

OCTOBER•NOVEMBER 2004

UPLOOK

• ASSESS THE NEED • CATCH THE VISION • TAKE THE CHALLENGE •



KEEPING UNSPOTTED

William MacDonald

THE GIFT OF CRITICISM

Donald L. Norbie

WHICH MODEL?

Anonymous

COMMITMENTPHOBIA

Two Year End Conferences! See Page 19

KEEPING UNSPOTTED

The world is a spotty place.



You may find it hard to believe, but I'm not only old enough to remember the "Dick and Jane" readers in the public schools—with their mythic dog, Spot—I can actually remember away back to the days when Christians wrestled over whether to have a television or not! When the saints thought that the Lord's Day should be wholly for the Lord. When fashions that attracted attention or were considered immodest were shunned by serious believers. There were excesses, I know. Some preachers found their "calling" in being fashion consultants, majoring on minors, never seeming to get past the externals, not "*minister[ing] grace to the hearers*" (Eph. 4:29).

But in spite of those aberrations, they seemed to be simpler times, and in many ways, better times. Today Dick and Jane are found only in antique shops. They are thought to be far too bland for children who blast there way through digitized death-defying traps and slaughter untold cyber-villains on their video screens. A stay-at-home mom and a working dad with well-adjusted children are too far from reality to be taken seriously. And few today would dare mention abstaining from worldly amusements for fear of being thought to be philistines. We should hardly expect worldlings to object to worldliness; like asking fish about water, it's all they have ever known. But things have slipped so far that some *unbelievers* around us are actually crying out against the encroaching darkness. Yet the evangelical church through compromise has largely lost its voice against the incoming tide.

In Scripture, worldliness is not described so much in terms of what we have or do. In fact Paul warns against the "*Touch not; taste not; handle not*" approach to the problem (Col. 2:21). Instead it is in what we love: "*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*" (1 Jn. 2:15). We have been sent on a mission *into* the world but we are not *of* it (Jn. 17:14-18). How can we "*[love] the world*" of people (Jn. 3:16), yet "*love not the world*" (1 Jn. 2:15) as a system—religious, economic, social, and political—a system that is opposed to everything pleasing to God?

First, there are specific moral directives in the Word (with no wiggle room!). For example, "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers*" (2 Cor. 6:14). What is it about "*not*" we don't understand? Or "*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth*" (Eph. 4:28). God turns thieves into philanthropists. There are many other such helpful commands.

There are also sweeping principles which must be applied to the particulars of life: "*Do all to the glory of God*" (1 Cor. 10:31). "*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*" (Eph. 5:11). "*Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king*" (1 Pet. 2:17). In these cases, we are not told specifically *how* to do these things, but are expected to *want* to do them, and to look for practical ways to see them happen as we yield to the Spirit.

But it is in a third area that we find the greatest challenge. Some call them "gray areas" but there are no more gray areas in the world than there were on Spot's coat. Paul teaches that some issues might be black to one believer and white to another, but every Christian should seriously ask the questions, seek the Lord's help in finding His answer, "*be fully persuaded in his own mind*" (Rom. 14:5), and be gracious to those who may see it differently.

How can we escape from the vortex of worldly influence (2 Tim. 2:22)? By passionately throwing our energies in the opposite direction—"*follow righteousness, faith, love, peace.*" I have enough problems with my heart without feeding on "*foolish and hurtful [desires], which drown men in destruction*" (1 Tim. 6:9). If we would "*keep [ourselves] unspotted from the world*" (Jas. 1:27), it will only be with dogged persistence.

So run from the spots, run!

J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

UPLOOK

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- 1) by using the reminder envelope sent to facilitate your renewal;
 - 2) by using the form on our website at:
http://www.gospelcom.net/uplook/magazine_uplook/subscribe.phtml
 - 3) by contacting our office at any time, by phone, fax, mail or e-mail.
- Please advise us of any address changes at least six weeks in advance and include your customer number from your mailing label.

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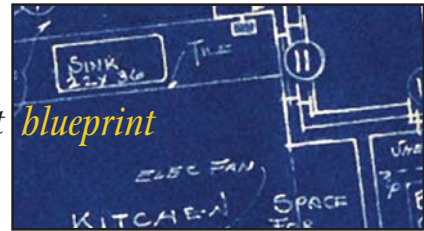
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KEY ISSUES

THINKING IT THROUGH • BUILDING IT IN • LIVING IT OUT

WHICH MODEL?

The author appeals for honesty in talking about the New Testament *blueprint*



Donald L. Norbie

As Paul went into Corinth he had a goal to build a temple for God. He had a plan to follow. He later wrote, “According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon” (1 Cor. 3:10). In later years Paul was deeply concerned that there be no deviation from that pattern (1 Cor. 14:37).

In the 1800s, as the “assembly movement” took root in Canada and the U.S., those pioneers too had a model. They felt keenly that they must follow the simple plan of the early church. What were some of its characteristics?

The gospel must be preached. Baptism should follow a profession of faith. The local assembly should welcome all who love the Lord and are not morally disqualified. The Lord’s Supper and teaching were emphasized. All men were encouraged to participate verbally in prayer and worship. All believers were viewed as priests. Gifts were encouraged. Young men were given opportunity to speak.

Today a different model is being advanced as more practical and efficient. Smaller assemblies are viewed as weak and ineffective. The goal now is a large assembly of two hundred or more. As groups get larger, they tend to function as organizations rather than as families. Administration becomes complex. It is more difficult for elders with regular employment to handle such work. One or more “full-time workers” are viewed as indispensable.

Increasingly, in the larger assembly, more occupy a passive role. Good speakers are needed to hold a large audience. One hour at the breaking of bread means only a handful of the men can participate.

Don’t be deceived. These two models are different. But how do we choose? Is it a matter of personal preference?

In the June 1980 *HIS* magazine, Virginia Owens writes:

The only question admitted as valid by the pragmatist is

“does it work?” yet never

before have we so desperately needed some guide, some scale of judgment for determining on grounds other than pragmatism, what is fitting and proper, in the original sense of that word, to an expression of the Christian faith (p. 19).


If one is committed to the idea that the New Testament church is the valid pattern for today, then pragmatism is not the guiding philosophy.

When an apostle left a church he had established, he appointed no one elder to take his place. No local elder was encouraged to quit work to serve the assembly. On the contrary Paul worked at times to encourage elders to do the same. “I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak...” (Acts 20:35). Peter writes to elders in the same tenor, “Feed the flock of God...willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:2).

Some try to find justification in 1 Timothy 5:17 for giving a salary to an elder, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor.” But Lenski writes:

It is generally assumed that the elders were paid for their services in the apostolic churches. We are convinced that this assumption is not tenable. The probability is that none of them were paid. The elders of the synagogue were not paid or salaried. p. 683, R. C. H. Lenski, *St. Paul’s Epistles to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon*. Columbus, Ohio: Wortburg Press, 1946

Lenski is right concerning the early church. Missionaries (apostles) lived by faith, supported by God’s people. Local elders were expected to earn their living and to shepherd the flock in their spare time. By sharing responsibilities, the needs of the flock could be met.

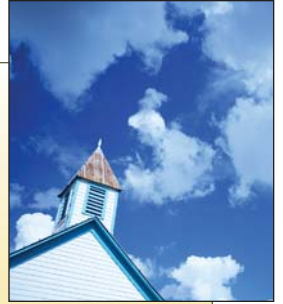
Let’s not play word games. One may choose the type of church organization he wishes. But we are not free to claim New Testament precedent for such if we depart from this simple pattern. This writer is convinced God’s ways are best for His people, and for His glory. 

FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK

CANADIAN CHURCH ATTENDANCE

According to Canada's best-known religious pollster, Reginald Bibby, "church is more popular with Canadians than the Grey Cup or the National Hockey League." In a recent book, *Restless Churches: How Canada's Churches Can Contribute to the Emerging Religious Renaissance*, the University of Lethbridge sociologist argues against "the widespread notion that organized religion is on the decline" in Canada. His research indicates that "in 2003, 26 percent of Canadians passed through church doors on a weekly basis, up five percent from three years earlier. That means that more Canadians attend church on an average weekend than the country's six NHL teams draw in an entire season," and this surpasses a typical Grey Cup TV audience. Most encouraging, Bibby says, "Millions more are waiting for a good reason to go to church." —*The Canadian Press*



OAKVILLE BIBLE STUDIES

The Oakville (ON) Bible Study series has begun for the 2004-2005 season. This year the topic is "The Conquest of Canaan" (Joshua & Judges). Studies at Hopedale Bible Chapel, 342 Sherin Dr., Oakville, ON. Studies commence at 9:00 AM, and finish at noon. Notes provided; tapes available. Speakers and topics:

- Nov 20, W. H. Burnett (ON)
Possessing the Land
- Dec 11, B. Gunning (ON)
The Closing Days of Joshua
- Jan 15, J. B. Nicholson, Parallels between Joshua and Judges
- Feb 19, J. Mikhael (ON)
Othniel, Ehud, and Deborah
- Mar 19, S. Burnett (ON)
Gideon, Abimelech, and Jephthah
- Apr 16, W. H. Burnett (ON)
Samson; Review of the Study Year

For more information, contact:
W. H. Burnett at 905-827-4842
wh.burnett@sympatico.ca
H. W. Allison at 905-336-8101
hw.allison@sympatico.ca
(for registration and tapes)

SINGAPORE ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Bethesda Hall (Ang Mo Kio) on their 140th anniversary! In 1864, Philip Robinson, a British businessman in Singapore, began meetings in a home.

Towards the end of the 19th century, both George Mueller



and Hudson Taylor fellowshipped and ministered there on stopovers.

The work has grown over the years and the original assembly now numbers about 600 at the Breaking of Bread. Sunday School attendance exceeds 300. Assemblies in Singapore are large due to the scarcity of land and cost of real estate. Numerous assemblies have spun off from the original and another hive off is planned for this year.

It is encouraging to see the work continue to flourish and to hold to the New Testament principles that

guided those who began the work so many years ago. May the Lord continue to prosper that work.

BRANDYWINE FALL CONF.

Brandywine (DE) Bible Chapel plans to host their fall conference Nov 5-7. Speakers: Doug Kazen (WA), Mike Attwood (GA) and Mark Kolchin (NJ). Conference starts Friday at 7:30 PM with a Bible Reading (1 Cor. 14:1-20). On Saturday and Sunday, ministry meetings from 2:00 PM to 5:45 PM. Dinner and Fellowship to follow each day. Call Sid Bhatt at 302-723-2155 for directions.

BROOKLYN CONFERENCE

The Metropolitan Missionary Conference is to be held, Lord willing, on Saturday, Nov 7, 2004 at Good Tidings Gospel Chapel, Malcolm X Blvd. Brooklyn, NY. Speaker: Henry Sanchez (MO). Meetings from 10:30 AM-2:30 PM. For further information, contact:

Jim McCall at 718-994-1318
Jimannabel@aol.com

FATHER/SON WEEKEND

Fathers and sons are invited to Camp Iroquoia (PA) for a Father & Son retreat Nov 12–14. The camp's new manager, Mark Thomas, will be the speaker. He brings many years of ministry experience with assemblies and camp work. Look forward to hearing some interesting stories and perhaps even a chalk talk. Contact:

Mark at 570-967-2577
campiroquoia@epix.net
www.iroquoia.org

WORD ALIVE SOUTHEAST

Schedule for the Fall season:
Main sessions from 9 AM–2 PM.
Bible readings in Col. 2 from 2–3 PM.
Lunch provided. All meetings held at Washington (GA) Bible Chapel, 808 E. Robert Toombs Ave. Speakers:
Nov 13, John Heller on Pioneering a New Work; Dec 12, Rex Trogdon on 1 John; Charles Oxendine on Esther.
Mike Attwood at 706-678-3180
Sam Thorpe at 706-359-6297

MISSIONARY BREAKFAST

Christian gathered at Hillside Bible Chapel, Orillia, ON, invite you to our Missionary Breakfast on Saturday, Nov 20, starting at 8:00 AM. Speakers are expected from Europe, Africa and Canada. For further information or requests for hospitality, contact us at 705-326-9572
hillside@bconnex.net

FALL BIBLE CONFERENCE

On Nov 13 & 14, Lake Geneva Bible Chapel, 501 South St, Lake Geneva, WI, plans to hold its Fall Bible Conference. Theme: Christ in the Tabernacle. Speaker: Phil Miekley (OH). Special music with Dick and Arlene Faulkner. Meetings: Saturday, Nov 13 at 4:00 AND 6:30 pm, with supper in between. Sunday, Nov 14, 9:30 AM, Lord's Supper; 11:00 AM, 3rd session.

