

# THE CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS

of the Kingdom of God

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# The CHRISTADELPHIAN TIDINGS of the Kingdom of God

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## The Sluggard

*"The sluggard craves and gets nothing" (Proverbs 13:4).*

*The sloth lives in an inverted world hanging from the upper branches of trees by long hooked claws. It moves slowly hand over hand but spends most of its day asleep. Its head is the same diameter as its neck and, lacking obvious ears, seems to emerge directly from its powerful shoulders. At the other end there is no visible tail. It is often difficult to tell the sloth's front end from its rear. Unless molested, this upside-down animal seldom moves during the day...*

*The sloth is such a masterpiece of immobility that during the rainy season tiny plants grow on its coarse hair. Caterpillars feed on the plants, and moths nest in them. The sloth's immobility is its chief safeguard against enemies. Seen motionless high among the dense foliage, it most resembles a mass of dead leaves, a termite nest, or a lump of moldy fungus. Even when killed a sloth continues to cling to his branch with his curved claws. No one, perhaps not even the sloth, knows whether he is dead or alive. No other warm-blooded mammal is so languid and lethargic.*

Barry Bowen

# Editorial

## Marriage Problems

*“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt 19:4-6).*

### Introduction

An enormous amount has been written in our community about the topics of marriage and divorce, and a somewhat lesser amount has been written about such topics as pre-marital sex. But in all this, there has been comparatively little emphasis placed on the real purpose of sex, which is to provide two devoted partners with a sensuous, deeply personal opportunity to glimpse the love and delight of God in them. And we all admit that once this union is established in the sight of man and God *“let not man put asunder.”* But sometimes things go deeply awry in such a union: what should be our reaction? Should we absolutely refuse to recognize that a marriage can be terminated while both members are alive? Should we allow for Scripturally based exceptions?

I would like to consider both these areas, recognizing that, although much discussed, the area of marital problems results in situations where there is little total agreement among us, and I am unlikely to change this fact. It is not my purpose to delve in exactly what “fornication” means in Matthew 19:19, or the subtleties of Paul’s exposition in 1 Corinthians 7. Rather, I would like to consider both the beauty and pleasures in the marriage state, and also the compassion that Jesus and the apostles showed when dealing with moral problems in their day.

### Marriage and Sex

The coming together of man and woman does indeed make “one flesh” — for when a child comes of this union, the baby is a single individual, made from both parents. All who have witnessed the birth of their child can remember what, in most cases, is the almost indescribable joy and happiness that a healthy baby brings. *“A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world” (John 16:21).*

And this joy is only a small part of the happiness that marriage and sex brings. However we might (quite appropriately) spiritualize the Song of Solomon, it does help us realize that the often erotic images that are used help us to appreciate that the book is indeed an allegorical picture of the union between God and His people. The yearnings that the young couple experience for each other, for both physical and emotional intimacy, for the desire to be close, for the contentment in each other, are but a shadow of the yearning of God for us — and we for Him.

Childbirth can be one outcome of such intimacy, but at its best marital sex is a foretaste of the glories of the future Kingdom, when true union between God and his people will be achieved.

Unfortunately, sex does not always take place in situations that lead to such an image of God and his purpose. But this should be the message we give to our young. Marriage is intended to perform other functions than to propagate the species. Paul in Ephesians 5 likens the love of a husband for his wife to the love of Christ for his ecclesia — his called out one. That the Greek used is “agape” does not mean that physical love is not involved in the case of a man and a woman. Indeed, Paul goes on to quote the seminal passage in Genesis 2:24, after saying “*So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself*” (Eph 5:26). Clearly the relationship of a man and his wife are a shadow of the relationship we have with Christ, if we only believe. But this relationship, like that of marriage, is not one to be trifled with. It needs to be protected, shielded, nurtured, and given room to grow. We think of the law which says “*When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken*” (Deut 24:5). The first year of marriage is a time for bonding, to learn to share, to compromise, to begin at acceptance of each other’s little habits and foibles. This is in the glow and warmth of physical love, but this marriage also needs to have the recognition of society that this relationship is permanent until severed by death.

### **Sex outside Marriage**

So what is the relationship of sex outside the marriage bond to this vision? I would argue that the purpose of sex, as God intended, is to give the partners a foreshadowing of the love of Christ for them and a pale preview of the future delight in store for believers. To seek one with whom to share this vision requires a fidelity and commitment that is not an optional feature of a healthy sexual life. Healthy sex requires the soundness of the marriage.

So it is with this vision that we derive the insistence that sex truly belongs in marriage. The crux of the reason is that the realization of the love of God and Christ are only truly available in a true marriage. Sex belongs only within a life long partnership, not for abstract moral reasons but because only through marriage can we glimpse the relationship between the love of man and woman and the love of Christ for his ecclesia.

Neither sex nor marriage is for everyone, as Paul says:

*“I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed”*  
(1Cor 7:26-27).

Marriage requires a willingness to serve, to subjugate oneself to another person’s needs and desires, to commit to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But for those who are able, marriage can and should enable us to properly understand the love of Christ for his ecclesia.

## Problems in Marriage

Not always is this view of marriage reflected in the realities of the actual relationship of husband and wife. With the frailties we are all subject to, all marriages undergo periods of stress, tension and difficulties. For many these stresses are handled without overwhelming the integrity of their marriage, but sometimes for one or many reasons situations arise that cause problems so major that the relationship disintegrates.

No one will disagree that marriage in the Lord is intended to be permanent. Whether are not the exceptive clause in Matthew 19 refers to premarital affairs or any illicit activities is somewhat irrelevant. Marriage is intended to be permanent and indissoluble. Every step should be taken to prevent breakup. Transgressions sometimes arise, but the first reaction should always to accept repentance and attempt to reconcile. However, not all situations are capable of resolution. Any one who has knowledge and experience of such problems will surely recognize that there is very rarely an “innocent” or a “guilty” party in marital dissolutions. However not infrequently we have such situations as:

- a partner becomes mentally ill or an alcoholic and violence ensues;
- one of the pair leaves the relationship without any obvious reason and refuses all attempts at reconciliation;
- one of the two is so involved in their own affairs or work that no true sexual or spiritual relationship is possible.

Ecclesias vary as to handle such problems. Some ecclesias are legalistic, some even having constitutions that prohibit either divorce, or remarriage after divorce. Such is apparently an easy way out of the dilemma: but is it reflective of the compassion and mercy exhibited in the New Testament by Christ? Paul himself was forgiven for his murderous assault on the early ecclesias, which clearly was a sin against the household much worse than that of any likely marital problems.

The New Testament establishes at once the highest possible moral principles and also shows the greatest examples of forgiveness possible. *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”* (Rom 3:23). Paul lists those transgressions that inhibit the future hope *“Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God”* (1Cor 6:9-10). Sexual sins predominate in the list: but then Paul goes on to say *“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God”* (vs 11).

It is hard indeed to say that sexual transgressions, accompanied by genuine contrition, prevent any future hope of sharing in a Christ-like marriage. We have to leave all to the judgment and mercy of the Almighty God.

*Peter Hemingray*

**Letters to the editor can be sent to [letterseditor@tidings.org](mailto:letterseditor@tidings.org). Please include your name, address, email, and phone. Submissions under 300 words are encouraged — the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.**

# Exhortation

## Love in 1 John

*“A pupil from whom nothing is ever demanded  
which he cannot do, never does all he can”*

*John Stuart Mill*

John Stuart Mill began learning Greek at the age of three, Latin at the age of eight, and had read through most of the Greek and Roman classics on politics and philosophy (as well as history — Gibbons ‘Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire’ being his favorite at 13). When I was still getting in trouble for pulling chairs out from people in Elementary School, John Stuart Mill’s father had made this child write dissertations and précis on most of these classical works, to make sure that the child developed his mind. His father was demanding, often to the limit of impossible, pushing the limits of John Stuart Mill to unheard of discipline and understanding in such a young boy. This is like the Bible and in particular, the first epistle of John and the concept of love.

### **Brief overview and analysis of 1 John**

The book is full of “If” and “Then” statements — very logical and simple. These simple statements are indicators with which we can examine ourselves to see whether we are walking in the light. They are small but profound statements that reach deep into our minds and cut open our hearts, and lay them out in full view of the light that comes from God’s Word. For example:

*“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”(1John1:6-9).*

1 John is all about ideals, like Jesus was. It reaches for the unreachable. It tells us what to reach for, and how to grasp perfection, how to love perfectly, how to live perfectly, how to not sin, how to obtain perfection. And, without faith, we would read 1 John with despair and frustration. How can I possibly carry out 1 John 3:6? And in 1 John 5:14, why would I even pray if all that will be accomplished is God’s will anyways? How can I even come close to the impossible standard of 1 John 3:24? Well, the answer to these questions is answered by John in 1 John 5:3-6. THAT’S US! We have to reach for the impossible in order to do our best! Then 1 John 2:1 tells us that when we reach for this standard, God will take care of the rest.

### **Introduction to Love**

Love (#25, 26 — agape, agapeo) is used intensely in this short epistle — #25 is used 17 times, and #26 is used 14 times for a total of 31. This is more intense than

anywhere else in the Bible! John is obviously making a point that we are meant to take notice of! So, spare me some time that I may do this.

“... it is remarkable that there have been only three supposed instances of its use in ‘profane’ Greek, two of which are now read otherwise and the third is doubtful... The fact that its use was very restricted made it easier to annex for a special purpose...” [James Hope Moulton, George Milligan. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*. (USA: Eerdmens Publishing Company, 1980), pg.2.]

Agape love is full, total, no-compromise love. It is the kind of love that we are to have in Mark 12:33 — it’s all encompassing. In fact, Jesus tells us this —

*“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love <25> one another; as I have loved <25> you, that ye also love <25> one another” ( John 13:34).*

What’s so new about this commandment of Jesus? Well, I can assure you that the first part certainly isn’t new. (Leviticus 19:18[your neighbor], 34[strangers and one another]). But the second part makes all the difference in the world. In fact a two letter word (in English) makes all the difference — ‘AS’... as Jesus loved us. What does ‘as’ mean? The word is ‘kathos’ #2531 and is translated ‘as’, ‘even as’, ‘according as’, ‘according to’. It gives the idea in our language of ‘equal to’, ‘in proportion to’, ‘in the degree that’... Let’s take a look at a few other passages where this word is used:

*John 15:9 — “As <2531> the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.”*

*2 Cor. 9:7 — “Every man according as <2531> he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”*

*Eph. 5:25 — “Husbands, love your wives, even as <2531> Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...”*

This ‘equal to’ love is the most fulfilling, perfect form possible. And it is this love that John, in his first epistle is capitalizing on. He tells us what this love is all about.

Agape stands in contrast to ‘eros’ (fleshly, erotic love) which is never mentioned in the New Testament, and ‘phileo’, which is affection, friendship (the word for friend in the Greek is philos), attraction, based on something that you like in the object towards which you feel phileo. But how can you possibly phileo your enemies? They do not attract you! It is based on emotion and therefore it is impossible to phileo them. Agape is not based on emotions but on a firm foundation of spiritual enlightenment through God’s Word and looking to Jesus. Then and ONLY THEN can we love God and then naturally love one another, whether it’s our brothers and sisters, our friends, our enemies, etc. (Matt. 5:44-48).

### **Love — the look from 1 John**

Agape love is the glue that sticks together EVERYTHING! Our faith, our confidence, our relationships with others, our attitude, our knowledge, our actions, etc.

Verse	Quote	Generalization
2:5	<i>“whoso keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfected...”</i>	There is a close connection between God’s Word and the love we have for Him and His son.
2:15	<i>“If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”</i>	The love we need to have for God cannot coexist with loving this world — they are at opposing ends.
3:1	<i>“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God”</i>	God has shown us his love by adopting us as his children! US! That is love, since we have not deserved it. The word ‘manner’ is #4217 and means ‘from what nation, tribe or country’.
3:16	<i>“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because [Jesus] laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”</i>	Here is where we understand how our love is supposed to be equal with Jesus’ and God’s — no holds barred! It is all or nothing
4:7	<i>“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God”</i>	The love that we have must be founded in God. We are loving people because God loved us, and we are trying to return it perfectly. The word “Beloved” is #27, agapetos, and means ‘you who practice agape love’. See John 13:25 for what Jesus said about love.
4:8	<i>“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love”</i>	God and Love are synonymous. Love is of God (v.7) therefore God is Love. That is simple but profound. Are we love?
4:9	<i>“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him”</i>	The love of God was demonstrated by Jesus living his life, dying for us, and then being resurrected. God’s love was made manifest by works. His love for us is on SOLID ground.
4:12	<i>“No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.”</i>	This is the logical conclusion from the preceding verses... if God is love, and we love one another (as Jesus loved us by giving us life by his death and resurrection) then God is in us! There is the fulfillment of real love, that we manifest God in our heart and in our actions!



