruits. Some may be lacking at first in natural aptitude. Let them take heart. Interest in the task and devotion to its cause will in the end prove far more effective, under God's blessing, than the halfhearted exercises of the born teacher. The preparation of lessons will be an unailing expression of this interest. It is an axiom of education that the really good teacher is always a student, and this will ensure a brightness and freshness in his lessons. The famous educationist, Thring, described teaching without study as serving water from a stagnant pool, while the student-teacher refreshes his class from running streams. But all the time, the teacher should be looking unto Jesus. "What would Jesus do?" is a question which has been suggested as a touchstone for right living. It is well to bring it particularly into these activities with our young. What would Jesus do? How would he now teach and guide our children in the way they should go?*

*Will Watkins, The Christadelphian 1947 p 54*

## Reflections

### Scriptural Discipline: (4) Rebuke and Correction

In the last article we looked at some fundamentals of Forgiveness associated with Scriptural discipline. Clearly, all Scriptural discipline is aimed at restoration. Our God delights in mercy and we must too. The first step in forgiving our brother is to have a personal awareness of our own need — that we too are encompassed by infirmity. Because of this, we then can “cast up” the problem to our Lord, to trust in his justice and righteousness. Ultimately, we know that we can commit our cause to “*him that judgeth righteously.*”

It is clearly true that not all offences are repented of, or restitution made. For sins not unto death, we can move forward because we “*aphiemi*” forgive. Whether we are fully restored is not essential. But, for sins unto death, whether against us or our Lord, we must pursue restoration since one’s eternal life is at risk.

#### Restoration

That may fly in the face of the common thinking in the world around us. The Humanistic thinking of the world tells us that we have no “right” to judge another’s behavior and that if such is done in “private” we have no responsibility in the matter. This could not be further from the true teachings of Scripture and serves as a warning to our generation. We are in this together. Your eternal life is my business and mine yours.

What does Scripture say about this? Solomon spoke about the warning to the one who views the sin and does nothing when he wrote:

*“Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?” (Prov 24:11-12 ESV).*

Ezekiel was warned about the role of the watchman when he was told,

*“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul” (Ezek 3:17,20-21).*

In the Law, Moses wrote,

*“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly. Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor’s life. I am the LORD. Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. **Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.** (Lev 19:15-17 NIV). (The margin in the KJV says, “that thou bear not sin for him.”)*

We need to view sins unto death this way. If they are not repented of, it is as if we are watching our dear brother or sister being taken away to execution. They WILL NOT inherit the Kingdom unless they repent. Think of it the way Solomon describes it. If you see your brother marching off to slaughter, you would do all you can to warn him and encourage him to change his direction. This is the responsibility we all have one to another. If we turn our heads, if we ignore it, we will be answerable to our God. He knows our hearts.

It is important, however, to know what we are and are not to judge. Perhaps you have heard within our own circles comments about how we are not to judge one another: that function is strictly the role of the Judge, our Lord Jesus Christ. Well, this can be absolutely right on some matters and DEAD wrong on others. We are to judge, but it is essential to know what we do and don’t judge.

## **Judgment**

In the New Testament, there are several words used for judge or judgment. We must know the difference between these words if we wish to appropriately understand Scriptural discipline. The first word is “*krino*.” This word is used for one that separates, selects, chooses, to pronounce judgment. This is used for the role of an adjudicator, in the process of a trial or the execution of sentence. In most cases, this is NOT our role. This is why Jesus tells us not to “judge” our brother, to judge not that ye be not judged. The judgment being spoken of here is all about a final sentence. Paul, in the context of areas where we have liberty, says:

*“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way” (Rom 14:10-13).*

In these cases, we are being warned about condemning our brother over matters of liberty, acting as if we are “the judge.” We do not belong in this role.

However, elsewhere the Apostle mixes the word “*krino*” with another word — *diakrino* — which means to separate throughout as in the sense of arbitrating. In 1Cor 11, Paul uses *diakrino* to say “if we judged ourselves.” In the RV it is “if we discerned ourselves.” So, lets take a look at this passage. Paul writes:

*“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge (*krino*) the world? and if the world shall be judged (*krino*) by you, are ye*

*unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge (krino) angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge (diakrino) between his brethren?” (1Cor 6:1-5).*

What’s the message here? We will “krino” in the world to come. That will be a significant part of our role as a kingdom of priests. However, now, we are not called on to judge such matters. We are called on to diakrino, or to arbitrate, to seek resolution and restoration between brethren.

Here’s a quick way to look at our judgment today. We are expected to judge. But our judgment involves the application of the Word and God’s standards to OBSERVABLE behaviors. In some cases, this may require nothing more than a private rebuke or corrective word. In other cases, it may require us to fully follow the Lord’s direction in Matt 18. But primarily, we are to deal with observable behaviors, not with what we believe lies within the heart. Perhaps that is the great lesson from the Parable of the Tares, where the judgment of the unrighteous is finally apparent in the tares at the harvest. It is separated by the angels, not us.

So, if a brother in Corinth is eating food offered to idols, this is observable, but it does NOT necessarily indicate that he is falling back to idolatry. If a sister no longer is attending meeting, that’s clearly observable. What we cannot assume or judge is that she no longer values the Truth. If a man frequently returns to substance abuse, we cannot judge that his repentance was never sincere. We must understand the difference and deal with the observable sin, rather than the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Bro. Fred Pearce wrote in “A Duty to Withdraw” that “we need to distinguish between ‘judging’ whether a man is worthy of salvation, and ‘judging’ that a persistent fornicator, for example, cannot be retained in fellowship, while leaving the final judgment in his case to the Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

Earlier, Bro. Islip Collyer wrote these instructive words:

“The spirit of the law deals mainly in positives in which none but we ourselves and Christ can judge us. If a man steals or commits adultery we are called upon to judge, and withdraw from his company, although even then we must act with humility and the desire that he shall be saved. If a man spends the whole of his life without any real love for God or for man in his heart he must be left to the judgment of the Master. We cannot withdraw from a brother simply on the grounds that he is lacking in love. Yet the sins of omission may be far more serious than the sins of commission. The one wicked act may only be the expression of a moment’s weakness. The loveless inactivity may express the tendency of a lifetime. Humanity may judge that a certain one never did anything wrong. Christ may judge that neither did he ever do anything right. The picture of the judgment in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew shows us the righteous commended

for what they had done, not for what they had avoided, and the wicked condemned for what they had neglected, not for what they had done.”<sup>2</sup>

So, with this as a platform, let’s now move into a quick examination of Matt 18.

## Matthew 18

For many years, I viewed (wrongly) Matt 18 as a process for getting restoration or repentance by a brother or sister that sinned against me. Clearly, Matt 18 does deal with this. However, it is not restricted to this. Matt 18 is intended, I believe, to deal with any sins unto death that are either committed against me or against our Lord. In other words, I have a responsibility to my brother or sister to follow Matt 18 when I become aware of them being involved in a sin unto death — even if it is not an offence against me. This is a critical distinction and consistent with our role as watchmen for one another.

Perhaps much of the difficulty has been in translation. The KJV says, “*Moreover if thy brother shall trespass **against thee**...*” Because of this, I had always seen this as a process for dealing with matters that are significant sins unto death, but restricted to sins against me. However, this was never consistent with other parts of Scripture. The Sahidic, Egyptian Coptic texts that have been preserved in Alexandria, Egypt are now being viewed by newer translations are a more accurate way of looking at this passage.