Nursery and child care to age 6 years will be provided. Please advise as soon as possible regarding the

number that will be attending to facilitate food planning. For more information, contact:

Warren Dunham 262-248-5515
e-mail: wdunham1@juno.com

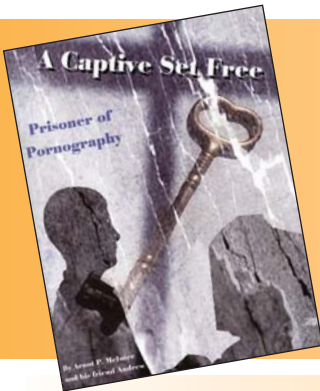
EQUIPPING FOR MINISTRY

The saints from Grand Valley Christian Fellowship, Marne, MI, invite you to attend the November EFM (Equipping For Ministry) Saturday Bible Study. This will be held on Nov 20 at Northwest Gospel Hall, 1350 Garfield, NW in Grand Rapids. Study begins at 8:30 AM. Ben Scripture (IA) is scheduled to speak on Apologetics and Christian Evidences, and Mike Fitzhugh (MI) plans on a Survey of 1 John: Evidences of Genuine Salvation. For brochures and info., please contact:

Mike Fitzhugh at 616-784-4887

WINTER YOUTH RETREAT

The annual Winter Youth Retreat will be held this year at the Clarion

**A CAPTIVE SET FREE by Arnot McIntee**

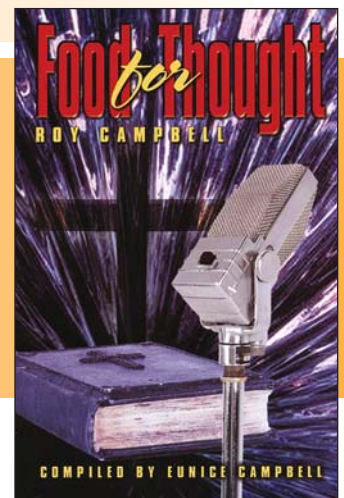
This timely booklet, subtitled "Prisoner of Pornography" is an interview with the author's friend, Andrew who tells of the grip of porn and the answer that can set one free. Highly practical. Every elder—every man—should read this.

Contact Arnot P. McIntee, 108 Westgate Park Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5X3
Phone: 905-938-2023 Fax: 905-938-5746 email: amcintee@vaxxine.com
Website: <http://www.truestories.ca>

FOOD FOR THOUGHT by Roy Campbell

Roy Campbell spent 26 years in Belize, Central America and in Jamaica planting assemblies, doing radio ministry and speaking to groups large and small. The title of the book takes its name from the radio broadcast he proposed and oversaw. This collection of thought-provoking essays came from his years of gleaning in the Word of God.

Contact Mrs. Eunice Campbell 607 – 72 Woodlawn Rd. E, Guelph ON N1H 1G7
email: campbell@sentex.net



Up-to-date news on persecuted Christians: <http://www.christianmonitor.org/>

Hotel in Toledo, Ohio. The Retreat begins with registration 12 noon, Dec 27. Check out 9 AM Dec 31.

The Retreat is geared for older teens (11th grade and up), college and career young adults. The theme this year is Called & Accountable. Keynote speakers and seminar presenters include Todd Van Ryn, Floyd Schneider, Jason Campbell, and Bob Tissot. For more information visit www.winteryouthretreat.org Or e-mail registrar Barb Taylor at barb@winteryouthretreat.org

EXCEL 2005

Join us for a weekend of study in God's Word and fellowship with like-minded young people. Speaker: Joe Mikhael (ON). Rather than setting a minimum age, anyone is welcome who is serious about coming to learn and mature in conduct. Accommodations can be arranged for married couples. The weekend begins Friday evening, Jan 21, and concludes with lunch on Sunday, Jan 23. Excel will be held at Pine Trail Camp in Saugatuck, MI. The cost is \$65 per person, which includes meals, snacks and lodging; \$80 will be charged for registrations post-marked after Dec 3. No applications postmarked after Jan 3. Web site: www.geocities.com/excelconference Call 616-997-5160

IROQUOINA RETREATS

The following is the 2005 retreat schedule for Camp Iroquoina.

College & Career	12/31-1/2, 2005
Jr. High 1	1/14-16
Jr. High 2	1/28-30
Sr. High	2/4-6
Family Retreat	2/19-21

Men's Retreat	3/11-12
Ladies Retreat	4/29-5/1
Retreakend	5/20-22

Mark Thomas at 570-967-2577
metebthomas@juno.com

INTEREST IN LAKELAND, FL

Austin and Sarah Temperley have recently moved to Lakeland, Florida. They are wondering if there are any interested Christians who would like to come together and break bread or possibly start a meeting there. The Temperleys both teach at Lakeland Christian School and the nearest assembly is about an hour away. They can be contacted at:
3542 Raintree Ct.
Lakeland, FL 22803
863-409-1664
soon2734@hotmail.com
sa4grace@hotmail.com

OUTREACH TO ROTARIANS

The 2005 Rotarian International Convention is to be held at McCormick Place in Chicago, IL, Jun 18-22, 2005. Stan Engle is arranging to distribute tracts at that event.

About 30,000 people are expected from 300 countries. They will be giving out a trilingual tract Sunday afternoon, Jun 19 at 2 PM. Several assemblies have shown an interest in helping. Rotarians are businessmen from all professions and religions.

They are also looking for someone to help us redesign the tract. Contact Stan Engle at:
405-236-5433
email: sengle@aol.com
web site: www.lifehouse.org

LAND FOR SALE

For sale, four wooded acres with-

in a few miles of the Cumberland Bible Chapel in Summerfield, TN. For more information, call:
231-788-0815

Homecalls

Robert Greenig

Bob Greenig, 59, went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, Sep 2 when he was struck by a large tree limb from a nearby property while he was working in his backyard.

Bob was a happy Christian, well known for his welcoming smile and kind words to all who visited the Kenilworth (NJ) Chapel. He helped with the monthly missionary prayer meetings at Kenilworth. He was well respected in his neighborhood. We can all pray that his sudden home-call will lead many of his neighbors to consider their eternal needs.

Please also pray for his wife Joan and their children, David and Celeste. A good brother, he will be deeply missed.

June Dale Gibson

On Sep 30, June Gibson, beloved wife of our brother O. J. "Jean" Gibson who faithfully served the Lord with him in California for many years. Saved as a child. June enjoyed teaching Sunday School, especially the younger children "to whom she displayed her hallmark qualities of kindness and patience on all occasions...June was always hospitable, approachable, insightful..." She was known for her hospitality. Prayer would be appreciated for the family.

Roger (Wayne) Imeson

Just at press time we received word of the passage of Roger Ime-

son, of East Lansing, MI. More details in the next issue of *Uplook*.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Ministry to the Deaf in Fiji

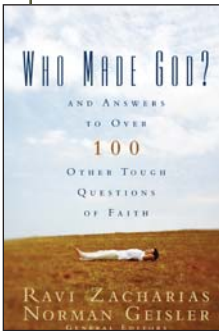
The only deaf school in the

islands of the South Pacific needs trained teachers and dorm parents. A Bible teacher is needed for the teens and adult deaf and to visit the islands to encourage other deaf to come to school.

Deaf persons with a Master's degree are preferred. Hearing applicants would be considered if they have had experience working with the deaf. Only mature Christians will be considered. Opportunities:

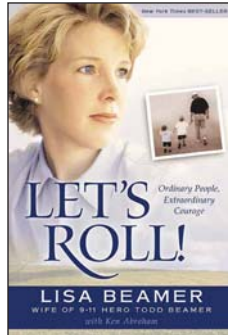
THINKING ABOUT *Holiday* SHOPPING?

Introducing Sonlight Products, a fast, easy and affordable place to shop for all your Christian products. Supplying Gospel Folio Press, Everyday Publications and dozens of other publishers.



Who Made God? Norm Geisler & Ravi Zacharias

This book offers answers to over 100 commonly asked apologetic questions. Bringing together the best in evangelical apologetics, this guide is for Christians who want to understand and talk about their faith intelligently.



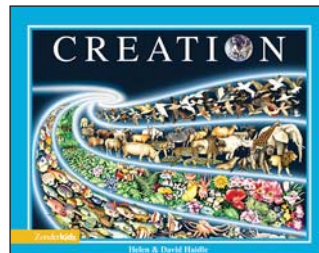
Let's Roll! by Lisa Beamer

This behind-the-scenes story of United Flight 93 hero Todd Beamer is a message of character, courage, and undeniable faith in the face of horrifying tragedy. It encourages anyone who reads it to live a real Christian life right now.



Choice Cleanings 2005 Daily Devotional Calendar

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PRODUCTS

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- Principal of an elementary school
- Teacher in an elementary school
- Full-time Deaf Ministry Worker
- Full-time Deaf Dorm Parent(s)
(must have high school certificate)

All applicants must look to the Lord for their support and adhere to New Testament principles. Apply to:

Mr. Jim Cooney
Christian Fellowship for Deaf
P. O. Box 4728
Samabula, Suva, Fiji
rirooster@connect.com.fj

Food Services

Verdugo Pines Bible Camp, in the San Gabriel Mountains of southern California. They are currently seeking an individual or couple who can be commended by their local assembly and fill a full time position as Cook and Food Service Coordinator. Duties would include menu planning, ordering and receiving food shipments, safe food preparation and presentation, leadership and organization skills. There is also an opportunity during the summer to lead devotions and evening Bible studies. On-site and professional training provided. This must be considered a ministry and requires individuals who are mature in their faith, enjoy serving others, and work well with people. A salary and home

with other benefits. Contact Verdugo

Pines Bible Camp:
PO Box 1989
Wrightwood, CA. 92397
Attn: John Bourbonnais
Email: papajohn@direcway.com
Camp phone: 760-249-3532
Camp FAX: 760-249-4447

Maintenance

Western Assemblies Home (WAH), located in Claremont, CA is in need of a full time maintenance man. WAH is a retirement home serving the Lord's people for over 60 years. This person would be responsible for all repairs of the main building and eleven houses on the two adjacent streets. They provide health benefits if requested. Contact:

Lynn Hughes at 909-626-3711,
Fax 909-626-4493

ADDRESS CHANGES

Jeff Tackes

2110 Franklin St
PO Box 446
Fort Benton, MT 59442

Echoes of Service

As of this month, Echoes of Service, a missionary service organization in the UK similar to CMML and MSC Canada, has moved. Their new address is:

Echoes of Service
124 Wells Road
Bath BA2 3AH UK

COMMENDATIONS

Dawn Vanden Eeden

We have been informed that the saints at Grace Chapel, Gilbertsville, PA, have commended Dawn Vanden Eeden to the service of the Lord in Quito, Ecuador. (Letter signed by six brethren from the assembly.)

PERSONALIZED TRACTS

In response to our appeal in the September issue of *Uplook* for some current tracts, Bill Snyder (SC) sent us a CD free for the asking. It reads: "Would you like to print personalized tracts for your assembly at home? This CD contains [seven] tracts... You need only add your assembly name, address, and phone number, print a master copy following the instructions on the CD, and print as many or as few as needed on your home printer. If you can't use the CD yourself, call and I'll send you master copies you can have printed anywhere." Contact Bill Snyder at:

1102 Holiday Dr
North Augusta, SC 29841
803-279-0931
email: snyderwj@juno.com



PITTSBORO CHRISTIAN VILLAGE

Expansion is a cause for thanksgiving

Administrator Dave Dewhurst writes: "We are very thankful that God has allowed us to expand the ministry of Pittsboro Christian Village. This past spring we completed the construction of four new homes. This is an increase of about 20% in individual homes at the Village. The new homes have a kitchen, living/dining area, study, two bedrooms, two full bathrooms and a garage.

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WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

THE STATE OF WORLD JEWRY

A recent edition of the *Jerusalem Post* (Sep 24, 2004) gives the stats on the Jewish population around the world. It states:

...There are 13 million Jews living worldwide, including 5.2 million in Israel.

