

# TIDINGS

**EDITORIAL**

## LAUGHTER

### **EXHORTATION**

Thankfulness

### **REFLECTION**

The Faith That Conquers

### **THOUGHTS ON THE WAY**

Family Heritage

### **ALSO...**

- Bible Study: Lessons from the Book of Daniel
- Bible Study: All the Children of God Have Names (Part 7)
- Joy of Sunday Schooling: Concordance Activities (Part 2)
- History: Conscientious Objection (Part 8)



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*Location: Rocky Mountain National Park*

"The Rocky Mountains with a fresh winter snow and cross country skis. The solitude and silence brings you closer to God."

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# Laughter

*“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:... a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance” (Eccl 3:1,4)*

*“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh” (Luke 6:21)*

## Humor


Laughter or humor is not a topic we often consider in our community. So when a brother presented a few classes on the topic at a recent Bible class, it made me reflect on the vital part humor plays in our lives, including our religious life — how it resonates and makes us remember when it is skillfully used (and even what it is used to illustrate.) And how often when we recollect those who have fallen asleep, we reflect on their sense of humor. Who can forget our late brother Bob Lloyd, with his “Round Tuit” — a wooden disc he handed out with great enthusiasm? The stories we all can tell of his talks! And as I reflect on laughter, on humor, and as we consider the joy so often associated with it, we should remember the joy and happiness of David as he danced before the ark on its way to Jerusalem. Of the joy the exiles felt when they dedicated the rebuilt temple (Ezra 6:16). Of the joy and amazement the disciples experienced at the risen Lord (Luke 24:41). So,

let us consider not only laughter, but the way our Lord clearly used humor in many of his parables, some unfortunately obscured in translation, as well as the sardonic humor that is so prevalent in the Old Testament.

## Old Testament

I always think the whole book of Jonah is full of satire, amusing imagery, and abrupt reversals of fortune. The four items that affected Jonah: a great fish, a gourd, a worm, and an east wind, have amused children through countless generations. And Elijah seemed to entertain at least himself: the ESV captures the double entendre in the Hebrew *“And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, ‘Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.’ ”* (1 Kgs 18:27). And the whole of Psalm 126 is a picture of laughter of joy, of delight in the restoration of Jerusalem:

***Humor plays a  
vital part our lives,  
including our  
religious life***



*“Humor in the Bible exists to make a point, one that is both impactful by its imagery, and made memorable as well.”*

*“When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, ‘The LORD has done great things for them.’ The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad” (Psa 126:1-3).*

Of course, God can laugh, but his laughter is mainly derisive and scornful, which is not my context. For example, *“He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision” (Psa 2:4)*. And of course the laughter of Sarah at the promise of a son in their old age was in disbelief, in cynicism, but it turned to real joy

when it came to pass: *“And Sarah said, ‘God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me.’ And she said, ‘Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age’ ” (Gen 21:6-7).*

### **Jesus**

The gospels are rife with parables, and many of them are laced with wit, amusing word pictures, and the funny side of all sorts of circumstances. I am sure the audience chuckled when they heard Jesus say, *“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?” (Matt 7:3).*



Consider the situation where “some Pharisees” came and warned Jesus that Herod wanted to kill him. And Jesus replied: *“And he (Jesus) said to them, ‘Go and tell that fox, “Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem” ’ ”* (Luke 13:32-33).

Jesus used a term for Herod (*Antipas*), fox, that was quite humorous on several levels: first of all, it is often used of a sly, crafty person, hardly a common epithet for a ruler. And, not obvious in the translations, the word for “fox” is feminine, perhaps a reference to Herodias, his current wife, “the power behind the throne”. You can almost hear his audience chuckling.

Another play on words is to be found when a gentile woman was asking that her daughter be healed: *“And he said to her ‘Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.’ But she answered him, ‘Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs’ ”* (Mark 7:27-28). The woman neatly takes Jesus’ word “dogs”, often used by Jews for Gentiles, and applies it to the sort of puppy dogs that are allowed to eat under the children’s table, where their presence is accepted: the recognition of the wit of Jesus is shown by Jesus’ next words: *“for such a reply the demon has left your daughter”*.

## Camels

*“Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God”* (Matt 19:24).

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!... You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!”* (Matt 23:23,24).



It is often said that a camel is a horse designed by a committee. The camel is one of nature’s little jokes, a natural, four-legged comedian, with a long, hairy neck, humps, knobby knees, big feet — all loosely connected. And so, we have two word pictures here.

1. **The camel and the eye of a needle:** there have been attempts to explain the image away, by citing a mythical gate or mistranslating the camel as a rope, but I believe it is humorous hyperbole on the part of Jesus. It drives home the difficulty of combining riches and true humility before God, in a way that is truly memorable — as well as a really funny image.

2. **The gnat, as an insect, was unclean** (Lev 11:20-23). And so Jesus, as part of his denunciation of the excesses of the Pharisees, likens them to a man who always passed his wine through a strainer before drinking lest he should eat “unclean flesh”, and yet he would gulp down a camel, despite the fact that the camel also was “unclean”. How many have pictured the scene in their mind’s eye: the Pharisee straining out insects with a piece of muslin, but meanwhile swallowing the big hairy neck of a camel. Another word picture, sure to be remembered with a smile, when another teacher might have simply said the Pharisees lacked a sense of proportion, sure to be instantly forgotten. Not only that, but the joke may have been helped by an Aramaic word-play between *qalmâ* (gnat) and *gamlâ* (camel).<sup>1</sup>

## Humor in Public Speaking

Some go through life with a smile on their face and a spring in their step: for such members, sprinkling their talks with a little relevant humor is easy and natural. Starting a talk by telling an irrelevant joke is usually inappropriate: starting with a story that is somewhat humorous, but relevant to the message, is quite different.

Object lessons that teach a message can be useful. One of the best exemplars, again, was Bob Lloyd.

Many remember his challenge, while not-so-young, to the teens to provide their best opponent to outrun him in a footrace. It sounded like an easy win for the young man who accepted the challenge, but there was a catch: the teenager had to compete while carrying a stack of chairs while Bob ran unencumbered and naturally won the race. Bob’s point was etched in the observers’ minds: in running our race to the Kingdom, we must set aside every weight and sin that does so easily beset us. And all enjoyed the example.

## Conclusion


Humor in the Bible exists to make a point, one that is both impactful by its imagery, and made memorable as well. It is never employed just for its own sake. It is used in the context to illustrate the intended message. It both brings the listener into the story, and serves to make the message resonate down through the ages. The story of the camel and the eye of the needle is a classic example of one that is truly humorous, but also makes a significant point: riches can be an impediment.

All this shows that laughter, joy, and amusing stories are part of the word of God, and should be part of our spiritual life as well.

*Peter Hemingray*

### Notes:

1. From “New International Commentary of the New Testament”.



Exhortation.

# THANKFULNESS

## The Sin of Ingratitude

Of all the different types of sins that people have committed throughout history, one of the most prevalent ones would have to be the sin of ingratitude. Everything we have in life is a gift from God, but how often do we really offer thanks for what he has done? Most professing Christians don't even offer thanks for their meals, much less offer thanks for all that God does in their lives. We are like the little boy who was given an orange by a man, and the boy's mother asked, "What do you say to the nice man?" The little boy thought... and he handed the orange back and said, "Peel it."

*"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17).*

*"Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph 5:20).*

In 2001 the University of Nebraska conducted a series of studies in an attempt to discover what characteristics were common in strong families. The research team discovered six qualities. The first quality (the most important) was appreciation. They concluded that strong families were so strong because family members expressed appreciation for what each member did and for who they were.

A similar study investigated the effect of praise in the workplace. There had to be four times as much praise as there was criticism before they felt good about their work and



about the environment in which they worked. This tells us that people need appreciation. They need praise. And they need these things four times as often as they receive criticism, to have a healthy environment at work or home.

A while ago I watched a webinar series on parenting, which was focused on addressing the universal factors that drive all the different behaviors that parents are concerned about. The key was that a child's primary goal is to achieve belonging and significance. Children need to feel capable, to feel like they make a difference, that they have something to contribute, and that they have personal power. That last one is particularly important to recognize. If children are not given power in positive and constructive ways, they will do things to find power any way they have to. It does not matter how much you punish your kids for doing things you do not like, if they do not achieve a sense of belonging and significance, then they are going to assert their power in ways that are not necessarily positive — because negative attention is better than no attention.

Those things are true of all of us — it is human nature. We all yearn to feel appreciated, to feel like we belong, and that our contributions matter. And bad things happen sometimes when we do not get those things. It does not seem like that should be hard to fix, once you identify the problem. But the truth is that even in the best of homes, there are sometimes harsh words and hard feelings. Why does that happen? There're all sorts of reasons, but the root cause, one

could argue, is a lack of thankfulness. Spouses, parents, children, siblings; we all forget sometimes the blessing that we actually are to one another; and we say things that are hurtful. We make negative comments when we want to try to modify someone else's behavior: Parents put down their kids, wives insult their husbands, husbands speak badly of their wives, and kids disrespect their parents. We do this because we think it's the best way to communicate our displeasure and to change the behavior of those with whom we're upset.

So, what does the Bible have to say about all this? *"With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be"* Jas 3:9-10).

In other words: God knows we have made critical comments—maybe unconsciously. He knows we have a tendency to a critical spirit, and that's a problem; "this should not be."

V.6: *"the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness".*

V.8: *"no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison".*

Please contrast that with what we read before in Col 3:17. God knows that we tend to be unconsciously critical of those around us...and so He commands us to be consciously thankful for all things. This is especially important in our homes, because a healthy home has an atmosphere where we compliment four times more than we criticize.

So how do we do that? How do I develop a thankful spirit in my home? There's a saying that goes: "The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. And the grass is not greener on this side of the fence. The grass is greener where you water it." We tend to feel like other people have happier lives than we do. Anyone who goes on Facebook knows this. You see all the fun things people do and places that they go, and you think, "Why can't I have their life." But that kind of thinking is faulty for two reasons:

1. You are only seeing the best part of other people's lives: nobody is posting photos of themselves sitting at their desk 8 hours a day or sitting on their couch watching TV when they get home!
2. We are probably not really appreciating the good in our own lives.

Now, in the case of my literal grass, it really is greener on the other side... but that is because I do not water it enough. Your quality of life is directly related to the amount of effort you put into it — and that is where thankfulness comes in. We need to practice thankfulness. We need to practice being thankful to God: *"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him"* (Col 3:17). We need to focus on the things we are thankful for, both in our natural families and our spiritual family.

Another common saying: "the squeaky wheel gets the grease". That is true. You can change things in this world by being aggressive, critical and persistent. However, if you do that often enough, people begin to find ways of avoiding you — because those kinds of people are not very fun to be around.

