

DECEMBER 2004

# UPLOOK

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

*Anticipating*  
**OUR 15<sup>th</sup> YEAR**  
*of the full format Uplook magazine*



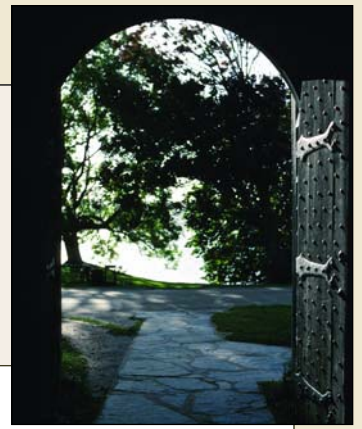
*What hath  
God wrought!*

*A selection of choice articles from the early years*

**COMMEMORATIVE EDITION**

# TWO-FACED

*Janus was supposedly the god of doors. There's one before us now.*



As 1950 drew to a close, I cannot help but think that my thoroughly Scottish father anticipated with some relish the timely arrival of a new little tax deduction, a deduction to be applied for the whole of the previous year! But alas it was not to be. Although my dear mother spent the waning hours of the year and into New Year's Day laboring on my behalf at the hospital, I kept everyone waiting until the third day of January.

Grace triumphed in a remarkable way, however, and each April passed without my being made to feel the irreparable financial hardship which my untimely birth had caused.

I sometimes wonder: Is my enjoyment of history, of reminiscence, linked to my birth in the month named after Janus, the two-headed Roman god? Or is it the advancing years? Perhaps it is a combination of the two. Both New Year's and birthdays cause most people to reflect. When they come so close together for me, I can have a spring tide of emotion and personal evaluation sweep across my soul. Hopefully, like ocean tides, the experience flushes out polluting residue and brings new vitality into our experience.

Although believers are present possessors of eternal life, we now make do in the narrows between the inland sea of memories behind us and the boundless ocean of possibilities before us. Of course some things are better forgotten—old hurts, failures and sins now “under the blood,” regrets of the things that might have been, even past successes which might cause us inflated egos or early retirement to rest on our laurels. All these Paul lumps together, and calls us to forget “*those things that are behind*” (Phil. 3:13).

On the other face, some things are essential to remember. “*I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old*” (Ps. 77:11). His works are to be seen everywhere; He incessantly is at work on our behalf. His wonders may not appear to us as frequently, but they too are there in times of crisis or great need.

As noted on our masthead, the ministry of this magazine began in 1928, seventy-seven years ago. But I was handed the baton in 1990, and we began with the full-format *Uplook* in January of 1991. So for this month, we have gone back to the early years and selected some of the best articles for our commemorative issue.

Of course many articles could have been included. But my (very arbitrary and highly personal) requirements included the following: the articles must be short—one page or less with few exceptions; they should be by current authors (at time of writing); and must be pertinent to today's readers. I trust you will find them helpful.

But as we also scan the future, let me leave you with a story from the back cover of the November 1991 edition:

The story is told of a little girl who was taking a long cross-country journey. In the course of the day, her train crossed a number of rivers. The water could often be seen in advance as they twisted their way through the mountains. The girl said nothing, but her mother could tell that something was stirring doubts and fears in the child. It was that she did not understand how the river they were approaching could safely be crossed. As they drew near, however, a bridge appeared and provided the way over. Several times the same thing happened.

Finally the child leaned back in her chair, and emitted a long breath of relief. “Somebody,” she said to her mother, “has put bridges for us all the way!” So God does for His children every mile of the journey home.

J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

DECEMBER 2004

# UPLOOK

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Phone: (616) 456-9166

Fax: (616) 456-5522

Website: <http://www.uplook.org>

E-mail: [uplook@uplook.org](mailto:uplook@uplook.org)

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  - 2) by using the form on our website at: [http://www.gospelcom.net/uplook/magazine\\_uplook/subscribe.phtml](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.

UPLOOK magazine is intended to encourage the people of God in fidelity to His Word, fervency in intercessory prayer, labors more abundant, and love to the Lord. Believing in the practical Headship of Christ and the local autonomy of each assembly, this is not intended to be an official organ of any group or federation of local churches. The editor and authors take responsibility for materials published. For any blessing which accrues, to God be the glory.

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Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all unsolicited material.

News items must be submitted at least two months in advance of issue requested. Selected news items will be carried for two issues (if time permits). The editor reserves the right to determine those items best suited for the magazine. Editorial decisions are final. Photos accepted. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for photos you wish returned.