According to Jewish Agency figures, 5.6 million are living in North America, 1.2 million in Europe, 413,000 in the former Soviet Union, 401,000 in South America, 84,000 in Africa, 107,000 in Australia and New Zealand, and 19,000 in Asia.

The article also gives some helpful information on the population of Israel:

...Israel's 5.2 million Jews and some 287,000 immigrants and their families not registered as Jews make up 81 percent of the country's 6.8 million population, while the Arabs comprise 19 percent, according to a Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) census...

The figures do not include the 189,000 foreign workers counted at the end of 2003, the CBS noted...

During the year 5764 [2003-2004, *ed.*], some 22,000 new immigrants arrived in Israel, half of them from the former Soviet Union, 15 percent from Ethiopia, and 9 percent from France. In 5763, there were 27,000 new immigrants.

Tourism increased by 23 percent in 2003, a reversal of a slump that began with the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian fighting in 2000. Most visitors came from the US, the bureau said.

It is an interesting coincidence that approximately one-third of the Jews live in Israel, two-thirds outside of the land. Zechariah 13:9 declares: *"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on My name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is My people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."*



THE MOST HISPANICS?

September 15 began Hispanic Heritage Month, the date when five countries in Central America—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua—gained their independence from Spain. More than 30 million people living in the US trace their roots to Spain. Here are the states with the most Hispanic people.



1. California
10,966,556
2. Texas
6,669,666
3. New York
2,867,583
4. Florida
2,682,715
5. Illinois
1,530,262



COMMITMENTPHOBIA

An insider's look.

Anonymous

It was at the Vessels of Honor conference in May 1999 at an impromptu Q&A session that I first remember Jabe Nicholson challenging people in their late 20s and early 30s to “grow up.” Reminded of the exploits of young T. E. Wilson, Darby and others, we learned it was time to graduate from youth group. I was 28, and involved with various ministries which I took seriously and enjoyed, but I was convicted of my lack of long-term commitment to any of them. I knew it was a change the Lord needed to make, and I wanted Him to do it.

Five years later, the issue of not-so-young people and our lack of commitment was again driven forcibly to my heart by the June editorial of *Uplook*. I've made little progress in my quest for commitment; if anything, I'm further from it than I was five years ago.

The editorial diagnosed that the thought of committing to a particular work for the rest of our days makes us claustrophobic. I am guilty. However, I do want to be used by the Lord in a significant way so I'm anxious to find the cure for this degenerative psychosis.

Mr. Nicholson offered this solution: “They must get over it...we need to pray this generation into commitment, to preach them the message given to Joshua: *‘Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee’* (Josh. 1:9).” (Is it significant that he omitted “*wherever you go*”?) I wish I could “get over it.” Should I promise my life-long loyalty to the assembly and ministries I'm involved with today? I feel helpless—like a claustrophobic who has just been told to ride crowded elevators until the fear passes. Perhaps tracing how we arrived in this condition will help us step towards the solution.

The most simple and obvious answer is that we are a worldly and materialistic generation. We've been brainwashed since elementary school to have confidence in ourselves, to try anything we want, that life offers us an infinite array of opportunities. We're taught that we can “have it all,” so we don't want to make any choices that might limit our options or keep us from having something better.

In addition, technological advances have made our generation the first global community. Typically our parents were raised in the same communities as their parents and grandparents;

but many of us have lived in three or four cities by the time we get our first job. Travel is fast and affordable, so instead of going fifty or a hundred miles for vacation or university, we're just as likely to go a thousand miles. We've visited several countries by the time we're thirty, or at least we're acquainted with various cultures through the media.

Buying into the “you can have it all” theory inevitably leads to demanding careers, over-active families, incessant bills—and feeling too overwhelmed and drained of energy to commit to more than the obligatory one or two assembly meetings per week. Our movies and TV shows have convinced us that this is the good life so we keep running, never quite reaching the elusive goal. We feel convicted that we should be giving more of ourselves to the Lord, but with so many balls in the air, we have to keep juggling so they all don't come crashing to the ground. We have lost our eternal perspective, if we ever had it in the first place.

Some of us, however, have consciously rejected the “have it all” myth, opting for a more balanced, stable approach to life. We want a happy family, a paycheck that will cover the expenses, a home that is comfortable, a healthy lifestyle, and good friends. You can count on us to be at the assembly whenever there is a meeting, and we're not intending to change any of this in the foreseeable future. We're careful not to be extremely liberal or extremely conservative so when a preacher starts talking about whole-hearted yieldedness, we start to feel uncomfortable. We've seen (or were raised in) spartan legalistic boxes that dictated every detail of what we shall and shall not do. This is the only definition of “super-spiritual” that we've experienced, and we know that's not for us. The duration of the commitment is easy; it's breaking past the

safe picket fence perimeter to offer ourselves unreservedly for whatever the Lord asks of us—that is our challenge.

Others of us have adopted a warped morph of “you can have it all” and *True Discipleship*. We want to *do* it all. Excited and challenged by the opportunities in the Lord’s work reported from around the world, we just don’t know where to get started! We’re inspired by Paul’s short-term missionary journeys and the evangelistic fervor of the days when people “pulled up roots to move to other places to break ground for new works.” Mr. MacDonald challenges us to offer God a blank piece of paper, sign the bottom, and let Him fill in the details of life—and we have misread that *carte blanche* as representing our way of thinking. Between globetrotting to conferences and short-term mission trips, we’re waiting for the next big, exciting event so we can get in on it. Ironically, wanting to be “used by the Lord in a significant way” is the very thing that is holding us back from being serious and mature workers!

For years I’ve had a phobia about being trapped in a rut, of going through the motions of the Christian life. I feared a spiritually barren rat race life, and frantically fought against being a shadow boxer; I thought that would mean I’d wake up in twenty or thirty years and realize I hadn’t made any worthwhile investment in eternity. Then an older, gentle sister slipped a scrap of paper to me one Sunday. In pencil she had written a quote from Jim Elliot: “Wherever you are, if you believe it to be the will of God, be ALL THERE—and live it to the hilt.” This was my first glimpse at the kind of life I believe God intends for me. He isn’t impressed with my waiting for a more interesting opportunity or my constant attempts to peek around the corner at the road ahead. I’m learning to trust that if the Lord wants me somewhere else, He is able to speak to people who are rooted as clearly as He can speak to drifters. I am asking the Lord to open my eyes to exciting possibilities at home. By the grace of God, I hope to learn that those servants who are faithful year-in and year-out *are* being used by God in a significant way.

Older, life-long warriors, we need you! Not only can you pray us into commitment, but tell us your stories of exciting things that God has done here at home. We want to know about the tract bands, the street preaching, and the series of gospel meetings when 30 souls were saved. Help us believe it can happen again.

Generally speaking, it was during the first half of the last century (when our grandparents were in their prime) that many of our assemblies and associated ministries in North America were born out of passion and zeal. Having


heard the stories first-hand or inspired by memories of their childhood, our parents’ generation did a good job of maintaining these works. Now as we reach out to accept the baton third-hand, we have little enthusiasm for carrying on the responsibilities. The once vibrant activities seem stale and lifeless. We see them as ineffective and don’t get the point of keeping on. Sadly, the lines between doctrine and tradition are blurred. Instead of brainstorming for fresh, effective outreach possibilities, we’re trying to redefine foundational New Testament truths.

Our leaders and visionaries have been accused of having their heads in the clouds, of not setting realistic, attainable goals, of having all the ideas but expecting others to do the work. Well, that’s exactly what we need!

Our generation needs leaders who have their minds in the heavenlies, set on eternity—people who will remind us what’s worth living for; who set an example of laying up treasure in heaven. The world’s propaganda bombards us constantly, so we need constant reprogramming of our minds. We need to regain our eternal perspective.

We need to adopt a bigger, bolder vision of the work of God. A successful general points his soldiers beyond this battle to the final victory when the world will be a better place because of their bravery. A great teacher doesn’t hope her class will merely pass the course; she longs for her students to learn things that will change their lives. The best coach doesn’t look to win the game only; he expects his team to win the season.

That’s who makes a fine leader. We’re looking for spiritual leaders who aim high, elders who expect more of us than we can imagine for ourselves. It’s OK if not every idea comes to fruition, or if we don’t attain every goal—we’ll accomplish more than we would if we were left to our own. We need to dare to think past the way we’ve always done it, to be challenged to step out of our comfort zones in order to see the Lord accomplish great things through us.

We need to settle down, and be there “for better or worse.” There are opportunities for everyone to be involved! Just as generals need soldiers, teachers need students, and coaches need athletes, so our spiritual leaders need committed followers. We won’t spend our lives fluttering about looking for something significant when our home assemblies begin to sizzle with amazing blessings by the Spirit’s work. But there is much work to be done, and we can’t expect the elders to do it all. They’ll provide protection, wisdom and direction—and we’ll provide the enthusiasm, the energy, and of course, the commitment. We’ll be prepared to make a long-term investment. 

THE GIFT OF CRITICISM

What big teeth you have! "If you bite and devour one another..."



William MacDonald

A critical spirit is killing us and some of our assemblies also. I feel qualified to speak on this subject because I've done a fair bit of it myself—far too much.

I'm not talking about a justifiable judgment of false doctrine and ungodly behavior. There are areas in which we must judge if we are directly involved in dealing with these disorders. What I'm referring to is criticizing other believers or assemblies when it's none of my business.

Let's think first about the criticism of other believers. The Word gives us some points to ponder.

All believers are members of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13) and the family of God. Therefore they are our brothers and sisters. My heart doesn't criticize my kidneys. It's too busy keeping the blood flowing.

We need all the members of the human body. By the same token, we need every member of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:21-25), whether they are godly Baptists or Presbyterians. We should love all Christians (Jn. 13:35). I may not agree with born-again Methodists in secondary matters, but I must love them because they love my Jesus.

We should pray for them (1 Sam. 12:23). If we should pray for all men (1 Tim. 2:1); that certainly includes all God's people, whether Methodists or Pentecostals. We should care for them as opportunity arises (1 Cor. 12:25). This transcends all denominational borders.

We should suffer when they suffer (1 Cor 12:26). When I hit my thumb with the hammer (which I seem to be skilled in doing), the whole body feels it. And we should rejoice when they rejoice. When my Bible Church friends have a baby, I enter into their joy. Or when their church has had a time of blessing in which many have been saved, I should rejoice and be glad.

We can learn from them (v. 27). I've never known another believer that I couldn't learn something from.

When it comes to Christian service, all true believers are on the same side. We are fighting against a common enemy. When the disciples tried to stop a believer who was casting out demons in the Lord's name, He said, "*Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is for us*" (Lk. 9:49-

50). There it was a matter of service by a fellow-Christian. When it comes to the person and work of Christ, it's a different story. There the rule is "*He who is not with [Jesus] is against [Him], and he who does not gather with [Him] scatters abroad*" (Mt. 12:30). There is no room for latitude there.

We should realize that there are different gifts (1 Cor. 12:6-7, 11, 17). Not everyone is an evangelist or a Bible teacher. We must not try to pour everyone in the same mold. We should also remember that there different ministries in the body (1 Cor. 12:5). The Spirit uses many different methods of evangelism, for instance. And we should realize that there are different powers (1 Cor. 12:6). Some, for instance, are mighty in the Word (Acts 7:26; 18:22).

We should rejoice in the victories of others in serving Christ, even if their motives are not pure (Phil. 1:16-18).

We should realize that God uses different methods at different times (Mt. 9:14:17). He is sovereign. Don't try to box Him in.

We should make allowance for the fact that a person may be a Christian, yet be poorly taught (Acts 18:24-28).

Does that mean that we can do everything that other Christians do? No. We must be true to our convictions based on the Word of God.

If after pondering all these things, you still feel you must engage in criticizing someone, you should go to the person directly (Mt. 18:15). If you still feel that you must do it, then first tell him all the good things about him that you can think of. Remember what Spurgeon said. "Blame comes best on the back of praise."

How does this apply to criticism of other assemblies or churches? According to the Bible, every assembly is autonomous and responsible to the Lord alone. No individual or fellowship has any right to criticize another one. This is a great load off the shoulders of those of us who feel responsible to manage the universe.

This article is titled The Gift of Criticism. There is no such gift, of course. It exists only in the minds of those of us who think they have it. To us, the Lord is saying, "Wrap it in a napkin and bury it in the ground."