### Some examples

There was a pastor who had to deal with a woman who worked at the post office, who was hard to get along with. She was rigid and rude. And even if he was nice to her, she was still short with him. At first, he thought about complaining to her supervisor; but then he realized that might look bad coming from a pastor. And so, he made up his mind to do whatever he could to win her over with his charm. From that day forward,

***"The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. And the grass is not greener on this side of the fence. The grass is greener where you water it."***

he repeatedly complimented her and thanked her for anything he could think of. After a few weeks she began to change. She would smile. She would find ways of helping him to get around some of the rules. His gracious attitude changed her heart and changed her behavior.

But what if the other person does not change? What if they still behave badly and irritate you? Does that excuse you from God's command to be thankful? NO! It does not matter what the results may be in the lives of those around you. God still commands us to be thankful. Even if we cannot alter the behavior of

others by our gratitude, a thankful attitude can have a powerful benefit in our lives. It may not change others around us, but it will change us.

Benjamin Weir was a missionary in Lebanon who was kidnapped by Islamic fundamentalists in 1985 and was held hostage under miserable conditions for 16 months. In his first interview after his release, he was asked how he spent his time and how he dealt with the boredom and despair. He said, “Counting my blessings.”

“Blessings?” they asked.

“Yes... “Some days I got to take a shower. Sometimes there were some vegetables in my food. And I could always be thankful for the love of my family.”

Weir discovered the power to overcome his circumstances by learning thankfulness. He was physically in bondage, but spiritually and mentally he was free. Because he learned how to be thankful even in the harshest of circumstances.

### Examples from the Bible

Finally, let's take a couple of examples from Scripture.

*“Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’ When he saw them, he said, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed.”*

*One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him — and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?’ Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well’ ” (Luke 17:11-19).*

All ten of the lepers sought mercy for Jesus; All ten obeyed Jesus’ command; All ten were healed of their disease, but only one returned to give thanks. There does not seem to be any emotion in Jesus response: “*Rise and go your way*”. But I will bet that expression of gratitude would have meant a lot to him. He asked, “*Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?*” What happened to those nine other lepers? They went home rejoicing. They hugged their families and celebrated with friends and neighbors — but they never went back to thank Jesus. Which of those lepers are we most like? Are we like the nine? Or the one?

In John 12, we have another expression of gratitude. We read of Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus who, only days before, received her dead brother back to life. They invited Jesus to dinner, and Mary took a bottle of very expensive perfume and poured it on Jesus’ feet. It was a beautiful expression of her incredible gratitude. Another disciple — Judas, the unthankful thief and traitor — said “what a waste! We

could have sold that perfume and given it to the poor (as if he cared for the poor!)

Jesus said, *“Leave her alone!... The poor you have always with you, but you will not always have me.”* Now, just think about what that simple act of thankfulness would have meant to Jesus! He was human, after all, which means he had all the same basic human desires we do, including the desire to feel appreciated.



Mark gives us a little more of a sense of what that would have meant to Jesus, if we assume the two episodes to be the same.

*“But Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done*

*will be told in memory of her’ ”*  
(Mark 14:6-9).

That humble act had a pretty significant impact on Jesus — he wanted the whole world to know about it, and what an example of thankfulness she was.

### **True Thankfulness**

We come now to share the symbols of Jesus’ sacrifice by partaking of this bread and wine; and we are reminded of that one thing for which, above all things, we need to be truly thankful, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for our sins.

We need to be a people who are known for our thankfulness. This is especially true in our homes, with our spouses, our children, and our parents. It is true, not only because of the change it can bring about in those around us, but because of the change it can bring to our own lives and hearts.

*“And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”* (Col 3:14-17).

Dan Garan  
(Orlando, FL)



Bible Study.

# ALL GOD'S CHILDREN HAVE NAMES (PART 7)

## Beloved Brothers and Sisters

Fellow Workers and Friends. (*Romans 16:8-12*)

### Romans 16:8-10

Historians tell us that Ampliatus, Urbanus, Stachys and Apelles are all common slave names found in the staff of the imperial household.

When writing to the Philippian church, Paul — who was probably in Rome — sent them greetings from “*all the saints... especially those who belong to Caesar’s household*” (*Phil 4:22*). The phrase “Caesar’s household” might refer only to the actual relatives of Caesar, but would generally refer to a much larger number which included the staff — servants and freedmen in the imperial household — as well as the relatives.

J.B. Lightfoot made a study of burial inscriptions of imperial establishments available in his time (*St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians*, London, 1879, pp. 171-178). He determined that a number of the names found in Romans 16 were also found in those inscriptions. Since *Phil 4:22* mentions “*saints... who belong to Caesar’s household*”, it is reasonable that some of the lesser-known saints mentioned from this point forward in Romans 16 may have been slaves in Caesar’s royal household.

### Romans 16:8 Greet Ampliatus

This is “Amplias” in the KJV, which is a contraction of Ampliatus — the



latter being the reading in the best New Testament texts. The Latin name means “enlarged”, similar to the English word amplify. Again, as in the mention of Epenetus (v. 5), Paul expresses his very warm personal attachment. This demonstrates the reality and depth of Christian friendship that developed between him and others who remain rather obscure to us. Paul was a man who gave himself in love to the people among whom he served, and to those who worked alongside him. If for no other reason, they encouraged and strengthened him merely by returning his love!

William Barclay writes:

“Behind the name of Ampliatus may well lie an interesting story. It is a quite common slave name. Now in the Roman cemetery of Domatilla, which is the earliest of the Christian catacombs, there is a decorated tomb with the single name Ampliatus carved on it in bold and decorative lettering. The fact that the single name Ampliatus alone is carved on the tomb — Romans who were citizens would have three names — would indicate that this Ampliatus was a slave; but the elaborate tomb and the bold lettering would indicate that he was a man of high rank in the church. From that it is plain to see that in the early days of the church the distinctions of rank were so completely wiped out that it was possible for a man at one and the same time to be a slave and [an elder] of the church. Social distinctions did

not exist. We have no means of knowing that Paul’s Ampliatus is the Ampliatus in the cemetery of Domatilla, but it is not impossible that he is.” (Daily Study Bible: Romans 16)

**In the Lord:** Perhaps we read this simple phrase so often that we lose the impact of it. “In the Lord [Greek *‘kyrios’*]” occurs frequently, particularly in Paul’s writings, and means the same as “in Jesus Christ”:

- Paul affirms and exhorts “in the Lord” (Eph 4:17);
- he loves “in the Lord” (Rom 16:8);
- people are received “in the Lord” (Rom 16:2; Phil 2:29);
- the ecclesia rejoices “in the Lord” (Phil 3:1);
- it stands firm “in the Lord” (Phil 4:1);
- it works “in the Lord” (Rom 16:12); and
- it greets one another “in the Lord” (Rom 16:22; 1Cor 16:19).
- Believers are to marry “in the Lord” (1 Cor 7:39);
- they are to be strong “in the Lord” (Eph 6:10); and
- to walk “in the Lord” (Col 2:6).
- Paul was a prisoner “in the Lord” (Eph 4:1).
- Our work is not in vain “in the Lord” (1 Cor 15:58).
- The believer has eternal life “in the Lord” (Rom 6:23); etc.

For believers in Jesus Christ, the whole of life, both in the present and the future, is organized around his absolute supremacy. Paul and his friends knew they were always

standing in the presence of, and under the protection of, their risen Lord — as though he were (which he was) the only eternal and immovable place of safety in a transient and dying world.

I am sure we would all agree that, of all the saints we know, Paul is the man whose example we might best follow. Surely those whom Paul loved “in the Lord” we should also love “in the Lord”! Those whom Paul greeted, received, exhorted, walked with, and worked with “in the Lord”, on the way to the Kingdom... we would surely have treated those same brothers and sisters in the same way Paul did. Do any of us doubt that this should be so?

Yet today we have factions — political parties, almost — in our brotherhood. We choose sides, and force others to choose sides also, on the basis of relatively minor differences: what Bible versions they read; how old they believe the earth to be; which interpretations they embrace of future events outlined in Revelation or Daniel or Ezekiel; how they dress; what holidays they observe; or what they eat, or do not eat!

Then we treat brothers and sisters on the “other side” of our pathetic little self-imposed divides as something less than truly “in the Lord”, certainly not nearly so much “in the Lord” as our own specially favored ones —

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with whom we agree 100%! “My brethren, *such things ought not so to be*” (Jas 3:10, KJV). I have no doubt at all that the great apostle, if he were in our midst this very day, would never cease to remind us that we should “*destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died*” (Rom 14:15, KJV). Nor should we “destroy” our brothers and sisters “in the Lord” with our clothing requirements, or with our prophetic predictions, or our Bible versions, or our specialized use of Hebrew and Greek, or any of a hundred minor issues, or else we will be like those whom Christ said “*neglected the most important matters of the law — justice, mercy, and faithfulness... [so that they might] strain out a gnat but swallow a camel*” (Matt 23:23,24).

**Romans 16:9** Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

**Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ:** The KJV renders this as “*Urbane*”. This is another Latin name, meaning “refined” or “elegant”.

Paul seems to indicate that this man helped him at some time in the past and that he assisted others also in the work of the Lord. He is the only believer in Rome other than Aquila and Priscilla (v 3) whom Paul expressly called a “*synergos*”, i.e., a fellow worker or co-worker.

**And my dear friend Stachys:** This name signifies “ear of grain”. Was

this brother a farmer? Otherwise, we know nothing else about this believer, except that he was dearly loved (“*agapetos*”) by the great apostle.

**Romans 16:10** Greet Apelles, tested and approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

**Greet Apelles:** The word means “separate”.

**Tested and approved:** “Tested and approved” translates one word in the Greek text here: “*dokimos*” (see Rom 14:18; 1 Cor 11:19; 2 Cor 10:18; 13:7; 2 Tim 2:15). In 1 Pet 1:7 a related word, “*dokimazo*”, is used of gold that has been put through the smelting fire, and purified (see also Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 3:13; 11:28; 2 Cor 8:8; etc.). Had Apelles come through some severe persecution with his faith intact, or even strengthened?

**Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus:** There is no Greek equivalent for “household”, either here or in verse 11. The literal phrase is “those of Aristobulus”, or “those of Narcissus” (see also 1 Cor 1:11).

“Aristobulus” signifies “great counselor”, which sounds like a government official. Those of his household were probably his slaves. Since Paul did not greet Aristobulus himself — even as he did not greet Narcissus personally in verse 11 — this man may have been an unbeliever, or may have died by this time.