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# KEY ISSUES

THINKING IT THROUGH • BUILDING IT IN • LIVING IT OUT

## IS BIGGER REALLY BETTER?

*Excerpted from the January 1992 issue, pp. 4-5.*

**James G. McCarthy**

**C**an a local church become too big to be truly effective? Consider your car engine. It can efficiently produce great power, but only over the range of operation for which it was designed. It is called the power band. Keep the rpm's within this range and it performs beautifully. Operate it outside that band, and efficiency and power rapidly diminish. I believe God's principles for the church were also designed to work under specific conditions.

One of these is size. Consider three areas essential for church vitality which decrease in effectiveness as the size of the church increases.

### **SHEPHERDING OF THE FLOCK**

A shepherd has his limits. He can care for only so many sheep. Exceed that threshold and the flock suffers. To provide adequate care, the shepherd must first know his sheep, not as a flock, but as individuals. He must know their needs and pray for them regularly. He must be ready to lay down his life for the sheep under his care.

Shepherds must lead by example (1 Pet. 5:3). This requires them to be with the sheep and available for genuine friendships. Sheep need to know the shepherd. *"The sheep follow him for they know his voice"* (Jn. 10:4).

The anonymous lives we live in our neighborhoods are fast becoming a reality in many of our overgrown churches. Counsel lacks the needed perspective of a personal relationship and history. Sheep stray, and the only one who notices is the wolf. Church discipline is rendered obsolete because it would affect too many people and nobody can keep track of who's coming anyway.

In an attempt to meet these problems and keep growing, more men are added as elders. But once again there is a practical upper limit. The larger the group of elders, the more difficult it is to be of the same mind (1 Cor. 1:10). Even with more overseers, no elder can keep up with all

the needs. File systems are devised, but burdens on paper can never replace burdens on hearts.

The next step is often to subdivide the flock and assign each part to one elder. Although well intentioned, the dynamics of a plural eldership are destroyed in the process. Sheep lose the spiritual oversight of several pastors. In effect, they find themselves under one man. Often the different ministries of the church are also divided. One elder takes responsibility for evangelism, another for singles, etc. Soon the elders lose the big picture. They can even become territorial as they compete for resources. Specialized ministries tend to multiply, and elders soon find themselves administering programs rather than shepherding people. These taxing responsibilities put an effective barrier between the shepherds and the sheep.

One day, the Lord will ask elders, "Whatever happened to Bill Brown?" (see Heb. 13:17). Woe to the shepherd who must answer, "Bill who?"

### **EXERCISE OF GIFT**

The expertise required for ministry in a large church limits the use of spiritual gifts. Consider once again the eldership. As the church grows, the demands on the eldership increase exponentially. A working man who would have made a fine elder in a small church finds it impossible to keep up with a large church. The church becomes increasingly dependent on full-time staff. Slowly we creep toward professionalism as specially trained men are hired.

The same trend can be seen in the public ministry of the Word. Something is wrong when the pulpit is reserved for those of conference level ability or celebrity status. Even the dynamics of an open meeting such as the Breaking of Bread are adversely affected by big numbers. First, few men are willing to address a large crowd. Second, even of those willing to speak up, only a small percentage will have the opportunity. Most resign themselves to being dumb priests. Finally, because a truly open meeting in the

large church would have unpredictable results, the leaders find it necessary to restrict and orchestrate the meeting.

It can be argued that in the large church there is more opportunity, not less. There is some truth in that statement. But the ability of the oversight to effectively direct large numbers of people in ministry must also be considered. My experience has been that in the smaller churches men and women grow more quickly in the exercise of their gifts. In the larger church there tends to be what one church planter described as “too many folded arms.”

### CORPORATE IDENTITY

One of the greatest strengths of the smaller assembly is that it is conducive to a sense of belonging—a family atmosphere. In the large church the members, out of practical necessity, soon resign themselves to nothing more than a superficial relationship with the majority. The result is a marked decrease in corporate loyalty, commitment, and vision. The blessings of God which encourage and inspire the church are often lost. I was in one church where four adults professed faith in Christ in one week. Yet most of the members had never prayed for any of them or even knew that it had happened. Contrast that with the small assembly where even the visit of a neighbor can create corporate excitement.

Sorrows are also lost in the crowd. 1 Corinthians 12:26 could often be revised, “If one member suffers, most of the members don’t even know.” Aware of these problems, the large flock is yet again subdivided into cell groups in an attempt to have the best of both worlds. But treating the larger flock in smaller units is only an admission of an inherent strength of the small church.