When I am tempted to criticize other Christians, I hear the Lord saying to me what He said to Peter, "What is that to you? You follow me."



QUESTIONS ABOUT QUESTIONS

Is there such a thing as a bad question? The Book says Yes.

Webster defines a question as “an interrogative expression often used to test knowledge” or “a subject or aspect in dispute or open for discussion.” While these may be true in many cases, the meaning of the root Latin word *quaerere* is “to seek, ask.”

From Satan’s “*Hath God said...?*” to the angel’s query to John in Revelation 17:7, the Bible has 3,298 questions. It is a wonderful way to learn. Of course there are different ways to ask questions: expecting a positive response—“You’re coming, aren’t you?” or a negative response—“You don’t like that kind of music, do you?” or not anticipating any particular response—“Did you enjoy that taste?” We see more clearly the force of the Samaritan woman’s appeal to her townsmen when she said, “Come see a Man that told me everything I ever did. It couldn’t be the Messiah, could it?”

Many passages hinge on following the Q and A layout. Job 38 has 40 questions; 2 Samuel 19 has 22; 1 Corinthians 9 has 20. And some of the most powerful passages in the word are set in a question and answer format, Romans 8:31-39 and Galatians 3:1-5, for example.

The New Testament speaks of both good and bad questions. In fact, Paul gives four stringent warnings in his pastoral epistles:

- “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do” (1 Tim. 1:4).

- “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings” (1 Tim. 6:3-4).

- “But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes” (2 Tim. 2:23).

- “But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable

and vain” (Titus 3:9).

That having been said, the writings of Paul are full of questions—and have stirred up questions—good, wholesome, helpful questions that have led many into truth.

The first time we hear the Lord speak, it is after His time with the doctors at the temple where He was “...both hearing them, and asking them questions” (Lk. 2:46). I imagine they were most probing kind of questions.

This first instance recorded in our Lord’s life reminds us that questions may take a rhetorical form, where the questioner already knows the answer but is calling on the hearer to think about the answer himself. Such was the query in the Garden, “*Adam, where art thou?*” and our Lord’s middle cry from the cross, “*My God, why...?*”

After enduring a barrage of questions all day from the various sects of the Jews, Jesus said, “*I will also ask of you one question, and answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things*” (Mk. 11:29).

On another occasion the Lord posed the question to end all questions: “*And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions*” (Mt. 22:46).

This issue highlights the ten questions I am most frequently asked during Question and Answer sessions. In fact a conference hardly seems complete without some of these perennial ones popping up. Perhaps the comments included here will help to settle these and give the floor to others that will expand our biblical horizons.

In some places the Question Box is empty; the Lord’s people have nothing to ask. As my father used to say, “The tragedy is not when the Lord’s people don’t have the answers; it’s when they don’t even have the questions.”

Our own Bible study will supply both answers to questions and new questions to stimulate further study. May the Lord lead us on to know Him better and His blessed Word. After all, a good, thought-inspiring question will often prove more helpful than a glib, superficial answer.



THE TOP EIGHT HURDLES

Clear answers ready for these questions will help to arm you for the fight.

1 If there is a God, and if He is good, why is there pain and suffering in the world? Why did God create the devil? Why does He allow evil to continue?

Cliffe Knechtle explains: “Don’t make the mistake of using moral indignation as an argument against God’s existence. For if there is no God, there is no authority to define what is absolutely right and what is absolutely wrong.” Of course if one rejects God because there is suffering in the world, it leaves you with nothing but despair.

The Bible tells us that God not only created the world perfect, but included in it creatures who could choose to love and know Him in a personal way. That meant, of course, that they could choose *not* to love Him, in fact to rebel against Him. And that, says the Bible, is just what happened. All the grief you see in the world is a result of a civil war in the universe.

But that is not all the Bible says about evil and suffering. It also explains that although God is not responsible for the evil, He has found a way to use it for good if we cooperate with Him.

First, He uses it to get our attention. C. S. Lewis writes: “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

Second, pain is God’s means of bringing things into focus. A phone call from the hospital about a loved one reminds us about what is really important in life.

Third, suffering—like a trip to the dentist or to the surgeon—can hurt us in order to heal us. Some of the things in life that we thought were assets turn out to be liabilities, like too much freedom or too much money. Other things we first thought were bad turn to our good. Many people thank God they got cancer, or ended up in jail, because that is what they needed in order to meet Him.

Some people think God should get rid of all evil as soon as possible. But then that would mean getting rid of every sinner, too. God says He *is* going to rid the world of evil and suffering, but Jesus has set about to rescue as many as possible first, to invite them to switch sides, to lay down their arms of rebellion, repent, and believe the gospel.

2 How can I take Christianity seriously with so many hypocrites in the church? And why are there so many denominations? Anyway, isn’t Christianity just a crutch for weak people?

Jesus reserved His most scathing remarks for the sin of hypocrisy. Why? Because as long as I pretend to be what I am not, I will never become what God designed me to be.

Of course prejudging all Christians as hypocrites is like saying all apples are rotten because I’ve seen a few rotten ones in my time. True, Christianity sets high standards for its followers, and there is no place for a Christian excusing his sin. But assessing Christianity by the performance of some Christians is to miss the main point.

Christians are often assumed to be claiming perfection because most religions teach that only a perfect person could be sure of heaven. But when a Christian claims such assurance, he is basing it on his trust in the perfection of *Christ* and His work, not on his own condition!

So the real question is: “What do you think of Christ?” He is the Saviour, and no moral imperfection can be found in Him. Yet His followers should seek to show His grace, love and holiness in our lives that others “*may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*”

The variety of denominations—barring false cults that purposely twist Scripture—should not be an insurmountable problem to a true seeker. While some things need to be interpreted in the Bible, the essential message—believed by every true Christian—needs no interpretation. It needs only to be believed. The four elements in the message: i) all have sinned; ii) the soul that sins dies; iii) Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; iv) believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

Christianity a crutch? Hardly! What good is a crutch to a dead man? What everyone needs is new life, and that is what the Christian gospel offers.

3 Don’t all religions lead ultimately to God? Are you saying that all other religions are wrong? Does it matter what you believe as long as you are sincere?

A student described his belief as a mountain which everyone was climbing, all on different paths yet all leading to the same summit. This has one fatal flaw. It only works if you can prove that humanity is going uphill! Not easy to believe of the generation that has seen two World Wars, the collapse of the family and common decency, and lives with the constant reminders of incessant bloodshed around the world. The Bible says man is getting worse.

The shocking fact is this: with all the religions in the world, there are *many ways*. So says Isaiah 53: Everyone has turned to his own way. But there is only *one Saviour!* No other religion even offers one; they say that a person must accomplish their salvation by their own works.

The politically correct way to look at things in the West these days is to assume that all beliefs are equally valid. This moral relativism is shown for what it is in the following paragraph by Hadley Arkes: “In one society, a widow is burned on the funeral pyre of her husband; in another, she is burned on the beach in Miami. In one society, people complain to the chef about the roast beef; in another, they send back the roast beef and eat the chef.” Any difference?

We all know from experience that sincerity is not enough to guarantee arrival at one’s destination. One must also take the right road. On this Jesus was perfectly clear: “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, except by Me*” (John 14:6).

4 What about the people who have never heard of Jesus? Will they all go to hell? How can a loving God send anyone to hell? And is it fair to be punished for ever, no matter how much you sinned during 70 or 80 years?

Certain things we know for sure. God never gives us information just to tickle our fancy. If we are not to be the judge in this matter, God feels no obligation to tell us how this judgment will be decided. Yet we know “*the Judge of all the earth*” will do right. And that Judge is no one other than Jesus Himself. What does He say in John 3? “*This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*” (John 3:19). So the light has come, yet men refuse to respond.

We know as well that all those saved are saved through Christ and His finished work. There is no other saviour.

And there is a real place called hell. It was not made for humanity; it was made for the devil and his angels. But if certain people decide to remain with the devil in his rebel-

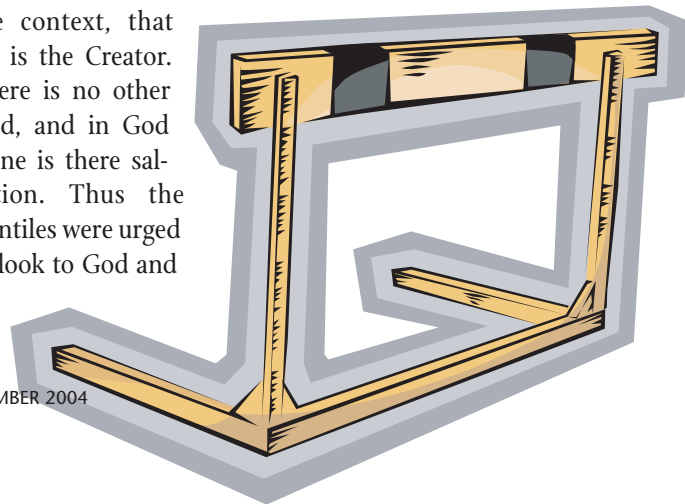
lion, they are welcome to share his fate. After all, doesn’t hell show that God takes human decisions seriously? He doesn’t drag people kicking and screaming to heaven. If they don’t want His Son, they certainly don’t want heaven since heaven will be filled with His glory. Imagine being with millions of psalm-singing Christians and never able to get out! It is an unbeliever’s nightmare of astronomical proportions. Hence Jesus’ comment to the highly respectable Nicodemus, “*Men love darkness rather than light.*” Nicodemus needed to be born from above if he ever hoped to see the kingdom of God.

But back to the question of who can be saved. We know that many have been saved who never heard of Jesus, in Old Testament times. It was not only people like Abraham, who “*rejoiced*” to see Christ’s day, but those like Rahab and the men of Nineveh—who clearly were saved since they will be used as witnesses for the prosecution at the Last Trial (Mt. 12:41). What did they know of Jesus?

David Gooding states: “When Romans 2 says that God’s goodness to people was meant to lead them to repentance, was that goodness extended to Jews only or also to Gentiles? I would have thought that God, being no respecter of persons, was good to Gentiles as well. Paul says it to the people of Lystra, Acts 14. God didn’t leave Himself without witness; He was good to them.

“Now Romans 2 says that this goodness of God was meant to lead people to repentance. Did God hope that they would repent? Unless He was insincere, of course He did. What really happened when they did repent? Did God, by His silence, indicate, ‘You’ve repented, but that isn’t enough, of course. I haven’t revealed to you the means of salvation and I am not intending to. Therefore, you repented but there is no salvation for you?’

“Another indication in the OT of God’s attitude to the Gentiles is the famous one, ‘*Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else*’ (Isa. 45:22). That seems to suggest that God was interested in saving Gentiles and He bases that invitation on the fact, if one looks at the context, that He is the Creator. There is no other God, and in God alone is there salvation. Thus the Gentiles were urged to look to God and



be saved. Unless God is saying things that are ultimately meaningless and tantalizingly insincere, He must have meant it seriously, inviting Gentiles to look to Him and be saved.”

As to suffering punishment forever, three factors must be considered: i) do they want out of their place of torment if the only alternative is living in Christ’s glory? ii) will they stop sinning—and therefore stop running up their debt—when they die? iii) what is suitable punishment for being guilty of the death of the Son of God and never repenting for it? We must beware when we think that we are more merciful than God. After all, His Word itself declares that there is no other escape if men “*neglect so great salvation.*”

5 Doesn’t evolution disprove the necessity of God? Can’t science explain everything we need to know?

John Lennox states: “For many centuries theism was the dominant view, that God is the Creator and Upholder of the universe. It was the view of many leading figures in the scientific revolution. It...comes as an astonishing surprise to many...intellectuals that many of the figures that they revere in science as being responsible for the great upsurge of science in the 16th, 17th & 18th centuries were not only theists, but Christian theists. In fact, 90% of the founding members of the Royal Society of Great Britain were believers. Sir Alfred North Whitehead, one of the leading historians of science of all time said this, ‘Men became scientific because they expected law in nature and they expected law in nature because they believed in a Lawgiver.’ We owe a great deal of modern science to people who were motivated by their belief that behind the universe there was a Creator God, so that science and Christianity were certainly not incompatible in their minds.”