*“If your **brother or sister sins**, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over” (Matt. 18:15 NIV).*

*“Be on your guard! **If your brother sins**, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ forgive him” (Luke 17:3-4 NASB).*

This is an essential principle for understanding Matt 18. Matt 18 is a process to restore any who are lost in sins unto death. It is a process for restoration — not for one’s personal “justice” about being offended. This seems consistent with the context of Matt 18, which is all about restoration. Jesus warns:

- Be converted and become as little children;
- Woe to him that causes offences;
- Remove foot, hands, eye if it offends you;
- Despise not one of these little ones;
- The searching for the lost sheep of the flock of one hundred;
- The standard of forgiveness of seventy times seven;
- The unrighteous servant;
- How we are to forgive from the hearts our brother of his trespasses.

This doesn’t mean that I should not follow the principle of Matt 18 when dealing with a personal offence or a sin not unto death. In fact, the guidance the Lord gives about privately going to our brother is of great value. But, Matt 18 is not to be fully applied to matters where personal liberty or sins not unto death are involved. Here’s what Bro. Roberts wrote on the matter:

“For the present it will suffice to note that the sin or trespass that Christ alludes to is a palpable, obvious, fatal sin. When doubt exists on this point, let us not apply Matt 18:15–17. ‘Some men’s sins are open beforehand.’ Some are not, and therefore, we have to wait for later circumstances, or Christ’s infallible judgment, to disclose them.”<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to see the way our Lord pulled this process together, using skillfully the guidance from the Law. The principle of going directly to your brother and keeping sin at bay as close to the source as possible is fully consistent with the Law. Moses wrote:

*“If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage” (Deut 13:6-10).*

Israel operated best with this principle in mind. The role of all was to work together so that as a family, a tribe, a nation they would all be holy people unto their God. **Discipline is best handled closest to the individual and as early as possible.** No member was to be an island, but accountable to the body. The first place that sin should be fought is in the close, intimate relationships we have in our lives. We are warned to spare not! What an important lesson for our ecclesias today! If we all serve as watchmen to those we know best, if we don’t conceal missteps, we not only serve those we love best, but protect the ecclesia. More on this later.

So, if we deal with observable sins unto death as our Lord commands, we are doing what we can to save a soul from death. If our brother is approached in love by the concerned brother or sister, the vast majority of times they are saved and the repentance process begins. The Lord has laid out for us two additional steps, witnesses and the ecclesia, if the private communication and rebuke does not bring about at least an expression of repentance. But, if one will not hear the brother, the witnesses or the ecclesia, this is not just a sin unto death, it is rebellion! We have already looked at how our God views rebellion. The core issues that bring about rebellion, which can all be traced back to the flesh and pride, must be dealt with. But, that process is not for us. It is the work of our Lord and his angels. We are called on to “deliver him unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.” In this part of the restorative process, the Lord works with the individual to bring them to a place of repentance. It involves a process of crushing one’s pride to bring them to point of repentance. In our next article, we will be specifically dealing with this

final step of the disciplinary process. It is frequently misunderstood and often poorly applied.

So, how might we understand this importance process for helping our brother? We might think of it this way.

- Remember your own weakness and need — a critical starting place!
- Forgive (*aphiemi*) and give the resolution of this matter to the Lord
- Pray for your brother and for yourself — that you will be guided in your work
- Arrange for a private conversation
- Make an appointment, select an appropriate time/place
- Begin with affirmation of your love (been praying for you, concerned)
- Ask permission to share your concern
- Share (behaviorally) your concern
- Listen
- Use Scripture to govern standards
- Promise to continue praying
- Follow-up

If this does not lead at least to an expression of repentance, you **MUST** progress to private corroboration with 2-3 witnesses. If this does not lead to expression of repentance, the matter must be taken to the ecclesial and the brother is confronted by the many. If this does not lead to an expression of repentance, then sadly we must progress to public condemnation and censure (delivered unto Satan for destruction of the flesh).

Is this the end of the disciplinary process? Absolutely not! It has reached a stage when all our efforts to bring about repentance have failed. We now hand this over to our Lord and ask him to work in our brother or sister's life so that they will repent and not be lost. Our next article will specifically look at how our Lord does this work.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, we would like to share a couple of final thoughts. First, too often we hear comments about ecclesias applying this final disciplinary step as being unloving, not reflective of brothers and sisters who truly care for one another. Further we hear comments that would indicate a sincere doubt that such a step would do little more than drive away the brother or sister. Actually, there is no more of a loving process we can follow than Matt 18. Following it in a compassionate manner, reflecting the love of our Lord, states that we love our brother and sister so much that we will not turn our faces from them — we will not stand by while they destroy their spiritual lives.

Last, I would like to share some comments from Bro. Roberts about the need for private conversation when we first hear of such sins. He wrote:

“Nothing tends more to the keeping or the restoring of peace than the observance of this law; and no law is more constantly broken. The universal impulse, when anything is supposed to be wrong, is to tell the matter to

third persons. From them, it spreads with the result of causing much bad feeling which, perhaps, the original cause does not warrant, and would not have produced if the aggrieved person had taken the course prescribed by Christ, and told the fault “between thee and him alone.” If good men, or those who consider themselves such would **adopt the rule of refusing to listen to an evil report privately conveyed**, until it had been dealt with to the last stage according to the rule prescribed by Christ, much evil would be prevented. Disobedience is almost the universal rule in this matter. The results are serious now, in the generation of hatred instead of love. Much more serious will the result be to the offenders against this rule in the day when all matters will be measured and settled by the divine rule...”<sup>4</sup>

In our next article we will look at “delivering unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh” or the final step of Matt 18, viewing a rebellious brother as a heathen man or publican.

David Jennings (Pomona, CA)

Notes:

1. *The Christadelphian*, 1974, p 411.
2. *The Christadelphian*, 1913, p 203.
3. *The Christadelphian*, 1895 p 57.
4. *The Christadelphian*, 1888, p 458. See also *Nazareth Revisited*, p 201.

## **Good Men Should Adopt The Rule Of Refusing To Listen To An Evil Report Privately Conveyed**

### **Special Invitation**

*For some years, unity discussions have been taking place with Churches of God of the Abrahamic Faith. In the interest of promoting friendship and mutual understanding, we print the following invitation:*

*You, your family and friends are invited to the 39th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 21-27, 2014.*

*Main Speakers:*

- Bro. Mark Drabenstott: “The Seven Great ‘I Ams’: Our Abundant Life”
- Bro. Doug Davis: “Christ in the Jewish Feasts”
- Bro. John Pople: “Wearing the Name”

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek (330) 609-6957 or [brad.rek@gmail.com](mailto:brad.rek@gmail.com). Visit our website at <http://abrahamicfaithgathering.org/> for more information and to view talks from last year.*

## Book Review

### Bible Guidelines For a Happy Marriage By John Bilello

#### Summary

“The fairy tale romance is typically the story of a boy and girl attracted to each other with magical passion, enduring some perverse trial that threatens to destroy them and painfully end their relationship, but they conquer all and go on to live happily ever after. Unfortunately in real life almost all the challenges begin after the fairy tale ends. No matter how hard we try there will always be potholes and humps along the road in any relationship. But the mutual caring, love and emotional support of a husband or wife can make all the difference in whether or not we persevere.”

This book offers sound, proactive, Biblical advice on how to build and maintain a happy marriage.

#### Introduction

The author of this very important book is a respected brother in North America, who, along with his wife Mary have had over 50 years of marriage. They have counselled many couples, often dear friends, on multifaceted aspects of marriage. Also they have given sound Biblical and practical advice to many seeking marriage in the Lord. The book is based partly on a series of articles published in *The Christadelphian Tidings* (the monthly fraternal magazine of the North America community).