Have we lost our way? Why do we want to be so big anyway? Is it because Christians have certain expectations which only a big church can deliver? Special ministries for every member of the family are becoming standard. Popular speakers, expensive facilities, and large numbers are often equated with success and blessing.

We may envy the assets of a large church, but do we applaud the results in people’s lives? Personally, I am not impressed. In fact, I can’t recall anyone championing maturity as one of the benefits of being large. The Scriptures tell us that real spiritual maturity comes as the church grows “*up into Him who is the Head, that is Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work*” (Eph. 4:15-16, NIV). Here is where the large church fails to deliver what the saints need most.

Ralph Shallis, in his book to new believers, writes,

In a small church, you will find a purpose in being alive; you will be a valuable...member of the family; you will have a real contribution to make. If, on the other hand, you are in a very large church, you will probably be submerged in an anonymous mass—which is very bad for your spiritual health. You become lazy and useless, or just frustrated.<sup>1</sup>


We need to stop competing with the big church down the road. Certainly they have their strengths, but let’s not sacrifice ours while attempting to mimic them. Teach the saints the strengths of the small church, and teach them what is of real value. Never compromise principles for parishioners. Remember that numbers are a poor index of success. Vance Havner writes of an approach to real growth all but forgotten today:

Actually, we need a thinning instead of a thickening. I learned long ago that growing corn and cotton must be thinned. We reduce the quantity to improve the quality. Gideon had to thin his troops, and a similar procedure might help God’s army today. Jesus thinned His crowd.<sup>2</sup>

How big is too big? There is not one answer to this question. Factors which affect the number include the ability of the elders and the culture in which the church resides. Certainly the church is too big when the elders find the flock more than they can handle, the gifts of many of the saints lie dormant, and the saints think of the church as something they go to.

What is the alternative? The answer is not to de-emphasize evangelism. We have been commanded to make disciples of all nations. Our churches should be growing. There is nothing spiritual about being small and stagnant like a puddle evaporating in the sun.

Expansion during the first century was through the planting of new churches. To relieve overcrowding, experienced men should lead a portion of the flock out to establish a new assembly. This is usually referred to as a hive-off. In late spring, the crowding of the hive stimulates their swarming instinct. The queen bee and a portion of the bees migrate to a new location and establish a second colony. Soon both hives are back to full capacity, and the process repeats itself.

Size is only one parameter of church vitality, but if your work has become ineffective, maybe you are too big. 

1 Shallis, Ralph, *From Now On* (Bromley, England, 1973), p. 143.

2 Havner, Vance, *Hearts Aflame* (Westwood, NJ, 1952), p. 114.

# A REFRESHING SAINT

*When we published this (Jan. 1991) Mr. Bramhall was in his prime—in his 90s!*

**John W. Bramhall**

**D**o you like to meet a refreshing saint? Onesiphorus was declared by Scripture to be a refreshment to the great apostle Paul. What a blessed testimony! His name means “profit bringer” and he lived up to it, for he was profitable to the saints of God. Isn’t this what every Christian should be?

## THE QUALITY OF HIS MINISTRY

*“He oft refreshed me”* (2 Tim. 1:16) is the witness of Paul to the ministry of this brother. In the heat of trials and difficulties, a visit by Onesiphorus was as a breath of fresh air to the beloved servant of Christ, refreshing his spirit with fellowship, consolation and kindness, and that very frequently. When this profit bringer “blew in” he brought with him the freshness of a spiritual atmosphere that enabled one to recover from the enemy’s blasts. He always seemed able to cool off the temperature of the trial when visiting tested saints, including God’s mighty apostle to the Gentiles, who attracted more heat than most.



## THE FAITHFULNESS OF HIS MINISTRY

He “was not ashamed of my chain” writes Paul, for though forsaken by the Christians at large and bound as a prisoner of Rome, Onesiphorus did not desert the apostle because he was *persona non grata*. Faithfulness was part of his character and Paul could add this testimony to Timothy: *“In how many things he ministered unto me in Ephesus, thou knowest very well.”*

## THE DILIGENCE OF HIS MINISTRY

*“When he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me”* (v. 17). The worldly maxim, “When in Rome, do as the Romans do” was not the motto of this saint of God. He spurned the vaunted glories of the great metropolis of

the Roman Empire, searching until he found the beloved servant of God. What chords of appreciation arose from the heart of the apostle, causing him to record this deed upon the pages of the Book of God.

## THE FUTURE REWARD OF HIS MINISTRY

*“The Lord grant him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.”* That day when Onesiphorus stands before the Judgment Seat of Christ will yet declare the gold, silver, and precious stones that resulted from the faithful ministry of this refreshing brother to the people of God. Nei-

ther is God *“unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister”* (Heb. 6:10). Would you not enjoy having Onesiphorus “blow in” for a visit as a spiritual “breath of fresh air”?