As far as the question of evolution—meaning that all we see in the universe can be explained by impersonal force randomly acting on mindless matter—is concerned, it is far from being proven. Michael Behe, Associate Professor of Biochemistry at Lehigh University, argues that “the most convincing evidence for design is not to be found in the stars or the fossils, but in biochemical systems. Behe uses examples such as vision, blood-clotting, and cellular transport to demonstrate that life comprises an astonishing array of chemical machines, made up of finely calibrated, interdependent parts that defy current naturalistic explanations. Behe surveys professional science literature and shows that it is completely silent on the

subject, stymied by the elegance of the foundation of life.”

Behe writes: “It is important to realize that we are not inferring design from what we do not know, but from what we do know.... A man from a primitive culture who sees an automobile might guess that it was powered by the wind or by an antelope hidden under the car, but when he opens up the hood and sees the engine he immediately realizes that it was designed. In the same way biochemistry has opened up the cell to examine what makes it run and we see that it, too, was designed.

“It was a shock to people of the nineteenth century when they discovered, from observations science had made, that many features of the biological world could be ascribed to the elegant principle of natural selection. It is a shock to us in the twentieth century to discover, from observations science has made, that the fundamental mechanisms of life cannot be ascribed to natural selection, and therefore were designed. But we must deal with our shock as best we can and go on. The theory of undirected evolution is already dead...”

It is unwise to think of God as “a God of the gaps.” John Lennox explains: “As science advanced, God appeared to be squeezed into the gaps in scientific knowledge and, of course, He got tinier and tinier...The notion that God is simply a God of the gaps is a very dangerous notion. It ended up in deism—that God, if He existed at all, started the whole thing off and then He simply lets it run. You can see that it wouldn’t be very long down that road before you would end up with God losing His existence altogether. As science pushed the frontiers further and further back, God would become less and less necessary. So we get to naturalism, a situation where God has lost His existence; only the universe exists as a closed system of cause and effect....

“There are certain logical problems within naturalism that are worth pointing out. Because we believe in God as a God of rationality, we are guided by Scripture to the conclusion that when intellectuals give up on God, Romans tells us that they become darkened in their understanding.

“Professor J.B.S. Haldane was an atheist and yet, he could see that the extreme form of reductionism that reduced everything simply to physics and chemistry and mathematics had a logical flaw at its heart. He put it this way, ‘If my mental processes are determined solely by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true. In particular, I have no reason to believe that my brain is even composed of atoms.’

“Here you have a very curious situation. If we are simply to be reduced, as George Gaylord Simpson says, to

being the product of a natural process which didn't have us in mind, then, in the end, it's true that the thoughts in our minds are simply the results of motions of atoms in our brain. Then why on earth should we believe them? There's a logical absurdity at its heart."

Lennox continues: "Let me tell you a story. In Siberia I gave a lecture some years ago, chaired by the Communist Party, on 'The Search for Meaning and Values at the End of the Twentieth Century.' One man, a senior politician, was very angry. He went up and drew a lightning flash on the blackboard and said, 'People used to believe that that was caused by God and now we know how lightning works.'

"I looked straight at this politician, and said, 'I am amazed how much we agree. The God you don't believe in I don't believe in either. A God who disappeared when you discovered how lightning worked wouldn't be worth believing in anyway, would He?' Then I looked at the audience and I said, 'Our friend here, I suspect on the basis of his logic, when he discovered how the main spring of a watch worked, he ceased believing in a watchmaker.'

"So many people feel that once you have discovered a mechanism, you've wiped out the notion of a designer. So in science, the only place you're going to find God is in the places we don't understand anything. That is nonsensical. It is actually the other way around. The more intricate you discover the mechanisms to be, the more it ought to increase your wondering at the sheer brilliance of the Mind that invented them."

6 If Jesus was the Messiah prophesied in the Hebrew Scriptures, why didn't most of the Jews—especially the religious leaders—recognize Him?

When the leaders in Jerusalem cried, "Not Jesus but Barabbas" they made it clear why they rejected Him. Barabbas was a freedom fighter against the Romans, and the rulers of the Jews wanted a Messiah who would deliver them from their earthly enemies. Thus Jesus' words to Pilate, "*If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight*" (Jn. 18:36). Nor did the Jews like Jesus absolute claim over their life because of His insistence that He was indeed God manifest in flesh. They objected to Him being "Lord of the Sabbath," forgiving sins against God, and telling them that He would yet be seen by them in His kingdom glory (causing the same irritation as Joseph telling his brothers about their bowing to him).

But the Jewish leaders' rejection of Jesus' claims does


not weaken the Bible's argument; it strengthens it. After all, many OT prophets warned that Messiah would be "*despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not*" (Isa. 53:3). David warned of the "*The stone which the builders refused*" (Ps. 118:22). Paul, quoting Isaiah, quoting God, asked, "*Who has believed our report?*" Of course, as Paul points out, there were many Jews (including himself) who did believe and responded with John, "*It is the Lord!*"

7 How can someone know for sure? Many Christians say that it is presumptuous to say you know until the final judgment. After all, Jesus said that some who will stand outside knocking who thought they should be inside. Couldn't you be one of those people?

If we are to know for sure, certain factors are required. First, it would have to rest on a finished work with no possibility of failure. That Jesus did at Calvary. The logic is inescapable. He was verifiably perfect, five trials by His enemies overwhelmingly proving the point. If perfect, He did not die for His own sins. He states that it was our sins for which He died. Therefore, since "*the wages of sin is death*," one sin left unpaid-for would keep Him in the grave. The resurrection of Christ is our receipt of a payment for sin fully satisfying God.

But we would also need to have God's word on it. And we do. He says: "*Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*" (Heb. 10:17). And Jesus declares, "*I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand*" (Jn. 10:28). "*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*" (1 Jn. 5:13).

As far as the people standing outside (who thought they should be in), what are they saying? We trusted in Christ's finished work? No! We did miracles in your name. They were claiming that, on the basis of their performance that they deserved a place in heaven.

Notice Christ's response. He does not say, I knew you once, but I no longer do. Instead, He sadly declares: "I never knew you." Anyone who comes to God must be honest about their sin; anything else is an alias. Because only your sins rightly introduce you to God—like this: "*God be merciful to me a sinner*" (Lk. 18:13). 

THE LUXURY OF CHOICE: *Two Year-End Conferences Offered!*

2004 TIMOTHY CONFERENCE • TORONTO

December 28-31, 2004

Sheraton Parkway Toronto North, Richmond Hill, ON

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS: David Gooding, Roy Hill, Randy Amos and Alan Parks

The Timothy Conference was born out of a desire for a practical return to 2 Timothy 2:2—to take the issue of discipling young believers out of theory and into practice. Our desire is to provide help and encouragement for both sides of the equation—to stir up and equip mentors and to give immediate practical help to young Timothys desiring mentoring.

Schedule

TUESDAY, 12/28/04

7:30 PM Randy Amos

9:00 PM RECEPTION/HYMN SING

WEDNESDAY, 12/29/04 & THURSDAY, 12/30/04

7:00 AM PRAYER TIME

8:00 AM BREAKFAST

9:00 AM David Gooding

10:30 AM BREAK

11:00 AM SEMINARS

1:30 PM LUNCH

2:45 PM BREAK

3:00 PM SEMINARS

4:00 PM SEMINARS

5:00 PM FREE TIME

5:45 PM DINNER

7:30 PM Alan Parks (Wed.) Roy Hill (Thur.)

9:00 PM HYMN SING

FRIDAY, 12/31/04

7:00 AM PRAYER

8:00 AM BREAKFAST/CHECKOUT

9:00 AM David Gooding

MYRTLE BEACH NEW YEAR CONFERENCE

December 30, 2004–January 2, 2005

Baywatch Resort & Conference Center, N. Myrtle Beach, SC

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS: Mike Attwood and Jim McKendrick

What better way to bring in the new year than to gather with fellow believers for ministry, fellowship and great singing? Plus time to relax and enjoy the beautiful ocean views. A New Year conference with a difference. Teaching ministry in the morning and evening with organized recreation in the afternoons. Register early—limited space available!

Schedule

THURSDAY, 12/30/04

7:00 PM REGISTRATION/FELLOWSHIP

FRIDAY, 12/31/04 & SATURDAY, 1/1/05

7:00 AM PRAYER TIME

7:30 AM BREAKFAST

9:00 AM Mike Attwood

10:15 AM BREAK

10:30 AM Jim McKendrick

12:00 PM LUNCH (Free time 1–5 PM, fellowship and recreation. Indoor pool, beach, shopping or sightseeing)

5:00 PM DINNER

7:00 PM Jim McKendrick

8:15 PM BREAK

8:30 PM Mike Attwood

10:00 PM Hymn Sing/Watchnight Meeting (on 12/31 only)

SUNDAY, 1/2/05

7:30 AM BREAKFAST/CHECKOUT

If travel plans permit, you may wish to attend the LORD'S SUPPER locally at Myrtle Beach Bible Chapel, 9:30 AM.

Timothy Conference Fees:

Conference registration includes: 3 nights' accommodation, all meals & gratuities (Wednesday breakfast through Friday breakfast), access to all conference sessions, handout materials and use of hotel facilities.

Standard rates:

Single	\$425 CDN	Double	\$295 CDN
Triple	\$265 CDN	Quad	\$245 CDN

The above mentioned occupancy categories are based on the number of persons 13 yrs. and older in a room. It does not include how many children there may be.

Family rates:

Standard Rate per person 13 yrs. and older
\$97.50 CDN per child ages 5-12

No charge for children under 5 years

Commuter rates (as space is available):

Option A: all sessions and all conf. meals \$245 CDN

Option B: all sessions and all meals per day \$95 CDN

Offering: On Wednesday, an offering will be taken at the evening session to assist in fellowship gifts and accommodation expenses of conference speakers and seminar leaders.

Completed registration forms with pay-

ment (by mail or fax only) should be sent to:

Timothy Conference 2004
15 Ballantyne Dr., Ajax ON L1T 4H6

Fax: 905-619-0087

Payment accepted by VISA, MasterCard or checks payable to "The Timothy Conference."

- Registration deadline Friday, December 10, 2004
- Cancellations after Dec. 10, 2004 subject to 20% charge.

NOTE: If you wish to share a room with someone, all registration forms must be sent together, each indicating the same request. Roommates will be assigned by the Registrar if no request is made on your registration form.

Accommodations: All rooms come equipped with complimentary high speed internet access. Amenities include complimentary in-room coffee makers, hair dryers, irons/ironing boards, newspapers, voice mail, data ports, and free indoor parking. There are two heated swimming pools, steam room, squash, tennis and badminton courts, basketball and volleyball courts and fitness equipment.

Children's sessions available during meeting times for ages 5-12 will be conducted by Nathan Thomas (OH).

Myrtle Beach Conference Fees:

Conference registration includes: 3 nights' accommodation (taxes included), all meals & gratuities (Friday breakfast through Sunday breakfast), access to all conference sessions and use of hotel facilities.

Individual rates:	w/meals	w/o meals
1 BDR Condo — Single =	\$270pp	\$180pp
1 BDR Condo — Double =	\$180pp	\$90pp
1 BDR Condo — Triple =	\$152pp	\$60pp
1 BDR Condo — Quad =	\$138pp	\$45pp

Family rates:	w/meals	w/o meals
2 BDR Condo — Fam 5 =	\$145pp	\$53pp
2 BDR Condo — Fam 6 =	\$136pp	\$44pp
2 BDR Condo — Fam 7 =	\$130pp	\$38pp
2 BDR Condo — Fam 8 =	\$125pp	\$33pp

(pp = per person)

**Children 5 years and under FREE

Commuter rates (includes meals for the day):

- Friday only — \$43pp
- Saturday only — \$40pp
- Total conference — \$92pp (all meals)

Special Note: An offering will be taken at the Fri. evening session to assist in fellowship gifts for conference speakers.

Completed registration forms plus \$50pp and \$100/per family registration fee(s) should be sent to:

Mark Hartley
PO Box 72191, Durham, NC 27722-2191

Make checks payable to: 'Mark Hartley'

- Registration deadline EXTENDED to Nov. 26
- Remaining balance due on Dec. 15.

NOTE: After Dec. 15, a registration surcharge of \$25.00 will be charged, provided the hotel has availability.

If you have a special musical talent for the Watchnight meeting, contact Scott Tucker (843-650-8975) before Dec. 10.