4:17-18	<i>“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”</i>	Here is the ultimate test of our love: if we have shown agape love NOW in this world, as Jesus did up until his last breath, then we will have confidence at the judgment. And not ‘phobos’ or judgment-phobia. If we are doing the best we can to love God, will we have need to fear at the judgment? This is not to say that we don’t rely on God’s grace , since we don’t deserve to be in the kingdom, no matter how close we get to perfection, but it’s like the analogy of getting your homework done and handing it in on time as opposed to it being late, and you fear like the dickens when the teacher comes to collect it! It says ‘fear hath torment’, torment meaning penalty or punishment.. If we fear at the judgment, it is for a good reason! “Casteth out” is a neat phrase — #906 — Matt. 5:13; Matt. 13:48; John 15:6
5:3	<i>“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”</i>	This is where we started! (2:5) However it has the addition of ‘his commandments are not grievous’ or burdensome. Why are they not burdensome? Well if we are loving one another as Jesus did, we can share the burdens, and we can look ahead with faith (v.4)

## Summary

We cannot understand agape or practice agapeo without reading and knowing our Bibles. This love that we have to God cannot live in us alongside our love for the world — one of them must go. This love, which is from another country (this world does not understand or care to understand this kind of love that compels you to love those who don’t attract you) is manifested by God making us his adopted children, his sons and daughters. God’s love is not only manifested in calling us his children, but in purposing his only Son to be killed and raised again to atone for our sins that must be blotted out. The logical conclusion? We must do the same — lay down our lives for each other — CONSTANTLY! Not just to die for someone, but to do something simple like v.17. We must love one another or else our love cannot possibly be agape! It is of necessity brimming with ACTION — God’s was, Jesus’ was, and so should ours. Are we synonymous with love? Are we walking manifestations of God’s most amazing character? No one will know

unless we act! God's love is SOLIDLY founded on what he did for us, helping us out by putting away our sins so that we could be close to him. What's our driving force for loving? The logical conclusion to us having and DOING agape love is that God dwells in us, just as he did PERFECTLY in Jesus. Finally, agape is what will sustain us at the judgement. We throw out fear, we fill our hearts with agape, and then when Christ returns, we will have confidence.

## Conclusion

Love is the driving force in our lives. It is the ability to drop what we are doing and help someone, to listen to problems in someone's life, to clean our rooms when our mothers tell us to (ahem...), to not care if we miss lunch because we are talking to a co-worker about the Bible and God's plan, to exert ourself past our perceived limits... to reach perfection by God's grace.

In our lives, our busy priorities have a way of getting out of hand... pick up the kids at this time, got test at this time, must be home for supper at this time... where does love fit into all this? IT DOESN'T... it is above it... LOVE IS OUR PRIORITY! It is what defines our priorities. It certainly defined God's.

*Mike Robinson (Echo Lake, NJ)*

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## 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 between our communities, we print this invitation:*

*You, your family and friends are invited to the*

*36th annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering  
at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, July 25-31, 2011.*

*Main Speakers: Bro. Ted Sleeper — "Meditations on Creation"*

*Bro. Tim Galbraith — "The Tabernacle: A Magic Mirror for Disciples"*

*Bro. Ed Carpenter — "The Light of the Gospel"*

*Contact Bro. Brad Rek 330-609-6957 or lisarek8@cs.com*

*Visit our website <http://abrahamicfaithgathering.org>*

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*To every man there openeth  
A way, and ways, and a way.  
And the high soul climbs the high way,  
And the low soul gropes the low:  
And in between, on the misty flats,  
The rest drift to and fro.*

*But to every man there openeth  
A high way and a low,  
And every man decideth  
The way his soul shall go.*

*John Oxenham*

## Bible Study

### Leviticus and the Tabernacle (7)

This article continues our study of the realities in the gospel foreshadowed in the Tabernacle and the laws in Leviticus. We are still “in the Outer Court”, looking at the altar offerings and the laver. The last article showed that Christ is our sin offering.

**Without the camp.** Sin offerings were carried without the camp and burned:

*“And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth **without the camp** unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt... And he shall carry forth the bullock **without the camp**, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is a sin offering for the congregation” (Lev 4:11-12, 21; cf. 6:11; 8:17; Exod 29:14; Lev 9:11; 16:27).*

Hebrews explicitly connects Jesus’ sacrifice with this ritual:

*“We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned **without the camp**. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered **without the gate**. Let us go forth therefore unto him **without the camp**, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Heb 13:10-14).*

The exhortation for us is clear: we must go unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, for there is nothing permanent in our present lives, so we seek the coming of the everlasting city, the new Jerusalem, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

**Voluntary, freewill offerings.** Burnt offerings and peace offerings were voluntary, freewill offerings:

*“If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: **he shall offer it of his own voluntary will** at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD” (Lev 1:3; cf. 22:18).*

*“And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, **ye shall offer it at your own will**... And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, **offer it at your own will**” (Lev 19:5; 22:29; cf. 22:21, 23).*

The substance behind this shadow is Christ’s willing offering of himself:

*“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and **I lay down my life** for the sheep... Therefore doth my Father love me, because **I lay down my life**, that I might take it again. **No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it***

*again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:15, 17-18).*

Jesus gave up his own will that God’s will might be done. He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane: “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless **not as I will, but as thou wilt**” (Matt 26:39). Following this pattern, he taught his disciples to pray: “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven**” (Matt 6:9b-10). So we sing, “Take my will and make it thine; It shall be no longer mine” (Hymn 163).

**Whole burnt offering.** All of the burnt offering was turned to smoke on the altar, representing complete dedication to the LORD:

*“If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd... the priest shall burn **all** on the altar to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD... And if his offering be of the flocks, namely, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice... the priest shall bring it **all**, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD” (Lev 1:3, 9, 10, 13).*

The reality behind this pattern is the essence of the first and greatest commandment: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with **all** thine heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy might” (Deut 6:4-5).

In full obedience Jesus dedicated himself entirely to his Father: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, **thy law is within my heart**” (Psa 40:8; cf. Heb 10:5-10). “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and **to give his life a ransom for many**” (Mark 10:45). “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, **though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor**, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2Cor 8:9). “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But **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**” (Phil 2:6-8).

Jesus exhorts his disciples to following his example:

*“And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, **Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.** For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but **whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.** For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:34-37).*

Similarly, Paul echoes the language of the burnt offering: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and **hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour**” (Eph 5:1-2).

We commit ourselves to reflect these realities through the hymns we sing:

“When my love for man grows weak, When for stronger faith I seek, Hill of Calvary! I go To thy scenes of pain and woe. There behold his agony Suffered on the bitter tree; See his anguish, see his faith, Love triumphant still in death! Then to life I turn again, Learning all the worth of pain, Learning all the might that lies In a **full** self-sacrifice” (Hymn 222).

“Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, **all** for Thee” (Hymn 163).

**Peace offering.** The peace offering was the only sacrifice that could be eaten by the offerer (Lev 7:11-21; Deut 27:7). Meal and drink offerings were also part of this meal of fellowship, which was a wonderful harbinger of the memorial of our Lord:

*“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood,** ye have no life in you. **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,** hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. **He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,** dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so **he that eateth me, even he shall live by me**” (John 6:53-57).*

*“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, **Take, eat; this is my body.** And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, **Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins**” (Matt 26:26-28).*

Paul and Luke draw out the connection to the peace offering: “*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*” (1Cor 10:16; cf. Luke 22:17, 19). Here they are following the pattern of the peace offering: first the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled and then the flesh was eaten.

**Sacrifice of thanksgiving.** Peace offerings were a gesture of thanksgiving:

*“If he offer it for a **thanksgiving**, then he shall offer with **the sacrifice of thanksgiving** unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried... Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with **the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings**... And the flesh of **the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving** shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning” (Lev 7:12-13, 15; cf. 22:29).*

*“What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee **the sacrifice of thanksgiving**, and will call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the LORD’s house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD” (Psa 116:12-19).*

*“And offer a **sacrifice of thanksgiving** with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Amos 4:5).*

When Jesus instituted the Lord’s supper, he gave thanks for the cup and for the bread:

*“And he took the cup, and **gave thanks** <2168 eucharistio>, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves... And he took bread, and **gave thanks** <2168>, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me: (Luke 22:17, 19).*

Consequently, the memorial service is sometimes called “the eucharist”, that is, “the giving of thanks”:

*“Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at **thy giving of thanks** <2169 eucharistia>, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily **givest thanks** <2168 eucharisteo> well, but the other is not edified” (1Cor 14:16-17).*

*“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; **Giving thanks** <2168> always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (Eph 5:19-21; cf. Col 1:12-14; 3:12-17).*

**The laver.** The washings in the laver foreshadow our baptism into Christ for the remission of sins. Ananias exhorts Saul, *“And now why tarriest thou? **arise, and be baptized, and wash away** thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16; cf. 2:38).* This echoes David’s prayer: *“**Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow**” (Psa 51:2, 7).*

In this way, we have our consciences cleansed: *“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:14; cf. 9:9). “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water**” (Heb 10:22; cf. 10:2).*

The laws of purification. Leviticus 11-17 was part of the Outer Court section of Leviticus. Lessons based on these laws are developed throughout the New Testament, as the following examples indicate:

- Food (Lev 11; Mark 7:18-23; Acts 10-11; Col 2:16; 1Tim 4:3-4).
- Childbirth (Lev 12; Luke 2:21-24; Gal 4:4-5).
- Leprosy (Lev 13-14; Mark 1:40-45 || Matt 8:1-4 || Luke 5:12-16).
- Issue of blood (Lev 15; Mark 5:25-34 || Matt 9:20-22 || Luke 8:43-50).
- Day of Atonement (Lev 16; Heb 9).

### **The tent of the Tabernacle: Jesus and his body**

Now we enter into the tent of the Tabernacle, to see the reality behind the sanctuary where God dwelt, filled with His glory (Exod 25:8; 29:45-46; 40:34-38). The

gospel of John testifies that Jesus was the reality behind the shadow:

*“And the Word was made flesh, and **dwelt** among us, (and we beheld **his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,**) full of grace and truth... For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:14, 17-18; cf. Exod 34:6-7; 33:20).*

*“Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy **this temple**, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of **the temple of his body**. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said” (John 2:18-22).*

This claim of Jesus to be a temple was twisted by the false witnesses at his trial (Matt 26:60-61; Mark 14:57-59) and by his revilers at the cross (Matt 27:39-40; Mark 15:29-30).

That the LORD would seek out people to dwell in was foretold by the prophet Isaiah:

*“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa 66:1-2).*

The reference to “this man” points to Jesus himself and those who make up his body.

**Believers, individually and collectively, are the temple of God:**

*“Know ye not that **ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, **which temple ye are**” (1Cor 3:16-17).*

*“What? know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1Cor 6:19-20).*

*“And what agreement hath **the temple of God** with idols? for **ye are the temple of the living God**; as God hath said, **I will dwell in them**, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2Cor 6:16-18; cf. Lev 26:11-12).*

*“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the founda-*

*tion of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:19-22).*

These exhortations are powerful. We as individuals are to live holy lives because God is dwelling in us, and we as the collective body of Christ are to behave ourselves appropriately, because we are built up together as a holy temple, a habitation of God.

### **The Holy Place (Leviticus 18-24)**

The first part of the Tabernacle was the Holy Place, which was restricted to the priests. It contained the Seven-branched Lampstand, the Table of Shewbread, and the Altar Incense. The Holy Place section of Leviticus contains the second greatest commandment: “*thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*” (Lev 19:18; cf. Matt 22:39; Mark 12:31).

The truth casting these shadows is centered on the saints. Believers are made to be a royal priesthood:

*“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, **an holy priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ... But ye are a chosen generation, **a royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people”* (1Pet 2:5, 9a; cf. Exod 19:6).

*“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, **And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father**; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”* (Rev 1:5-6; cf. Rev 5:9-10 RV; 7:15; 20:6; Isa 61:6).

We willingly take on this responsibility when we sing of our consecration:

**“Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;** Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise. Take my hands, and let them move At the impulse of thy love; Take my feet, and let them be Swift and beautiful for thee. Take my voice, and let me sing Always, only, for my King; Take my lips, and let them be Filled with messages from Thee. Take my silver and my gold; Not a might would I withhold; Take my intellect, and use Every power as Thou shalt chose. Take my will and make it thine; It shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is Thine own; It shall be Thy royal throne. Take my love; my Lord, I pour At thy feet its treasure store: Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee” (Hymn 163).

*Joe Hill (Austin Leander, TX)*

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*Devotion is neither private nor public prayer, but a life given to God. He is the devout man, therefore, who considers and serves God in everything and who makes all of his life an act of devotion by doing everything in the name of God and under such rules as are conformable to His glory. (William Law)*



## Bible Study

### “As it was in the days of Noah” (6) Objections Considered

#### Introduction

In the previous article, we considered the section on the animals in the ark. It is one of the most scrutinized parts of Scripture. People wonder whether the things the Bible describes could actually have happened. There are three questions, in particular, that are often raised about the plausibility of the account. First, what about the dinosaurs? Were they in the ark? Second, how did Noah get all of the animals, especially those from faraway places, like Australia, and bring them into the ark? Third, how did all of the animals fit into the ark?

There are no definitive answers to any of these questions. But they are valid and worthy of thoughtful consideration. It is a good idea to think them over and to have a ready answer for an interested friend who might pose them to you. I am going to suggest some possible answers for you to ruminate upon. We will consider each of the three questions in turn.

#### What about the dinosaurs?

The Bible indicates that the world was a very different place before the Flood. People lived a really long time. There were giant humans. There were probably giant lizards too. Perhaps they got to be big because they also lived a long time.

The environment may have been an important contributing factor to the size and longevity of the animals. There is an interesting, and somewhat challenging, passage in the Creation account that may offer some important insight into what the antediluvian world was like: *“Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day”* (Gen 1:6-8, NKJV).

It has been suggested that on the second day of Creation God took the waters that covered the earth and divided them into the waters that comprise the seas (i.e., *“the waters which were under the firmament”*) and a water-vapor canopy in the atmosphere (i.e., *“the waters which were above the firmament”*). That canopy could have protected the planet from harmful radiation, which would have allowed the inhabitants of the earth to live a lot longer. Plus, it could have resulted in a greenhouse effect that would have made the world a warmer place. Plants and trees could have been larger. (Perhaps that is where Noah got the wood to make the giant ark.) More abundant vegetation would have supported larger animals, such as dinosaurs.

So, were dinosaurs brought into the ark? It seems like they would have been if they were alive at that time. Of course, it would have made sense to bring smaller, younger members of the species into the ark instead of full-grown adults. That was probably the practice for all of the larger animals.