I am sure you would. But of course that isn’t possible today. What is possible is that you endeavor to be a refreshing saint yourself! God has need of them everywhere among His people in these difficult and testing days. Be a “profit bringer.”

A little word in kindness spoken,  
A motion or a tear,  
Has often healed the heart that’s broken!  
And made a friend sincere.

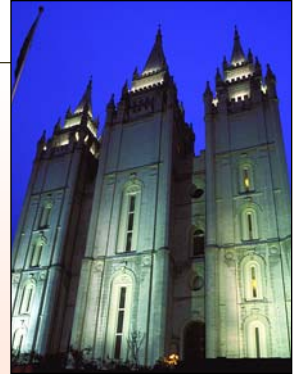
A word—a look—has crushed to earth,  
Full many a budding flower,  
Which had a smile but owned its birth,  
Would bless life’s darkest hour.

Then deem it not an idle thing,  
A pleasant word to speak;  
The face you wear, the thoughts you bring,  
A heart may heal or break.

—Mary Dow Brine

# FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK



## MORMONS GOING MAINLINE? HARDLY.

**O**n November 14, reports *Christianity Today* (CT), Indian-born apologist Ravi Zacharias and Fuller Seminary president Rich Mouw spoke in Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, UT. Zacharias was asked to speak on “Who is the Truth?” and was not expected to highlight many differences between historic Christian theology and Mormonism, but apparently he did mention them. The *Desert Morning News* reports: “He spoke of the ‘exclusivity and sufficiency of Jesus Christ,’ noting that He asserted an exclusive truth claim in His declaration as ‘*the Way, the Truth and the Life.*’ His hour-long sermon emphasized aspects of Christian doctrine for which Mormons have a different understanding, such as sin, salvation through the Cross, and the Trinity. The sermon, which filled the Tabernacle to capacity with about 7,000 evangelical Protestants, Mormons, and others, received a standing ovation.

But CT reported that Zacharias wasn’t the only evangelical on the platform. Michael Card led music, and Fuller Seminary president Richard Mouw gave an introductory sermon. And it will be Mouw, not Zacharias, that Utahns will remember, says *The Desert Morning News*. He offered “a stunningly candid apology to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and [noted] that ‘friendship has not come easily between our communities.’ He dubbed the evening ‘historic’ and apologized that evangelicals ‘have often misrepresented the faith and beliefs of the Latter-day Saints.’”

CT notes that Mouw’s full remarks are not available online (but Standing Together Ministries, which organized the talk, is selling CDs and DVDs). But here are the full quotes that made the papers: “Let me state it clearly. We evangelicals have sinned against you.” “We’ve often seriously misrepresented the beliefs and practices of members of the LDS faith.” “It’s a terrible thing to bear false witness...We’ve told you what you believe without first asking you.” “I remain convinced there are serious issues of difference that are of eternal consequence, but now we can discuss them as friends.”

Several news outlets have noted that Zacharias is apparently the first evangelical to speak at the Tabernacle since Dwight L. Moody. Moody’s 1871 appearance in the Salt Lake Tabernacle is mentioned in the *Salt Lake Desert Evening News* (Sat. June 3, 1871), which has Moody appearing there with the singer Philip Phillips and Dr. J. H. Vincent, editor of the *Teacher’s Journal*. Moody preached a sermon entitled “Salvation for All.” He spoke there again on Sunday, April 2, 1899.

### WORD ALIVE SOUTHEAST

Christians within driving distance of Washington, GA, note Word Alive’s schedule for the Spring. Sessions from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Bible readings continuing in Colossians from 2:00–3:00PM. All meetings held at Washington Bible Chapel, 808 E.

Robert Toombs Ave, Washington, GA. Lunch provided. Speakers:

Jan 8, Sam Thorpe Jr.  
Romans 9-11

Feb 12, Larry Price  
Servant Songs of Isaiah

Mar 12, Dewitt Jones  
Minor Prophets

Apr 9, Mike Attwood  
Seven Sayings from the Cross  
May 13-14, J. B. Nicholson Jr.  
Christian Apologetics  
For more information, call:  
Sam Thorpe at 706-359-6297  
Mike Attwood at 706-678-3180  
website: wordalivese.org

## OAKVILLE BIBLE STUDIES

The Oakville (ON) Bible Study series continues in 2005. 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. Still to come:

- 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  
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)

## PARK OF THE PALMS

We have been sent a listing of the

2005 conference speakers for Park of the Palms, Keystone Heights, FL.