The sole purpose of this book is an attempt to provide sound, proactive, Biblical advice to brothers and sisters on how to have a “happy marriage”. Their hope and prayer is that the book will be of help to brothers and sisters throughout the world in facing the many strains, hardships and temptations that inevitably occur in the course of married life.

#### Content

The book begins with a look at marriage in the twenty-first century, comparing it with the way in which it was arranged, often by parents, in Bible times (and still is in some parts of the world). Even though men and women often make their own free choices of when to marry, it does not mean that we are necessarily wiser or happier in terms of our relationships — invariably it is quite the opposite! Statistics from North America, United Kingdom and Australia painfully reveal that second and third marriages fail at an even greater rate than first marriages!

The failure of marriage tends to peak almost universally from between the seventh to the eleventh years of marriage and not early on! Often it is caused by pent up frustrations that have remained unresolved, until they eventually lead to a rupture in the relationship.

Not only does this book explain why there are so many causes of unhappy marriages, but it gives realistic advice based on God's principles that help everyone to put into practice the guidelines that God has given for our benefit.

The author makes it very plain that marriage is a God given institution and should therefore be taken very seriously. He has tackled such subjects as “choosing wisely”, “making love last”, “committing to a relationship” and “setting realistic expectations.

He also analyses the reason why people nowadays often do not enter into marriage but just partner someone with no life commitment! It is a reflection of the emphasis that our society places on self-fulfillment; it's all about me; getting and not giving. Few realize that the “more selfish you are the less happy you are!”

The key to success, says John, in a chapter on **“Becoming Simpatico”**, is open communication. The advice of Paul in Ephesians chapter 4 on talk and action, the combination of which builds up rather than breaks down, is so important. Even if you are absolutely right or if you think your way is more logical, it does not automatically make for a better solution. Rarely is there a perfect resolution to a problem — sometimes good enough is enough, suggests John. Reminding your partner of all their other faults, that are not relevant to the issue at hand, means you go nowhere fast!

The author states the obvious in some areas e.g. “it is unrealistic to expect any marriage to sail along without hitting rough waters from time to time. We must not try to resolve conflict by destroying the character and ego of our partner. Only a person who has completely given up their own identity would be able give in to every conflict; and that is a form of abuse.” Perhaps one of the worst disagreements is on how to handle finances and the practical advice given is very relevant on this major issue, whether we are married or not.

**“Finding wise counsel”** is of great importance and a chapter is devoted to it. John strongly suggests that all ecclesias should seriously consider pre-marital counselling — and I strongly support that view from a life-time of experience in our body. You would certainly be on the right track if you based it on this book!! Who should give the guidance to a potential couple, and when it is best done, is considered, but wisdom is the principal thing.

**“Earning a living”** receives incisive treatment in a chapter which is full of Scriptural advice again, but in the context of the modern world with all its promotion of self-centeredness.

The major issues of **“having children”** and **“raising them in the Lord”** takes a further two chapters. The critical subject of discipline for children is treated in depth with lots of down to earth advice based on God given guidelines and examples — not the latest theories from child development gurus!

Two further chapters deal with the every important topics of **“immorality - before and after marriage”** and **“intimacy — its contribution to a happy marriage.”** The “one flesh” principle is clearly established as the benchmark in both Old and New Testaments in spite of the influence of the heathen world that surrounded

the physical and spiritual Jews! I quote “The Bible does not avoid discussing marriage intimacy and neither should we”. It is very interesting to see how the author expands on this and makes it relevant to everyone. He says “This book cannot possibly do more than open the door to this weighty subject”. (There are many further sources of information at the end of every chapter).

“**In-laws and Out-laws**” is an intriguing chapter. After giving some Scriptural rules to remember, John says that he can personally testify that these maxims work having faced these situations in his own life, as well as witnessing other brothers and sisters relationships. Whom John calls “Outlaws” and their effect on a marriage is very illuminating, especially when he shows how they should be handled in a happy marriage.

As already stated, differences normally occur in any marriage and the author devotes his penultimate chapter to “**Resolving Conflicts**”. After reviewing the major reasons for disagreement, John gives Biblical ways of dealing with anger. He explores Ephesians 4 again and realistically says it is our human nature that lets us down. Yet anger does not necessarily lead to sin, he says, but we must not let it fester. Essential practical measures are then outlined and of great interest are his “Dos and Don’ts” list.

A cooling off period is recommended when emotions take over, but this is no excuse for not dealing with the problem. “Clamming up and refusing to work out a problem can drive an even bigger wedge in a relationship” he says.

And what if an impasse is reached? Seeking counsel from parents or other in-laws who are nonjudgmental may help, but often advice is best sort elsewhere — as long as wisdom is there! Obviously we have a huge advantage in our community over the secular world because of the good number of mature married couples that can help. Even then, John suggests, professional counselling may be in order, but do remember the support networks that exist — under different names — in North America, the UK, and Australia. “I am sorry, forgive me; I will try to do better in future” is a valuable recommendation that he makes.

“**Till death do us part**” is the final chapter. John again uses God given principles to guide his comments, but also looks at the situations where things do not go according to plan. Manmade solutions like divorce, do not bring happiness, and often financial hardship follows in their wake, as well as upsetting the balance in family life.

Man has come up with ingenious methods to alleviate the suffering but all the models are in serious contraction to the way of Christ and our Father. “The wife of our youth” should be for life as we all know. Even retirement can bring new challenges in a relationship with both being in each other’s company more. And what about weightier issues like “serious illness, intimacy problems, adult children difficulties, diminishing income, ageing parents and so on” he says. A good solution is given in principle along with practical advice. John, in a page and a half reviews the guidelines that he has provided throughout the book; it is quite a revelation, but you will have to read it for yourself to find out.

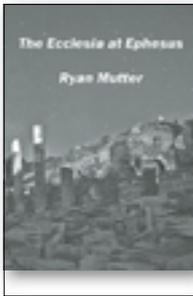
## Conclusion

I consider this book a truly major contribution to the subject of marriage. Not only is it recommended to all age groups, married or not, but it gives a spiritual as well as practical dimensions on how to have a happy life. If our King delays his return, this book will go a long way to helping our survival and the health and happiness of our community worldwide.

*Malcolm G. Cross (Doncaster, England)*

## Books from The Tidings

### **The Ecclesia at Ephesus, by Ryan Mutter**



*Ephesus was one of the most advanced cities in the Roman Empire. Believers living there faced many of the same issues that confront followers of the Lord Jesus Christ today. The Bible captures more than four decades of the Ecclesia's history through the Acts and the numerous New Testament writings penned by or to believers living in Ephesus. The lessons the Bible provides about the causes and consequences of events in the Ecclesia remain relevant in today's ever-changing times. Since the Bible records the development of the Ecclesia as a whole and also certain of its individual members, studying the Ecclesia at Ephesus*

*provides powerful lessons in spiritual growth. \$9.00 US (264 pages, with color maps and images).*

#### **Bible Guidelines for a Happy Marriage, by John C. Bilello**

*Sound, proactive, Biblical advice on how to build and maintain a happy marriage. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 127 pages).*

#### **The Creation Text: Studies in Early Genesis, by David Levin**

*Forty-nine studies offer fresh insights into early Genesis by examining the text and structure of the first five chapters. \$12.00 US (364 pages).*

#### **My Journey in Faith, by Ronald Hicks**

*A brother shares his life experience in the Truth with Christadelphians around the world, and the joy of mission work. Special price: reduced from \$10.00 to \$5.00 US (372 pages).*

#### **Pictures of Redemption, by George Booker**

*Explores parables, analogies, and figures of speech used in Scripture to illustrate the many facets of redemption. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 192 pages).*

#### **The Whole Armor of God, by Ryan Mutter**

*This story takes place nearly 3,000 years ago, but the spiritual challenges are familiar to today's young people. \$6.00 US (110 pages).*

#### **How to Order**

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## Bible Mission News

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### Truth Corps Leaders Needed!