Accommodations: Each condo has 2 double beds in each bedroom, a "murphy" double bed, and sofa bed in the living room. Each condo is equipped with kitchen, dishwasher and washer/dryer. All condos have an unobstructed ocean view.

Children's sessions available during meeting times for ages 5-12.

SCIENCE & YOU

VISIBLE CREATION SHOWING US THE INVISIBLE GOD

SETI IN THEIR WAYS

The “Ask the Experts” question and answer section in the July 2004 issue of *Scientific American* fielded a question about the program called SETI, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (p. 120). The question posed was: “What kind of patterns does SETI look for?”

The answer, given by Peter R. Backus, programs manager at SETI, is a good example of how adherents to the evolutionary faith continue to miss the obvious even when they are looking for it.

The goal of SETI is to find signs of intelligent life beyond earth by monitoring light and radio waves hitting earth from space and searching them for patterns. Their reasoning is that humans cannot be alone in the universe and for them it is a virtual certainty that life has begun and evolved on other planets, perhaps even to the point of being able to broadcast radio signals. Since only a living, intelligent being can consistently make and broadcast signals that are nonrandom or coded, finding patterns would be the first tangible evidence for the existence of life outside of earth. For SETI followers this would also be proof of their faith that earth is not unique and that evolution has occurred elsewhere in the universe and not just on earth.

It is ironic that, while specifically looking for signs of intelligent life, “SETIans” have missed the obvious implications of the complex patterns of life right here on earth. Specifically, that the many non-random patterns which characterize life and living things on this planet are themselves signals that there is an intelligent designer behind these patterns.

The evolutionary faithful are unmoved by this argument, yet it is exactly this argument which they offer as the rationale for the search for life beyond earth. Some will spend their lives looking for a sign of intelligent life behind the patterns of radio emissions from space, but never apply this same reasoning to life on earth. To do so would lead them to a totally different conclusion about the origin and meaning of life than they currently hold.

In his short answer, Peter Backus even admits that at SETI they really don’t even know what kind of pattern to look for. Should they look for a binary code of ones and zeros such as is used in our computers, or a symbolic language or pictures? He observes that “other encoding schemes have been suggested, but in truth scientists do not know what to expect. That is part of what makes SETI so interesting.”

Their faith tells them life is out there. Their logic tells them generally what to look for—even that is uncertain. So they keep listening for the right signal, either unaware of, or willfully deaf to, the chorus of signals directed at them here on earth by God saying, “I am here, I am here, I am here.” But, sadly, they have neither ears to hear nor eyes to see, and so continue to miss the obvious even while searching for it.



—MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, Ph.D.

Dr. Windheuser presents medical education lectures to physicians on diabetes and cardiovascular disease. He lives in Lawrence, KS and fellowships at the Bible Chapel there. Inquiries may be directed to michaelandheather6@sbcglobal.net

BOOKSHELF

TREND SETTERS • LIFE CHANGERS • TIMELESS CLASSICS

THE RIGHT QUESTIONS: *Truth, Meaning, & Public Debate*

by Phillip E. Johnson; Intervarsity Press, 2002; 192 Pages; ISBN 0830822941

How does a thinking Christian reconcile science with faith? Instead of giving a direct answer, Johnson invites us to rephrase the question, or even to ask an entirely different one. Johnson, a Harvard-educated law school professor, came to faith in Christ later in life. Having spent many years in academia, his passion now is to see professors and students won to Christ and delivered from the politically-correct slavery of the academic world.

He is probably best known for his first book, *Darwin on Trial*, published in 1991. As that title suggests, there he applied a legal methodology in assessing the claims of evolutionists and materialists. In *The Right Questions*, he focuses more on the faulty and unproveable assumptions that underlie their science—their blind commitment to a materialistic and naturalistic explanation for the universe and everything in it. As he puts it, the Christian begins with the assumption “In the beginning was the Word.” The Darwinist says, “In the beginning were the particles,” although they would not phrase it in those terms. Each statement is a foundational assumption upon which a worldview is based. Neither statement can be “proved” or disproved, at least not in the scientific sense; rather each statement is accepted by faith. Scientists tend to deny that charge, arguing that they only go where their science leads them. However Johnson quotes preeminent Harvard biologist Richard Lewontin who wrote, “[Science] has a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism.”

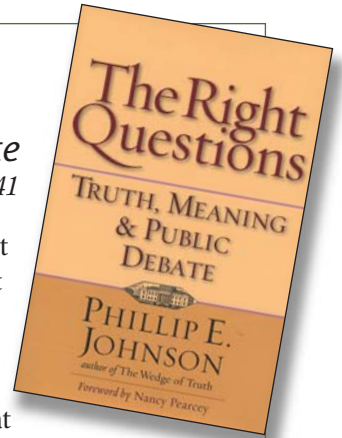
This work is much wider ranging than his previous works as well as being more personal. Topics include: The human genome project and the meaning of life, 9/11, Islam, the war on terrorism, Genesis and gender debate, religion and its role in education and public life. He shows how the materialistic philosophy of science impacts the way society thinks about these bigger issues. Johnson argues that the battle is often won or lost in the way the question is phrased. Until now, the evolutionists have been framing the questions, using their assumptions. He points out how if Christians can reframe the questions, they can often change the whole tenor of the debate.

In each section he tries to reach the root of the issue. For example, with respect to Genesis, he writes: “I did not want to become involved in the long-standing and deadlocked battle between the Bible and science. Rather I wanted to point out that the real battle is not between the Bible and science but between science as unbiased, empirical observation on the one hand, and science as applied naturalistic philosophy on the other....”

Of final note is Johnson’s autobiographical chapter in which he chronicles the Lord’s dealings with him through the stroke he suffered in 2001 and his subsequent recovery. He describes how the Lord used that experience to take him to a deeper trust in the Lord. As he puts it: “I knew myself to be not so much a believer in Christ as a skeptic about everything else, a recovering rationalist who had lost his faith in world’s definition of reason, but who knew only the world’s Jesus...What I needed was the only solid rock, the real Christ....”

While I find it difficult to get a handle on the book as a whole because the range of topics covered is so broad I found Johnson’s approach helpful in thinking about some of these issues. It certainly helps lay some groundwork for a more profitable line of approach in dealing with them. Yet the lack of answers is vaguely unsettling. While Johnson is confident that soon Darwinism will join Marxism and Freudism in the dustbin of discarded ideologies, I find little reason to be so optimistic.

KEVIN SHANTZ



PURPOSE-DRIVEN BEST SELLER

Take a very careful look before you leap.

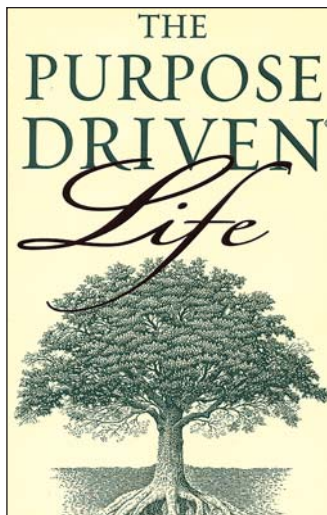
Michael Penfold

A large number of people from assemblies are reading an influential and impossible-to-ignore book called *The Purpose-Driven Life* by Rick Warren. Here are some figures about the book:

- It received the Book of the Year Award from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association in 2003 and 2004.
- It has spent more than 70 weeks on *The New York Times*' best-seller list.
- It has sold more than 17 million copies worldwide in just three years.
- Currently in the UK it is selling more than all the other top 10 books combined on the Christian bestseller lists.

The author, Rick Warren, is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. Now with 16,000 in attendance each weekend, and over 50,000 names on the church roll, Saddleback is one of America's largest and best-known churches. Warren's influence is staggering. His e-mail "ministry tips newsletter" reaches some 83,000 church leaders weekly. More than 250,000 pastors and church leaders from over 125 countries have attended Purpose-Driven Church seminars in 18 languages.

Warren's previous book, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, sold over one million copies in 20 languages. Winner of the Gold Medallion Ministry Book of the Year, it is used




as a textbook in many seminaries, and was selected as one of the 100 Christian Books That Changed the 20th Century. Now, in connection with *The Purpose-Driven Life*, over 12,000 churches from all 50 states and 19 countries have participated in a program known as "40 Days of Purpose." Many of these churches have reported that it was the most transforming event in their congregation's

history. Hundreds of pastors have written or called, saying, "Our church will never be the same" and "This is the greatest thing that has ever happened in our church."

What are the concerns? In brief, Rick Warren is an ecumenical leader. His "church growth" philosophy overthrows many non-negotiable principles held dear among assemblies.

But what of the book itself? It is unsound in many parts and unless the reader is very well grounded, it could easily have an influence in the wrong direction. The best evaluation I have seen can be found on the following two pages:

www.svchapel.org/Resources/articles/read_articles.asp?id=1
www.svchapel.org/Resources/articles/read_articles.asp?id=2

The author of these critiques, Gary Gilley, has written an excellent book called *This Little Church Went to Market* which is an examination of the Church Growth Movement in the U.S. His look at Warren's second major book is an incisive and helpful work which I commend to all brethren concerned for the welfare of assemblies. 

"When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. 1:17-20).

SERVING OUR GENERATION

The clock is quickly counting down on the Boomers.

Jabe Nicholson

The Boomers are dying. I ought to know. My boyhood friend, one year my senior, is gone. Just like that. Gone. We rode our bikes together, went swimming on hot summer afternoons, attended the same schools. We fellowshiped in the same local church where we tried—with fits and starts—to stir up our gifts, and stumbled into manhood together. You see him standing in my wedding photos. My heart holds happy memories of those times.

Anyway, two weeks ago, when I was in Ireland, his family stood around his grave. One morning at work he felt a tightness in his chest. He paid a visit to the local hospital, was given some medication, and was left for only a moment or two. But when the nurse returned, he was gone. Just like that. His passing was a solemn reminder to me that time is running out for reaching this generation.

There are no definitive dates that mark out the Baby Boomer generation, but many observers use the period between 1946 (when the end of the war in Europe began the dramatic climb in births) and 1964 (when the widespread use of the Pill led to a decline in the birthrate). One study (Spring 2004 *Biography* magazine) states:

By 1959 there were over 50 million children under the age of 14 living in the United States. Together they made up over 30 percent of the population. There were as many children in 1959 as there were people living in the US in 1881...

The baby boom would prove to be the single greatest demographic event in American history.... Boomers were so disproportionately numerous, so affluent, so blessed by the cold peace of the Cold War (Vietnam notwithstanding), that they would have the motive, means, and opportunity to reshape the nation (pp. 49-53).

Of course simple arithmetic shows that even the latest born of that generation are now 40. The oldest are approaching 60. If we are still going to reach this generation—my generation—for Christ, we must do it now.

What factors might help us understand the Boomers so we could be more effective in impacting them with the gospel? The Scripture states that someone who has built

up a defense against us “*is harder to be won than a strong city*” (Prov. 18:19). When seeking to do exploits for God, it makes little sense to seek entrance to a person’s soul at the point of its strongest defense. Instead we should ask: What are the vulnerabilities of this generation? Where might we find entry into their materialistic, me-centered, often cynical hearts?


In assessing this generation, the article continues:

The Boomers have been dismissed by many commentators as selfish, or self-indulgent, a generation that never had to make the sacrifices of its predecessors...But this stereotype is short-sighted and misses other very different trends...the steady rise of church-going; the explosion of charitable giving; the explosion of entrepreneurship...Though they pushed the country toward liberalism when they were young, they pushed it right back to conservatism when they grew older.

Whether you agree with that assessment or not, it is the case that many who once embraced the free-wheeling, anti-establishment spirit of the 60s and 70s have turned 180 degrees from that. I know because I meet them in local assemblies all across the continent. Somehow they were reached and rescued by the gospel.

But it isn’t the 60s and 70s now. Boomers aren’t experimenting with hallucinogenic drugs and free love. Instead they now struggle with kids on drugs, crumbling marriages, financial uncertainty, bodies that prove to them daily that they are mortal (Superman just died!), and parents slipping into the netherworld of Alzheimer’s.

Many of them were inoculated against the Real Thing by their parents’ religion. But if we can gain their trust, they do have pressing questions, which many despair of ever having answered. Questions like: If there is a good God, why is it such a sad world? Is there any way of knowing for sure that there is a heaven? And knowing if I’m going? Can I really trust the Bible? Can I understand it?