Jan 15-21, David Dunlap (FL)  
Jan 22-28, Alan Parks (SC)  
Jan 29-Feb 4, Peter Colon (FL)  
Feb 5-11, Mike Attwood (GA)  
Feb 12-18, Ken Fleming (IA)  
Feb 19-25, Daniel Smith (IA)  
Feb 26-Mar 4, Eddie Schwartz (NC)  
Mar 5-11, John Gordon (NC)

For more information or to make reservations, contact:

Park of the Palms  
706 Palms Circle  
Keystone Heights, FL 32656  
Phone: 352-473-4926  
Fax: 352-473-6113

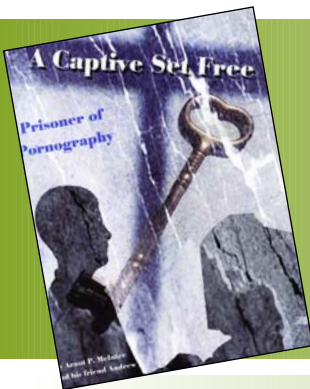
## EXCEL 2005

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. Accommo-

dations 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 postmarked after Dec 3. No applications postmarked after Jan 3. Web site: [www.geocities.com/excelconference](http://www.geocities.com/excelconference)  
Call 616-997-5160

## S. FLORIDA CONFERENCE

The 54th Annual South Florida Missionary Class Conference is planned for Feb 18 (7PM) & 19 (3PM), at Hollywood Bible Chapel, 2300 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, FL. The invited speaker: Dr. Rob Lindsted (KS). Topics include: Current events in Bible prophecy; the Lands of the Bible; God's eternal covenant; Anti-Christ and his platform; and Missions Around the



## A CAPTIVE SET FREE by Arnot McIntee

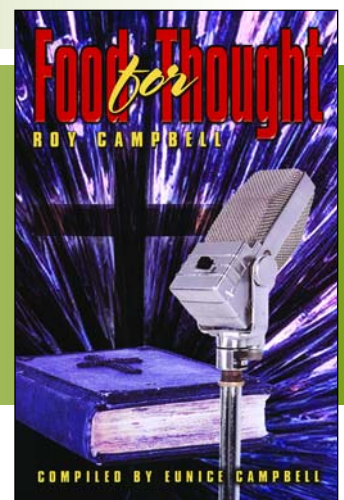
This timely booklet, subtitled "Prisoner of Pornography" is an interview with the author's friend, Andrew who tells of the grip of porn and the answer that can set one free. Highly practical. Every elder—every man—should read this.

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](mailto:amcintee@vaxxine.com)

## 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](mailto:campbell@sentex.net)





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World (Burma, China, Romania, Brazil). For more info, contact:

Rahlyn Ramsaran at 954-345-4515  
Aaron Renth at 954-447-6850  
Malcolm Skelton at 954-435-3552

### **IROQUOINA RETREAT**

Men—take a break at the annual men's retreat to be held at Camp Iroquoina on Saturday, Mar 12. Mark Kolchin (NJ) is the scheduled speaker. If you play an instrument, please bring it. We look forward to a wonderful session of music and fellowship. Friday and/or Saturday night lodging is available if needed. To register, contact:

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

### **DALLAS CONFERENCE**

The 50th Dallas Area Conference is scheduled for Mar 18-20, Lord willing. J. B. Nicholson Jr. (MI) and Randy Amos (NY) will be ministering the Word. The meetings will be held at Wheatland Bible Chapel, 1303 W. Wheatland Road, Duncanville, TX 75116. For information: John Daniels at 972-424-9889  
john\_marilyn\_daniels@verizon.net

### **SPRINGTIME IN ALABAMA**

The Christians at Hope Bible Chapel in Birmingham, Alabama invite you to their annual spring conference being held Apr 15-17, 2005, in the will of the Lord. Mr. Mike Attwood (GA) is the invited speaker. For further information, contact Peter Rosborough at 205-833-2380  
prosborough@juno.com

### **CHICAGO AREA CONF.**

The Chicago area Spring Confer-

ence will be held, Lord willing, April 22-24 at the Palos Hills Christian Assembly (10600 S. 88th Ave., Palos Hills, IL). Speakers expected are Keith Keyser (PA), Joe Mikhael (ON), and Alan Schetelich (NJ). Special sessions will be held for children. Contact:

John Daghfal at 815-886-4152  
jdaghfal@hotmail.com

### **NEW GOSPEL WEBSITE**

Several believers from an assembly in Newtown, CT have recently developed an evangelistic website: [www.PeaceAndPurpose.com](http://www.PeaceAndPurpose.com).