The CBMA is in search of married couples or individuals to act as leaders for Truth Corps for 2014 and beyond — but primarily for 2014!

Truth Corps is a CBMA missionary program that gathers together a group of young Brothers and Sisters — all 18 or older, usually three or four Brothers and three or four Sisters — plus a Brother and Sister acting as their team leaders, and send them to ecclesias in need of assistance around North America, Latin America and the Caribbean for several weeks of intensive missionary work. Not only does Truth Corps create lasting impacts in the ecclesias it works with — both helping bring in contacts from outside, and rejuvenating the youth and preaching efforts of the ecclesias themselves — but it also forever changes the young people who embark upon it. Young people come away from Truth Corps with a newfound confidence in preaching the Gospel in their personal lives, an enthusiasm for preaching both in their home ecclesias and abroad, and with lasting friendships formed while on the team. To be effective, however, a group of young people needs a spiritually mature Brother and Sister traveling with them; someone to provide necessary supervision and chaperoning, as well as providing wisdom, counsel, and encouragement to the team as they leave their homes and families and embark on a summer of intensive missionary service. This is where the team leaders come in!

God willing, this year's Truth Corps's locations include the Mid-Atlantic United States, Guyana, and Trinidad & Tobago. The program will be four weeks long, lasting from July 5th to August 2nd, 2014.

Below are the answers to a few questions you might have, but if you have any additional questions, please contact Allen and Tara Laben at [allenandtara@gmail.com](mailto:allenandtara@gmail.com), or by phone at (757) 870-7579.

Q: Do we need to have previous experience with Truth Corps?—

A: Previous experience with Truth Corps, either as a team member or a member of a host ecclesia, is helpful but by no means a necessity! Team leaders will be provided with a manual that will tell you everything you need to know about the training, structure, and work of Truth Corps. More important than Truth Corps experience is the ability to help manage and support a small, tight-knit group of young people. Additionally, there are local leaders in each Truth Corps location who will help you manage the work in that particular location.

Q: Will our trip be paid for?—

A: Yes, all of your travel expenses will be paid for and most of your food will be provided as well — your only expenses will be your personal effects and any “pocket money” you wish to carry with you in your travels.

Q: Do I need to speak a foreign language?—

A: Not at all! English is widely spoken in all of Truth Corps’ locations for this year.

Q: What does a typical day with Truth Corps consist of?—

A: The team stays together, either in hotels or in homes hosted by local ecclesial members. As a leader, your day would start by helping make sure the team is up and ready for the day, and starting the day with breakfast, prayer, a devotion (led by the team’s Brothers in rotation), and sometimes the first daily Bible reading. Mornings with Truth Corps are usually filled with some kind of preaching activity, such as door-to-door canvassing, leafletting, teaching at a Vacation Bible School, or some similar activity; the leaders help keep the team on-track and also participate with the team in these activities. Lunch is provided by the local ecclesias, and following the second and third daily Bible readings and a short First Principle workshop (facilitated by team members on rotation), afternoons are usually for rest, personal Bible study, and sometimes fellowship with the local ecclesias. Evenings are usually spent attending ecclesial events such as CYC, Bible Class, public lectures, etc. that Truth Corps would be participating in, or visits to the homes of Brothers and Sisters needing help or encouragement. Each day ends with a the team discussing the events of that day, renewing their commitment to service and preaching for the next day and closing the day with prayer. Travel days differ from this outline, as do the team’s one leisure day each week during which you would participate in a recreational activity planned by the local ecclesia. There is a lot more information about this in the Truth Corps Leaders’ Manual, which will be provided to you well in advance!

Q: What do I do next?

A: Please contact us as soon as possible at [allenandtara@gmail.com](mailto:allenandtara@gmail.com), or by phone at (757) 870-7579; leave a voice message if you don’t reach us right away. We would also appreciate your prayers for the efforts of the CBMA and Truth Corps as we seek to spread the Good News.

Thank you in advance for your help and prayers!

*With love in Christ, Allen and Tara Laben*

## **Visit to Chile: In Which I am Amazed**

According to my guide book, over a third of the 16-17 million Chileans live in Santiago, the capital. It is a booming metropolis nestled between some pretty large mountains, aka the Andes, and a fascinating combination of 400 year old churches and modern skyscrapers. It boasts some pretty fantastic public transportation, including an extensive bus and metro system.

I had the privilege of visiting the ecclesia Santiago de Chile at the beginning of this year for just under a week. I don’t know who laughed more, the brethren and

contacts or I, at the number of times I exclaimed just how similar Santiago is to Southern California in so many ways. One of the first is the freeways, which rival LA freeways in size and scope, except with a little less graffiti than downtown. Another was the climate, with warm, dry days and cool nights, which are also typical of the irrigated semi-desert of Southern California. By far the most startling appearances were the companies; shopping malls filled with brands such as Apple, TGI Fridays, Nike, and many others.

However, the real thing that constantly amazed me about the similarities between the country of my birth and this land I had never visited was the connections instantaneously formed with those of such precious likeminded faith. When I arrived, one of the sisters was there to pick me up and take me back to her house, and treated me with all the care of a queen. The ecclesia met during the weekend for a meal and breaking of bread, and I became part of the gregarious, loving and slightly chaotic thing that is a family. When we studied the Scriptures together using the daily readings, we were all reminded together of that hidden pearl. That treasure so great that to give all of our life to it is merely our reasonable service. I was heartened to be reminded, yet again, that the message of the good news of the coming kingdom transcends all nations, peoples, tribes, and tongues. That the message of the messiah has power whether you are rich or poor by the world's standards, educated or uneducated, whether you live in the shadow of hundreds of Catholic cathedrals hundreds of years old or in the shadow of the mountains of sub-Saharan Africa, or in the shadow of generations of Christadelphian forefathers.



**The Santiago Ecclesia**

in so many diverse places.” My thanks should go to them, for their selves and their heart.

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us” (2Cor 4:7).*

*Colleen Uiga, Spanish Truth Corps  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity*

## Christmas Vacation in Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico is one of the bigger islands in the Caribbean with a population of close to 4 million. It is an American territory or commonwealth and Puerto Ricans have US citizenship.

Although it has its share of economic challenges, Puerto Rico is a delightful island. It is a bit like Hawaii — the people are friendly, the water is safe to drink and the chain stores and restaurants are familiar. Spanish is the main language but many people speak English.

Sis. Kathy and I became interested in visiting Puerto Rico when we read Bro. Don Luff's article in the Tidings (January 2013). We decided to spend the Christmas holidays on the island, and the highlight of our visit was a delightful couple of days spent with Bro. Miguel and Sis. Aida Robles. The Robles are retired and in their late 60's and live in Ponce which is the second largest city after San Juan. They were baptized over 25 years ago by Bro. Basilio Fernandez, now living in Florida and are a wonderful example of a couple living faithfully in isolation. Meeting with them was a privilege, as they are very warm and generous, and they welcomed us with open arms.