But then what happened to the dinosaurs? Well, one theory of the Flood is that the forty days and forty nights of rain were caused by the collapse of the water-vapor canopy. Indeed, Genesis 7: 11 states that *“the windows of heaven were opened”* during the Flood. That certainly sounds like a unique event in history, and the text supports that idea. The margin of the King James Version, and a number of other translations, render “windows” as “floodgates.” Once a floodgate is opened, the water that it restrains rushes out, and then it is gone. Once the canopy disappeared, the world would have become a colder place, and the food on which the largest animals relied would have become scarcer. Perhaps the dinosaurs died off as a result.

### **Bringing the animals into the ark**

So, how were all the animals collected and loaded into the ark? The account indicates that God directed them to come to Noah. God tells Noah that the animals *“shall come unto thee”* (Gen 6:20).

For many of these animals, their journey would have begun many months before the Flood came. But that is not unheard of in the Bible. There are other instances where God intervened in the animal kingdom to set the stage for an event many months before it actually took place. For example, the plague of locusts in Exodus 10 had its origins in unusually heavy rainfall that would have occurred in the Arabian Peninsula several months before the locusts arrived in Egypt. Female locusts lay their eggs in wet sand, and heavy rains in Arabia result in vegetation growth that protects the young locusts. It allows more of them to survive to adulthood. Modern locust swarms in the Middle East journey east at the speed of the wind. And Exodus 10: 13 records that God caused an *“east wind”* to blow that brought the locusts upon the Egyptians. That type of plague continues to happen to this day.

God’s workings in the animal kingdom to bring about His will are an important reminder that He sets the stage for events to happen in the earth long before they actually occur. Even as we wait for Christ’s return, God is active among the nations.<sup>1</sup> Right now, He is laying the foundations for the events that will result in the return of Christ to the earth and the establishment of the Kingdom.

Returning to the subject of God causing the animals to come to the ark, some of them would have had to travel great distances. It is certainly possible that God created circumstances that would have permitted that to happen. It is also possible that the continents of the earth were a lot closer back then than they are today. So, for example, the distance between Australia and the Middle East back might not have been as far as it is now. And there might not have been as much water to cross. We know that plate tectonic activity causes the continents to move. Large movements are accompanied by earthquakes, mountain building, and volcanoes. It is possible that there were dramatic movements in the plates at the time of the

Flood. These movements might have caused the continents to change from where they were in Noah's day and to take something like the shape they have today. Those continental shifts would have been associated with earthquakes, and earthquakes can cause massive flooding due to tsunamis. (A "tsunami" is a series of water waves that result from the displacement of water from an earthquake or other source.) Indeed, on December 26, 2004, a tremendous undersea earthquake off the coast of Indonesia resulted in massive flooding throughout East Asia and beyond due to tsunamis. Almost without warning, communities were buried beneath waves over 100 feet high. Over 250,000 people died from the tsunamis that resulted from that earthquake, and lives were lost over 5,000 miles from its epicenter. (That is the distance between Detroit and Moscow.)

The effects of just that one undersea earthquake were staggering. Multiple, massive earthquakes throughout the earth could certainly have resulted in worldwide flooding. In fact, the Bible indicates that tsunamis might have contributed to the Flood. According to Genesis 7: 11, not only were *"the windows of heaven"* opened, but also *"the fountains of the great deep"* were *"broken up"* at the time of the Flood. That latter phrase sounds like it could be a description of earthquakes and ensuing tidal waves. Plate tectonic activity at the time of the Flood could also have led to the creation of the fossil record as we know it. Animals caught up in the cataclysm could have been swept by torrents of water into fissures that had opened in the earth. They then would have been sealed inside as seismic activity continued to convulse the crust of the earth. Some fossil beds have the appearance of having been created under such circumstances. But assigning their origin to the Flood remains contentious, even among scientists who believe in the Genesis record.

Regardless of how exactly it happened, the Flood destroyed life on the face of the earth. Only those with Noah in the ark survived. But did the ark have sufficient capacity to hold all of the animals that it would have needed to carry? It certainly seems reasonable to answer "yes" to that question.

### **Was there sufficient space in the ark for the animals?**

People have tried to estimate the number of land animals that God commanded to be brought into the ark. The numbers generally range between 25,000 and 40,000.<sup>2</sup> (The estimates vary based on assumptions about the variety of animals that exist and whether some of those varieties could have re-emerged through breeding without explicitly being preserved in the ark.) It has also been assumed that the average animal in the ark was the size of a small sheep. Well, the average stock car can hold 120 sheep.<sup>3</sup> So, if there were 35,000 animals in the ark that were, on average, the size of a sheep, it would have taken 292 stock-cars worth of space to hold them. But the ark had over 500 stock-cars worth of space in it. So, the animals probably occupied around 60 percent of the ark's space. Some of the remaining space would have been used for food storage. But much of it was probably reserved for the people of the antediluvian world that God hoped to save.

So, space was not a problem for the ark. It was definitely big enough to do its job. And, in the end, the ark was not as full as God, or Noah, would have wanted. It was such a tragedy that so many people turned down God's offer of salvation. In

the next article in the series, we will consider the day when that offer was no longer available and God shut Noah and his family inside the ark.

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Notes:

1. It is interesting to note that God frequently represents nations by animals in prophecy.
2. John Whitcomb and Henry Morris. *The Genesis Flood, the Biblical Record and its Scientific Implications*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1998). and John Woodmorappe. *Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study*, (Santee, CA: Institute for Creation Research, 1996).
3. John Whitcomb and Henry Morris, *Op Cit*.

## Youth Speaks

### The Parable of the Two Builders (1)

The Parable of the two builders highlights the absolute necessity of being doers of the Word and not hearers only, by building our lives and ecclesias upon the one solid foundation of the Truth. Within this parable believers are called to examine and strengthen their foundations so that they will be able to withstand the storms of life and ultimately the judgment to come.

#### The background

We can picture the large crowds following Christ, listening to his teachings, seeing the miracles he performed, asking questions of him, and intently listening to the answers he provided. In those crowds were two types of people, and in Luke 6:46, Christ seizes the opportunity to ask a question to make them ponder their true motives for following him — a question which provides the background to the parable of the two builders. “*Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46). The problem was simple: many of those following Christ addressed him as ‘Lord,’ but they weren’t acting upon the things he was teaching them. They addressed him as their Lord, but did they truly believe it?

Christ now proceeds to relate to them the parable of two builders in which he divides his followers into one of two categories — those who hear his words and act upon them, seen in the man who builds his house on a rock; and those who hear his words but don’t act upon them, seen in the man who builds his house on the sand (or earth). While we may think these two types of followers would be complete opposites, the parable — as presented in Luke’s gospel — instructs us otherwise.

#### Luke’s account

Comparing Luke’s account of this parable to Matthew’s, a number of differences become apparent — each holding significance for us to consider.

First, Luke’s account places particular emphasis upon the foundation, and draws our attention to how that foundation is obtained:

*“He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock...it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and*

*doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth...” Luke 6:48-49*

Secondly, Luke does not say that the foolish man built his house on the sand, but rather on the earth — a small change in word, but one with great significance, as we’ll examine in the next article.

Finally, Luke does not say that one of these men was wise and the other foolish — he simply refers to them as two men. This may seem unusual, for the titles “wise” and “foolish” bring to mind a number of Old Testament echoes particularly relevant to these two individuals, thus making their omission even more significant. For what other reason would they be omitted, if not to draw our attention to the similarity between these two men? In fact, only one difference between the men is noted in Luke’s account: one man digs to get to the foundation, while the other man just starts building on the earth beneath his feet, without making any effort to remove the earth to build on a solid foundation (note that in Luke’s account, even the location where the two are building is identical). We thus learn that in order to be a doer of the word, effort is involved, and a solid foundation is required.

### **Removing the earth**

What then is the “earth” which must be removed away? In 1Cor 15:47, Paul describes man’s fleshly, sinful state as, “the first man is of the earth, earthy”. In Col 3:2,5, Paul uses the word again in relating the “earth” to worldly/fleshly things: *“set your affection on things above, not on the things on the earth...mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.”* The writer to the Hebrews tells us that the patriarchs of Israel were *“strangers and pilgrims on the earth”*; and here the word “earth” stands for the physical earth, but again holds the idea of not being people of the earth. The “earth” therefore stands for the things of this world, and a way of thinking and reasoning that is natural to our flesh nature. It’s this mindset which must be removed out of the way: *“reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin”* (Rom.6:11); *“Mortify therefore your members...”* (Col. 3:5); *“They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts”* (Gal. 5:24).

On a practical level, this means going above and beyond the natural levels of human kindness, as is pointed out in Christ’s discourse leading up to the parable:

*“If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same...But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again”* (Luke 6:31, 35).

But is simply being a “good Christian” or an exceptionally “good person” all that is required to be a doer of the Word? The parable indicates otherwise. There is still the aspect of finding the rock and building upon it.

### **Building on the rock**

The symbol of the rock and a foundation comes up elsewhere in the New Testament: In Romans 9:33, 1 Corinthians 10:4, and 1 Peter 2:8, the rock is used to symbolize Christ. In 1 Corinthians 3:11 Christ is described as the foundation. In Ephesians 2:20 the foundation of the ecclesia is said to be the apostles and

prophets, and Jesus Christ the chief corner stone. In Hebrews 6:1 the *“principles of the doctrine of Christ”* are described as the foundation. The rock foundation which we must build our lives upon is therefore the first principles of the Truth as taught and practiced by our Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, a person can be described as a “good Christian”, or as an exceptionally “good person”, but if they do not have a proper understanding of who Christ is and what he taught, their “good works” will get them nowhere. They have not built their house upon the foundation. Part of that teaching involves an acceptance that in our flesh dwells no good thing, that it’s only by God’s grace and mercy we are saved, and that we must be baptized into Christ to be found acceptable before God. Without this understanding, no matter how “good” or “charitable” a person we may be, we cannot have hope of being in God’s Kingdom.

The first principles of our faith are the foundation upon which we build our lives, and the importance of correct doctrine cannot be diminished. When the first century ecclesia was established we are told that they *“continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine”* (Acts 2:42). In Hebrews we learn, *“without faith it is impossible to please Him (God): for he that cometh to God must believe...”* (Heb. 11:6). In order to believe in something, of necessity we must understand it. How do we get this understanding? *“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”* (Rom. 10:17). It is ironic that so many “Christians” today claim to believe and have faith in God, and yet never open their Bibles and study their Scriptures! Just as the man had to dig to find the foundation, so must we put in the effort to know our Scriptures and have confidence in what we believe: *“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings is to search out a matter”* (Prov. 25:2).

It is that understanding that must form the basis of our actions. Notice in the parable that both men were building — both had actions; but only the man who’s actions were based on the rock — on a correct understanding — were able to have any lasting benefit. The man who built on the earth built merely for the present, while the man who digged could see by the eye of faith that the storm that was approaching, and built his house accordingly. His actions were in accordance with his convictions, just as Noah’s were in the days when he built the ark.

Through our understanding of the Scriptures, and by the eye of faith, we believe that the Lord Jesus is coming and that *“the Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever”* (Rev. 11:15). Do our actions show to those around us our absolute conviction in this fact? The way we live our lives must of necessity be in accordance with what we believe and understand. *“Faith without works is dead”* said James (James 2:26); and Christ instructs us to *“let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matt.5:16).

The lesson of this parable is that not only must we listen to Christ’s words, but we must put them into practice, that our lives may be an example and testament to all around of what we believe and in what we have our faith.

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# The Joy of Sunday Schooling

## What's the Goal? Part 4 — Personal Life Practices

Faith works. Faith moves people to do Godly things that they would not otherwise do; often things they could not do without it.

*“By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. ... By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. ... By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance” (Heb 11:4, 7, 8). (All references are from the ESV)*

Faith also keeps people from doing things that ought not to be done.

*“By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin” (Heb 11:24-25)*

Hebrews 11 is a testimony to the fact that faith works.

Of course, there is another side to this story. Unbelief has its works, too. It leaves people vulnerable to doing things that they ought not to do, and it keeps them from doing things that ought to be done. Unbelief keeps men and women from living up to their potential as beings created in the image of God.

Our children need to begin finding their way through this world of faith and unbelief, and Sunday school provides some wonderful opportunities for us to help them do it. The Bible stories that we tell the children often revolve around the lives of people; good, bad, faithful and unfaithful. The details are presented as God knows them, so there is plenty in these stories for us to learn from — and teach — about life.

### Lessons of life

People have not changed since Bible times, and the needs of people have not changed. People still need to grow spiritually and they still need salvation. The Bible shows how God meets these needs in the lives of responsive individuals. The process is a dynamic one and it involves the participation of those who are being saved.

When we read about men, women, and children in the Bible, it is not difficult to see how God wanted them to live. We can take the details of their lives, learn from them, and create lessons of life for our Sunday school children. Just as we all participate in the process of living, the lessons of life that we create for our children need to involve their participation. Lessons of life are active lessons, not passive ones.

Consider, for example, a few details in the life of the apostle Paul. Then begin thinking about the life lessons you might build around these for your children.