Lightfoot identified Aristobulus as the grandson of Herod the Great, who lived in Rome and apparently died there. Those addressed would then be his slaves and employees

*Those whom Paul greeted, received, exhorted, walked with, and worked with “in the Lord”, on the way to the Kingdom... we would surely have treated those same brothers and sisters in the same way Paul did.*



who had become Christians. On the other hand, if this identification is incorrect, we must think of an otherwise unknown figure whose family is mentioned here. The former alternative is somewhat favored by the fact that the next person to be greeted (v. 11) is Herodion, a name suggestive of association with, or admiration for, the family of Herod. Even though no actual relationship may have existed, the placing of the two names with Herodian association so close together may support Lightfoot's thesis. (Everett F. Harrison, *Expositor's Bible Commentary*,)

**Romans 16:11** Greet Herodion, my relative. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

**Greet Herodion, my relative:** Here "relative" ("kinsman": KJV; Greek "*suggenes*", meaning: same family) may simply mean a Jew, or perhaps a Benjamite.

**Greet those in the household of Narcissus:** Again, as with "the household of Aristobulus" (v. 10), this phrasing suggests that Narcissus was not a believer, but that some of his "household" of slaves and servants were "in the Lord". Obviously, what William Barclay says below can only be, as he admits, speculation — but it is possible:

"The household of Narcissus" may have [an] interesting story behind it. Narcissus was a common name, but the most famous Narcissus was a freedman who had been secretary to Emperor Claudius and had

exercised a notorious influence over him. He was said to have amassed [an enormous] private fortune. His power had lain in the fact that all correspondence addressed to the Emperor had to pass through his hands and never reached him unless he allowed it to do so. He made his fortune from the fact that people paid him large bribes to make sure that their petitions did reach the Emperor. When Claudius was murdered and Nero came to the throne, Narcissus survived for a short time, but in the end he was compelled to commit suicide, and all his fortune and all his household of slaves passed into Nero's possession. It may well be his one-time slaves who are referred to here. If Aristobulus really is the Aristobulus who was the grandson of Herod, and if Narcissus really is the Narcissus who was Claudius' secretary, this means that many of the slaves at the imperial court were already Christians. The leaven of Christianity had reached the highest circles in the Empire."

**Who are in the Lord:** This phrase modifies the previous phrase, that is: Paul is greeting, not the whole of Narcissus' household, but all those who were "in the Lord". This indicates a divided household, with some "in the Lord", i.e., giving allegiance to Christ, while others had no connection with Christ.

**Romans 16:12:** Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear

friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

**Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord:**

Similar in name, these two were probably sisters, maybe even twins if judged by the similarity of their names. It was not uncommon then, as now, to give children, especially twins, similarly sounding names (e.g., Jean and Joan). Possibly they belonged to an aristocratic family, since “dainty” and “delicate” (or “luxuriating”), as their names mean, would seem to fit this category. If so, their Christian convictions led them to put aside any tendency to live a life of ease. Ironically, Paul praises these two sisters for not living up — or down — to their given names, but rather for being hard workers in the Lord’s cause:

*“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:17).*

**Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord:** Her name simply means “a Persian lady”, so this could well be a nickname or title: ‘the woman from Persia’. “Dear friend” is the Greek “*agapetoi*”, meaning one who is especially beloved.


The same words for “work hard” (Greek “*ekopiasen*” and “*polla*”) are used in verse 6 of Mary, and again here in verse 12 of three other women, sisters in the Lord. Is it coincidental that in this chapter Paul uses it of four believers, and they are all sisters in Christ?

In congregations of believers, women are often the hardest workers. Men may spend much of their time pondering deep and meaningful Scriptural things, and those are certainly very important. At the same time, women may often ponder such matters too, while at the same time they are also occupied with caring for the household, the children, the meals, and various other needs of believers and acquaintances.

Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were a song and dance team in movies and stage productions from the 1930s to the 1950s. Astaire was the headliner, with Ginger Rogers generally perceived as following his lead. Their partnership inspired a famous line, which described their relative roles, as well as the effort expended by Rogers to keep up with her male partner. It was said that *Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did, except she did it backwards and in high heels!* There are quite a number of wives who fill a similar role with their husbands in the ecclesias: both may be working hard in the Lord, but we may be certain that one partner in the relationship is working harder than the other!

George Booker  
(Austin Leander, TX)





Sunday School.

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## Ready-to-Use Bible Concordance Activities (#2)

Bible apps have largely replaced the hardcopy resources used by past generations of Bible students. Today, students can access an entire library of study aids on a small hand-held device. It is possible to find anything you want with the click of a button or the touch of a screen. Bible study has never been easier, and this is good.

It doesn't hurt, though, for students to be familiar with the physical resources that stand behind it all. The activities last month and this are designed to focus on one of these: the King James Bible concordance. The activities are intended to be done with Young's and Strong's concordances open on the table. Afterward, students can go back to their Bible apps with a better appreciation of how they really work.

### Activity # 4

#### Finding Passages in the King James Bible

Here is a significant Bible prophecy of the resurrection of Christ:

*"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."*

The passage can be found by looking up any of the words in a King James concordance. But some words are easier to search than others. Which of these words would you look up in the concordance to find this passage as quickly as possible? Why?

#### SOUL HELL HOLY CORRUPTION

- Look at the passage again. What other word might you look up to get quick results?

- Use a King James concordance and find where the passage is located. How many answers are there?

Here is a Bible passage with an important message about salvation:

*“Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”*

- What word would you look up in a concordance to find where this passage is located? (There is no right or wrong answer to this question, so pick a word that will let you find the passage as quickly as possible.)
- Use a King James concordance and find the passage.

## Activity # 5

### Word Studies with Strong's Concordance

Look up the word **everlasting** in the concordance.

- Which Gospel writer uses this word more than the others? What is he talking about when he uses the word?
- What is the New Testament Strong's Number for *everlasting*?
- Find this Strong's Number in the Greek Dictionary at the back of the concordance. The corresponding Greek word is *aionios*. What does it mean?
- How else is this Greek word translated in the King James New Testament?
- Now look up the word *eternal* in the concordance. Which Gospel

writer uses this word more than the others? What is he talking about when he uses the word?

- What do you notice about the Strong's number for *eternal*?
- Which of the four Gospels is the Gospel of unending life?

Look up the word **world** in the concordance.

- How many different Greek words are translated *world* in the King James New Testament? What are their Strong's Numbers?
- Which of these words (Strong's Numbers) is used most often in the New Testament?

Find Strong's Number **2889** in the Greek Dictionary at the back of the concordance.

- The corresponding Greek word is *kosmos*.
- What does it mean?

Sometimes the dictionary definition of a Bible word can be a bit hard to understand. It is always a good idea to see how the word is actually used in the Bible if we want to get a better idea of what it means. Let's do this with the word *kosmos*.

Look up the following passages and answer the questions.

- Matt 18:7 – What *world* is accountable for committing offenses?
- Mark 16:15 – What *world* has creatures that need to hear the gospel?
- Luke 12:29-30 – What *world* has nations that are preoccupied with food and drink?

- John 1:29 – What *world* has sin that needs to be taken away?
- Rom 3:19 – What *world* is guilty before God?
- 1 Cor 1:21 – What *world* has its own wisdom?

Look again at the word *world* in the main body of the concordance. Confirm the fact that *kosmos* is used in all six of these passages.

Now, based on how the word *world* (*kosmos*) is used in these passages, what do you think it means? Circle one.

world = the planet Earth

world = plants and animals

world = mankind

world = something else

When studying a Bible passage, a bit of concordance work often turns up other helpful passages that are not included in the cross-references. Let's see this by looking at Psa 37:11.

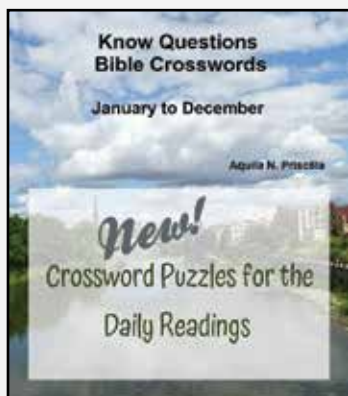
*But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

This is a wonderful Old Testament promise that Jesus repeats to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:5). But who are the meek? What kind of person is meek? These are questions worth exploring in the Bible. It's time to do a little concordance work.

- Find **meek** (Psa 37:11) in the concordance.
- What is its Strong's Number?
- From what Hebrew word is it translated?
- What does it mean?
- How else is this Hebrew word translated in the KJV Old Testament?

Find the other places where the same Hebrew word is used in the Old Testament. Identify two or three of these passages that help you better understand what it means to be meek in a biblical sense.

Jim Harper  
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(Meriden, CT)



## BOOK REVIEW

**Now available!** *Know Questions Bible Crosswords, January to December*, by Aquila N. Priscilla, can be obtained from Lulu ([www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)) for \$16.00.

This coil-bound book has 365 crossword puzzles based on the daily Bible readings (Bible Companion by Bro. Robert Roberts). Individuals and families will enjoy doing the puzzles and seeing how much they remember from each day's Bible readings.



Reflection.

# THE FAITH THAT CONQUERS

## Part 1: The Thrill of Victory: *Faith Wins Every Battle*

We need a renaissance of faith in our Community of believers. I am ever more convinced of this as I talk to people and observe what is happening within and without our Community. This four-part series explores four critical aspects of the faith that needs to grow in us. The series is the result of several years of thinking and study on the faith God wants us to have. The four aspects are:

1. **The Thrill of Victory: *Faith Wins Every Battle*.** The faith that conquers knows every battle will be won — because the battle is the Lord's.
2. **Against All Odds: *Faith Changes Everything*.** The faith that conquers knows calm in every

storm — because things are not what they seem.

3. **The Golden Key: *Refined Faith Saves Us*.** The faith that conquers knows it will be tested, but realizes our trust in Him is what truly saves us.
4. **In It for Life: *Faith Perseveres*.** The faith that conquers knows to persevere, since victory comes to those whose faith never quits.

### Why This Matters

Faith is no small subject. It is transcendentally important. Three vital points make the case.

1. *Faith lies at the very core of our relationship with our heavenly Father.* It is what He seeks from

us. The writer to the Hebrews cannot say it more plainly: *“Without faith it is impossible to please God”* (Heb 11:6). There is no equivocation on the matter of faith, no room to wonder. If we have it, we please God. If we do not, we cannot.

2. *Faith is the most important thing we do in this life.* Yes, good Bible scholars may immediately turn to 1 Corinthians 13 and claim love as the greatest of faith, hope and love. But love is eternal. Faith is the critical element of this life that leads us to eternity (an essential point we will explore more deeply in Part 3). Our mortal life is a long journey with one crossroad after another. At every turning point the question we face is remarkably simple: Trust in your own instinct and insight or trust God? This is the very essence of faith, described

in stark relief in the wisdom of Solomon’s pen:

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your path”* (Prov. 3:5-6 NKJV).