During our visit on Christmas Day and the following Sunday we were treated to delicious island style food (barbeque chicken, rice and fried plantain). We did the readings and shared a breaking of bread together. The language was a bit of a challenge due to our limited Spanish and their limited English, but we were aided in this regard by the Robles' eldest son, Miguel Jr. (about 40), who speaks good English and was more than happy to sit in with us and aid our discussions.

The Robles are not shy about witnessing to their family, friends and neighbors, and while we were there we spent time talking with an elderly neighbor and retired language professor, Tomas, who asked some insightful questions. We also had the opportunity to talk with Miguel Jr., who has a high regard for his parents' faith.

For a variety of reasons there has been very little witnessing in Puerto Rico. The Roman Catholic Church is dominant and the Pentecostal churches are also strong. However the JW's, Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons and other, smaller groups have made inroads, and so there are opportunities for preaching. The CBMA has provided support to this area over the years, and currently a number of students are taking our Spanish Bible correspondence course.

Two other Christadelphians live on the island. A younger brother, Edgardo Saldana, who found the truth from our Spanish website labiblia.com and was baptized in

Los Angeles a few years ago, lives in San Juan. A friend of the Robles, Bro. Roberto Martinez, was baptized a few years ago and lives nearby in Ponce.

We were instantly drawn to the Robles despite the language hurdle, and got along famously. While sharing some meaningful discussions about our lives in Christ, we soon learned that our experiences and struggles in the world are similar. But of course they have other challenges too because of their isolation (which made us feel thankful for our own ecclesia). We also enjoyed their enthusiasm and their own little ways of doing things, and they seemed to enjoy ours in return! Sis. Kathy and I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to meet this special family, and hope to go back for another visit in the not too distant future. Puerto Rico is becoming a popular tourist destination, and we encourage others to visit the island and support the brethren.

*Martin and Kathy Owen (San Diego, CA)  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity*

## All-Mexico Bible School

First ever! Come help start an annual event at a beautiful location at Hotel Perico in the hills overlooking Lake Chapala near Guadalajara. Dates: August 1-4, 2014. Speaker: Bro Bill Rawson. Contact Bro. David Lloyd davidrllloyd@earthlink.net or phone 818-352-6486.

## Argentina Report — January 2014



**Sis. Julia and Sis. Colleen Uiga**

Hello again from Córdoba, Argentina, the little part of Europe that ended up in South America! Hello from the land of tango, the land of gauchos, the land from which the current Pope hails, and the land that will take your breath away with its scope, diversity, and beauty. Hello from a land so different from my own, so diverse, with many stories to be told.

I had a friend ask me, “What is it like? What is it like to leave your culture, your ecclesia, and move to a place so different? How did you adapt?” To which my short response is: I haven’t yet. Not completely anyway. The first month was a wondrous dream: each event had a new facet to it, everything was so new and intriguing. I was extremely blessed to come here at a time when there was a missionary here from a English-speaking country, who explained to me how things are different, what social customs exist, and helped me when I had questions that would seem obvious to a native. A little example: here they have a tea drink called yerba mate, or mate for short (pronounced ma-tay), which is drunk with a silver plated straw from a gourd filled with tea leaves. All parties share the same straw, and it is passed from the person serving to each person in succession. If one doesn’t want any more, he or she simply says ‘thank you’ upon returning it. This drink is everywhere, and I may even call it the national drink of Argentina. Walking, one will see the familiar

shape of the mate gourd and thermos in many a person's hand. If needed, someone might explain this to the foreigner, but there is a connection that's formed when it is found that they don't need to, the 'foreigner' already know. Personally, I very much like mate and find the custom delightful.

A little bit more difficult to become used to is the perception of time here. I read an article once about Americans and how we view time. It stated: 5-10 minutes early is 'on time', and 5 minutes after is 'late'. If you are going to be more than 10 minutes late, it is polite to call and inform the host. Not so in Argentina. Time is a shifting and moving creature, and pinning it down to your expectations is well-nigh to impossible. Being here requires that one set aside preconceptions and judgments around time. Because often, the person is 'late' according to North American standards because he or she was interacting, relating to, or helping someone else. Here, the relationship is very important, more important many times than business.

I can't say as of yet that I have clear insight on the people, the culture, or even everything about how to get around, but I'm enjoying discovering more little by little. There is a reason for every difference, for every action, and I'm loving listening to find out not just the 'what', but the 'why'.

There is a structure in the Spanish language which uses the verb 'tener' followed by 'que' and a verb, and it's used to express obligations, duties, and basically whatever things need to get done. Therefore 'tienes que hablar' is translated as 'you have to speak'. In terms of adjusting, by far the biggest obstacle has been the language. When I talk in English, I don't even realize the variety of sentence structure and vocabulary that changes with each subject that I use. Listening, my mind picks up naturally the shades of meaning and missing sounds of others, and my mind grasps the concepts, ideas, and levels of meaning of the communicator. What an amazing thing is the mind. Not so in Spanish. Here, when learning Spanish, it is necessary to listen, listen carefully, ask questions when you don't know something, and always, always....tienes que hablar. Only by practicing, learning from mistakes, and taking the brave step forward to just speak will you really improve when learning a new language. You will worry about looking foolish, and saying the wrong thing, but you must not let that rule over you. How much is that like our speaking in the Truth? For realistically, our language, concepts and thoughts in the Truth are a new language to the natural man. We need to listen, study, and especially need to speak of the things that we have seen and heard. There is a day coming, and we are the watchmen. Have we sounded the alarm? Will I? Will you?

*Colleen Uiga, Spanish Truth Corps.  
Submitted by Jan Berneau,  
CBMA/CBMC Publicity*



**Brothers Brydyn Melles and Pancho**

## News & Notices

(Please send in news and notices by the 5th of the preceding month;  
please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.  
Word files or e-mail in text-only format are preferred.)

### **BARRIE, ON**

Since our last correspondence Sis. Pat Kryskow has transferred to Kitchener-Waterloo, ON Ecclesia, and we subsequently rejoiced with Sis. Pat in her marriage to Bro. Fred Bouttell. Sis. Ona Lawton transferred to the Brantford, ON Ecclesia, and we have accepted the transfer of Bro. Patrick and Sis. Susan Smidt from the Cambridge, ON Ecclesia.

We are sad to report the falling asleep of Sis. Jean Donnelly on Dec. 3, 2012. Despite Sis. Jean being legally blind, she was an inspiration to our ecclesia for her positive outlook on life and spiritual vision. Her presence is greatly missed. A service of remembrance was held at our ecclesial hall which was filled to capacity with relatives and neighbors.

God willing, in October our ecclesia, with assistance from ASK, is making plans to have a preaching booth at the 2014 International Plowing Match which is coming to our area this year.

We pray for God's blessing on these efforts.

*Grant Abel*

### **CALGARY, AB**

We inform the brotherhood of the resignation of our Bro. Mike Lindsay.

*Paul Aback*

### **MISSISSAUGA WEST, ON**

We thank Bro. Bill Link, (Baltimore, MD) for leading our studies at our Ecclesial Retreat in March of 2013. This was the second Ecclesial Retreat we've had that has proven to be a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our ecclesial family around the word of God.

In December, we rejoiced to see the baptism of EMILY ROSE, daughter of Bro. Adrian and Sis. Cathy Rose. Our new sister has grown up in our Sunday school and CYC activities and stands as a wonderful example to our other young people.

In recent months we also welcomed, by way of transfer, Bro. Tom and Sis. Vivian Thorp (Hamilton Greenaway, ON) and Bro. Paul and Sis. Brenda Ghent (Toronto Church Street, ON). Having moved to South Australia, we commend Bro. Daniel and Sis. Kym Cadieux to the One Tree Hill Ecclesia. Bro. Daniel, Sis. Kym and their children have been greatly missed.