- “*Lord, what do you want me to do?*” (Acts 9:6). This is a timeless question! What *did* the Lord want Saul to do? How did Saul respond? What compelled Saul to change his entire outlook on life? How does Saul apply to us today?
- “*Saul ... attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him. ... But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles*” (Acts 9:26-28). Thank God for Barnabas! He was willing to stick his neck out and give a questionable man a chance. What lessons are here for us and our children? Do the children know anyone who needs a friend to come along side and help him or her become accepted?
- “*So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren*” (Acts 11:29). This hardly needs comment. What do our children know about the needs of brothers and sisters and young people in other parts of the world? And once they know some of these needs, what do *they* think they can do to help?
- “*Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off*” (Acts 13:3). Thus Paul’s missionary journeys began. What do our children know about the journeys of Christadelphian Bible missionaries? What kinds of life practices are implied in “fasting and praying” for our missionaries?
- “*Sergius Paulus, a prudent man ... called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God*” (Acts 13:7). What is God’s definition of a prudent man? It is not difficult to figure out, so let’s get prudent! How do we start?
- “*But Elymas the sorcerer withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. ...*” *And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time*” (Acts 13:8-11). Who or what are the modern-day sorcerers that our children face in the world of unbelief? Let them provide the answers to this question. How can they render blind these enemies of the truth?
- “*But they ... went to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 13:51-52). What joy can our Sunday school children bring to other believers or to other Christadelphian Sunday school children? Let them come up with the answers ... and then do something.
- “*The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men ... and (they) would have done sacrifice*” (Acts 14:11-13). What honors does the modern world render to superstition? Is there a reason why newspapers publish daily horoscopes but not daily Bible passages? What signs can our children see that the world still worships other gods? Where do believers stand in regard to these things?
- “*They rehearsed all that God had done with them*” (Acts 14:27). Brothers and sisters, the world over, still do this kind of thing when they come back from the mission field. The *Bible Missionary* magazine is full of their reports. What do our Sunday school children know about the Christadelphian Bible Mission? Are they aware that God is still at work with those who venture to serve Him?
- “*... no small dissension and disputation ... much disputing ... the contention was so sharp between them*” (Acts 15:2, 7, 39). And this amongst brethren! Do our children know any Biblical principles of conflict resolution? How can they apply these principles to their own quarrels? This would be a great place



to introduce a case study on conflict resolution, one that speaks directly to the age level of the children.

We could keep going. The Bible is packed with details like these that pertain to life and human conduct. The scope that it gives us for creating lessons of life for our children has almost no bounds.

### Life Application activities on the web

The Tidings Committee is in the process of creating a Sunday school link on its website (<http://www.tidings.org/>). Life application activities will be posted there for anyone to read, download, use or adapt. As with all the Sunday school resources we plan to post, God willing, life application activities will be organized and accessible by Scripture, Subject, and Learning Level.

Life application activities will also be referenced to the life goals – the Transformation Goals – that have been proposed in this series on “What’s the Goal?” We hope that this will be helpful for Sunday school teachers.

Let’s conclude by looking at two of the many life application activities being prepared for posting on the Tidings website. The first example will be accessed from a menu entry that reads: Scripture — Acts 9:6; Subject — Conversion; Learning Level — Preteens, Teens.

#### ***Acts 9:6 “Lord, what do you want me to do?”***

Class activity: Invite a brother or sister to tell your Sunday school class how he or she came into the Truth. This will be especially relevant if the brother or sister was opposed to the Truth before accepting it.

##### Life Goals

Knowledge:	<i>of the conversion process</i>
Attitudes:	<i>willingness to change</i>
Effective thinking:	<i>deciding to be baptized</i>
Relationship to God, Christ:	<i>obedience, accepting grace</i>
Relationship to others:	<i>getting to know an ecclesial member</i>
Personal life practices:	<i>submitting to God</i>

The second example will be accessed from a menu entry that reads: Scripture — Acts 9:26-28; Subject — Fellowship, Friendship; Learning Level — All levels.

#### ***Acts 9:26-28 “Saul... attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him ... But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.”***

Class activity: Identify a child who could use a friend or special encouragement (someone in Sunday school or in the community near your meeting place). Plan something that you can do as a Sunday school class to reach out to this child. Do it.

##### Life Goals

Knowledge:	<i>of the needs of others</i>
Attitudes:	<i>concern for others, loving</i>
Effective thinking:	

Relationship to God, Christ:	
Relationship to others:	<i>reaching out, building bridges</i>
Personal life practices:	<i>kindness</i>

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**Sunday school resources coming soon on the Tidings website:**  
<http://www.tidings.org/>. *Can you help preview Sunday school materials before they are posted on the web? Please contact Bro. Jim Harper at [sundayschool@tidings.org](mailto:sundayschool@tidings.org).*

## Reflections

### Overcoming the Dens and Caves of Life (1)

Have you ever felt like you were living your life in a cave? Perhaps emotionally, or even spiritually? At times, we may feel quite dark, lonely, depressed, or spiritually deflated. Personal weaknesses can bury us in guilt, and illness or bereavement can leave us feeling isolated. Relationships, family, finances, jobs and ecclesial challenges can overwhelm us.

At times, the cave has been ‘home’ to the writer. Times when we want to curl up in a dark corner, retract from those around us, and shut down. Times when the future becomes bleak, and we feel like giving up. Times when we may question how, or if, God is working in our life. While in the cave, we may conclude that we are alone in our circumstances, nobody cares, and no one can relate.

During these miserable periods, it is encouraging to contemplate the experiences of the faithful in Hebrews 11. Men and women, young and old, they all experienced highs and lows throughout their spiritual journeys. We are inspired when we recall their moments of victory, when they “*stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*” (Heb 11:33-34).

Yet, we often forget, “*others were tortured... had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.*” (Heb 11:35-37).

Verse 38 concludes their struggles with an intriguing statement: “*they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth*”. Many of God’s faithful also endured the darkness of caves — physically, emotionally, and spiritually. If life’s challenges engulf us, we are not alone. Rather, we can take heart that we are in the best of company and “*surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses*” (Heb 12:1), many of whom also survived overwhelming challenges in a cave.

#### **In dens and caves of the Earth**

This short phrase begs the reader to thumb the pages of Scripture for individuals who spent time in a cave. When we do, a sizeable list emerges: Lot and his two

daughters lived in a cave after fleeing Sodom (Gen 19:30) and many of the patriarchs were buried in the Cave of Machpelah including Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah and Jacob (Gen 49:30-31). The Israelites hid in caves and dens to escape the Midianites (Jdgs 6:2) and Philistines (1Sam 13:6); Obadiah hid 100 faithful prophets from Jezebel in a cave (1Kgs 18:4); and Elijah sought refuge in a cave at Sinai while he battled fear, depression and loneliness amidst a period of intense apostasy (1Kgs 19:9-10).

We could certainly add those who spent time in ‘pseudo-caves’ such as Joseph in the dungeon, Daniel in the lion’s den, Jeremiah in the miry cistern, Legion who abode in the tombs, Lazarus in a sepulchre, and even Paul and Silas in the Philippian prison.

Desperate, life threatening, circumstances drove many of these individuals to the cave. Others sought the cave on their own volition. In each case, however, it is encouraging to recognize that the cave became a temporary source of refuge and respite, followed eventually by God’s rescue and deliverance. Thus, Scripture highlights many faithful who “wandered in dens and caves of the earth”, but also demonstrates how these faithful ultimately ‘rejoiced in God’s salvation’ (Psa 20:5).

### **Psalms from the cave**

Our list of examples omits another individual who spent significant time in a cave. We know this from Psalm 57, which begins: “To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave”. Further research reveals that David also wrote Psalm 142 while he was in the cave. It commences: “A Maschil of David; A prayer when he was in the cave”. In both Psalms, the Spirit conveys David’s feelings and experiences while enduring time in a cave. It is upon these two magnificent Psalms that our studies are focussed. When explored, they furnish the reader with a rich reward of instruction and comfort for dealing with our personal caves.

Initially, we might ask, “When did David spend time in a cave”? ‘The cave’ proves to be a historical key by which the details of Psalm 57 and 142 can be unlocked. For almost five years, David and his men scuttled over the terrain of southern Israel. During this flight, David sought refuge with his troops in two caves: the first was the Cave of Adullam (1Sam 22:1), while the second was the Cave of En-gedi (1Sam 24:1-3). Both are located in Judah, south of Jerusalem. The fertile land surrounding Adullam, on the western flanks of the Judean Hills, is pierced with numerous limestone caverns, some of which are interconnected and large enough to hold 200 or 300 men. En-gedi (Hb. spring of the goat-kid) is situated on the eastern edge of the Judean Hills, in close proximity to a refreshing spring, amidst the scorched wasteland of the Dead Sea valley.

In both instances, David is desperate to escape the relentless pursuit and fiery violence of Saul. Although the caves provided asylum, the distress and anxiety that David suffered are evident when he laments “*my spirit was overwhelmed within me*” (Psa 142:3). In the Hebrew, ‘overwhelmed’ means to shroud or clothe with darkness and languishing. Numbing despair completely engulfed David. He had

no permanent place to live; he struggled for food and water, and felt rejected by an entire nation.

David equates the experiences in the cave to being trapped in a dungeon, and pleads: *“Bring my soul out of prison”* (Psa 142:7). Elsewhere, he mourns *“there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul”* (Psa 142:4 ESV). Though Psalm 57 contains a level of confidence and hope exceeding that of Psalm 142, David’s despondency is still evident when he complains *“my soul is in the midst of lions”*, and *“my soul was bowed down”* (Psa 57:4,6 ESV).

At times, David’s misery may parallel our own. We may find ourselves in desperate circumstances, trapped in an emotional and spiritual prison, where no one seems to notice or care about us.

How did David deal with the cave experiences of his life? Psalm 57 and 142 serve more purpose than to simply validate or characterize the dark challenges he wrestled. Instead, the Spirit seeks to share solutions that David used to extract himself from these dark moments. It is uplifting to meditate on these and realize there is a way through our trials.

We will consider seven solutions in total. Though none may be considered mind-bending or revolutionary, ultimately, they are means and methods that God has set before us to help illuminate the darkness. They are critical if we are to survive the cave and understand, from God’s perspective, the meaning of their troubles. When our world collapses around us, they are easily forgotten or casually dismissed.

## 1) Prayer and praise

When we experience stress or distress, we often keep things to ourselves and independently try to solve our troubles. Amidst the inky blackness of the cave, we forget that God can help us and cares about us. David recognized this potential pitfall and instead exclaims, *“I poured out my complaint before Him; I shewed before Him my trouble”* (Psa 142:2).

David used prayer as a means of communicating his trouble to God. He poured out his feelings to the Father, and through humble supplication requested grace and mercy to help in his time of need (Heb 4:16). Prayer was also recognition of the reliance he placed on the Father to dispel his emotional turmoil and rescue him from his enemies.

In **Teenagers of the Bible**, Shane Kingsbury stresses the importance of prayer, particularly during our youth:

“In times of adversity and trouble, it is not unusual to try all kinds of ‘solutions’ and ‘cures,’ only to find that we have ignored the greatest cure of all time: Prayer. This is particularly true of the teenage years when we have plenty of energy, and pride ourselves in achievements, frequently taking matters into our own hands – only to find ourselves more deeply mired into the problem. Then, as a last resort, we turn to prayer!”<sup>1</sup>

In Psalm 142, David appeals to God to *“attend unto my cry”* (Psa 142:6). The Hebrew word ‘attend’ means to prick up the ears. God gives ear to our own prayers

and we are assured like David: *“In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me”* (Psa 86:7). Prayer is powerful, and yet, it is not an age of prayer. David, Daniel, Jeremiah, Paul and many other faithful made maximum use of prayer. It behooves us to follow their example and ensure prayer is not a sporadic communication with God. Our daily spiritual habits must be rooted in prayer — particularly so when we encounter troublesome times.

Perhaps music is a salve for our troubled times. Beyond prayer, David expresses the sentiments of his soul through song and praise. In Psalm 57:7 he reveals, *“My heart is fixed, O God, ... I will sing and give praise”*. To this, he adds in verse 8-9 *“Awake, psaltery and harp ... I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations”*. David’s musical skills were calming to Saul, while he stewed amidst the mental mayhem of his cave. He now uses them to lift his own spirits by expressing his love, confidence and gratitude to the Father. It was his greatest desire to pronounce the Father’s mercy and glory *“among the nations”*. In a uniquely similar circumstance deep in the chambers of the Philippian jail, Paul and Silas *“prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them”* (Acts 16:25).

While wrestling with our own dungeons, prayer, song and instrument are powerful ways to communicate with the Father and to *“pour out our heart before Him”* (Psa 62:8).

## 2) Crying

Society teaches us that ‘big boys don’t cry’. Nothing could be farther from the truth in David’s life. David did not ‘bottle up’ his emotions but poured them out unashamedly. In Psalm 142 David *“cried unto the Lord”*, and further requests that God *“attend unto my cry”* (Psa 142:1,6). The Hebrew word ‘cry’ means a shrieking or creaking from anguish or danger. It is used of Israel when they wept because of the bondage in Egypt (Exo 2:23-24) and describes a mixture of tears and desperate pleas for God’s help.

There are additional occasions when David shed tears to deal with his grief. As he and Jonathan part ways in the field, *“they kissed each other and wept together - but David wept the most”* (1Sam 20:41 NIV). Later, when David and his men return to Ziklag and find it destroyed with their families taken captive, *“David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep”* (1Sam 30:4). Twice David weeps over the loss of his children (2Sam 12:22, 18:33). Overwhelming circumstances also cause David to plead: *“Hear my prayer, O LORD, listen to my cry for help; be not deaf to my weeping”* (Psa 39:12 NIV).

David was the king of Israel, a leader, and a mighty man of war, but he still embraced his grief and turned it loose through tears. He poured out the pain and the loss, the anger and the hurt, no matter who else heard or saw, or what they said or thought. Crying is therapeutic and is one of the emotions God has given to us to bear the pain of the cave experiences. We should not bottle up our grief and hold it inside where it will corrode our heart and soul. Unashamedly, we can relieve our feelings through tears.

Psalm 56 was penned by David to recount his capture by the Philistines in Gath (Psa 56:1; 1Sam 21), just prior to his flight to the Cave of Adullam. Here, he makes a curious request of the Father: *“Thou tellest [numberest] my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle; are they not in thy book?”* (Psa 56:8). What does David mean by this curious phrase ‘put my tears into your bottle’? When have we ever seen someone hunched over a bottle, attempting to capture their tears? In ancient times, however, ‘lachrimony’ was common-practice. Tears were collected in small, sealed bottles to commemorate events of particularly deep emotion. The bottle, along with its tears, acted as a record and reminder of the grief.<sup>2</sup>

A deep sensitivity of spirit was one of the characteristics God desired when He *“sought Him a man after His own heart”* (1Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22). Like David, we should not be afraid to shed our grief and have assurance that God is intimately aware of all our tears and wanderings.