On the site one can find articles explaining the gospel and answering common questions. There are also printable tracts for distribution, and other aids to help spread the gospel. They invite all believers to avail themselves of this tool in your contacts with the unsaved and ask you to help spread the word.

They are still in the process of adding new material to the site; if you have written articles or tracts which you would like to be shared, (subject to review and/or possible editing), they would be grateful. Please send them to:

Peace And Purpose  
P.O. Box 34  
Southbury, CT 06488  
questions@peaceandpurpose.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 giv-

ing 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](http://www.lifehouse.org)

### **COMMENDATIONS**

#### **Brian McKibbin**

The elders of Wakesiah Gospel Chapel (Nanaimo, BC) commend Brian McKibbin to the work of the Lord. Brian is active in a preaching and teaching ministry to various age groups. Prayerful support is desired for Brian as he continues to serve the Lord and looks to Him for guidance.

### **ADDRESS CHANGE**

#### **Mr. and Mrs. Mark Kolchin**

735 Hill St.  
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734  
Phone 609-693-3464

### **HOMECALLS**

#### **Roger Imeson**

As noted in the previous Uplook, our esteemed brother Roger Imeson went Home on Oct 27, 2004. Born July 27, 1931 in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, Roger was saved at the age of 12. Roger became a respected member of the business community and used his position as a quiet but effective testimony among his business associates. A large number of those business people heard a clear presentation of the gospel at his funeral. Roger was a long-time board member and administrator at Rest Haven

Homes in Grand Rapids, MI. Please remember his wife and family in your prayers.

Shortly before his death, the editor had a phone conversation with Roger. At that time he said, "We sometimes think of death as the believer's last enemy. But it's not. It is the last enemy that Christ shall defeat. But as Paul says, 'Death is yours.' I've discovered that death is the last opportunity for the Christian to happily submit to the will of God." And Roger certainly did.

### **Vernon Markle**

G. Vernon Markle, 91, Riverview (Moncton), NB, passed into the presence of the Lord on Friday, November 26, 2004 after a brief illness. Born in Midhurst, ON, son of the late Gilbert and Jessie Mae (Orok) Markle.

Vernon was a retired missionary, having served in Cuba and El Salvador, and was in fellowship at Moncton Gospel Hall. Vernon will be missed by his family. He was the last surviving member of his immediate family. Albert Hall, Wallace Buckle and David Swan officiated at the funeral.

### **NAZARETH OUTREACH**

On Nov 17, the Arabic Emmaus Correspondence School based in Nazareth and the assembly there were joined by other Christians in Galilee to distribute 10,000 gospel packs to neighboring homes. The packets included "God's Answers to Man's Questions" by Bill MacDonald (in Arabic). They were distributed in Nazareth and some other Galilee villages. Also included were registration forms for the Emmaus courses. In addition, a calendar card advertised the website: [www.life-is-more.net](http://www.life-is-more.net) and offers for a Gospel of Luke and the Jesus film. About 1000 of these packs also went to houses in Bethlehem. Pray for many to enroll in the courses, for lasting contacts to be made, and for their follow-up.

### **BLESSING IN AFRICA**


A Pan-African Conference on Missions for those working among "Brethren" was held Nov 8-12 at the Good News Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

There were 103 delegates coming from 18 countries, with a further 20 believers coming in some days from the Johannesburg area. Countries

represented were Angola, Congo DR, Chad, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, Madagascar, South Africa, Zimbabwe, UK, Canada, USA and New Zealand.

Of this number, 81 delegates were African nationals, 13 were expatriate missionaries who are or have worked in Africa, 9 from world-wide Service groups or individuals with a commitment to the "Brethren" work in Africa. They represented a variety of ministries such as local church elders, evangelists, medical missions work, school education ministries, youth work, HIV/AIDS interventions, orphan care and literature printing and distribution.

The conveners write: "We would like to give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ for His help and blessing...It was a time of rich fellowship, with new relationships formed between workers in various countries.

...We left with a sense that this is a...watershed, as we move from the time when Africa was a major recipient of missionaries, to the present age where Africa becomes a source of missionaries to reach the continent and the world for Christ." 