We are grateful to Bre. Ken Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI) and Dave Billington (Brantford, ON) for leading the classes at our Fall Prophecy Day in November. We were encouraged to see the convergence of many prophecies and the powerful hand of our God. Surely our Lord's return must be soon!

Like so many in the brotherhood, we have faced some very difficult trials over the last year. Both with sickness and the loss of loved ones, we have been reminded of the frailty of the human condition, but we know that "Yahweh is nigh unto them that are

of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit” (Psalms.34:18). Despite this, we have so much to be thankful for and we more earnestly look forward to the return of the Lord Jesus.

*Graham Baldock*

## **PITTSBURGH, PA**

Our ecclesia rejoiced to have the honor of witnessing the marriage of Sis. Sarah Telles and Bro. Michael Davey on June 2, 2013. Sarah grew up in our ecclesia. We wish them God’s richest blessings as they walk together to His kingdom.

Bro. Zachariah Kemp has transferred to the Northern Virginia Ecclesia.

Our annual study weekend was held on May 3-5, 2013. Bro. Ryan Mutter spoke on “The Life of Timothy”. We very much appreciated his classes and exhortation.

Our CYC study weekend was held September 21-22, 2013. Bro. Jim Cowie spoke on the subject, “How God Deals with the Jacob in All of Us.” Young people and adults were blessed by his encouraging and instructive talks.

We have welcomed visitors from many ecclesias in the United States, Canada and Australia. We want to especially thank the brethren who gave us words of exhortation: Ian Nibloe, Kevin Flatley, Art Hibbs, Caleb Folkerts, Tim Cooper, Craig Stickney, Michael Davey, Richard Morgan and Jim Bates. We also wish to give a special thanks to Bro. Ryan Mutter for leading our adult Sunday school in December on John’s first letter.

We are looking forward to having Bro. Mike Robinson (Echo Lake, NJ) on May 3-4, 2014, for our annual study weekend. Lord willing, he will present classes on, “The Levites: They Shall Be Mine.”

*Len Budney*

## **RICHMOND PETERSBURG, VA**

The Richmond Petersburg Ecclesia continues to meet at the Virginia Home for Boys and Girls, 8716 West St. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23294, and would like to invite all brothers and sisters visiting the Richmond, VA area to meet with us either for Sunday Memorial Service or Bible Class on Thursday evenings at 7:30 PM. Sunday school starts at 9:30 am, and Memorial Service starts at 10:45. Midweek Bible study is Thursday at 7:30 pm.

For more information contact Bro. David King at 804 270-2153 or 804 241-5863.

*David King*

## **SPRINGFIELD, MA**

We have had an exciting, albeit busy year in our small ecclesia. First, we have been blessed to be joined by Sis. Eliza Djuma, her husband, and five children who have come to us from the refugee Tongogara Camp Ecclesia located in Zimbabwe. She and her family have now been with us for over a year. This has been a challenging transition for Sis. Eliza, her family, and our ecclesia, as we have had to overcome communication issues as well as attempt to meet the needs of her and her family. Their adjustment to this country from their native country of Africa has been no mean task; additionally, their employment situation continues to be tenuous. However, “when one member suffers, all members suffer; when one member rejoices, all members rejoice.” I have marveled at the collective spirit of sacrifice with which our members have been attempting to meet their needs. Your prayers on their behalf are most needed.

Additionally, our ecclesia has been blessed with the opportunity to present the “Learning to Read Your Bible Effectively” seminar in our area. This effort was met with overwhelming interest. At one time, we had over forty five people attending this seminar. We have continued to conduct follow-up seminars due to continuing interest for almost a year and a half. This has been both an exhausting and an exhilarating work in the Lord’s service. Hopefully this work will culminate in some baptisms. Thanks be to God!

*Gary Chodkowski*

### **SUSSEX, NB**

We welcome Bro. Philip and Sis. Janice Baines who are commended to us in love from the Cambridge, ON Ecclesia.

*Cliff Baines*

### **VANCOUVER, BC**

We rejoice with the angels of heaven at the baptism of DANIEL FEDORSKI on January 12, 2014. Daniel is the son of Bro. Tim and Sis. Debbie Fedorski of this ecclesia. We have watched him grow over the years through his continued attendance at Sunday school, CYC and our regular meetings. We pray for God’s blessing on him as he joins us on our walk to Zion.

Bro. Simon Snobelen has assumed the role of recording brother. His address is: 16523 59th Avenue, Surrey, BC, V3S 4G2. He may be reached by phone at: 604-575-8557, or by email at: simonsnobelen@shaw.ca. We thank Bro. Jonathan Stodel for his hard work over the past four years.

Commencing in February we are planning to hold a series of seminars on Sunday evenings in our hall.

*Terry Fearn*

### **NEW ECCLESIA — MONROE, WASHINGTON STATE**

On November 3, 2013, the Monroe Christadelphian Ecclesia, a new ecclesia in Central Fellowship, was established in the metropolitan area of Seattle, Washington. The brethren together have purchased an ecclesial hall and meet at 235 S. Lewis Street, Monroe, Washington, which lies thirty miles northeast of downtown Seattle. Our ecclesial activities are: Sunday School (9:15 am), Memorial Service (11:00 am), Wednesday Bible Class (7:30 pm), and a combined CYC with the Seattle ecclesia (Saturdays, 7:30 pm in homes of the brothers and sisters).

The following brothers and sisters are the founding members, all of whom are former members of the Seattle ecclesia: Tony and Amy Ball, Emily Ball, Bethany Bleichner, Dan and Lindsey Bleichner, John and Dawn Bleichner, Tim Cooper, Steve and Mindy Faver, Eric and Susan Hawthorne, Shindano and Deta Ikola, Sifa Ikola, Alice Lake, Dan and Michelle Lake, Ethan Lake, Krista Lake, David and Liz Luaulu, Amber Onstot, Adam and Amanda Seago, and Dan and Penny Whitcomb.

All ecclesial correspondence should be sent to the Monroe Christadelphian Ecclesia, 235 S. Lewis Street, Monroe, WA 98272, or by email to [secretary@monroechristadelphians.com](mailto:secretary@monroechristadelphians.com).

*Your brother in Christ,  
Eric Hawthorne, Secretary*

## SEATTLE, WA

As of November 3, 2013, the Seattle Ecclesia recognizes the formation of a new ecclesia in Monroe, Washington. We therefore acknowledge the transfer of the following brothers and sisters from the Seattle Ecclesia as founding members of the Monroe Ecclesia: Tony and Amy Ball, Emily Ball, Bethany Bleichner, Dan and Lindsey Bleichner, John and Dawn Bleichner, Tim Cooper, Steve and Mindy Faver, Eric and Susan Hawthorne, Shindano and Deta Ikola, Sifa Ikola, Alice Lake, Dan and Michelle Lake, Ethan Lake, Krista Lake, David and Liz Luaulu, Amber Onstot, Adam and Amanda Seago, and Dan and Penny Whitcomb.