(To be continued...)

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Notes:

1. Shane Kingsbury, *Teenagers of the Bible*, Logos Publications, p. 141.
2. Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the Old and New Testaments*, eSword, Psalm 56:8.

## Spiritual but Not Religious

### Introduction

The Christadelphian community rightly believes in being both spiritual and religious. The Greek word for “spiritual” is “pneumatikos” and conveys a meaning according to Strong’s of “non-carnal”<sup>1</sup> while the Greek word for “religious” is “threskeia” and conveys a meaning of per Strong’s as “ceremonial observance, worshipping”.<sup>2</sup> We are told in the Bible to encourage each other by assembling ourselves together (Heb 10:25; Matt 18:20), to use the Bible as our sole spiritual guide (2Pet 1:20-21; Rev 22:18-19; 2Tim 3:15-17; Acts 17:11), to properly worship God in the way commanded (John 4:24; 1Cor 11:23-26, Eph 4:2-6, 12-16; James 1:27), and to strive to be spiritual reflections of Christ (Gal 5:16-26; 6:1; 1Pet 2:2-11; Rom 7:12-25; Rom 8:1; Phil 2:1-5; 2Cor 5:20).

According to a 2009 Newsweek poll 30% of Americans consider themselves “spiritual but not religious”<sup>3</sup> which is an increase from 24% in 2005. People between the ages of 19 and 30 are increasingly likely to move away from the faiths they grew up in, and blend multiple faiths and spiritual practices as they go through college.<sup>4</sup>

### Spiritual but not religious

What does it mean to be “Spiritual but Not Religious” (SBNR)? Practitioners have widely varying personal concepts of “God” or some higher power. There is the increasing prestige and influence of the sciences, the evolving views of modern theologians, and the greater acceptance of cultural relativism. These have all made it more difficult, especially for the more educated in American society, to maintain a loyalty to traditional religious institutions. Accordingly, the meaning of the word

“spiritual” for SBNR individuals has become associated with the private personal experience as opposed to the word “religious” which they associate with formal religious institutional memberships and adherence to orthodox doctrines.<sup>5</sup> To one who is SBNR, religion is about being outwardly guided by a church, religion or book, while spirituality is about inwardly guiding one’s self.<sup>6</sup> Sanders points out SBNR is a spiritual life often exclusive of a church, mosque or synagogue.

Janis, in observing the reasoning of those who are SBNR, states, “Your experience of God doesn’t have to be the same as the experience of everybody or anybody else. One sign of spiritual awakening is an increased respect for all people, all religions, and all forms of God.” There are wide variations of beliefs for those who are SBNR. Common is the acceptance of many valid different “spiritual paths” with the individual choosing the path that seems best for him or her. An example would be the singer Madonna believing in Kabbalah.

Even some atheists consider themselves SBNR. While the atheist would be most skeptical of a higher power or “spirit”, he might embrace “spiritual” as being nurturing thoughts, emotions, a belief in the connectedness of the universe even if its only harmony is a mysterious flow of cause and effect.<sup>7</sup>

Fuller observes that Eastern religions and philosophies such as Transcendental Meditation (TM), Buddhism, reincarnation, and the law of karma, have made inroads in the West. There has been a revival of Neo-Paganism, witchcraft and various nature-oriented belief systems. A sizeable segment of the population is searching for “new” sources of spiritual understanding. Many of these people are skeptical of claims of absolute truth, don’t interpret the Bible literally, and may gravitate toward exotic religious philosophies. These include astrology, fortune-telling, tarot cards, Ouija boards, the I Ching, trance channeling, and various metaphysical beliefs collectively referred to as the “New Age” movement. Themes of holistic healing are present in the New Age movement, which includes crystal healing. Deepak Chopra is a prominent advocate for New Age medicine. The New Age movement is characterized by an interest in Eastern philosophy, a belief that subtle energies connect the human body with higher planes, and a faith in the mind’s power to influence external reality.

Some of the SBNR conceptualize God as a power within us rather than a power over us. Others who are SBNR try to unite science and religion.

### **Talking to those who are spiritual but not religious**

In discussions with people who are SBNR, some feel there are excluded books that should be included and included books (writings of Paul, etc.) that should be excluded from the New Testament. They regard the way the New Testament books entered the canon as a corrupt process. They often don’t take the Bible literally, which allows them “liberty” to do as they please. The individual, the individual’s ideas, the individual’s desires, the individual’s universal construct may become the new object of worship. Agnostic “theologian” Bart Ehrman, who wrote “Jesus Interrupted” and other works, is popular in SBNR circles. Ehrman sheds doubt on God’s Word by pointing to alleged contradictions in the Bible, and refers to

supposed missing New Testament Scriptures. He also notes that millennialists have been expecting Christ's soon return since the first century, and also argues that a loving God would not allow suffering. The SBNR tend to view the concept of "One Truth" from the Bible as narrow minded, judgmental, ignorant and intolerant. SBNR beliefs may be a construction or collection of ideas, philosophies, ideals, that which is admired, assimilations, and various bits of beliefs eclectically selected by the individual. Some have simplified their belief system to merely "the golden rule".

An example of SBNR philosophies in a church is Unitarian Universalism (UU) which claims to be a "caring, open-minded religion that encourages seekers to follow their own spiritual paths. Our faith draws on many religious sources, welcoming people with different beliefs. We are united by shared values, not by creed or dogma." It was founded in 1961.<sup>8</sup>

### **The rise of spiritual but not religious**

There are many reasons for the rising popularity of the SBNR movement. Fuller notes that many have had negative experiences with traditional churches. They may also view church leadership as more concerned with building an organization than promoting spirituality, as hypocritical, or as narrow minded. Some may have experienced emotional or even sexual abuse. Forsaking formal religious organizations, these people have turned to embracing an individualized spirituality that includes picking and choosing from a wide range of alternative religious philosophies. They may reject the construct of an all-powerful benevolent God as we understand Him. Perceived improbable events in the Bible, such as miracles, may contribute to the embracing of a different spirituality. They often view spirituality as a journey intimately linked with the pursuit of personal growth or development. Some are so turned off by institutional religion that their only perceived viable choice is between the alternative spiritual philosophies and nothing.

Near death experiences resonate with some, where they claim some have perceived a long tunnel with a bright light at the end. Feminist influences also resonate with some. Judaism and Christianity are perceived as patriarchal religions. God is a male and the authors of the Biblical books were ancient men, not women. Many women feel they are second class citizens within churches and want a feminist friendly spirituality more in line with 21st century "values". The traditional spirituality of worshipping in a denominational "one size fits all" church to worship an absolute truth is yielding ground to those who rarely expect to find absolute truths, but instead seek truths that are practical in the sense of meeting their personal everyday needs and interests. They may view church goers as blind to the realities of science, logic and associate the religious with a lack of education or intelligence. Bookstores, coffee shops, and the Internet have become the new churches and synagogues.

Perceived freedom also resonates with the unchurched spiritual. Churches promote loyalty to specific doctrines. Not everyone is comfortable with a spiritual style that limits his or her freedom to choose. Some consider a wholesale acceptance of a church's doctrine as lacking the integrity of "owning" one's own faith. They may also resent the authoritarian structure of a church pushing a specific faith



when there are 38,000 Christian denominations,<sup>9</sup> almost all claiming to be the one true church. Some may feel bored, restless or otherwise spiritually unfulfilled in church. Many don't like church restrictions placed on their personal lifestyles and may feel marriage is no more sacred than a piece of paper. They may seek a belief system that validates whatever it is they want to do.

Some point to a traditional mean spiritedness of churches and the church that stands in stark contrast to the example of Christ. From the Spanish Inquisition, to the Crusades, to those on both sides of the Civil War who claimed God was on their side as they killed their brethren, to those who are against abortion but first in line to support capital punishment, to gossiping unloving behaviors, to selfishness, to being harsh and judgmental, to church leaders fleecing their flock, to various other abuses — all these potentially contribute to a disconnect with traditional Bible based religions.

Some question why a loving God would require animal and human sacrifice. Some look at the billions of people not exposed to the Bible, much less one specific true faith, and reason there must be many acceptable paths else God is unfair. Others question why a God would give a person an alternative sex drive if he or she is not expected to act on it. Others question how a loving God could allow a human baby or puppy to drown, etc. These and other questions can drive people from traditional churches. Some who are SBNR would be atheists if it were not for relatively recent scientific discoveries such as the complexity of DNA.

## **Our guidance**

We have in God's Word examples and guidance involving reaching out to those of very different beliefs:

In Acts we read : *“Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship — and this is what I am going to proclaim to you”*(Acts 17: 22-23).<sup>10</sup>

Paul refers to the wisdom of the Greeks:

*“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength”* (1Cor 1:18-25).

Paul writes of the spiritual conditions in the last days:

*“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people. They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” (2Tim 3:1-7).*

He also wrote *“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1Cor 3:11).*

Timothy was told to preach the Word in and out of season for a time would come when people would not be receptive to sound doctrine:

*“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.” (2Tim 4:2-5).*

We are encouraged by the words of Jesus: *“Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (Matt 9:37-38).*

In discussing God’s Word with a person who is SBNR, the Christadelphian has an opportunity to listen, assess the situation, establish the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, point out its true teachings, and then question the source and rationale of any belief not built on the rock of the Bible. By living a Christ-like example, we can hope to make a positive impression on those who are truly seeking, as opposed to reinforcing negative stereotypes. Most important is that we ask for God’s help and blessing in all our efforts.

*Charles Link, Jr (Moorestown, NJ)*

**Notes:**

1. Strong’s <4152>. Non-carnal has come to relate to sexual matters: a more suitable term might be non-physical – the spiritual body is not a regular body.
2. Strong’s <2356>. Alternate terms might be either religious zeal (Acts 26:5, James 1:26) or religious excess (Col 2:18).
3. Stone, D., One Nation Under God?, “Newsweek”, (April 07, 2009)
4. Sanders, J., ‘Spiritual but not religious’ becoming more common self-identification, “American-Statesman”, (May 31, 2010).
5. Fuller, R. C., “Spiritual but not Religious”, Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, (2001), p.5-167.
6. Janis, S., “Spirituality For Dummies”, 2nd edition, Wiley Publishing, Inc., Hoboken, (2008),

p.29-30.

7. "The Center for Spiritual Atheism", (2008).
8. "Unitarian Universalist Assoc. of Congregations", (2011), <http://www.uua.org>.
9. Fairchild, M., Christianity Today – General Statistics and Facts of Christianity Today, from [about.com](http://about.com), (2011).
10. All Biblical references are from the NIV.

## Wesley and the Free Cheese

*"But not as the offence, so also is the **free gift**. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the **free gift** is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the **free gift** came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom 5:15-18, KJV).*

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the **gift** of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23).*

Who wouldn't want a gift? Especially a "free" gift? And that's what salvation is, isn't it? The free gift of God, given, like all free gifts, with no strings attached?

Well, let me tell you about "free gifts". Or, rather, let my brother Wesley (natural and spiritual) tell us about free gifts.

You see, Wesley was a school teacher, a group that hasn't exactly taken a vow of poverty, but they've come close. And it certainly was close enough some years ago, when Wesley discovered that, according to a special set of federal guidelines, his beginning teacher's salary qualified him for a particular government give-away program.

It seems that the federal government, through one of those high-level bureaucratic management decisions, had somehow financed a vast nationwide overproduction of cheese. Millions of pounds of the stuff was stacked up in warehouses around the country, where even with all the proper refrigeration and other precautions it could only be stored for so long.

So what to do? After some consideration, the federal government let it be known that individuals and families falling below certain levels of annual income would be eligible for free cheese. And sure enough, Wesley's full-time teacher salary qualified for this special benefit. Ten pounds of free cheese! What could be better?

Now comes the interesting part.

All you have to do, it turns out, is show up at a certain government building at a certain time, with all the proper paperwork (pay stubs, past years' tax returns, two photo identifications, etc.), wait in line for what seems an interminable time,

answer a number of questions satisfactorily... and then the “free cheese” can be yours... if you have met all the qualifications.

In due course Wesley finally returned home with the free cheese and, as he told us, a valuable lesson: Very few things in life, certainly very few things of any value, come with no price tag. Even things that are “free” cost something!

So it is on the infinitely grander scale of human interactions with the Almighty. And so it is with what Paul called the “free gift” of justification, or righteousness, or salvation.

What does this “free gift” really cost?

- 1) First, we need to know that we qualify for the “free gift”. So many actually qualify, who never know about it. They perish for lack of knowledge. How terribly sad!
- 2) Secondly, we need to know where the “free gift” will be dispensed. They don’t just give it away anywhere: you have to know the location. In this case, the “location” is Christ, the mercy-seat of God: *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12, NIV).
- 3) Then, of course, we need to know when the “free gift” will be dispensed. Furthermore, we need to be in the right place at the right time to receive it. Fortunately, there are many “right places” to receive this gift, that is, wherever other believers are gathered together, raising their petitions to heaven, through the one mediator. Or even if the single believer is all alone, on a mountaintop or in a closet, he or she can still find the way to the throne of God: *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water”* (Heb 10:19-22).
- 4) And we must not forget our proper support documents — not, in this case, pay stubs and tax returns, but rather our names, through confession and repentance and baptism, properly inscribed on heavenly “documents”: *“Rejoice that your names are written in heaven”* (Luke 10:20). *“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God... to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven”* (Heb 12:22,23).
- 5) Finally, if we are willing to be patient and wait, and wait, and wait some more... then, at last, we will receive our “free gift”: *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer”* (Rom 12:12). *“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm”* (James 5:7,8).