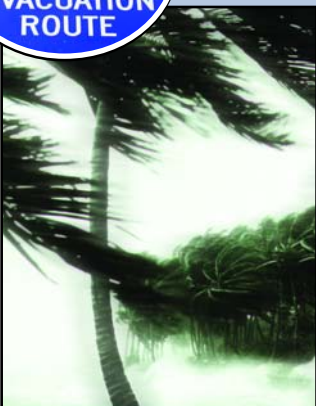


### **GRANADA HURRICANE RELIEF FUND**

*A letter of thanks to those who helped and an opportunity to go and rebuild*

Brother Samuel Jeremiah, on behalf of the Washington (DC) Christian Assembly, writes: "I wish to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to over 40 assemblies and individuals who have responded...to help the Brethren on the island of Granada, West Indies, to recover from the severe damage they sustained both in private homes and in the collapse of some of the Gospel Halls and Chapels. Hurricane Ivan caused damage to about 90% of the buildings in Granada...Calivigny Gospel Chapel and Crochu Gospel Hall were totally demolished. Five others sustained substantial damage to the roofs, windows and siding....Much prayer is needed for the island residents and those who are exercised, whose hearts the Lord may touch, may travel to Granada to render assistance in rebuilding..."

**If you would like to help**, you may contact brother Samuel Jeremiah at **202-726-2881**



# THANKS A MILLION

*The first publisher of Uplook tells about a hymn ahead of its time (from the Dec 1994 Uplook)*

## William J. Pell

In the summer of 1923, Mr. Fred Mehl pitched a gospel tent in Big Rapids, MI, his hometown. It was my privilege to join our brother in house-to-house visitation, open-air and tent services. “Grandma’s” open house became our “dwelling.” The elderly German couple received us kindly. There, in the upper room, we knelt together daily—sometimes more than once a day—on the painted gray floor, seeking help from above.

Grandma’s house was also a rendezvous for other members of the family who were vacationing at the time. Among the vacationers was a son-in-law—a professor from a theological seminary in a nearby state.

One evening, on coming home from the tent, we found the family gathered around the old reed organ, singing some of the great hymns of the Church from a German hymnbook. To the one, a German by birth, they were old familiar hymns. The other one, of Holland extraction, was able, because of the similarity between the two languages, to follow some of the words.

The chorus of one hymn especially thrilled us:


*Tausand, tausand maal zij dier,  
Liebste Jesu’ dank daarvuur.*

Intrigued with the refrain, we made a sketch of the music. The words were written by Ernst C. Homburg (1605-1681). That interest so impressed the college professor that, on returning to his home, he kindly sent a copy of the hymnbook which contained the words and music.

Over and over again, the refrain came to mind. Then

one day, while searching for material for publication, a translation of the hymn by Mrs. Frances Bevan was found in an old copy of Things New and Old. Excited over the discovery, we printed the words in the May 1932 issue of *Assembly Annals* (a previous name of *Uplook*). Our good friend, the late Mr. A. P. Gibbs, was visiting in the home at the time, and we suggested, “These words deserve a good tune.” In a short time brother Gibbs showed us a melody which has since been published and greatly enjoyed.

We love to sing, “A thousand, a thousand thanksgivings, I bring, blessed Saviour, to Thee.” That could mean one thousand or two thousand and is almost as much as we can readily comprehend. But the old German version, “Tausand, tausand maal” suggests a thousand times a thousand—a million.

So perhaps long before the world glibly was saying, “Thanks a million,” God’s people were gratefully rendering to Him their “Thanks a million.” A thousand, a thousand—even a million thanks falls far short of the praise of which He is so worthy. But we will have all eternity to praise and adore Him. 

*Thou Life of my life, blessed Jesus,  
Thou death of the death that was mine,  
For me was Thy cross and Thine anguish,  
Thy love and Thy sorrow divine;  
Thou suffered the cross and the torment,  
That I might forever go free—  
A thousand, a thousand thanksgivings,  
I bring, blessed Saviour, to Thee!*

*For me Thou hast borne the reproaches,  
The mockery, hate and disdain;  
The blows and the spittings of sinners,  
The scourging, the shame, and the pain;  
To save me from bondage and judgment,  
Thou gladly hast suffered for me—  
A thousand, a thousand thanksgivings,  
I bring, blessed Saviour, to Thee!*

*O Lord, from my heart I do thank Thee  
For all Thou hast borne in my room,  
Thine agony, dying, unsoled,  
Alone in the darkness of doom,  
That I, in the glory of heaven,  
Forever and ever might be—  
A thousand, a thousand thanksgivings,  
I bring, blessed Saviour, to Thee!*

# WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

## ACLU SEEKS TO DISPROVE MANKIND IS MARKED BY INTELLIGENCE

**T**he American Civil Liberties Union plans to file a federal lawsuit against a Pennsylvania school district that is requiring students to learn about alternatives to the theory of evolution. The ACLU said its lawsuit will be the first to challenge whether public schools can teach “intelligent design,” which holds that the universe is so complex that it must have been created by some higher power. The Dover Area School District is believed to be the first in the nation to mandate intelligent design when it voted 6-3 in October in favor of including the concept in the science curriculum.