3. *Faith is under assault.* Twenty-first century America is becoming a place ever more hostile to faith in the Almighty. Secular humanism rules our educational system, from kindergarten to university campuses. But it is worse than that. Media, entertainment, government and even sports have adopted a muscular progressive agenda, often proclaiming that those who uphold a Biblical view are bigots. University campuses, once paragons of free thought and speech, are becoming one-way streets away from God.



***“Faith is under assault. Twenty-first century America is becoming a place ever more hostile to faith in the Almighty.”***



This hostile world is especially harsh on young, tender plants. The faith of our youth is at risk — a huge risk. It is time for us not only to understand the threat but also to do something about it. We must nurture faith in very difficult conditions. I am confident we are up to the challenge.

## The Thrill of Victory

Each day we are surrounded by powerful brands. They are on the food we eat, the cars we drive, the clothes we wear, the soap with which we wash our hands. Two of these brands are now trillion-dollar companies — Amazon and Apple. Additionally, McDonalds, Starbucks and Coca-Cola are but a few of the other brands unavoidable in daily life.

Yet none of these is the brand most recognized around the world. Consumer research reveals the brand consumers recognize more than any other is one you put on your feet —



Nike. The Nike swoosh is immediately recognizable to consumers all around the world. They associate it with winning athletes and a spirit that you really can do anything if you “just do it.”

I doubt the founders of Nike picked the company name for any reason other than they knew some Greek and held an affinity for the Greek

notion of victory. One has to wonder, though, if the God on high is not offering people of faith a subliminal exhortation through daily encounters with all those swooshes.

*Nike* is a very important word in scripture, and it has a powerful connection with faith. A bedrock passage comes from the Apostle John, who holds the special place of writing the gospel with the strongest emphasis on “believe” and “belief.”

*“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5).*

That word victory is the Greek word *nike*. Our faith gives us the victory — over the whole world. That is how important faith is. But that single English word victory in the passage fails in doing justice to the rich power of *nike*. Here is the same passage with the key underlying Greek words transliterated:

*“For everyone who has been born of God **nika** (3528) the world. And this is the **nike** (3529) that has **nikesasa** (3528) the world — our faith. Who is it that **nikon** (3528) the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5).*

Our English word “overcome” also comes from the Greek root *nike*. All three “overcomes” in this passage are the same Greek word, Strong’s number 3528. Regardless of the ending, the core Greek word is a sibling derivative of *nike*.



The simple, powerful point is this: *Faith brings victory — the thrill of victory.* Faith overcomes the world — every struggle, every battle, all lifelong. It gives us the right path to take at every crossroad — every time. Faith gives us the greatest victory of all, a triumph over the greatest enemy each of us faces. We cannot avoid this enemy. He is waiting for each of us.

*“We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye... then shall come to pass the saying... ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?’ ... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:51-57).*

Here is that same Greek word *nike* in the Bible’s grand chorus of victory. Our victory comes through Jesus. But our faith is what connects us to that great power.

## Victory through Faith

Stories of faith and victory are numerous in Scripture, but a New Testament passage with a dual victory is especially instructive. Right after Jesus had driven the demons from Legion into a herd of swine he gets in a boat and sails to the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. There, he is met by a throng of people. News of his miracles has spread like wildfire.

One of those inching closer to Jesus is a ruler of the local synagogue, Jairus. His beloved daughter is gravely ill. He believes Jesus can heal her and so he approaches Jesus:

*“Seeing [Jesus], he fell at his feet, and besought him, saying, ‘My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live’” (Mark 5:22-24).*

The entire Jewish hierarchy vigorously opposed Jesus. That means Jairus

came at no small risk to himself. But that did not dissuade him, because he genuinely believed this man could heal his daughter. Jesus agrees to go with him. As they walk, a woman weaves her way through the crowd, low to the ground. She is an outcast, a woman who has suffered for 12 years with a hemorrhage. Despite the madding throng, she will not be deterred. For she was convinced: *"If I only touch his garment, I shall be made well"* (Matt 9:20). She presses forward and touches the hem of his garment. Immediately, Mark says, *"the hemorrhage ceased"* (Mark 5:29).

Jesus suddenly stopped and proclaimed: *"Who touched me?"* (Mark 5:30). The apostles, no doubt trying to help him make his way through the throng are incredulous. *All these people and you wonder who touched you? It's a throng!* But Jesus won't move.


Finally, the woman came forward in fear, falling at his feet.

*"[She] came in fear and trembling and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. And he said*

*to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease' "* (Mark 5:33-34).

For 12 years, this poor woman had used all her meager savings in the vain pursuit of a cure. No one could heal her. Now she was healed in a flash. Was the hem of Jesus' robe a magic talisman? No. Jesus explains exactly why she was healed: her faith. God's power, her *faith*. Immediately, one of Jairus' servants stepped forward with the terrible news: Your daughter is dead. Jesus was too late. There was no need to go now. Yet Jesus knew better. He knew that faith can produce victory even when all seems lost. And so, he repeated to Jairus the lesson he had just shared with the outcast woman:

*"Ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler, 'Do not fear, only believe.' Taking her by the hand he said to her ... "Little girl, I say to you, arise.' And immediately the girl got up and walked ... and they were immediately overcome with amazement"* (Mark 5:36-42).



*"Faith brings the thrill of victory.  
It is one of the soaring themes of Scripture.  
But scripture offers a warning, too —  
the agony of defeat."*

Amazement indeed. Faith overcomes the greatest enemy of all—death. Jairus’ faith and God’s power brought victory. Just like the woman who touched his hem. *Just like us.*

## The Agony of Defeat

Faith brings the thrill of victory. It is one of the soaring themes of Scripture. But scripture offers a warning, too — the agony of defeat. Those of you who remember sports on television before ESPN will recall ABC’s top-rated sports show, *The Wide World of Sports*. Each Saturday it covered major sporting events around

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the world. The show always began with these words of Jim McKay: “Spanning the globe to bring you the constant variety of sport, the thrill of victory and the agony

of defeat.” Remember the ski jumper who typified the agony of defeat?

Scripture offers several warnings on defeat, but perhaps none is more instructive than Moses and Israel at the Jordan ready to go into the Promised Land. This incident is put forward in Hebrews 11 as the antithesis of faith. Israel was on the very cusp of crossing the finish line. They had been released from 400 years of slavery through God’s powerful hand. They were led by the awesome symbols of God’s power, the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of

fire by night, across a vast wilderness. Now they were at the very door.

They decided to send in 12 spies, one from each tribe. Ten returned with an ominous report. The land is full of giants and fortified cities. We should not attack because “*they are stronger than we are*” (Num 13:31). Joshua and Caleb presented a very different report. The land is flowing with milk and honey. It is an exceedingly good land. “*We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it*” (Num 13:30).

The report pointed in two very different directions. A wave of fear swept across the camp. As it crested, Joshua stepped forward:

*“If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land... do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them”* (Num 14:8-9 NIV).

The miracles they had witnessed in the wilderness were long forgotten. Fear swamped faith. Not only did the people reject Joshua’s appeal to faith, they picked up stones and were ready to stone him and Caleb.

They wandered in the wilderness 40 long years. Everyone one who was there at that critical moment died in the wilderness. All except two — Joshua and Caleb. The real messengers of faith.

The agony of defeat comes not from the size of the adversary. It comes not from our lack of skill. It comes from

one thing and one thing only — *lack of faith*. The words of Hebrews should ring loud in our ears:

*“They were unable to enter because of unbelief” (Heb 3:19).*

## A Nike Parable

Scripture provides another important footnote to the thrill of victory. In fact, it is a victory parable from a man who bears the very word *nike* in his name — Nicodemus. In the Greek, his name is *nike demos*, which literally means “conqueror of the people.” (*Demos* is the root in our English word, democracy.)

Nicodemus held a highly honored position in the Jewish hierarchy — a Master Teacher. (Think of this as a sort of endowed professor at Harvard University today, as well as his likely role as leader of the Sanhedrin.) Somehow, he had heard of Jesus’ teaching. Intrigued, he wanted to know more. But he knew that all of his peers viewed Jesus as a threat to their Jewish world. Many of them wanted Jesus removed from the picture. So, Nicodemus went secretly to Jesus by night, his fear overcoming his fledgling faith. Jesus provides Nicodemus the gospel in miniature — that you must be born of water and of spirit to enter the kingdom of God. That *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believes might not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).*

Nicodemus leaves Jesus, his head spinning. What happened to his faith? John alone mentions him. There is one tantalizing mention in John 7, when Nicodemus finds some courage with his Pharisee peers. They

have sent out guards to seize Jesus and the guards returned without Jesus. How could you not seize him, the chief priests ask? Were you, too, deceived? Nicodemus steps up and poses a simple question: *“Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?” (John 7:51).* Nicodemus is no longer in the shadows, but his faith is still not complete.

The full measure of Nicodemus’ faith comes at a pivotal moment. Jesus has breathed his last on the cross. The Jews and the Romans, it would seem, have won the battle. The Apostles, except for John, have all forsaken Jesus and fled. At this dire point, two faithful men step forward to bury their Lord. One was a wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathea.

The other was Nicodemus. His faith was now big and strong. He no longer cared what his pious Pharisee peers thought. He put his trust squarely in the God of Abraham and His son. And so, with loving hands and faithful heart, he carried his Lord to the tomb.

Nike Demos. He conquered his fear. He found the thrill of victory that faith alone supplies.

## The Victory of Faith

God puts us at one crossroads after another in our life. At every juncture, the question is the same: Will you trust your own instinct or trust God? One path offers a Nike we see very often: *Just do it*. Do it your way — an intoxicating message that goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. But we all know where this path leads: *“There is a way which seems right to*



*a man, but its end is the way to death” (Prov 14:12).*

The other path offers a very different *nike*: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths” (Prov 3:5-6 NKJV). We all know where this path leads, to the same victory Jesus promised Nike Demos. It leads to everlasting life.

Faith always brings victory. Will it come in the way you expect? No. Will it always be for our good? Yes. Will it be an eternal victory? Yes! Will it make our life richer in ways we cannot anticipate? Yes.

What does all this mean for us? Four conclusions stand out:

- We share a fabulous story of victory — it should bind us together — like winning always does. Are we acting like a victorious team with an aura of joy and gladness? Or are we riven by loss?
- We must prepare for the crossroads, knowing they will come. Our faith is tested every time we reach a juncture. Trust in yourself or trust in God? This is not a bar exam on your theology.

*It is a test of your trust in the Almighty.* That should be a critical focus for us.

- Faith-filled ‘decision and doing’ are especially critical to our youth. We are not paying enough attention to supplying them with the best tools they need when they stand in the crossroad.
- When we fully understand faith’s thrill of victory, we become a hopeful, optimistic people. We are witness to a depressed world.

I hope that every time you now see a Nike swoosh you will think about the real victory that faith provides. The Apostle Paul’s words offer further urging. Let us grow our faith, secure in the knowledge that it is faith and faith alone that brings the thrill of victory.