Now here’s the marvelous thing. Despite the “price” that must be paid — despite the knowledge, the time, the place, the credentials, the waiting — despite all these “qualifications”, the gift when it finally comes will still be a “free gift”. No amount

of knowledge, no amount of “good works”, no amount of patient waiting, will ever be enough to “earn” such a gift!

When it comes, it comes from the blessed hand of a loving Father, who desires that we share all His bounty. But it does not come to those who do not know, it does not come to those who do not act on their knowledge, and it does not come to those who do not wait, patiently and prayerfully, for it. In that sense, it has a real “price tag”! In that sense the “free gift” of eternal life will cost us our whole life:

*“For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his life? Or what can a man give in exchange for his life?” (Mark 8:35-37).*

But who would not gladly pay over his whole life to “buy” such a “free gift”?

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*

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## ***I Would Be True***

*I would be true, for there are those who trust me;  
I would be pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.*

*I would be friend of all — the foe, the friendless;  
I would be giving, and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.*

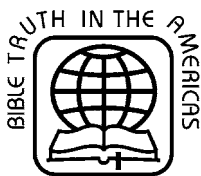
*I would be faithful through each passing moment;  
I would be constantly in touch with God;  
I would be strong to follow where He leads me;  
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod.*

*Who is so low that I am not his brother?  
Who is so high that I've no path to him?  
Who is so poor I may not feel his hunger?  
Who is so rich I may not pity him?*

*May none, then, call on me for understanding,  
May none, then, turn to me for help in pain,  
And drain alone his bitter cup of sorrow,  
Or find he knocks upon my heart in vain.*

*Howard A. Walter, and Samuel R. Harlow*

*(These words may be sung to the tune Londonderry Air, also known as Danny Boy.)*



## Bible Mission News

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### Two new brethren in Puerto Rico — and meeting again after 60 years!



**Left to right: Bro. Edgardo, Bro. Miguel and Bro. Roberto, with Sis. Aída in front**

It hardly seemed possible that the last time we visited Puerto Rico was in 2004. We were in Puerto Rico once again during early May this year and our main goal was to visit with Bro. Miguel and Sis. Aída Robles who have long lived in isolation on the south coast of this island in the city of Ponce. We also wanted to meet our new brother, Roberto Pérez Martínez, who was baptized on March 18th by Bro. Miguel. Sis. Aída and Bro. Roberto went to the same primary school together about 60 years ago in a town about 30 minutes west of Ponce. They were unaware of the fact that both their families had moved to Ponce when they were young, and that they had both married over 40 years ago. And on top of this, the two couples had lived about a five minute walk from each other — and they had never met in all that time! Roberto's wife passed away last October and while he was walking past the Robles' house one day late last year, Bro. Miguel

noticed Roberto's sad countenance and started to talk with him. In conversation with Roberto, Bro. Miguel discovered the past connection between Sis. Aída and Roberto — coincidence or providence? Bro. Miguel talked to Roberto about the Truth daily for the subsequent months, introducing him to the joy and hope of the Gospel, and this resulted in Roberto's baptism!

Another Puerto Rican had been studying by phone and correspondence with Bro. Jim and Sis. Jean Hunter (in California) for about three years — Edgardo Saldaña Morales. Due to his keen interest in the Truth, Edgardo flew to Los Angeles twice — once in November of 2010, and again in 2011 when he was interviewed and baptized on Saturday, April 30th. He returned to Puerto Rico the following Monday, and on Thursday, May 5th he drove from San Juan on the north coast of the island, south to Ponce. The five of us spent about five hours together. We enjoyed a delicious hot noon meal prepared by Sis. Aída; shared fellowship dur-

ing a Breaking of Bread Service; and reviewed several difficult passages like the Satan in Job and Paul's reference to the third heaven in 2 Corinthians! We will say that the hospitality extended by Bro. Miguel, Sis. Aída and Bro. Roberto in their homes was exceptional (there was a bed ready in both places!) — we had a very enjoyable visit with all four of them!

*Bro. Donald Luff, CBMA Linkman for Puerto Rico*

## **Campeche, Mexico**

### **Greetings to my brothers and sisters**



**Sis. Damaris and Bro. Jorge**

My name is Dámaris and I live with my family in Campeche, Mexico. I have been interested in the Scriptures for almost 30 years and I have visited various churches of different denominations, but I never found any of them aligned with the Scriptures in such a way as I found on the website [www.labiblia.com](http://www.labiblia.com).

It has been a great joy for me to find a group of brothers and sisters like yourselves, members of Christadelphian ecclesias. I like your organization, discipline, motivation,

literature, methods of study, the publicity that you prepare, the Bible courses and all the rest that is done to enable the Bible to be understood in depth, seriousness and devotion.

Many years ago my husband, Jorge, began to come to a correct understanding of certain doctrines, such as: the truth about tithing, hell is not eternal torment, the earth for the just, only God has immortality, and many others.

We couldn't find anyone that taught these doctrines. We saw that they had no place in any other religious group. This caused us to worry and for me personally, a little sadness and the feeling of distance from everyone else.

I used to read the Bible at home, make notes and pray, but my desire for many years was to share with other people what I had learned about God. I asked myself: How? Most people believed contrary to what I had found in the Bible! I never imagined that a group such as the Christadelphians existed, a group that embraced these teachings which are so fundamental for a true believer. Now I see that my dream is becoming a reality: to teach others about the promises of our heavenly Father. My husband and I were baptized in 2009 in the Gulf of Mexico.

Now we have the spiritual and material help we need from the brothers and sisters of the CBMA. This consists of the necessary tools such as Bible courses, studies, literature, leaflets to distribute, exhortations by Internet, news from other ecclesias and the newsletter sent every month. But our most important help comes from the blessings of our Creator — His mercy, love, strength and health.

What do we lack now? We need to organize ourselves to make time in our daily routines to attend to the preaching of the word. As Jesus said in Matthew 9:38: *“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest.”*

We also remember the words that the Lord spoke to Joshua after the death of Moses, as the Israelites were about to enter the Promised land: *“Be strong and courageous....do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Josh 1:9).*

*Sister Dámaris Abigail Cuevas  
Campeche, Mexico*

## **An Unforgettable Vacation in the Caribbean**

Canada is nicknamed the “Great White North” and not without good reason. When the temperature drops below freezing in November and it is not likely to rise to above freezing for several months during the winter season, we northerners welcome a break from the snow, ice and frigid weather. This past winter Sis. Ruth and I escaped the northern clime for a few weeks during February to seek the warm breezes of a gentler climate. And we found those soothing breezes on board a ship that traveled among the Windward and Leeward Islands in the Caribbean; the islands of pirates and sugar cane in days of yore.

The ship traveled from island to island at night. During the daytime the ship docked at one pretty island after another, each island surrounded by the warm, azure colored Caribbean sea. God’s handiwork in creation is wonderful to behold. This truth is no more evident than in the Caribbean. However, as enjoyable as this experience was for the two of us, we enjoyed a series of experiences that exceeded the beauty of this tropical paradise — we visited brethren and sisters on three Caribbean islands.

We had prearranged to visit Sis. Iris Shaw when our ship docked at St. John, Antigua. What a joy it was to see her smiling face and give her a hug after so many years apart! Years before, Ruth and I, together with Bro. Russ and Sis. Muriel Dawes, had done missionary work on the island and had met Sis. Iris. It was good to see her again and to know that her faith is strong despite her comparatively isolated location. We enjoyed lunch, a visit to her home overlooking the sea and then a drive around the island together, chatting up a storm all the while. And then back to the ship before it cast off to travel to the next island.

Later in our voyage we docked for the day at Castries, St. Lucia. Bro. Cliff and Sis. Julia Baines (CBMC fieldworkers) together with Bro. Andre George, recently converted from Catholicism, met us at the wharf. They had arranged for a mission friend to transport the five of us around this small but beautiful and mountainous island. It is noted for its pitons, two magnificent volcanic peaks that thrust up out of the sea. During our sightseeing trip we stopped in a small village to chat with several individuals who have expressed interest in Bible teaching. Sis. Julia had the foresight to prepare a very welcome lunch that we enjoyed in the shade of a banana tree.



On one of the Sundays our ship tied up at Bridgetown, Barbados, and, as had previously been arranged, the Recording Brother, Sasenarine Ramlochan, was there to take us to meeting. And what a lovely day followed!

This was indeed a trip down memory lane for Ruth and me. In the previous twenty years we visited Barbados annually and had come to know our brethren and sisters of the two island ecclesias quite well and had developed a deep and abiding love for our Bajan brethren.

The Bank Hall Ecclesia, Bridgetown, dates back to the 1890s! The Barbados South Ecclesia is a more recently formed ecclesia serving a different area of the island. Each ecclesia is keeping the light of the Truth shining brightly. We were very glad to learn that the two ecclesias had planned a joint Memorial Meeting and lunch to follow. This thoughtful arrangement gave us the opportunity to worship together with all the brethren and sisters we have known for so many years. And, as you can imagine, there was no shortage of conversation... nor of excellent Bajan food!



Although we saw many wonderful sights during our voyage, our most memorable moments were spent with dearly loved brethren and sisters in the Caribbean. We hope that we gave their spirits a lift. Certainly, they gave us a real boost as we wait for our Lord's return. Although the weather back in Canada was cold there was no shortage of warmth and hospitality extended to us by our spiritual family in the tropics.

We highly recommend to all brethren and sisters taking a midwinter break to find out where fellow disciples are located and then, if at all possible, visit them. Those visited and those doing the visiting will be greatly profited. As the world becomes smaller and travel is still possible, we have the delightful opportunity to visit and encourage one another.

*Bro. George and Sis. Ruth Jackson (Mississauga West, ON)*

## **Dreams do Come True!**

Here in the United States, there are countless marriages where a friendship began at a Bible School or CYC activity. What if there was only one Bible School a year you could attend and that was held in another country where you don't even live?



Sis. Zuelan Cascante (21) from Costa Rica and Bro. Neftali Espinoza (23) from El Salvador met during the year-end Bible Schools in Costa Rica and El Salvador, and were engaged to be married.

Attached is a photo of their marriage in the Santa Barbara, Costa Rican Hall on April 23rd. The hall looks very presentable, since about two years ago they repainted and installed new lighting.

We pray for God's richest blessings on their married life in the Truth. This is a good example of even closer relations and fellowship for the Central American Ecclesias.

*Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau, CBMA/C Publicity*

## Overcoming Termites in Trinidad

Termites may be found in many parts of the world, particularly in warm or temperate climates. They cause great damage and can be very troublesome to eliminate.

During a brief trip to Trinidad in 2009, I came across the termite infested home of Bro. Abiathar and Sis. Neesha Edoo. It was a wood structure built up on stilts so there was plenty of fuel for these tiny, but voracious insects. The damage was so bad that the front bedroom was separating from the rest of the house! The wooden posts had been supported by metal sleeves on several occasions, but were now giving way to the weight of the structure. It was a very unsafe situation indeed.

But over the last few years, Abi and Neesha have been able to rebuild their home, so now it is both safe and comfortable. The new structure is built out of steel tubing, tile building blocks, and sheet metal — all termite proof! Now, the only thing that is still under attack is the wood furniture in some of the homes belonging to our brethren. You can see little piles of saw dust on the floor beside and under their dressers. These little creatures are relentless, as any of you who have had termites in your home can verify.

The Edoo's feel quite blessed and grateful for the help they received for this project. They now have a safe dwelling for their family and a place where they can host their spiritual family, the ecclesia, for Bible Class and other activities.

*Bro. Brad Butts, CBMC Linkman for Trinidad and Tobago*



## Addresses for Bequests and Donations

**Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA)** supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Truth Corps, etc. Visit [www.cbma.net](http://www.cbma.net) for current activities as well as to make US dollar donations. Donations by check should be sent c/o Jeff Gelineau, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941, or contact [jeffandkellie@gelineau.org](mailto:jeffandkellie@gelineau.org)

**Christadelphian Bible Mission Canada (CBMC)** supports preaching work throughout the Caribbean and bequests for similar activity. Visit [www.cbma.net](http://www.cbma.net) for an update on current activities as well as to make Canadian dollar online donations. Donations by cheque should be sent to Box 55541, Unit 119, 15280 101 Ave., Surrey, BC, Canada, V3R 0J7

**Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation (WCF)** supports pastoral and preaching activities throughout the world. c/o Ray Pratt, P.O. Box 88, Deland, IL 61839-0086. Website: [wcfoundation.org](http://wcfoundation.org)

**CBMA Overseas Book Service** welcomes gifts of used Bibles, reference books, and Christadelphian books. Please contact Jan Berneau, 1221 N. Whitnall Hwy., Burbank, CA 91505-2110.  
Phone: 818-842-2868  
[jberneau@earthlink.net](mailto:jberneau@earthlink.net)

**Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee** publishes this magazine and other works on the Truth. P.O. Box 530696, Livonia, MI 48153-0696, [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org)

**Christadelphian Tape Library.** Contact Reuben E. Washington, 196 E. Stearns St., Rahway, NJ 07065-4923.  
Phone: 732-381-4590  
Fax: 732-499-8415  
[christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net](mailto:christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net)

**Fairhaven Christadelphian Charitable Foundation** provides assistance to Canadian ecclesias dealing with the health and welfare issues of senior members. Donations can be sent c/o Clive Daniel, 8583 Sansum Park Drive, North Saanich, BC, V8L 4V7, Canada

**Agape in Action** provides help for Christadelphian families and children living in extreme poverty. Donations may be sent to 39 Manor Park Crescent, Guelph, ON, Canada, N1G 1A2 or 521 Valmont Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 or via website [www.agapeinaction.com](http://www.agapeinaction.com)  
Email: [agapeinaction@rogers.com](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.com)

**Christadelphian Save the Children Fund** provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy mission areas.  
[www.christadelphianchildren.com](http://www.christadelphianchildren.com)

**Christadelphian Meal a Day Fund of the Americas** funds projects to support those in need in North and South America and the Caribbean. [www.cmadfa.com](http://www.cmadfa.com)

**Christadelphian Heritage College** c/o Brantford Ecclesia, 442 Dunsdon St., Brantford, ON, Canada, N3P 2B1

**Christadelphian Indian Children's Homes (CICH)** donations in US dollars can be sent to CICH, c/o David & Connie Stiles, 3 Blue Acre Rd., Middletown, CT 06457-5012

**Karolyn Andrews Memorial Fund (KAMF)** provides help in cases where brethren or families have been victims of persecution because of their faith. Checks in any currency to KAMF, c/o P.O. Box 87371, Canton, MI 48187-0371

**Joy Fund, Inc.,** provides grants to ecclesias, individuals, and families to assist with basic needs. c/o Stan Newton, 6861 Skyview Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647-2938

**Spanish language literature** is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947. 626-303-2222, email: [jdhunter@gte.net](mailto:jdhunter@gte.net)

**Christadelphian Care Line** fully confidential help with emotional and spiritual problems as well as family issues. 866-823-1039

**Alcohol Help Line** fully confidential help for overcoming alcohol dependency. 866-823-1039

## News & Notices

(Please send in news and notices by the 5th of the preceding month;  
please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.)