I’m convinced that Boomers will listen if we prove our certain hope by living caring, contented and victorious lives before them. We need to be there for them in their times of crisis and be ready with real answers to their real problems (1 Pet. 3:15). And there is no time to lose. 



TRUE STORY

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee” (Mk. 5:19).

INCIDENTS from the LIFE of CHRISTOPHER KNAPP

Written by Mr. Knapp’s son, Thomas, with input from the late Carl Armerding (revised 05/30/04)

Christopher Knapp’s parents, German immigrants, settled on a truck farm in the Albany, NY, area. He was one of five sons and a daughter, and was brought up under the nominal Christian influence of Calvinistic Reformed theology. Born June 6, 1870, it is therefore not surprising that in 1889, at 19 years of age, he went west to study for the Presbyterian ministry in South Bend, Indiana.

While in South Bend, he attended meetings at the YMCA (which in those days included gospel meetings) and there came to truly know the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. Years later, writing of his conversion in a tract entitled, “Main Street, and What It Means To Me,” Knapp said:



Illustration by John Bjorlie

About the first place I made for after finding a boarding house was the YMCA. The “C” stood for something in those days. There, “*prayer was wont to be made,*” the Scriptures were honored and studied, souls were sought after. Acquaintances there were quickly made... and one notable day one of these proposed a walk. We stepped out on Main Street together, and after going a few blocks, my companion suddenly turned to me with the question, “Knapp, are you a Christian?”

The question neither surprised nor offended me; it was a perfectly natural one, I thought (and so I still believe). So I answered frankly, “No, I am not.”

“Well, you ought to be,” he said. This I acknowledged. “Well,” he continued, “Don’t put it off: Life is too uncertain!” Then he told a searching story of a sudden death, which, under the Holy Spirit’s convicting power, turned my heart.

Yes, standing there on the pavement on Main Street under the blue spreading sky of that glorious 19th day of June, I submitted myself to Christ, I received Him as my Saviour, and in that act of faith, I passed from death unto life.

Coming into contact with Christians sometimes referred to as Plymouth Brethren, Knapp gave up his purpose of becoming a Presbyterian minister, and identified himself with that group of believers. As a young man of vigorous strength and zeal for spreading the Good News, he soon began evangelizing wherever the Lord opened doors. Thus began a life of simple dependence on the Lord for his food, clothes, lodging and travel expense.

Among the places of his early travels was Rochester, NY and, later, Minneapolis, MN. In Trout Brook MN, a small farming community, his gospel preaching was particularly effective, and a number were converted in the middle 1890’s. A century later, an assembly of believers related to his early work still exists.

At the turn of the century, Knapp went to the Bahamas and preached Christ to the folk of these islands who came to have fond appreciation for him. While preaching here and across the straits of Florida in Miami and Key West, he met his future wife, Helena Johnson (formerly of the Bahamas). They married on June 3, 1904.

Somewhat amazingly, he took this “Sunshine State” lady to the cold winter of Black Cape, on the southern

shore of the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec, where there were a number of Scottish settlements. She had never before seen snow, but willingly went. There, the following year, her first child, Helena, was born, almost at the cost of her life. This daughter lived until reaching 98 years of age, before being called home to be with her Lord.

A short time of laboring followed in Brownsburg-LaChute, QC, accompanied by his wife and infant daughter. He then moved on to Cumberland, ON, some miles south of Ottawa. From there, his labors took him to Napanee, ON, near Kingston, on the St. Lawrence River. There, gospel outreach resulted in a number saved and God being glorified in triumph over the power of Satan, sin and self. The following incident will illustrate that.

A farm family, the Hahns, had several girls, and one night Knapp overheard one of these girls refusing to come to the gospel meeting. On returning from the meeting, he approached her about it, asking her if she ever refused the request of her friends to go skating. "No," she said.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because I like to go skating," was her reply. He told her that he would pray that the day would come when she would like to go to the gospel meeting. She wrote him later to say that that came about. Such are the ways of God.

Continuing on in his labors for the Lord, he next was found in Bethlehem, PA, preaching the gospel along with Harry Ironside. Again, a number recognized their need and confessed the Lord. Here the Knapp's second child, a son, was born in 1908. This son went on to become Admiral Chris Knapp, of the US Coast Guard, and was known as "the Bible Admiral."

Knapp's eager spirit soon moved him to a foreign field, what was then called Spanish Honduras (now simply Honduras), settling in the city of San Pedro Sula. This was his second trip to that place. On the previous trip, he had been detained by ship repairs at Georgetown in the Grand Cayman Islands. While there, he preached on the beach during his two-week stay and there resulted a great awakening among the local inhabitants, including not a few "dead" church members. When he left, the local elders of the church wrote an appreciating letter of thanks for his being used by God among them.

While in Honduras with his family—now increased by three daughters born to them there (Margaret, Martha and Gertrude)—his indefatigable labors took him to almost every town of that poor Central American country. His co-laborers in Honduras were Groh (US) and Hocking (UK) and Miss Fannie Arthur of Harrisburg PA. Fannie

died very early on the mission field.

Knapp contracted malaria and would have died but for the Lord's mercy and a move out of Honduras to a cooler, yet not cold, climate in Zephyrhills, FL. A young American brother in the Lord, Carl Armerding, came down to help the family move and stayed on for a while. Shortly after, Groh moved out, then Armerding, leaving only Hocking to carry on the work.

While for a time no visible fruit appeared, the seed took root and sprung up, resulting in some twenty-five assemblies of Christians being established, the remainder of which are today in fellowship with so-called Open Brethren. All this, with the Lord's gracious blessing, resulted from "*labors abundant*" and illustrates 2 Timothy 2:6.

During the time Knapp was laid up with malarial fever, he was curtailed in travels but continued to labor some in the area of Tampa and Zephyrhills. He then moved back to the area of his birth, Albany, NY. Here the last two children—sons Phillip "David" (who went down on the Cruiser Vincennes on August 9, 1942 in the Battle for the Solomons) and Thomas—were born in 1918 and 1928.

From this place, he would bicycle up into the beautiful Heldeberg Mountains ridge district, to the back hill towns, distributing tracts to all who would receive them. Eternity alone will reveal the results. There was no outward, visible fruit at the time, except of course that the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified (2 Cor. 2:14-17).

While engaged in gospel effort, brother Knapp was very careful to see to it that any saved were properly shepherded and taught the Scriptures, with him warning them of pitfalls—both doctrinal and moral. But the driving motive of his ministry was Christ's glory, above all. Thus, he also moved about among the churches edifying, exhorting and comforting. This took him as far west as Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois, as well as along the eastern seaboard.

A stroke in 1938 crippled him and made impossible the previous level of activity, though he made a partial recovery. In 1942, he left the fellowship of the so-called "Exclusive" Brethren and thereafter fellowshipped with the so-called "Open" Brethren.

His homecall came on May 19, 1945, just as World War II in Europe was ending. Now he "*rests from his labors and his works do follow*" (Rev. 14:13). Among these are his delightful books, including: *Staff and Sceptre*, *Who Wrote our Hymns*, *Tales of Grace*, *Daniel and His Companions*, *A Fruitful Bough*, *The Time of Harvest*, *The Life and Times of Samuel the Prophet* and *The Kings of Judah and Israel*. ❧

I'M GLAD YOU ASKED

Sharing the gospel can be effectively done by asking good questions or telling good stories.

NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT!

“ It was five years ago, on October 25, 1999, that something went badly wrong in a corporate Learjet carrying golf pro Payne Stewart and five others. Crashing in a field near Mina, SD, it left a crater ten feet deep. Stewart, once known for a mercurial temper, had been transformed by the gospel. John Hoffman, the land owner, placed a fence around the site and had a rock there inscribed, at the families' request, with the victims' names, the date of the tragedy, and the words of Psalm 40:2-3, *“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”* —Orlando Sentinel ”

THE MASTER'S QUESTIONS

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Have you looked for My sheep in the desert,
For those who have missed the way?
Have you been in the wild, waste places
Where the lost and wandering stray?
Have you trodden the lonely highway,
The foul and darksome street?
It may be you would see in the gloaming
The print of My wounded feet.

Have you carried the living water
To the parched and weary soul?
Have you said to the sick and wounded,
“Christ Jesus can make you whole”?
Have you told My fainting children
Of the strength of the Father's hand?
Have you guided the tottering footsteps
To the shore of the Golden Land?

Have you stood by the sad and weary
To soothe the pillow of death?
To comfort the sorrow-stricken,
And strengthen the feeble faith?
And have you felt, when the glory
Has streamed through the open door
And flitted across the shadows,
That I have been there before?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THEM

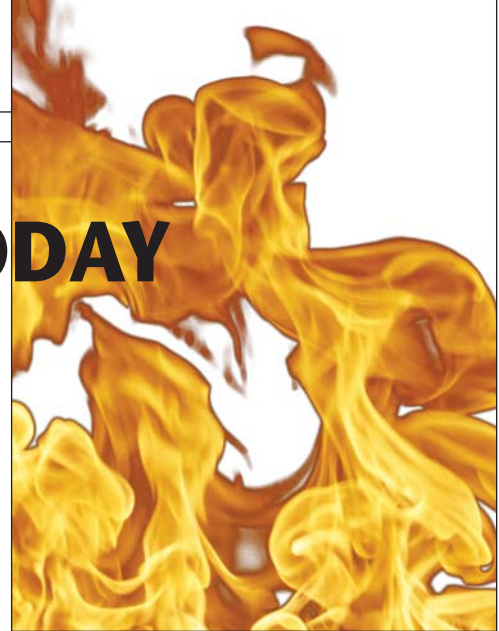
Very often Christians are asked the questions, but the Lord Jesus asked His hearers some questions of His own. Here are some questions you may wish to ask unbelievers:

1. *If you're wrong in what you believe, would you like to know?*
2. *Have you ever found anyone in history with a character more attractive than Christ?*
3. *Have you considered the personal consequences to you if the Bible actually is true?*
4. *Have you ever wondered why the Bible would call atheists fools?*
5. *How can you account for the fact that some of the greatest minds in history—Wycliffe, Rembrandt, John Milton, Lord Kelvin, Johann Sebastian Bach, Robert Boyle, Michael Faraday, Blaise Pascal, C. S. Lewis, and a multitude of others—have found the Christian world view to be completely reasonable?*
6. *Has anyone ever explained to you how you, according to the Bible, can know for sure that you will be in heaven when you die?*
7. *Can I tell you the most amazing thing that ever happened to me?*

TONGUES SPEAKING TODAY

*We see it in the Bible and we see it in Charismatic churches.
Is it the same thing?*

Harold Mackay



The most rapidly expanding religious movement in Christendom at present is the Charismatic Movement. The Charismatics (although it is difficult to speak in general terms because of the numerous groups linked under this title) are usually sound as to the deity of Christ. Many preach salvation by grace through faith, although often rejecting the eternal security of the believer. Most accept Bible truth regarding heaven and hell.

The doctrine which characterizes practically all the various groups of Charismatics and which is usually the main plank in their platform of preaching and practice is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This they claim is not the common experience of all believers but a sort of second blessing received only by those who fulfill certain conditions, usually tarrying and praying or possibly the laying on of hands. This, they teach, results in speaking in unknown tongues.

Why the attraction? First, it would appear to be a reaction against the impotence of a sterile liberalism. Liberal Christianity is bankrupt. In spite of high-sounding claims, a parading of scholarship, and a well-publicized program for social betterment, it has little to show for a century of effort. Its membership is decreasing, its coffers are being depleted, and it finds itself the object of attack by those it claims to befriend. The stone of liberal skepticism has proved to be a poor substitute for the bread of life.

Closely akin to this is the deadness of formal orthodoxy. Much of Christendom that has not openly denied the truth of the Bible has lapsed into a state of spiritual dearth that has little attraction for the masses. It is evident that the neo-Pentecostal movement making inroads in old-line denominations is having great success in those denominations most given to liturgical formalism. Here again there seems to be a reaction against spiritual dearth.

Without doubt sincere Christians are attracted to the movement because it seems to offer fulfillment to a genuine desire for greater holiness and effectiveness in life and testimony. There are few Christians who have not, at some time or another in their Christian life, experienced a great

longing for complete victory over indwelling sin and greater fruitfulness in service for the Lord. Such desires are certainly legiti-

mate. The Charismatics profess to provide the answer; this offer can appear most attractive.