*“I have heard of your faith ... may [our Father] give you a spirit of wisdom ... having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know ... what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe” (Eph 1:15-19).*

*Mark Drabenstott  
(Kansas City, MO)*

**“Let us grow our faith, secure in the knowledge that it is faith and faith alone that brings the thrill of victory.”**



Bible Study.

# LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## The All Powerful God

**We all know the stories, and no matter how many times we read them they seem incredible.**

First Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego refuse to worship the idol created by King Nebuchadnezzar (under whose authority they were serving in exile) and they were thrown ‘into the midst of a burning fiery furnace’. You recall that on account of their miraculous deliverance, their oppressor himself gave recognition and paid deference to the God of all the earth:

*“Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed*

*the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God. Therefore, I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort” (Dan 3:28-29).*

Later on in the Book of Daniel, our protagonist is Daniel himself and he comes into direct contradiction with an unalterable decree by King Darius,

“...that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O King, he shall be cast into the den of lions” (Dan 6:7). And because Daniel was steadfast in his habit of prayer three times a day, he fell right into the trap set by his enemies, and was thrown into the lions’ den.

Because God was faithful, Daniel emerged unhurt, but what is poignant about this story is the reaction of King Darius who is first “sore displeased with himself” and purposed to deliver Daniel at all costs. King Darius is firm in his belief that Daniel’s God would be able to save the King and Daniel, then spent all night fasting and praying for Daniel’s deliverance, which he rejoiced to see. After casting the adversaries to the lions, King Darius made a decree:

*“... that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions” (Dan 6:26-27).*

What great belief! What great obedience! What great faith! What a GREAT GOD!

What about us? Can we see ourselves demonstrating the level of belief, obedience and faith of Shadrach, Meschach, Abednego and Daniel — “the faithful four”? Are we able to stand up on a daily basis for our

belief? Are we able to have complete confidence and trust in God that no matter how bleak the circumstance, we know that we can count on His deliverance?

## **The making of our own incredible story**

I submit to you, that our capacity or ability to emulate Shadrach, Meschach, Abednego and Daniel can only find potential in seeking Godly wisdom and understanding, eschewing the things that are not of God and immersing ourselves in the habit of prayer.

When Belteshazzar (Daniel), Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meschach) and Azariah (Abednego) were chosen out of all the captives to stand in King Nebuchadnezzar’s palace, they were selected because they were “skillful in all wisdom and cunning in knowledge” (Dan 1:4). The King certainly felt that these men would have been the perfect candidates to convert to the learning of the Chaldeans. But they were steeped in wisdom greater than man’s wisdom for “God gave them knowledge and skill and all learning and wisdom” (Dan 1:17). The confidence which this knowledge inspired was responsible, in large part, for the acts of belief and obedience that were exercised by these four.

We are therefore encouraged to fortify ourselves with the Word of God, and while the Book of Daniel gives us live examples of reliance on the Word, there are many injunctions throughout the Bible that tell us how crucially significant it is for us to grow

in Godly wisdom and understanding, just a few of which are cited below:

*“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding” (Prov 4:7).*

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” (Prov 9:10).*

*“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD” (Jer 9:23-24).*

The Apostle Paul when speaking to the Ephesus brethren in Acts 20:32 said: *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up,*

*and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”.*

It is therefore clear that knowledge and understanding of God through His Word, and acting in concert with that wisdom, invites God’s favor toward us and positions us to grasp, with both hands, our inheritance as joint-heirs with the resurrected Christ Jesus and as children of God.

### **Turning from the things that are not of God**

Armed with Godly wisdom and understanding therefore, we are better equipped to “turn from, avoid and pass by” those things that are not of God. In so doing, like the faithful four, we turn from those things, even if we could gain some great earthly benefit or standing with man. In the case of the faithful four, they refused to eat of the king’s meat because they saw it as defiling themselves. We too must practice considering those things that are not of God, as defiling of our true status in God. If we look closely at the Daniel in the Lions’ Den account, we will notice that Daniel

*...there are many injunctions throughout the Bible that tell us how crucially significant it is for us to grow in Godly wisdom and understanding...*



actually knew that the decree had been signed, and he thought nothing of his standing within the King's realm, ("preferred above presidents and princes"), and what impact defying the decree could have on his position. He continued to pray his thrice daily obeisance to God.

We need to insulate ourselves from the heat of the fire and the fierceness of the lions in our lives. We do this by being fully persuaded, that in the knowledge and understanding of God and His will, we have an ironclad shield that thwarts the impact of the things that would imperil us. As the Word says, *"we put on the whole armour of God, so that we are able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand"* (Eph 6:11,13).

We are not naïve. We know that it is true to human nature, that even after we have immersed ourselves in the Word, and we have gained the confidence that comes from God proving His faithfulness in our lives, we at times lose our focus. So when we are reading about the missteps of the children of Israel, even with all that God did for them, let us read with the understanding that we bear their very nature. But guess what? God remains faithful, He cannot change, so again He comes to our rescue:

*"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor 10:13).*

It is true we sometimes feel as though we are missing out, especially when it seems that some of the things that are not of God are really just harmless stuff, so why not indulge? Let us not be deceived. To do so would be a slippery slope to destruction. Let us stick with the example provided by the faithful four who refused the king's meat and yet their countenances were *"fairer and fatter"* than those who ate of it. To take this a little further, the faithful four's stance in this situation eventually resulted in their promotion in the King's realm, reminiscent of the words of Prov 16:7 that *"when a man's way pleases the LORD he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him"*. Surely, there is no contest here.

### Putting on the habit of prayer

The Bible tells us that *"men ought always to pray and not to faint"* (Luke 18:1). It also assures us that *"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"* (Jas 5:16). We certainly see that to be true of Daniel's situation! Do we make time to pray? Or do we let the fury of the fires of this life overwhelm us so much that we forget the power there is in prayer? Before we get to the point where we grow weary of our circumstances, before we get ready to give up, before we faint in the way, we need to pray. Prayer refreshes us, it arms us for the struggle and for the battle. In prayer, we regain our confidence and assurance that God is in control and will never leave us nor forsake us.



*In prayer, we regain our confidence and assurance that God is in control and will never leave us nor forsake us.*

Our first thought or course of action, in any fiery furnace or lions' den situation, must be to pray. Certainly this only becomes our default position if we had been practicing and adopting this position as a habit, as Daniel clearly shows. This done, we can assuredly come simply and humbly before Him, time after time, withholding nothing as the Word invites us to do:

*"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil 4:6).*

A complementary and essential companion to prayer is worship. I have been told that nothing lifts our mood more than having a tune on our lips and a hum in our hearts. Since I was a young girl, I have experienced my grandmother and mother beginning their daily devotion time with "*psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*". Prayer and worship are the dynamic duo that calls on God to act on our behalf. And even as I write this, I am reminded of a simple, yet powerful song from my Sunday school days:

*Whisper a prayer in the morning*

*Whisper a prayer at noon*

*Whisper a prayer in the evening*

*So keep you heart in tune*

*God answers prayer in the morning*

*God answers prayer at noon*

*God answers prayer in the evening*

*So keep your heart in tune*

So, let prayer and worship provide us those special times of refreshing throughout the day when our spirit meets with the Omniscient, Omnipresent, Almighty God, the Great I AM!

### **Vessels in God's service**

In thinking about these perspectives from the Book of Daniel, we should remain conscious that the lessons therein are not only for us as children of God. We need to remind ourselves that God is "*not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Pet 3:9). The lessons of God's might, as well as His jealous protection, salvation and redemption of those who fully trust in Him and obey Him, must have fully resonated with those who had lit and increased the heat of the fire, and had charge over the fury of the lions. (Even as some perished in the heat of the fire.) We therefore, as children of God, ought to be cognizant of the role we play in God's great plan for the lives of others, and consistently act so that His plan is fulfilled. May His grace and peace continue with us all.

*Nicolette Pattie Duke  
(Mount Grace, Tobago, WI)*





# Conscientious Objection in North America

*In part 8 Bro. Peter talks about the time between the wars in the US.*

## Introduction

After the chaos of WW1, “the war to end wars”, throughout the 1920s and much of the 1930s, pacifist sentiment was strong in the United States, and little thought was given to conscription in the Christadelphian community in North America. The only exception was a request by Julius Kahn, chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, who on Jan 8, 1920 invited the Christadelphians to appear before his committee. Allen Mowry of New Jersey (Unamended) drafted a letter, and William Tunstall of Worcester (Amended) was the spokesman. On Jan 13 the two attended: the full

record of the hearing is online<sup>1</sup>. Bro. Tunstall, after much discussion, made the following recommendation:

**A member (or child of a member) of a well-recognized religious sect or organization, or Sunday School thereof, which has been in existence for at least five years prior to the approval of this act and whose declared creed or principles during such period forbid its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of such sect or organization, but no person**

**so excepted shall be excepted from service in any capacity that by regulation shall be declared to be noncombatant, providing only that such noncombatant service shall be under civilian authority and direction and not under the military.**

This was, of course, only one of the numerous inputs into the government's deliberations, and little more was done until the 1930s.

### **Military Service Bulletins**

With the rise to power of Adolf Hitler in Germany, the fear of another war in Germany became strong. The British formed a new Military Service Committee in 1935, and the Spanish Civil war and the general situation in Europe caused a marked reduction in the pacifist sentiment both in Europe and the US. So the US committee, a joint effort of the Amended and Unamended, became active.

At this time, there were three distinct Christadelphian groups, the Amended, Unamended and Bereans: of these, the Amended fellowship was probably the smallest, and the Bereans cooperated only marginally with the joint committee.

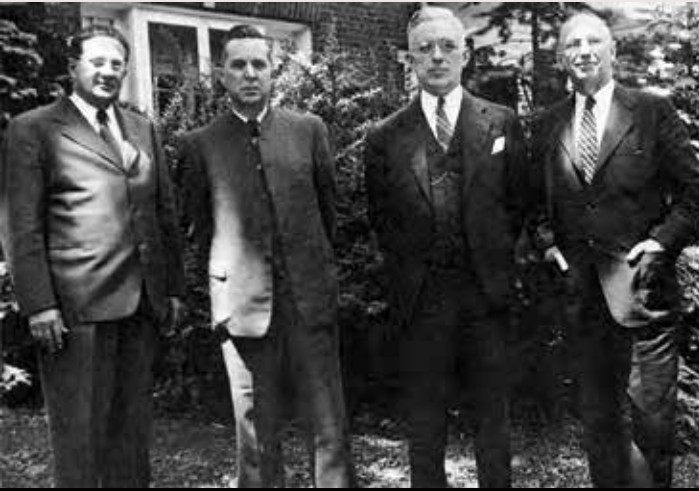
By 1940, as the probability of conscription increased, there were frequent contacts and visits between Committee members and the General Staff, although how much this influenced the eventual outcome is uncertain. Certainly, the authorities were well aware of it: there is a letter from General Hershey asking for the opinion of the Christadelphians on a paragraph in the Senate bill.