### **BALTIMORE, MD**

The Baltimore, MD Ecclesia rejoices to announce the baptism of JOSHUA HEWITSON, son of Bro. Mark and Sis. Jane Hewitson, grandson of Sis. Lois Hulbert, on December 29, 2010. It is a privilege to watch our young people grow up to embrace the truth and this was the feeling on the occasion of Josh's baptism. This year we were also blessed to have Sis. Larynette Ndah join our ecclesial family. Larynette came to the United States last year from Cameroon. As a young person there, she learned of the hope of Israel through her uncle, Bro. Fedelis Fang of the Douala Ecclesia. We are blessed by the fruit of his efforts and give thanks to God for His providential care.

On April 8, 2010, our much loved Sis. Janet Ribaudo of the Finger Lakes, NY Ecclesia, fell asleep in Christ. Sis. Janet grew up and was baptized in the Baltimore Ecclesia. She is the daughter of our Sis. Dorothy and the late Bro. Bill Link, and wife of Bro. John Ribaudo. Janet was so faithful, from a child right until the end of her life. She "loved his appearing" and fell asleep in hope of that coming day. Our hearts go out to the Link and Ribaudo families who have lost such a daughter, wife, sister, mother and friend.

With gladness we announce the birth of Victoria Ivy, on November 18, 2010 to Bro. Josiah and Sis. Jenny Hewitson, and the birth of Noah Jeremy, on February 19, 2011 to Bro. Allen and Sis. Tara Laben. May these little ones grow up playing in the streets of Jerusalem, for we know the time is near for our Lord to appear!

Over the past year we have hosted a rigorous preaching effort and we are grateful to a number of brethren for their supporting presentations on many first principle and current event topics. The year began with an open house to introduce ourselves in the neighborhood of the hall with the theme, "Keep Your Resolution; Make This a Bible Reading Year." Other public presentation topics included: "The Bible: Is It Inspired? Israel in Bible Prophecy" by Bro. Jim McKelvie (Moorestown, NJ); "What Can Christians Learn from the Old Testament?" by Bro. Steve Cheetham (Moorestown, NJ); "Why Does God Allow Suffering?" by Bro. Grant Anderson (Milford Road, MI); "God's Future Kingdom on Earth: The Solution to Today's Problems" by Bro. Shane Kirkwood (Sutherland, Aust.); "Christ's Coming: Will It Happen?" by Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON); and "Fulfilled Prophecies of the Bible: Evidence of the Hand of God" by Bro. Ryan King (Petersburg, VA).

We thank Bro. Steve Davis (Boston, MA) and Bro. Jonathan Bowen (Brantford, ON) for their efforts in leading our study weekends. Our ecclesia benefits from the continued support of the Washington DC and Richmond-Petersburg, VA ecclesias in exchanging speakers.

*Andy Bilello*

### **BEDFORD, NS**

There is much to report since our last communication. First, we held our Annual Study Day on September 25, 2010. We are grateful to Bro. Wayne Coutu (Hamilton Book Road, ON) for leading the study on the theme of the women in the genealogy

of Christ. Bro. Wayne was joined by his wife, Sis. Kelly, and daughters, Sis. Kessia and Mikayla. We were also delighted to welcome brothers and sisters from the Sussex, NB Ecclesia during the study day.

Lord willing, our study day will be held this year on September 17, 2011, with Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT) giving the talks on the theme "Pentecost Revisited". All are welcome. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Sis. Julie Snobelen at thesnobelens@hotmail.com.

Since our last communication we have welcomed a number of brothers and sisters from the following ecclesias: Sussex, NB; St. Johns, NF; Toronto East, ON; Hamilton Book Road, ON; Hamilton Greenaway, ON; Cambridge, ON; Shelburne, ON; Moorpeth, England; Teinmouth, England; and Newquay, England. We thank Bre. Derek Booth (Moorpeth, England), Frank Abel (Hamilton, Book Road, ON), and Paul Baines (Sussex, NB) for their words of exhortation.

Finally, our ecclesia was blessed to witness in Halifax with brothers and sisters and friends from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and England, the wedding of Bro. John Ching, originally from Christchurch, NZ, and Sis. Sair Hilton (Newquay, England) on April 16, 2011. We pray that God will bless this new couple as they walk together toward the kingdom.

*Stephen D. Snobelen*

## **ECHO LAKE, NJ**

We thank our Bro. David Birchall (London, ON) for his words of exhortation. The ecclesia was happy to see Sis. Louise with him.

We rejoiced with the angels in heaven as we witnessed the baptism of ORVILLE EARLE, husband of our own Sis. Lolurie Earle, on Sunday May 8, 2011. Our prayers are with Bro. Orville as he begins his walk toward the kingdom.

We are pleased to welcome by transfer from the South Ozone Park, NY Ecclesia, our Sis. Gabriela Kilburn, who has been commended to us by the ecclesia there. We are pleased to have one more join our numbers and look forward to her help and fellowship.

We have been pleased and privileged to have the company of a number of visiting brothers and sisters and we have welcomed them around the table of the Lord: Margan Packie, Virginia Packie, Carolyn Antonaccio, David and Maryann Jorgensen, and Mabel Knapp (Union, NJ); Margaret Cummings (Moorestown NJ); Jamaul Husbands (Georgetown, Guyana); Cornelius Kellet (Washington DC); Phil Taylor (Singapore); and Tony Isaacs (Atlanta, GA).

*Stewart Marsden*

## **NEW WESTMINSTER, BC**

We will miss the fellowship and service of Sis. Shonna Malczewski, and commend her to the love and fellowship of the Vancouver, BC Ecclesia. We welcome back Bro. Thomas and Sis. Esther Cawston after their stay in Victoria, BC.

We thank Bro. Don Pearce (Rugby) for his spiritually energizing talks at our fraternal on "Events at the time of the End", and an opportunity for the local ecclesias to cooperate in the public effort at the Surrey hall.

There are two changes in our Sunday morning meetings. We are now meeting at the Liverpool Room, 528 Liverpool Street in New Westminster. But there is no change in

our postal address. Also, meeting time has been changed to 11:00 am.

*Art Bull*

### **PETERBOROUGH, ON**

The brothers and sisters of the Peterborough, ON Ecclesia would like to share some of our recent news. We meet every week at 11:00 am from May 1st until November 1st at St Joseph at Fleming nursing home, 659 Brealey Dr., Peterborough, ON. From November 1st to May 1st we meet every other week. We continue to enjoy the fellowship of visiting brothers who bring their families and give us words of exhortation.

We recently held our annual meeting where Bro. Bryan Rose retired as Recording Brother after doing a great job for many years. Bro. Percy Gwilliam has taken on the recording brother position. Please address ecclesial correspondence by email to percygwilliam@hotmail.com, call: 705-748-2357, or address mail to 465 Cordach Cres, Peterborough, ON, Canada K9H 3A4. We welcome any brothers and sisters visiting in the area to join us around the table of the Lord.

*Percy Gwilliam*

### **SPRINGFIELD, MA**

The Springfield, MA Ecclesia is sad to inform the brotherhood that the following brother and sisters have resigned their fellowship: Bro. Bill Flagg, and Sis' Anna Bauver, Jan Bauver and Katharine Flagg.

We are further saddened to report the falling asleep of our Sis. Ruth Smith on Wednesday, March 23, 2011. Ruth was a hard working, loving mother who dedicated her life to her family. She was a long time member of the Springfield, MA Ecclesia and with her husband, Stan, raised their five children here. She was a quiet, humble and caring sister. I never knew her to be pretentious or arrogant, and she was always willing to help with ecclesial activities.

We are very pleased to report that JUDY PIXLEY was baptized into the saving name of Jesus Christ on June 27, 2010. She became aware of our seminar follow up Bible classes and joined at the invitation of a friend. Not too long afterward, he dropped out and she continued her burning desire to learn the Scriptures. God does work in unexpected and marvelous ways.

*Lloyd Long*

### **SUSSEX, NB**

We have been blessed to have the following visitors recently: Bro. John and Sis. Rachel Perks (Ottawa, ON); Bro. Dale and Sis. Carol Crawford, Bro. Mike and Sis. Ruth Carr, Bro. Ken and Sis. Wendy Dickson, Bro. Steve and Sis. Julie Snobelen, Sis. Jerusha Snobelen, and Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sarah Crawford (Bedford, NS); Bro. Peter and Sis. Ruth Edwards (Derby, UK); Sis. Hannah Abel (Barrie, ON); Bro. Jay and Sis. Rebekah Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON); Sis. Brietta Harper (Meriden, CT); and Bro. Tim and Sis. Kim Weir (Mississauga West, ON). Bro. John lead an interesting study on First Thessalonians and Bro. Jay led the young people's camp. We thank Bre. Edwards and Weir for their exhortations and Bible Class, and Bre. Perks and Mayock for their studies.

We are looking forward to the visit of Bro. Steve Davis (Stoughton, MA) for our Annual Thanksgiving Study weekend October 8-9, 2011.

*Cliff Baines*

## Minute Meditation

### All things work together for good

Nido Qubein once observed, “You can’t think your way into acting positively, but you can act your way into thinking positively.” George W. Crane has advice based on this observation: “Act the way you’d like to be and soon you’ll be the way you act.” These men believe that if we begin to act in a good way that soon our thinking will be affected to feel positively about our good acts. It works the other way as well; if we start behaving badly our thinking will change for the worse.

In Scriptures this principle is taught by example. For instance, the first commandment is to love God. We find it difficult to love someone who cannot be seen. However, we read over and over in the Psalms and elsewhere to praise our God. “O praise the Lord all ye nations, praise him all ye people, for his merciful kindness is great towards us.” David writes, “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.” By praying to our heavenly Father and praising Him for all He has done for us, we appreciate His goodness to us and grow in thankfulness and love for Him. Our thinking changes because we are speaking the words of praise that we are commanded to speak. Our thoughts become full of gratitude for the many blessings we have been given, and we love our God for it. Our action of mouthing the words of praise to our God will change our thinking and the words will become real to us.

Another example comes from Proverbs where we are advised to train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. By forcing children to obey, to perform their duties, to go to school, to learn about God, we are training their thinking. We teach them not to be greedy by forcing them to share their toys or cookies with other children. They learn from their actions many lessons, such as the satisfaction of a job well done and to consider the needs of others, all positive thought processes. Their actions change their thinking, even though they act in that way because their parents tell them.

A negative example is Pharaoh in Egypt whose actions to oppose the God of Israel so hardened his thinking that even after the firstborn were slain and Israel had left, he reconsidered and decided to chase them down and forcibly return them. He acted negatively, his thinking aligned with his actions, and at the last his decisions would be considered irrational, with Egypt in ruins as he headed off in his chariot to his doom in the waters of the Red Sea.

It is much easier to think negatively, and negative thoughts tend to produce negative results. As Henry Ford said, “If you think you can do it, or you think you can’t do it, you are right.” If we focus on the hurdles in our way and we do not take the actions that will bring success, essentially we defeat ourselves. There is a story about a little league coach who was trying to inspire his team to think more positively. One day after they arrive at the field for a game, one of his players comes running up to him and says, “Do you see how big the fellows are on the other team? I think

we are going to lose.” The coach realizes that his lessons on thinking positively are not sinking in. He says to the youngster, “Don’t you remember me telling you that you should think positively? Now, rephrase your statement for me.” The little boy says, “Okay coach, I know we are going to lose.”

If we begin to act as if everything is going to get better, it will help us to change our negative attitude, and soon we will be thinking in a more positive way. When Joshua and Caleb returned with the spies, they ignored the giant warriors and strongly fortified cities they had seen and focused on moving forward to take the land with God’s help. Unfortunately the other 10 spies thought only about the obstacles and convinced the rest of the people that the task of conquering the land was impossible. The people made plans to return to Egypt because they thought that they would never be able to take over the Promised Land. As a result, that generation was not permitted to enter the land. Their negative action reinforced their negative thinking, and they reaped the unfortunate consequences.

In contrast, Caleb was so confident in God’s help that he specifically requested Hebron for his inheritance, the area where the giants in the land lived. Joshua, who had feelings of total inadequacy when he stepped into the shoes of Moses as the leader of Israel, was very careful to obey God and to act the part of a leader of the people of God. Joshua’s success in acting the role assigned to him changed his attitude and he truly became the faithful leader who captained the people in their conquest of the land. Joshua and Caleb are examples of George Crane’s words of wisdom; their actions caused them to become the men they wanted to be.