Finally, many uninstructed believers are attracted because of its use of biblical terms. *Spirit baptism, the fullness of the Spirit, the gift of tongues*—these all seem to promise that which is of God, for they are all NT terms. To the immature and uninstructed they seem to be the truth. Today's tragic condition of woeful ignorance of the Bible in America certainly contributes to the possibility that people will succumb to the claims of the Tongues movement. It could be expected that from those who claim a superior endowment of the Spirit, there would issue such a rich unfolding of the deep things of God by preaching and pen as would authenticate their claims. But there is little evidence that such is the case.

Let us consider the errors of the Tongues movement. Here are the four most common errors.

1. **Placing higher priority on tongues than the Bible does.** Speaking in tongues is practically the keynote of the movement. Is it so in Scripture? In all the teachings of Christ recorded in the four Gospels there is but one reference to tongues (Mk. 16:17), a reference to the future, "*They shall speak with new tongues.*" The word "new" signifies different languages; this was fulfilled at Pentecost.

In Acts 2, the chapter on Pentecost, there are only five references to tongues (vv. 3, 4, 6, 8, 11). This chapter contains 47 verses, only 13 of which are in any way connected with the subject. The book of the Acts covers approximately the first 30 years of Church history. In its entire scope of 28 chapters, only three occasions are recorded where there was speaking in tongues: chs. 2, 10, and 19. Out of 1,007 verses in Acts only 18 deal with tongues.

Paul wrote 13 or 14 of the 27 books in the New Testament, and in only one of these (1 Cor.) does he mention tongues. In the 14 epistles from Romans to Hebrews there

are 100 chapters, and tongues are the subject of only part of two of them (1 Cor. 12 and 14).

When he does write about them, Paul places tongues and their interpretation last in both the manifestations of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7-10) and the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:28x). In giving his inspired estimate of the relative value and importance of tongues Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 14:5, "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather than ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." And again in the 19th verse of that same chapter, "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding..than ten thousand words in a tongue." Odds of two thousand to one against tongues!

Eight of the New Testament epistles were written by Peter, James, John and Jude. These writers make absolutely no reference to tongues. With these facts before us it is evident that little or no emphasis was placed on tongues even in the apostolic era when the gift was operative.

2. **Designating tongues as unknown.** This the Scriptures never do. In 1 Corinthians 14 the word "unknown" in connection with tongues appears five times in the King James Version but there is absolutely nothing in the original Greek to signify "unknown." The translators of our English version recognizing this fact, placed "unknown" in italics each time, indicating words that were supplied. The tongues referred to were unknown only to those not acquainted with that particular language.

There can be no question that the tongues at Pentecost were various dialects recognized readily by those familiar with that particular language. Let us prove that point.

There are two words used in the Greek New Testament for tongues and both are found in Acts 2. One word is *glossa*, occurring some 50 times in the New Testament. It is found in Acts 2:3, 4, and 11. "There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire" (v. 3), "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (v. 4); and "We do hear them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God" (v. 11).

Glossa is used of the tongue as the organ of speech 16 times in the New Testament, in such verses as Revelation 16:10, "They gnawed their tongues for pain." Six times it is used in the book of the Revelation in such expressions as, "peoples, nations, and tongues," clearly referring to different languages spoken by different nationalities.

The other Greek word is *dialektos* which is immediately recognized in its anglicized form as dialect and that is exactly what it means. It occurs in Acts 2:6 and 8, "every man heard them speak in his own language" (v. 6) and "how

hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" (v. 8). Three times in later chapters in the Acts it is used as the Hebrew tongue, in 21:40; 22:2; 26:14.

A consideration of these facts make it irrefutably clear that what was spoken on the day of Pentecost was not some unintelligible gibberish, but a different language from that normally spoken by these Galilean apostles. There were Jews present from at least 14 nations and these testified that they heard the apostles speaking in their own dialect. The miraculous gift was that the Spirit enabled these Galileans to speak in other tongues which they had never learned and no doubt had never used before.

Recognizing this undeniable fact about the tongues spoken at Pentecost, some of the more thoughtful Pentecostal teachers have sought to evade this dilemma, but in so doing have made this mistake, their third:

3. **Making a distinction between the tongues at Pentecost and at Corinth.** Those who take this position admit that the tongues spoken at Pentecost were understood by those familiar with these languages, but they claim that the tongues referred to by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians were different, since they required an interpreter to be understood. While some good and godly men, in no way connected with the tongues movement, have held the view that these were ecstatic utterances, sometimes called angelic languages, this view appears untenable.

Before examining it, let us notice the inevitable results of admitting this difference. If the tongues at Corinth were not the same as at Pentecost, then there is no connection whatsoever between speaking in unknown tongues and Pentecost. The whole Pentecostal movement is undermined and the name itself becomes a misnomer. Claiming to possess a Pentecostal gift that has no connection with Pentecost is so obviously wrong that one wonders that it is ever being advanced.

In seeking to escape from one horn of this dilemma, the advocates of this theory are impaled on an even sharper one. Without entering on a detailed exposition of 1 Corinthians 14, consider here only the matter of terminology. In our English translation of 1 Corinthians 14 we find the word *tongue* or *tongues* occurring 16 times. Fifteen times it is a translation of the Greek word *glossa* which we have discussed already. The one remaining instance is in a quotation from the Old Testament in verse 21 where we have another form of *glossa* as a translation of the Hebrew word. This form of *glossa* is literally "other-tongues" and signifies a foreigner. As you will recall, this word *glossa* is the identical word employed in Acts 2 for the tongues in



which they spoke at Pentecost. It is also used in Acts 10:46 of the speaking in tongues by the Gentiles at Caesarea and in Acts 19:6 of the disciples of John at Ephesus.

Thus on the ground of the word used by the Spirit to describe tongues, they were one and the same at Jerusalem, Acts 2; at Caesarea, Acts 10; at Ephesus, Acts 19; and at Corinth, 1 Cor. 14. Dean Henry Alford, a recognized authority in NT Greek, says this in commenting on Acts 2: "How is this speaking with other tongues related to the speaking in tongues afterwards spoken of by St. Paul? I answer that they are one and the same."

4. *Declaring tongues to be the result of Spirit baptism.*

The adherents of the tongues movement, whether inside or outside the Pentecostal denomination, practically all teach that Spirit baptism is a sort of second blessing received some time subsequent to conversion and experienced only by those who tarry, pray through, or engage in some other religious activity until the desired baptism is received. This cannot be substantiated by Scripture and is contrary to the teaching of the Word of God. What says the Scriptures? The Old Testament Scriptures say absolutely nothing—Spirit baptism is unknown from Genesis to Malachi. In the New Testament we have seven specific references; four of these are prophetic, two are historical, and one is doctrinal.

The four prophetic references are found in the Gospels (Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33). These all refer to John the Baptist's prophetic words regarding the baptism in the Spirit by Christ in contrast to John's baptism in water. Thus in these four passages we have the expectation of Spirit baptism, "He shall baptize you."


The two historical references are found in the Acts of the Apostles—that which had been expected was now to be experienced. In Acts 1:4-5 we have the words of the risen Christ, "...they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." In speaking of the promise of the Father, Christ was undoubtedly referring to His earlier words as recorded in John 14:26 where He said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name..."

Some ten days after Christ made this promise to His

disciples concerning the baptism of the Spirit, Pentecost occurred as described in Acts 2. The events of that feast day undoubtedly included the baptism of the Spirit. For Peter so described it in his words to the Jerusalem leaders after the reception of the Spirit by the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius at Caesarea. Here are his words as given in Acts 11:15-17, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us..." Peter here finds a parallel between what occurred at Pentecost in Jerusalem with the Jewish believers and what took place at Caesarea with the Gentile converts, and he designates both as being baptized with the Holy Ghost.

There is but one other place in the New Testament where the expression, "baptized with the Holy Ghost," is explained—1 Corinthians 12:12-13, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is [the] Christ. For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Here is the doctrinal statement concerning Spirit baptism. Here, and here only, is the explanation given by divine inspiration. What was expected in the Gospels during the earthly life of our Lord, and experienced by both Jews and Gentiles after the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, is explained by Paul. According to the Word of God, baptism in the Spirit is that work of God by which the body of Christ, the true Church, was brought into being, Jews being incorporated into it at Pentecost, Gentiles at Caesarea.

Every believer is now constituted a member of the body of Christ. It is not the ecstatic experience of a favored few, but a divine work on behalf of all. The final statement in 1 Corinthians 12:13 is this, "and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." What you drink is in you. If you drink enough you are filled. When you are filled you are full. In the Bible we read of being filled with the Spirit. We also read of being full. The former is an experience, the latter a condition resulting from the experience. The believers at Pentecost were filled with the Spirit according to Acts 2:4.

May the Lord help us all to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). But as well, may we be "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9). And may this two-fold filling result in a third: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11). 

THE PARALYSIS OF ANALYSIS

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Prov. 3:5).

“Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Phil. 1:27-29).

There are recognizable strengths in careful analysis, but the outcome of nothing but analysis can certainly become our undoing. The distillation of the enormous, mind-boggling amounts of data available through today’s information highway can be extremely helpful and yet in this lies a very present danger. The analyzing of information into a rational form may cause us to believe that our expended labor has been a worthy investment.

The entire world can now analyze and rationalize almost everything via the worldwide web. Now only the unfortunate, the poor and the lazy are exempt from wading into the dizzying amounts of available information. The real danger is just here, for so many through occupation with objective information alone miss entirely the great subjective world of real experiences and emotions that the majority of mankind inhabit. The person who continually escapes into the cyberworld may lose touch, and actually grow to fear human interaction.

It can certainly be an advantage to analyze issues at hand, but when it has a paralyzing effect relative to the world of faith, then objective, intellectual rigor becomes a definite hindrance to the Christian life. *“We walk by faith, not by sight”* (2 Cor. 5:7). The purveying of mere facts and figures, when enmeshed with the arrogance of a quick yet solely rational mind, becomes a danger and a hindrance to trust and confidence in God.

So many of our beloved yet unsaved family members and friends on the Broad Way are trapped amid the restless sea of lost humanity. As Frank Knox said, “It is a paralysis of the mind that you are not saved.” The first group mentioned as having a part in the lake of fire are *“the fearful”* (Rev. 21:8)! It is in matters relative to God, His salvation, His grace and mercy, that God-fearing people feel so passionately and subjectively, because through faith they have refused to be paralyzed by the fear of man, the fear of the future, even by the fear of death itself. We ought to be alert and on guard lest that fear of man paralyze us. *“The fear of man bringeth a snare”* (Prov. 29:25).

We realize the spiritual nature of all paralyzing fear only when we have actually conquered it. In this regard the Christian says, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”* (Phil. 4:13). The believer is here saying that it is Christ, His life and power, that gives the trusting saint the victory. The analyzing mind is paralyzed by the thought, “But, what if...?” The mind and heart of faith says, *“But God!”*

The great difference that marks the life of a believer is that the heart and mind of faith continually bring God into every equation. When we have a clear word from God, all speculation and hypothetical reasoning can only result in unnecessary analysis that paralyzes the heart and mind. There is also an analytical ponderosity that initially passes for wisdom. Observation of its fruit, however, makes it clearly evident that it is but a barren, faithless activity that has analyzed itself to death.

As we encounter daily this pseudo-wisdom and all terrorizing onslaughts of fear with real confidence in the Lord, each anxiety can become a catalyst to strengthen us to a prayerful confidence and an unqualified trust and dependence on the Lord and His Word. The result should be, “Let us go forward focused on Him, trusting not our analysis but God!”

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AN ARRESTING QUOTATION C. H. SPURGEON

*"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you,
and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you,
and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy:
for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."
Luke 6:22-23*

I am somewhat pleased when I occasionally hear of a brother being locked up by the police, for it does him good, and it does the people good also. It is a fine sight to see the minister of the gospel marched off by the servant of the law! It excites sympathy for him, and the next step is sympathy for his message. Many, who felt no interest for him before, are eager to hear him when he is ordered to leave off, and still more so, when he is taken to the station. The vilest of mankind respects a man who gets into trouble in order to do them good, and if they see unfair opposition excited, they grow quite zealous in the man's defense.

—in his book, LECTURES TO MY STUDENTS