Harley Young

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## Seattle Intelligence

*Brother Trussler reports that about the latter end of April last, he received a letter from a brother Wellington Frost, of Seattle, Washington Territory (a city about ten days journey by train from Boston), conveying interesting particulars. He was living alone, having none but the world around him. He was immersed by a London brother, while living at San Francisco (Cal.). This brother left him to go back to London. Before leaving him he told him of a publishing house somewhere in England, but brother Frost did not succeed in getting into communication. At last he applied to the postmaster at Boston, who gave him the address of the Christadelphian meeting place at Chandler Hall, Essex street. By this means he got into communication with the brethren. Brother Trussler says, "Since then I have received another letter, full of love and gratitude." He says, "I now feel that I can reach out my hand as it were, and have it clasped by some one, who in sincerity has a hope and faith like my own." He encloses P.O.O. for the Christadelphian, Christendom Astray, and The Trial. He intends (the Lord willing) having quite a collection of Christadelphian works, including Eureka, Elpis Israel, &c. Elpis Israel was the book that made a lasting impression.*

*The Christadelphian, 1886, p 335*

*WEST SEATTLE (Wash.).—3233 Walnut Avenue.—We have removed from North Yakima to above address, where we meet for breaking of bread. We advertise in one of the daily papers, and a sister Smith, who is on a visit to Seattle, saw it, and has met with us. Her home is in Wisconsin, where she has been in isolation. On Sunday, August 15th, we had with us a daughter of brother McNair. She, sister Thompson, has also been in isolation since she removed from Winnipeg to Seattle. She saw the advertisement, and says she is thankful to have a meeting she can come to. If any brother or sister should be passing this way, or living near enough to meet with us, we shall be pleased to welcome them.—JOHN DUGDALE.*

*The Christadelphian, 1915, p 479.*

## Minute Meditation

### Boasting in the Lord

Jeffrey Gitomer, while giving advice to salesmen, noted, “My experience has shown me that if you have to say what you are, you probably aren’t. Think about that for a moment. ‘I’m honest,’ ‘I’m ethical,’ even ‘I’m the boss,’ or ‘I’m in charge,’ usually indicates just the opposite. Doesn’t it?” CherLisa Biles would agree; she said, “There is no need to boast of your accomplishments and what you can do. A great man is known, he needs no introduction.”

The truth of these words can be seen in examples such as the used car dealer calling himself “Honest John”, who had a reputation for making shady deals with his customers. We should not want or need to tell others how wonderful we are. Solomon’s advice is to “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”

Isaiah warns us about boasting, “Shall the axe boast over him who hews with it, or the saw magnify itself against him who wields it? As if a rod should wield him who lifts it, or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood.” We are God’s creation. We cannot take credit for what we manage to accomplish because of how God made us. Paul tells us, “For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” All that we are and have is a gift from God. James makes it clear, “You boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”

Remember a famous world heavy weight boxing champion who used to strut around and stick out his chest saying, “I’m the greatest?” He lost his abilities and faded from the public eye after losing his mind due to blows to his head. Remember the ocean liner that advertised that it was unsinkable — until the Titanic ran into an iceberg and sank? God can bring all mankind’s boasting to nothing.

Is boasting ever a good thing? We learn in Micah, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.’ ” We should boast in knowing our God and obeying Him. As Paul tells us, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Paul does boast. He tells us, “But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” Any other boasting must be of only one kind, as Paul explains, “If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.” Paul was afflicted with what he called a “thorn in the flesh” that he prayerfully begged to have removed. The answer God gave him was “My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Paul concluded, as he tells us, “Therefore I will boast

all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

The greatest man that ever lived was the Lord Jesus Christ. He describes himself by saying, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Paul explains what meekness meant for our Lord: “But [he] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Jesus took no credit even for the words he spoke, explaining that he spoke only what the Father gave him to speak, and he submitted to His Father’s will in all things, even though it involved suffering and dying. He never would give himself glory, but only gave glory to God.

Let us follow the example of our Lord and humbly serve our God. Any boasting must be of our thankfulness for the hope of salvation we have been given from the sacrifice of our Lord, and appreciation for our weaknesses. When we feel weak, we learn to depend on the Lord, to trust in his strength, as Paul did. There should be no boasting about anything else.

We are thankful for the love and strength that we have been given, and while we do not take credit for any achievements, and recognize our weakness and dependence on our God, yet, as Paul tells us, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

*Robert J. Lloyd*

## **Coming Events (Lord Willing)**

**(Please send in notices at least two months before the date of the event.  
Three months is preferable.)**

### **MARCH, 2014**

**1 New England Little Disciples** at Barton Center, North Oxford, Ma. A day of Bible study and activities for children pre-K to 7th grade. Students are expected to complete a workbook(available online) in advance. See website [www.nelittledisciples.com](http://www.nelittledisciples.com). Contact Sis. Tammy Rundle [nelittledisciples@hotmail.com](mailto:nelittledisciples@hotmail.com) or 781-829-4410.

**8-9 Paris Avenue, OH** Spring Study Weekend with Bro. Ken Styles (Detroit Royal Oak, MI). The topic will be “Godly Love”. Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: [delder1@kent.edu](mailto:delder1@kent.edu).

**15-16 Victoria, BC** Spring study weekend with Bro. Jason Hensley. His topic will be, “And I Will Send You the Comforter.” Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen [victoria@csl.ca](mailto:victoria@csl.ca).

**29-30 Ann Arbor/Royal Oak, MI** Joint Study Weekend: “Surviving Perilous Times,” Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON). Saturday 10am arrival at Ann Arbor Ecclesial Hall,

5795 Pontiac Trail, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Class 1: "By their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them"; Class 2: "Take Heed to Yourselves and to the Flock"; Lunch; Class 3: "Warring a Good Warfare". Sunday 10am Memorial Service "Christ Hath Suffered Leaving us an Example" and Class 4: "Sanctify Them Through the Truth". Contact Info: Bro. Dan Styles, dnstyles@hotmail.com or (313) 743-7302.

#### **APRIL, 2014**

**5-6 Boston, MA** 23rd Annual Spring Study Weekend. Boston Ecclesia, 48 Freeman Street, Stoughton, MA. Bro. Aaron MacAdams (Worcester, MA) "Hear Now, You Sons of Levi!" Registration and coffee at 10:30AM Saturday with three classes beginning at 11:00AM. Lunch provided. The fourth class is scheduled for Sunday morning at 9:30AM, followed by Memorial Service. Contact Bro. Jim Sullivan at 781-837-8865 or jimsulliv@aol.com.

**18-20 New England Brothers' Weekend** "Being a 21st Century Man of God" by Bro. Chris Sales at Camp Joslin, Charlton, MA. Contact Bro. Jason Dineen newengbros@gmail.com, 617-697-7717.

**18 Victoria, BC** Pacific Northwest CYC Conference. Speaking will be Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON). Contact Bro. Clyde Snobelen victoria@csl.ca

**18-20 Wichita Falls, TX** Annual Spring Gathering at T4C. Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON) will lead us in a study entitled "The Ecclesia — A Place of Refuge." For registration contact Bro. Larry Beutel at lbeutel@alsco.com.

**26-27 Sussex, NB** Study weekend lead by Bro. Martin Webster (Kitchener/Waterloo, ON). His topic will be "1 John – Epistle of Sublime Truth & Love".

#### **MAY, 2014**

**2-4 Southern California Brother's Weekend** at Lake Cachuma, CA. "Rejoice in the Lord Always", classes lead by Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD). An examination of how joy, peace, contentment, and hope can apply to brother's roles as leaders in their homes, ecclesias and workplaces. Contact Bro. Gordon Hensley at simi.rosa.hens@gmail.com or Bro. Levi Gelineau at Leviandjessica@gmail.com.

**3-4 Pittsburgh, PA** Annual Spring Gathering. Bro. Mike Robinson (Echo Lake, NJ) will be speaking on "The Levites: They Shall Be Mine". Travelers' lunch will be provided at noon and classes will begin at 1:00 pm. Contact Bro. Len Budney at pghecclesia@gmail.com or (412) 983-1970.