Paul teaches us this lesson when he says, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” What we may consider to be obstacles to our progress may in fact be part of God’s purpose for our life. In Paul’s life, all things on the surface did not seem to be working together for his good, but he explained that even though he had been arrested and charged falsely and was in prison though innocent, that he actually believed that it was all working out for good. When Paul was in prison in Rome and chained to Roman soldiers, he wrote a letter to those who lived in Philippi and said to them, “Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.” Paul recognized that what seemed like a terrible thing was actually an advantage for the truth. His actions, preaching and writing letters in spite of his chains, gave him a reason to think positively about his situation because he saw how the message of the gospel spread because of it.

While Paul was in prison he wrote a number of what we call prison letters. Had he not been in prison he could simply have visited these ecclesias and told them face to face what he wanted them to know. John, on the other hand, was not in prison, so when he wrote two very short letters, he said to a sister in 2 John, “I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope



to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.” To Brother Gaius in 3 John he wrote, “I have much to write you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink. I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.”

We can see the truth of Paul’s teaching that all things work together for good, for all things really did work out for his ultimate good and for the good of all who received his letters. We are thankful for Paul’s prison letters since we in our time now benefit from the wise inspired counsel he wrote to those ecclesias. We need to learn this lesson well and put it into action in our lives by acting in a positive way even when we do not feel like it. We will surprise ourselves when we discover that even in times of great hardship, acting positively will affect our feelings and we will begin to think more optimistically.

We can take comfort in the fact that the Lord is in control of our lives. We are the sheep of his pasture, and he is taking care of us to bring us through the trials of this life to the glorious life to come in the kingdom. We are thankful to know, as Paul did, that “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

*Robert J. Lloyd*

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## **SPECIAL ISSUE — Preaching in the Americas**

For the August issue of the *Tidings*, we intend to deliver a special issue packed with articles from a wide number of contributors, covering a range of topics related to this overall message. All are designed to help us focus on the imperative we all have in delivering the Unique Hope we all possess.

The issue is designed as a resource for all those who are interested in preaching — which should be all of us.

An outline of the areas that will be covered (God Willing) is listed below,

- First century and early Christadelphian preaching precedents;
- Preaching by campaigns, radio, television, Internet, seminars, Sunday school, etc.;
- Individual preaching initiatives and collaborative preaching initiatives;
- Domestic missionary programs and overseas mission programs;
- Preaching: past, present, and a glimpse into the future.

Additional copies will be available at \$2:50 each (\$3 Canadian).

For the additional copies you can

- Email to the [editor@tidings.org](mailto:editor@tidings.org). You will be billed along with the copies
- Make Checks payable to The Tidings and sent to P.O. Box 530696, Livonia, MI 48153-0696, with a note as to the address to send copies to
- On-line via the website [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org)

*David Jennings, Jim Harper*

# Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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

## **JULY 2011**

**1-4 North Battleford, SK,** Shekinah Study Weekend. Bro. Dev Ramcharan will be speaking on the First Epistle of John. Contact Sis. Laura Jackson at [t.jackson@sasktel.net](mailto:t.jackson@sasktel.net).

**1-7 Terra Nova Christadelphian Bible School** will be held in Terra Nova Park, Newfoundland. Speakers and subjects are Bro. Joni Mannel (Walsall, UK): "At the breaking of bread " and Bro. Frank Abel (ON): "Wait on the Lord". For complete information and registration please visit our website [terranovabibleschool.com](http://terranovabibleschool.com). Contact Bro. Gary Hynes, 32 First Street, Mount Pearl, NL, Canada A1N 1X8 (709-747-2750); [contact@terranovabibleschool.com](mailto:contact@terranovabibleschool.com).

**2-10 Mid-Atlantic Bible School,** Shippensburg, PA. The theme this year is "O Taste and See that the Lord is Good" – Psalm 34:8. The Youth Program theme will be "Occupations in Scripture". The speakers are Bro. Garth Maier (East Texas, TX): "The Gospel in the Law and Prophets" to the adults and "The Truth Affirmed" to the teens; Bro. Simon O'Grady (Tawa, New Zealand): "Knowing our Lord, Jesus Christ, His Name and Titles" to the adults and "Daniel and His Story" to the teens; Bro. Michael Owen (Seaton, UK): "Christ-Centered Families in the 21st Century" to the adults and "Finding the Joy of the Truth" to the teens. Registration forms on website <http://www.christadelphians.net/macbs>.

**9-16 Fifth annual Manitoulin Family Bible Camp** on Manitoulin Island. The speakers are Bro. Neville Clark (Adelaide, AUS): "Moses — The Man of God" and Bro. Ryan Mutter (Baltimore, MD): "Walk Worthy of the Calling with which You are Called." Contact [www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com](http://www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com) or Bro. Rick Sales [ersales@xplornet.com](mailto:ersales@xplornet.com) or 519-925-6847.

**10-16 Southwest Bible School** will be held at Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX. Speakers are Bro. Mark O'Grady (Tawa, NZ): "Revelation — Exhortations from the Apocalypse", Teen class: "Encounters with a Risen Lord"; Bro. Stephen Palmer (Cardiff, Wales): "Ezra and Nehemiah"; Teen class: "David and Solomon"; Bro. David Lloyd (Simi Hills, CA): "Spiritual Muscle for the Five Big Mistakes", Teen class: "Lessons from Daniel". Registration information at [www.swcbs.org](http://www.swcbs.org) or by contacting Bro. John Clubb at (940) 636-0412; [jclubb4081@aol.com](mailto:jclubb4081@aol.com); 1612 Douglas, Iowa Park, TX 76367.

**16-24 Eastern Bible School,** Connecticut College, New London, CT. Theme: "Set Your Minds on Things Above". Bro. Roger Lewis (Christchurch North, NZ): "The Four Faces of Christ in the Gospels"; Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON): "Idolatry in the 21st Century"; Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON): "The Re-Creation of Zion". For registration information contact Sis. Cindy Nevers, P.O. Box 296, Auburn, MA 01501, or [cindy.nevers@tecbs.org](mailto:cindy.nevers@tecbs.org) or visit our website [www.tecbs.org](http://www.tecbs.org).

**23-30 Christadelphian Bible Camp,** Manitoulin Island. Theme is "Looking unto Jesus". Speakers will be Bro. Matt Norton (Lismore, NSW, AUS): "Impressions of Christ" and Bro. Mark O'Grady (Tawa, NZ): "Joseph – 'God did send me before you to preserve life' ". More details on website [www.christadelphianbiblecamp.ca](http://www.christadelphianbiblecamp.ca). For registration, contact Bro. Alex Browning at [jabrowning@rogers.com](mailto:jabrowning@rogers.com) or phone 1-416-284-0290.

**23-31 Midwest Bible School.** Hanover College, Hanover, IN. Speakers and their topics are Bro. Ed Binch (Avon, IN): "Jehoshaphat: Being Saved by God's Grace"; Bro. Jim Styles (Simi Hills, CA): "The Angels of God"; Bro. Roger Gore (Adelaide Enfield, AUS): "Paul's Letter to the Colossians". Contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 24970 Woodridge Drive, Apt. 108, Farmington Hills, MI 48335, 248-462-5740, mike.live@gmail.com or visit [www.midwestbibleschool.com](http://www.midwestbibleschool.com).

**24-30 Pacific Coast Bible School** Idyllwild, CA. Speakers are Bro. Craig Blewett (South Africa): "The Message we have heard"; Bro. John Pople (San Francisco Peninsula, CA): "To Speak Well of God"; Bro. Steve Hornhardt (AUS): "Come and See — A Consideration of Revelation 3, 6 & 12". Contact Bro. Jeff Gelineau 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 9306, [mail@gelineau.org](mailto:mail@gelineau.org) or Bro. Gary Patterson [garympatterson@hotmail.com](mailto:garympatterson@hotmail.com) or visit our website [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org).

**31 - Aug 6 CBMA** Old fashioned Bible Campaign in Guadalajara, Mexico. Many preaching activities, fellowship, devotionals/hymn sings, a Bible School class each night etc. Learn a little Spanish during the week and meet and work with your brethren in a growing Hispanic ecclesia. No Spanish required. Ages 18 and up in this preaching effort. Contact Bro. David Lloyd at 818-352-6486 or [davidrlloyd@earthlink.net](mailto:davidrlloyd@earthlink.net).

**31- Aug 6 Rogue River Bible School.** Speakers are Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON): "Waiting for the Lord", Bro. Graeme Osborn (Vernon Okanagan, BC): "Weapons of our Warfare" and Bro. Steven Hornhardt (Salisbury, Adelaide): "Come & See — Witnessing for Christ". [rogueriverbibleschool@gmail.com](mailto:rogueriverbibleschool@gmail.com) or Bro. Rob Posey at 541-474-6963.

## AUGUST 2011

**20-26 Winfield Bible School.** Theme: "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in You." Bro. Stan Isbell (Houston North, TX): "The House of Prayer for All Nations"; Bro. Shane Kirkwood (Australia): "Philippians: Shine as Lights"; Bro. Jim Styles (Simi Hills, CA): "Hebrews: The Power of Faith in Jesus Christ". Registration: Bro. Don Zantingh 250-545-5988 [donzantingh@hotmail.com](mailto:donzantingh@hotmail.com) Accommodation: Bro. Harold Cawston 250-478-0343 [h\\_jcawston@shaw.ca](mailto:h_jcawston@shaw.ca).

**27-2 September Vancouver Island Bible Camp,** Camp Pringle, 2520 West Shawnigan Lake Road, Shawnigan, BC. Our speakers are Bro. Shane Kirkwood: "Encounters with the Master"; Bro. Stan Isbell: "Godly Mariners and Ships on the Sea – Lessons from the Bible of Men, Their Ships and the Sea"; Bro. Bill Link: "The Lord Shall Yet Comfort Zion — God's steadfast purpose in Zechariah". Contact information [www.vibiblecamp.com](http://www.vibiblecamp.com) or Sharon Enns [ennsranch@telus.net](mailto:ennsranch@telus.net) or 1-250-338-4812.

## SEPTEMBER 2011

**3 Moorestown, NJ,** Labor Day Study Day. Bro. Richard Palmer (UK): "Reflections on Science and the Bible". Contact Bro. Dan Langston for more information; [dklangston@gmail.com](mailto:dklangston@gmail.com).

**11-16 Adult Study Week,** Daily Interactive Bible Study on "The Life of David", at Wildwood Manor, Ballinafad, ON. For information about the workbook, or to register please contact Bro. Jack and Sis. Shirley Robinson [jrobins@worldchat.com](mailto:jrobins@worldchat.com) 519-448-1696 or Bro. Peter and Sis. Margaret Stonell [thestonells@hotmail.com](mailto:thestonells@hotmail.com) 905-627-9428.

**17 Bedford, NS,** Study day. Bro. Jim Harper (Meriden, CT) will be giving talks on "Pentecost Revisited". Contact Sis. Julie Snobelen [thesnobelens@hotmail.com](mailto:thesnobelens@hotmail.com).

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**17 London, ON**, Study day. Bro. Jay Mayock (Hamilton Book Road, ON) will speak on "The prayer of Jabez — According to His will". Children's class for ages 5-11. Register for the children's class with Sis. Louis Birchall 519-688-7081 or [dalefinancial@rogers.com](mailto:dalefinancial@rogers.com).

#### **OCTOBER 2011**

**8 Brantford, ON**, Thanksgiving gathering. Copetown Community Centre. Speaker will be Bro. Roger Long (Coventry, UK).

**8-9 Echo Lake, NJ**, Fall study weekend. Theme is "Making use of the senses we are born with" and our speaker is Bro. John Parry (UK).

**8-9 Sussex, NB**, Thanksgiving study weekend. Speaker Bro. Steve Davis (Stoughton, MA).

**21-23 Women At The Well Retreat**. Miracle Hot Springs Resort in Palm Desert. Sis. Nancy Brinkerhoff (Denver, CO) on "Hannah's Prayer." Contact Sis. Bonnie Sommerville [kenandbonnie@simihills.org](mailto:kenandbonnie@simihills.org) or send a non-refundable \$50 check made out to Sis. Bonnie Sommerville, 19111 Kinzie St., Northridge, CA 91324. Phone: (818) 341-3932.

#### **NOVEMBER 2011**

**12-13 Sarasota, Largo and Orlando, FL**, Study weekend. Bro. Phil Prater (Paris Ave., OH) will lead a study in "The Seven Abominations" based on Proverbs 6:16-19. Contact Bro. James Wilkinson at 239-849-3301 [jameslwilkinson@hotmail.com](mailto:jameslwilkinson@hotmail.com).

#### **DECEMBER 2011**

**24-30 Third Ontario Winter Bible School**, Best Western Highland Inn, Midland, ON, Canada. Theme: "The Faith that Works by Love". Bro. Carl Parry (Salisbury, Adelaide, AUS): "Jehoshaphat - The King who sought Yahweh with all his heart" and "The Spirit of the Law" (teens); Bro. Stephen Whitehouse (Rugby, UK): "The Message of Nehemiah: Faith in the Face of Adversity" and "Building on the Walls with Nehemiah" (teens); Bro. Jay Mayock, (Hamilton Book Rd, ON): "Loving our Neighbour: A Study of the Second Great Commandment" and "Reasons to Believe" (teens). Contact Sis. Barbara or Bro. Ron Kidd Apt.510, 110 Belmont Drive, London, ON, Canada N6J 4W3 (Tel: 519-690-0391; e-mail: [rbkidd@rogers.com](mailto:rbkidd@rogers.com); or visit our website: [www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com](http://www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com)).

#### **APRIL 2012**

**8-15 Australian Christadelphian Conference**, Adelaide, Australia. Theme: "Lift Up Your Heads". Speakers Bro. Tec Morgan (Washwood Heath, UK) and Bro. Chris Sales (Shelburne, ON). Please note the year **2012**.