From about 1937 on, the Amended military service committee issued a series of bulletins detailing first the grounds for our beliefs, then their efforts with the government to ensure satisfactory treatment of members, and then instructions for those conscripted. Sometimes they were issued jointly with the Unamended. By the time the conscription bill below was passed, around 17 bulletins had been issued, and very detailed instructions were given to those drafted. By 1940, as the probability of conscription increased, there were frequent contacts and visits between Committee members and the General Staff, although how much this influenced the eventual outcome is uncertain.

### **The origin of the Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps<sup>2</sup>**

Congressional deliberations on the first peacetime draft in American history began during mid-1940. There was still a strong isolationist sentiment in segments of American society, and some politicians and military figures did not believe a draft would be feasible until the United States issued a declaration of war. However, Senator Edward Burke and Representative James Wadsworth sponsored conscription bills in their respective legislative chambers in June of 1940. Debates over the bill continued throughout the summer.

Ultimately, the Burke-Wadsworth Bill passed in September 1940 as the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940. The end result of the bill was both a victory and a disappointment for COs and those who represented



*Zigler, Church of the Brethren; Miller, Mennonite Church; Furnas, Quakers.*

their interests. Section 5(g) of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 read:

“Nothing contained in this act shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the land and naval forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to war in any form. Any such person claiming such exemption from combatant training and service because of such conscientious objections whose claim is sustained by the local board shall, if he is inducted into the land or naval forces under this act, be assigned to noncombatant service as defined by the President, or shall, if he is found to be conscientiously opposed to participation in such

noncombatant service, in lieu of such induction, be assigned to work of national importance under civilian direction.”

Section 5(g) was a victory for the CO lobby because it improved upon the First World War’s narrow definition of a conscientious objector. What remained was finding a form of alternative service

that fit the definition of “work of national importance.”

The historic peace Churches (Quakers, Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren) held a common view that any participation in military service was not acceptable, so they devised a plan of civilian alternative service, based on experience gained by American Friends (Quakers) Service Committee work in Europe during and after World War I, and forestry service that was done by Russian Mennonites in lieu of military service in Tsarist Russia.

As a result, the historic peace churches actually shaped the broad design. On their own initiative they asked to run the service program for their own members. They ultimately assumed the cost of maintenance for any CO, regardless of affiliation, but this was probably because President Roosevelt

**JOINT ARMY AND NAVY SELECTIVE SERVICE  
COMMITTEE**

Washington, D. C.  
Room 42, Army War College

AUGUST 1, 1940.

Mr. Wm. H. Scott, Secretary,  
Christadelphian Central Committee,  
19 Wigwam Place,  
Springfield, Massachusetts.

Dear Mr. Scott:

Your letter to Mr. Clason has been sent to me to note.

I am inserting the words of the Senate bill as it is now written in regard to conscientious objectors. This language was formulated in conjunction with representatives of the Quakers and one or two other groups. I should be most happy to know your reaction to it.

I think it is unnecessary for me to say that I am most anxious to arrive at some practical working solution to this problem in which your groups and all other groups can definitely and positively assist the government in carrying out a difficult operation.

Sincerely,

**LEWIS B. HERSHEY,**  
Major, General Staff  
Executive.

I do have copies of almost all.

## Conclusion

The system which developed in the United States was clearly a vast improvement over that in WW1, where there was no provision for those who objected to military service in any form. The CPS camp idea came together very late in the

process of writing the conscription act, and basically seemed designed to remove conscientious objectors from contact with the vast majority of the population, and from their home environment. (They could not be directed to a camp anywhere within 100 miles of their home.) It caused hardship for all those involved, particularly when they had wives or other dependents. We shall cover how they survived, and the fate of those not granted exemption, in the next article.

*Peter Hemingray  
(Pittsburgh, PA)*

himself threw out the conditions they initially advocated, which included government responsibility to pay for all COs except those who specifically and voluntarily offered to serve under private religious agencies. The churches accepted this pattern of CPS, as the best which could be gotten.

## Bulletins

As I have mentioned, the bulletins gave detailed instructions to those drafted. By the end of the war, about 52 had been issued, and of course, with the rapid re-introduction of the draft with the Korean War, the work continued. How far these bulletins were circulated, including as to whether the Unamended and Bereans were included, I do not know.

### Notes:

1. Army Reorganization: Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs, Vol II. Also see *The Advocate*, 1920, pages 87 and 109.
2. The main sources for this section are "http://civilianpublicservice.org" and "Conscription of Conscience" by Sibley and Jacob (1952), along with the Bulletins issued by the Christadelphian Central Committee.

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Brother Peter,

Many thanks for your wise and timely editorial, in the November 2019 issue, on Christadelphian interpretations of prophecy, which have proved to be false. Like you, I too have been alarmed when I read various Christadelphian event adverts on social media, from ecclesias that have held preaching efforts on Brexit and Bible Prophecy.

I've noted titles such as: "The Bible and Brexit: Will Brexit ever happen?"; "The Bible, Britain and Brexit". Such presentations normally have supporting blurb along the lines of: "...for centuries Christadelphians have understood that Britain must separate itself from a united Europe. Significantly, the language used is usually dogmatic (Britain 'must' separate itself) rather than tentative: might, perhaps, maybe.

A group of our young people in the UK even took banners along to a Brexit protest in London, which displayed a quote from John Thomas: "Europe as a united dominion... Britain cannot be included among them."

I do not doubt the sincerity of ecclesias using this approach, but it matters to all of us how we are viewed by those outside of our community. It important that our behavior does not cause unbelievers to "malign the word of God" (Rom 2:24, 1 Tim 6:1, Titus 2:5), but also that our preaching does not encourage a similar negative response. Our preaching should

always present a credible, bible-based view of the gospel of the Lord Jesus and his coming kingdom – without throwing in things which are debatable and could potentially distract people from accepting the Lord as their savior.

As a community, we need to acknowledge that Britain is not mentioned by name in scripture and that to connect Britain with Tarshish – however strong we feel the evidence is – must always remain an interpretation. We need to be humble and use tentative language when putting forward this suggestion: perhaps, possibly, maybe. Like the letter that you referenced from Brother Harry Tennant, I respectfully suggest that such topics should remain in the domain of household discussion. They should not be transferred into the preaching arena, where it might cause some to turn away without considering issues, which are far more important.

Our preaching focus should always be that of the apostles: "*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*" (1 Cor 15:3-4).

Thanks once again for pointing out the real dangers of using questionable interpretations of prophecy in our preaching activities.

Sarah Joiner (Portland, OR)

Dear Brother Peter,

Greetings in the name of our Lord.

I refer to an article in the magazine for December 2019 written by Sis. Sarah Joiner, Page 528.

I agree with most of the thinking in the article, which made me recall an article by Bro. John Thomas. In it, he points out that at the table of the Lord is an act for us personally/individually more than a combined matter. He was explaining that at some meetings in the States there was a judgmental attitude, i.e. I am not taking the plate or cup from so and so or passing it to so and so. This was a typical Christadelphian “Guilt by association” error, and there were meetings who got around it by each going to the table and partaking like the church.<sup>1</sup>

However, the last line of the article says — “In his death he redeemed all mankind”. As it stands that sentence is teaching universal salvation for all.

My understanding is that man could not redeem himself from the sin of Adam and God gave His Son as the sacrifice for sin. That sacrifice is only effective for and to those who accept Jesus and live the life of His example.

The opportunity was provided by God for all who love him through His Son.

This view fits Rom 5, Heb 9:12 “for us” who believe: see also Titus 2:14, 1 Pet 1:18. In Rev 5:9, the redeemed are only the called out ones.

The sentence reminds me of a recent Carol - *And man shall live for evermore because of Christmas day*. If that is what people believe there is no need to go to any church because they all get there regardless. and baptism is pointless.

Your Brother by Grace,

*Ernest Wisner (Peterborough, UK)*

### Reply by Editor

Myself and Sis. Sarah would like to thank you for your comments. The last line was actually added by myself, and was, I agree, an unfortunate phrasing. Of course I did not intend to imply universal salvation, only that Jesus made salvation available for all mankind, if only they believed and were baptized.

Notes:

1 See The Christadelphian, 1866, Pg. 221

Bro. Jim Harper would like to point out that in his article on “*The Joy of Sunday Schooling*” in the January Issue he erroneously stated in “Every King James word has a Strong’s Number”. Of course this is incorrect: it should have been: “every word in the original language of the text (Hebrew, Greek etc) has an associated Strong’s number, not every English word.”





Community.

# BIBLE MISSION

## News from the CBMA and the CBMC

Baptizing Individuals. Building Ecclesias.

### **PERU AND CHILE, NOV. 2019**

It was a joy to visit our brethren, sisters and friends in Peru and Chile. As usual, a series of lectures was held in the Hotel Kamaná in the historic center of Lima. The immensity of the city with its 10 million residents and heavy traffic has made it difficult to find a venue accessible to everyone. Different locations have been tried in other areas, but we always return to the dependable Kamaná, which was actually discovered by Bro. Robert Alderson of Auckland around the year 2005.

On our previous visit this year we discovered that none of the email invitations sent to the postal contacts

had been received, so for this occasion we tried a new mass-mailing system and about 800 were delivered. Lima has been one of the most fruitful sources of postal course requests in South America. It was very gratifying to have 19 visitors out to the talks, many attending them all, and we pray they may continue to develop. Sis. Gloria took charge of the smaller children, using coloring books, crayons and lots of chocolate to keep a half-dozen of them occupied during the lectures.

On Sunday the members met for the Breaking of Bread at the home of Bre. Flavio, Gloria and Nahuel, with several friends also attending.

Afterwards, the Sisters served a chicken lunch which included a traditional Peruvian dish called “causa,” a delicious and artistic version of what we might call potato salad.

From Lima we flew south to Santiago for three days, a little nervous about the social violence that had been occurring. Chile had been in an upheaval for a month after an attempt was made to raise subway fares. There were street demonstrations, looting and burning of supermarkets, subway stations disabled, smashed windows and lots of graffiti. On arriving at our hotel we saw hundreds of people running past with their faces covered or wearing gas masks, but the bulk of our visit was blessed with peace.

In spite of it all 4 friends showed up for classes during the day, though joint evening activities were not possible. One young woman came all 3 days, staying from 9 AM to 1:30 PM with an endless series of Bible

questions. Jim was able to have a good chat with her husband also, and had some good visits with our old friend Bro. Richard Castillo.

We pray God will continue to protect and guide the brethren, sisters and friends in both these countries.