**16-18 Sussex, NB** Spring Youth Camp will be led by Bro. John Mannell (Toronto West, ON).

**18 Mid-Atlantic Gathering.** Contact Bro. David Cheetham at 856-273-3654.

**31-June 1 Meriden, CT.** Spring Study weekend with Bro. Ron Hicks. Sunday school picnic to follow on Sunday afternoon. Contact Bro. Steve Harper at shaper.rn@me.com.

#### **APRIL, 2014**

**5 Caring Network of Canada** sponsoring a "Seminar on Elder Care Issues". It will be held at Toronto North Hall, 39 Knox Ave, North York.

**18-20 Toronto Fraternal Gathering** will be held at Mayfield Secondary School, 5000 Mayfield Road, Caledon, ON. The speaker will be Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, UK): "Studies in John — How to become sons of God". Contact Info: Bro. Peter Dulis, Toronto West, pdulis@rogers.com or 905-820-9541.

**26-27 Baltimore/Washington** Gathering and Study day at Washington DC Ecclesia, 9240 Riggs Road, Adelphi, MD 20783. Speaker will be Bro. Ron Kidd (London, ON) on "God's Timetable for Redemption". Begins Saturday at 1pm, and Sunday at 10:30am. Contact Bro. Bob Kling by phone: 301-498-5245 or e-mail: rkling@acm.org.

## **JUNE, 2014**

**20-22 New York Metropolitan Ecclesias** annual Sister's Retreat for a weekend filled with spiritual bonding, upliftment, and fellowship around God's word. The retreat will be held at the Homewood Suites, 2801 Papermill Road, Wyomissing, PA 19601. The speaker will be Sis. Cynthia (Cindy) Paiva (Guadalajara, Mexico). Her topic will be "Practical Aspects of Daily Living in the Truth". Please contact Sis. Averil Ferguson at 718-881-8705 for more detailed information.

**22-28 California Kids Camp.** Topic this year is "Revelation". Teachers: Bro. Stephen Hornhardt (Australia) and Bro. David Wisniewski (Canada). For registration information go to [www.kidscampcalifornia.com](http://www.kidscampcalifornia.com) or contact Bro. Tom Graham at [tom@bigbrand.com](mailto:tom@bigbrand.com). Please register by Mar. 31.

**28-July 6 Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School** at Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA. Theme: "O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee" (2Chron 6:14). The teachers will be Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Queensland, Australia): "Contending Earnestly for the Faith" (adults) and "Cameos of the Kingdom" (teens); Bro. Jay Mayock, Jr. (Hamilton, Book Road, ON): "All in All (A Study of Psalm 8)" (both); and Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, Swansea, UK): "Simon Peter: Learning Lessons in Discipleship" (adults) and "Digging for Treasure in the Epistle of Peter" (teens). Contact by e-mail [Robin Colby macbs@live.com](mailto:Robin.Colby@live.com) or check our website: [www.midatlanticbibleschool.com](http://www.midatlanticbibleschool.com).

## **JULY, 2014**

**6-12 Southwest Christadelphian Bible School** at Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX. The teachers will be Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Australia), Bro. Stephen Palmer (Mumbles, Swansea, UK), and Bro. Leen Ritmeyer (Cardiff, Museum Place, Wales, UK) Information will be posted on the website: [www.swcbs.com](http://www.swcbs.com).

**19-27 Midwest Bible School** will be held at Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Speakers and their topics are: Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Australia): "Nazarites Unto God", Bro. Matt Norton (Lismore, Australia): "Impressions of Christ" and Bro. Stan Isbell (North Houston, TX): "Discovering Disguises Through the Bible". For registration information, contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 44943 Yorkshire Dr., Novi, MI, 48375; 248-462-5740, e-mail: [mike.live@gmail.com](mailto:mike.live@gmail.com) or visit [www.midwestbibleschool.com](http://www.midwestbibleschool.com).

**20-26 Pacific Coast Bible School** will be held at the Idyllwild Pines Camp in Idyllwild, CA. The speakers for this year are: Bro. Mark Vincent (UK), Bro. Rob Oosthuizen (Invercargill, New Zealand), and Bro. Joseph Palmer (San Diego County, CA). The school offers a wonderful environment for the whole family to study God's word and enjoy the fellowship of other brethren and sisters. For registration and more information contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065. E-mail: [mail@gelineau.org](mailto:mail@gelineau.org). Register at the website: [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org).

**26-Aug 3 Eastern Bible School** Connecticut College, New London, CT; Theme: "That We May Know Him." Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "That I May Know Him" (adults), and "Challenges to God and Faith" (teens); Bro. Andrew Bramhill (Shirley, UK): "The Lord's Encounters With Women" (adults), and "Questions, Questions, Questions"

## **The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God (USPS 107-060)**

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(teens); Bro. Tec Morgan (Birmingham, UK): "God Has Spoken" (adults), and "The Kingdom of God" (teens). For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers at 18 Sibley St., Auburn, MA 01501 or cindynevers@verizon.net.

**27-Aug 2 Rogue River Bible School** Topics and teachers are: "The Divided Kingdom" by Bro. Peter King (Worcester, UK); "The Days of Ahab" by Bro. Richard Morgan (Hamilton Book Road, ON); "The Faithful Kings: Rebuilding the Ecclesia" by Bro. Greg Robinson (Thousand Oaks, CA). Contact Bro. Randy Yoshida for further information — yoshida@cpros.com. For registration, contact Sis. Pat Posey — robandpatposey@gmail.com.

### **AUGUST, 2014**

**1-4 All-Mexico Bible School** first ever! Come help start an annual event at a beautiful location at Hotel Perico in the hills overlooking Lake Chapala near Guadalajara. Speaker: Bro Bill Rawson. Contact Bro. David Lloyd davidrlloyd@earthlink.net 818-352-6486.

**16-22 Winfield Bible School** Theme: "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness" Teachers are Bro. Stephen Whitehouse (UK): "Zechariah: Your King Cometh"; Bro. David Jennings (USA): "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the Sons of God", Rom 8:14; and Bro. Jeff Gelineau (USA): "Forgiveness: Doing the Unthinkable". Concerning registration fees, call Bro. Don at 250-545-5988 donzantingh@hotmail.com. Concerning accommodation, call Bro. Harold at 250-478-0343 hjcawston@gmail.com.

**17-22 Lakefield Bible School** (formerly Niagara Falls Bible School) at Lakefield College. The school is located east of Toronto near Peterborough, Ontario, on a beautiful lakeside campus. For information contact Bruce and Barbara Abel: bnb69abel@hotmail.ca or call 519-925-5297. Web site www.nfcb.com.

### **SEPTEMBER, 2014**

**13-14 Paris Avenue, OH** Fall Study Weekend with Bro. Michael Owen (UK) speaking on the topic: "Joy of Living the Truth". Bro. Michael will be doing several cottage classes prior to the weekend. Contact Bro. Derek Elder by phone at: 216-965-9763, or by email at: delder1@kent.edu.

### **OCTOBER, 2014**

**11-12 Sussex, NB** Thanksgiving Gathering will be lead by Bro. Jim Sullivan (Boston, MA) on "The Sons of Zeruiah".

### **NOVEMBER, 2014**

**8-9 Largo, FL** Fall Study Weekend with Bro. David Jennings (Pomona, CA). Subject: "Led by the Spirit." Contact Bro. Walt Dodrill at walttodrill@msn.com or 727-410-0896.