*Written by Bro. Jim & Sis. Jean Hunter, Link Couple for several Spanish speaking Countries*

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



*Brothers and Sisters in Lima, Peru*



*Four New Sisters in El Salvador  
Ruth Trinidad, Alejandra Alfaro, Dina Rivera and Jacqueline Armas*

## **CONVIVENCIA, DEC. 2019**

The Annual Convivencia (Retreat) was held in December, with 98 attendees in total. Some couldn't make it for the whole weekend due to the holiday falling mid week, but did come Saturday evening and Sunday.

Bro. Jim Hunter's classes were based on the Sermon on the Mount for the adults and the young people's class (there were 23!) was a review of basic Bible teachings and "Why Should I Care?" – trying to show the Young People how the teachings should change our behavior, and they will if we REALLY believe them. It was a nice bunch of kids with good attitudes.

Saturday evening the CYC prepared an activity for everyone - you had to even let the littlest kids participate or your team was disqualified! It was a great way to really mix everyone up and have everyone looking out for the little kids. The teams had to each do 6 different competitions - all Bible based.

Afterwards the CYCers who organized it, each told us what the spiritual point was for each activity.

In the evening the Sunday schools did presentations/dramas/Hebrew dancing - really well done.

The four baptisms were Sunday morning in the freezing water of the hotel pool!

There were Brethren, Sisters and young people from Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, USA and Peru.

*Written by Bro. Jim & Sis. Jean Hunter, Link Couple for several Spanish speaking Countries*



Community.

# NEWS & UPDATES

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## SIMI HILLS, CA

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We were excited to witness the baptism of CAMRYN DE CAUSSIN, daughter of Bro. Dean and Sis. Nancy de Caussin and welcome her to our ecclesia.

Congratulations go out to Sis. Emily Amis and Bro. Ryan de Caussin on their engagement. May God bless them both. We are happy to welcome into our ecclesia Bro. Ryan and Sis. Jerusha Vaughn transferring from the Thousand Oaks, CA Ecclesia, and Bro. Nate and Sis. Janee Blanchard, and Bro. Bryan and Sis. Harmony Blanchard transferring from the Verdugo Hills, CA Ecclesia.

We welcomed several brothers and sisters to our ecclesia recently. We welcomed: Paul and Mary Jane Styles (Ann Arbor, MI); Emily Ball (UK);

Jason and Rebekah Henderson and Jean Giordano (Norfolk, VA); Mike and Karen Sternad (Richmond, VA); Peter Davis, Sandy Davis, and Savannah Jackson (Boston, MA); John and Rachel Launchbury (Portland, OR); Anthea Kenyon



*Camryn de Caussin and her father Dean*



(Aust.); Tom and Dawn Stuart, and Mia George (Cardiff, Wales); Larry and Kathleen King, (Souther Oregon, OR); Randy Tyra (San Francisco Peninsula, CA); Josh Jackson and Ben Hayles (ON, Canada); Daniel Giordano and Lauren Brown (NJ); Steven Styles, Dan Simms (Aust.); Dante Barbetti (AZ); Natasha and Mike Boiko (Calgary, AB); Becky Elliott (Cambridge, ON); John and Heather Woodward (Baltimore, MD); and Nancy Jean Markwith (Hamilton, ON).

We were blessed to be able to host a Southern California Musical Weekend. This event was held on October 26-27, 2019. This was a weekend of praise to the Lord through music. It was entitled, "Reasons for Praise".

Our Women at the Well Retreat was held, October 18-20, 2019, with Sis. Eleanor Mannell (Mississauga West, ON) who led classes on, "In A Heartbeat: Lessons from the Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength". It was a time to grow in the Lord and enjoy the fellowship of one another.

We enjoyed a day of praise and fellowship at New Start 2020, held at our ecclesia on January 1, 2020, with hymns, spiritual songs, devotions and prayer.

*Bro. Gordon Hensley*

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## MOORESTOWN, NJ

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We were saddened to learn of the death of Sis. Doris Link on Friday, November 15, 2019. Our sympathies and prayers of comfort are with her family. She now sleeps until the return of our Lord.



*Bro. Charles and Sis. Doris Link*

We have enjoyed visits by brothers and sisters including: Cody Haughton (Cranston, RI); Tim Jennings (San Luis Obispo, CA); Samuel Potiah (Cumberland, Adelaide, South Aust.); Jaron and Danielle Joseph (South Ozone Park, NY); Keon Charles (Echo Lake, NJ); Seth and Jackie Cooper (Seattle, WA); and Dottie Billelo (Ann Arbor, MI).

We held two public lectures including, "What is Putin's Game Plan?" given by Bro. Steve Cheetham and "Climate Crisis: Is There Any Hope?" given by Bro. Dan Langston. These public lectures may be viewed on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MoorestownChristadelphian](https://www.facebook.com/MoorestownChristadelphian).

*Bro. Steve Cheetham*

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## ANN ARBOR, MI

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We are thankful to announce the baptism of KIZA HUSSEIN on Aug 28, 2019. Bro. Kiza is a member of a refugee family from Burundi that lives in Windsor, ON. Sis. Linda Beckerson, who resides in Windsor, has been working with Kiza's mother Sis. Charmante and his five siblings ever since that time with help from brethren and sisters and young people from the Detroit/Windsor

area. Classes continue and we pray for God's continued blessing on this effort. Sis. Linda is also working on immigration papers so hopefully soon the family will be able to cross the border to attend the Detroit area ecclesias and youth groups.

We are delighted to welcome Sis. Ruth Stinchcomb, Bro. T.J. Bryan and Bro. Tim and Sis. Christi Bryan from the Detroit Livonia, MI Ecclesia by way of transfer. We commend by way of transfer Sis. Brooke Styles to the Los Angeles, CA Ecclesia.

We were delighted to host the Christadelphian Bible Mission Americas/Canada's annual meeting in October and received an informative CBMA/C presentation on a Saturday evening as well as hosting the annual Tidings committee meeting in November. We thank Bro. Mark Carr (Toronto West, ON) for his ministrations to us at our annual Thanksgiving Gathering this past November.

As a reminder, all are welcome to join our weekly service Sundays at 10AM (EST) at the following link: [www.biblereadings.com/annarbor/webstreaming](http://www.biblereadings.com/annarbor/webstreaming).

Bro. Peter Billelo will be taking over as Recording Secretary effective, January, 2020. He can be reached at [p.billelo@cimdata.com](mailto:p.billelo@cimdata.com).

*Bro. Dan Styles*

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## BRANTFORD, ON

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We welcome Bro. Daniel Dayes, commended to us from the Toronto Church Street, ON Ecclesia. We transfer with love our Bro. Peter and Sis. Karly Styles to the care of the Brant County, ON Ecclesia. We also transfer our Sis. Sion Myers to the care of the Shelburne, ON Ecclesia. We will miss these members and pray that our Father will keep them as we continue our walk to the kingdom.

We are very happy to report that following a good confession of her faith ELISABETH (ELISHEVA) BILLINGTON, the daughter of Bro. Daniel and Sis. Lindsay Billington, was baptized on December 2, 2019. This was a very joyous evening, especially after having to cancel meeting the day prior due to an ice storm!

We thank our Bro. Brian Luke (Brighton, Aust.) for his ministrations including those for our annual Thanksgiving Gathering on October 12-13, 2019, where he spoke on, "Elisha, the Man of God".

We look forward to our upcoming Senior CYC Gathering, Mar. 6-8, 2020, when Bro. Duncan Movassaghi (Washington, DC) will speak on the theme "When they were Young" considering men and women in the Bible with incredible faith.

*Bro. Daniel Billington*

*Please send in news and notices by the 5th of the preceding month and include full name of ecclesia and recording brother. Word files or e-mail in text-only format are preferred. The ecclesial position primarily in Ontario, and perhaps elsewhere, is at present confused as unity-related matters are being resolved. Intelligence is published for information purposes only, without endorsement by The Christadelphian Tidings Committee.*





Community.

# FOR THE CALENDAR

## FEBRUARY, 2020

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**23-28 Desert Hot Springs, CA Palm Springs Bible School.** Join Bro. Stephen Whitehouse, Hall Green, UK and Bro. Duncan Kenzie, Saanich, BC at the Miracle Springs Resort for an uplifting and encouraging week of relaxation, fellowship and Bible study. Register online at: [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org)

## MARCH, 2020

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**14-15 Praise Weekend, Portland, OR** On Saturday 14th Jeff Ramirez (Verdugo Hills, CA) will be teaching classes in the morning, entitled “Reasons to Praise,” and we will be spend the afternoon in Praise workshops singing known hymns/songs, and learning new ones. Please bring your instruments! On Sunday 15th, Jeff will exhort about praise, and we will end the weekend with lunch. Please register with Mary Ellen Laird, [lairdme@web-ster.com](mailto:lairdme@web-ster.com)

**28-29 Study Weekend, Baltimore, MD** Bro. Perry Saunders (Orlando, FL) will be leading classes on the topic of “A Prosperous Kingdom.” Please register with Sis. Anna Hewitson, [anhewitson@gmail.com](mailto:anhewitson@gmail.com)

## APRIL, 2020

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**10-12 Fraternal Gathering, Toronto, ON** held at the Mayfield Secondary School.

**11-18 Australian Conference** will be held at the Westminster School, Marion, SA, AUS. Theme: “Looking Up, Looking Out, Looking Forward”. Speakers: Bro. John Launchbury (Portland, USA), Bro. Craig Blewett (Westfield, South Africa) and Bro. Matt Norton (Gosford, Australia). Venue: Westminster School, Marion, SA, Australia Enquiries: Website: [www.adelaide2020.com.au](http://www.adelaide2020.com.au). Email: [secretary@adelaide2020.com.au](mailto:secretary@adelaide2020.com.au). Post: The Secretary, PO Box 559, Brighton, SA, 5048.

**25-26 Spring Study Weekend, Sussex, NB** Bro. Steve Davis (Boston, MA) will be leading studies on the Subject: “The Greatest Story: The Drama of Scripture.” We look forward to the fellowship opportunity this presents.

## MAY, 2020

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**15-17 CYC Study Weekend, Largo, FL** The Largo Florida Ecclesia is pleased to announce it's first CYC Study Weekend. Families and Campers of all ages are invited to join us. The location is at Fort DeSoto Campground & Park in Tierra

## MAY, 2020 (Continued)

Join Verde, FL. Our guest speaker is Bro. David Fertig (Northern VA Ecclesia.) **Important note:** You need to reserve your campsite NOW, as this is a very popular campground due to it being located near the Gulf of Mexico. Sites are still available, but they will fill up quickly. It costs only \$5.00 to cancel a reservation. You can reserve for extended nights, if you wish to make it a vacation and stay longer to enjoy some great sites around the sunny Tampa area. If you have any questions, please contact Bro. Chad Monahan at [chadmonahan@gmail.com](mailto:chadmonahan@gmail.com). We look forward to seeing you, and have you join us for a weekend of study, fellowship, and fun together.

## JUNE, 2020

**27-July 5 Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School** will be held, God Willing, at Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA. The theme this year is “*Walk as Children of Light*” – Eph. 5:8-9. Speakers and their topics for this year are: Bro. Mark O’Grady, (Tawa, NZ) will speak on the subject “*Isaac: Man of faith, Children of Promise*,” Bro. Joseph Palmer, (San Diego County, CA) will speak on the subject “*Exhortations from the Apocalypse*,” Bro. Mark Vincent, (Stirling, UK) will speak on the subject “*Conquest (Joshua and the Canaanites)*.” This information and online registration is also available at: [www.MidAtlanticBibleSchool.org](http://www.MidAtlanticBibleSchool.org).

## JULY, 2020

**5-11 Southwest Christadelphian Bible School** will be held, God Willing, at Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX. The scheduled speakers are: Bro. Mark Giordano, (Norfolk, VA) - “*Until Messiah the Prince and the Restoration of Jerusalem*,” Bro. Stephen Mansfield, Golden Grove, South Australia - “*Barnabas The Encourager*,” and Bro. Dev Ramcharan, Toronto, ON - “*Quicken thou me according to thy word, a Study of Psalm 119*.” Further information and registration online at [www.swcbs.org](http://www.swcbs.org).

**11-19 Midwest Bible School** will be held, God Willing, at Trine University in Angola, IN. The speakers are: Bro. Roger Lewis, (Christchurch, NZ) “*Zerubbabel- My Servant*,” Bro. Mark O’Grady, (Tawa, NZ) “*Elisha*” and Bro. Tim Badger, (Brighton, AUS) “*I Will Be with You – Exhortations from the Book of Joshua*”

For registration information please visit [www.midwestbibleschool.com](http://www.midwestbibleschool.com)

**19-26 Idyllwild Bible School** will be held, Lord Willing, for the 65th year at Idyllwild Pines Camp in Idyllwild, CA. Our speakers this year will be Bro. Arne Roberts, (Dunstable, UK) on the topic of “*Wholly Holy*,” Bro. Ken Styles (Royal Oak, MI) speaking about “*The Blessing of Forgiveness*,” and Bro. Nathan Lewis, (Christchurch, NZ) on a topic not yet announced. Register online at [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org) or contact Sis. Kellie Gelineau at [kelliegelineau@gmail.com](mailto:kelliegelineau@gmail.com).

### SPECIAL INVITATION

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

**20-26 46th Annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering** will be held, Lord Willing, at Slippery Rock University, in Slippery Rock, PA. Speakers: Bro. Steve Ross: “*Life Lessons from the Kings of Israel*”; Bro. Glen Anderson: “*Tyre in Prophecy*” and Bro. Doug Davis: “*Manifesting the Fruit of the Spirit*.” Contact Bro. Brad Rek at 330-609-6957, or [brad.rek@gmail.com](mailto:brad.rek@gmail.com). Visit our website at [www.abrahamicfaithgathering.org](http://www.abrahamicfaithgathering.org) for more information and to view the talks from last year.

**26-August 1 Western Christadelphian Bible School** will be held, Lord Willing, at the Menucha Camp and Conference Center located in the stunningly beautiful Columbia River Gorge, only 15min from the airport. WCBS is a family oriented Bible School. We are thrilled to have the following speakers: Bro. Luke Barratt (Portland, OR), Bro. Mark Drabenstott (Kansas City, MI), and Bro. Maurice Green (Barnet, London, UK). Register at [www.wcbsretreat.com](http://www.wcbsretreat.com).

## AUGUST, 2020

**2-8 Rogue River Bible School** Speakers: Bro. David Wisniewski (Brant County, ON) “*The Garden: Revelation and Restoration*,” Bro. Shawn Snobelen (Victoria, BC) “*Developing Faith*,” Bro. Stephen Mansfield (Adelaide, AU) “*Prayer: Looking Vertically in a Horizontal World*.” For registration information, contact Sis. Pat Posey at: [patlposey@gmail.com](mailto:patlposey@gmail.com).

# Addresses for Donations

## **Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee**

publishes this magazine and other works. 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941: [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org)

**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 online donations. Donations by check should be sent to 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941, or [cbma.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:cbma.treasurer@gmail.com)

**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, V3R 0J7

**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 or [jberneau@earthlink.net](mailto:jberneau@earthlink.net)

## **Christadelphian Heritage College**

522 Book Road East, Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1, Canada

## **Christadelphian Heritage School**

Donations to: Thousand Oaks Christadelphians, c/o Jimmy Vetkos, 2322 Alscot Ave. Simi Valley, CA 93063

## **Williamsburg Christadelphian**

**Foundation (WCF)** helps ecclesias cultivate faith, nurtures faith in youth and creates opportunities for faithful service. c/o Virginia Brierly, PO Box 264, Villas, NJ, 08251-0264 [www.wcfoundation.org](http://www.wcfoundation.org)

## **Christadelphian Tape Library Contact**

Reuben E. Washington, 196 E. Stearns St., Rahway, NJ 07065-4923.

Phone: 732-381-4590 Fax: 732-499-8415 or [christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net](mailto:christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net)

**Agape in Action** provides help for Christadelphian families and children living in extreme poverty. Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 146, Three Rivers, CA 93271-0146, or 70 Delevan Drive, Cambridge, ON N1S 4S3 or via website: [www.agapeinaction.com](http://www.agapeinaction.com) or [agapeinaction@rogers.com](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.com)

## **Christadelphian Save the Children Fund**

provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy children in mission areas:

[www.christadelphianchildren.com](http://www.christadelphianchildren.com)

## **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 Jonathan Farrar, 140 Whitwell Way, Binbrook, ON L0R 1C0

**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

## **Karolyn Andrews Memorial Fund**

**(KAMF)** provides help in cases where brethren or families have been victims of persecution because of their faith. To donate: Acct name: Timothy Charles Galbraith, BSB: 062-692, Acc no.: 1165 7389, Acc type: Netsaver, Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Address: TC Galbraith, 18 Edna Str., Heathmont, Vic, 3135.

**Spanish language Literature** is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947. 626-303-2222, or [jdhunter45@gmail.com](mailto:jdhunter45@gmail.com)

# Thoughts on the Way

## Family Heritage

*“Children’s children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children” (Prov 17:6)*

Many people treasure their family heritage. The verse above focuses on this idea from both sides: (a) grandchildren are a crown to the older ones, and (b) parents are the pride or honor of their children. Jewish culture places great importance on the family. In traditional Jewish families, the elders have the preeminence and receive appropriate respect.

When one’s family is not treasured, and when the past, with its struggles and achievements, is not known or respected, then there are consequences — for individuals, families and society. It is good to know where you came from, because it helps to define who you are. Without such an anchor, young people may drift aimlessly.

Isaiah predicted that a time would come when *“people will oppress each other, [and] the young will rise up against the old, the base against the honorable” (Isa 3:5).*

Micah, in words quoted by Jesus, also predicted that a son will dishonor his father, and a daughter will rise up against her mother, and *“a man’s*

*enemies [will be] the members of his own household” (Mic 7:6; cp Matt 10:21,36; Luke 12:53; 21:16).*

And Paul said that 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” (2 Tim 3:2-4).*

### **Children’s children are a crown to the aged**

“Crown” (*“atarah”*) is from a root word meaning to encircle like a crown. Likewise, gray hair is a crown (same word) of splendor to the older ones (Prov 16:31). To live to see one’s grandchildren was considered a great blessing (Gen 48:11; Pss 128:5,6).

And to rejoice in the presence and love of one’s converts (one’s spiritual “children” and “grandchildren”) is perhaps the greatest of all blessings:

*“Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!” (Phil 4:1).*

*“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory*



in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? **Is it not you?**" (1 Thess 2:19).

## Parents are the pride of their children

The word "pride" (*"tiferet"*) also relates to a crown, which can, in turn, imply pride and glory. Not every instance of boasting or glory is negative. In Proverbs the word pride may indicate commendable things, such as sons' "boasting" in their fathers (here); "glory" in overlooking an offense (Prov 19:11); and "elation" in a righteous life (Prov 28:12).

It is one of the greatest of all heritages to have parents who can be esteemed and loved. Happy is the son who, as his judgment matures, honors his father with a growing regard and deepening affection. As one fellow said, "When I was 20, I marveled at what Ol' Dad didn't know. But when I got to be 30, I marveled at how much the old fella had learned in the last ten years!"

Much as parents can be a glory to their children, and children a glory to their parents — there are many family relationships which are regrettable, or even tragic. For every instance of joy and pride in family, there is an instance of sorrow and sadness. But it is against the background of "darkness" that the "light" shines ever more brightly.

Some time ago, Bro. Joe Banta gave an exhortation in which he read news from *The Christadelphian*, published in 1914, reporting the death of his great-grandfather, John Banta. The news had been sent by one of John Banta's sons:

"We have been called on to perform the sad rites for our beloved father, John Banta, who died on April 17. May his sleep be brief and his awakening joyous. He entered the race forty-six years ago (1868). His field of service was mainly in central and western Texas, though he made extensive lecturing trips through the western section of the United States. He was the means of bringing many to the truth. The last years of his life were spent in close confinement to an invalid's chair (with chronic rheumatism), but his last moments were free from pain, and he was perfectly conscious to the last. He spoke earnestly to those present: 'Now I want to bid you all good-bye'... It is a consolation to see one who overcomes and keeps the Savior's works to the end. And it inspires us to put forth a renewed effort to make our calling and election sure."

Families are important, both natural families and spiritual families. In the youngsters, the faithful older ones see hope for the future. And in the old ones, the younger ones may be encouraged to hold their own hope steadfast to the end.

As Moses neared death, the Angel led him up into the mountain. From there he was able to survey the Promised Land. It is one of the great joys of our lives that, even today, through the eyes of the older ones, we can still see the Kingdom of God.

*George Booker*

# TIDINGS



## BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE CIVILIAN PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPS, CIRCA 1945

- 1 Roscoe Starret 2 Doug Egles 3 Don Elliot 4 Mabel Mowry 5 Ivan Badger 6 Jim Taggert  
7 Charles Ghent 8 George Hewitson 9 Shelby Lenox 10 Tony Giordano 11 Donald Lipfert  
12 Frank Henderson 13 Paul Burd 14 Alvin Brittle 15 Linwood Carhart 16 Bernadine Lenox

This month we begin our look at World War 2 and learn how the Civilian Public Service Camps came into being in the United States. Similar camps had already begun in Canada, and soon over 200 Brethren, some with their wives located nearby, were spread all over North America in primitive conditions.



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