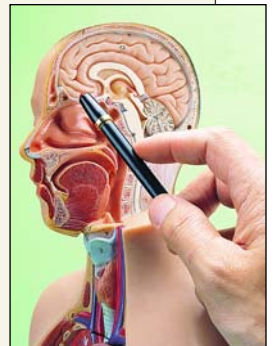
School administrators have declined to comment on the mandate, which applies to ninth-grade biology classes at Dover High School, in rural south-central Pennsylvania. But school board member William Buckingham, who spearheaded the change as the leader of the board’s curriculum committee, said that he proposed the change as a way of balancing evolution with competing theories that raised questions about its scientific validity.

At least one other district has recently become embroiled in federal litigation over teaching evolution. A federal judge in Georgia is considering the constitutionality of a suburban Atlanta district’s decision to include a warning sticker about evolution in biology textbooks.

Last month, the Dover district issued a statement saying that state academic standards require the teaching of evolution, which holds that Earth is billions of years old and that life forms developed over millions of years. But the statement also said Charles Darwin’s theory “is still being tested as new evidence is discovered,” and that intelligent design “is an explanation of the origins of life that differs from Darwin’s view.”

The ACLU has said intelligent design is a more secular form of creationism, a biblically-based view that credits the origin of species to God, and may violate the constitutional separation of church and state.

—MARTHA RAFFAELE, Associated Press



### DOWN DEPRAVITY RD.

The Supreme Court of Canada has given legislators the green light to legalize same-sex marriage. In an advisory opinion the court’s justices ruled that the Canadian Constitution and the country’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms do not bar the nation’s parliament from adopting a bill that would legalize same-sex marriage nationwide.

### WHAT NEXT?

Attorneys filed a lawsuit against the Plano School District for prohibiting students from wearing red and green at their “winter break” parties because they are Christmas colors. In addition, school officials have prohibited students from exchanging candy canes, or writing “Merry Christmas” on greeting cards to U.S. soldiers because the phrase might offend someone.

### PRAY FOR INDONESIA

The world’s most populous Muslim country can be a dangerous place for Christians. Assailants simultaneously attacked two churches in the town of Palu recently, injuring at least three. A bomb exploded at a church in downtown Palu in the early evening. At the same time, gunmen opened fire on the congregation of a church in the south of the city.

# SOLILOQUY WHILE FISHING

**Doug Kazen**

The warm sun shines down on contented figures sitting on the fantail of the small fishing boat. It's warm, peaceful, quiet. I can almost touch the little trolling motor without moving, yet can hardly hear its pulsing beat as it keeps us just barely under way. There is no newspaper aboard. That's good. No radio blares. That's better. And, of course, no TV! No wonder it's peaceful. The troubles of this sin-sick world seem far away. The boat gently rises and falls on the soft Pacific swells; the rhythmic motion drawing our minds into contented reverie. I glance across at my beloved. One wary eye watches the end of her fishing pole. If it twitches, she'll be all action. I've seen that response before! But now she is lost in thought. Too bad life isn't always this peaceful. But it can be, should be—for we are Christ's ones:

*"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"—*united to the Prince of Peace. *"There is therefore now no condemnation"*—peace regarding sin. *"Forgetting those things that are behind"*—peace as to the folly of our past. *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,"*—peace as to the years ahead. *"That where I am, there ye may be also"*—peace for eternity. We should always be at peace within. It's only when we let the world in that we are not.

Two hundred yards to starboard lie the rocky beaches of the Alaskan coast. Back from the beach a short way, mountains rise sharply to cloud-enshrouded peaks. No one is in sight. No building anywhere. Just pristine countryside. Marvelous beauty; all made by our heavenly Father. Nature's perfect balance here seems undisturbed; all held together by the nail-pierced hand. And now, for a few days, He is letting us share it with Him. This is grace indeed! It bows the heart in thanksgiving. But this is just the beginning. Eternity looms. Home. Heaven. Far beyond the best earth has to offer; better than eye has seen or heart imagined. There, in the Celestial Realm, we'll explore eternal wonders with the Christ who loves us so. Life here is merely a foretaste of eternal bliss.

It's been a while since we had a strike. Glance forward at the fish-finder. It shows fish in depths below—big king

salmon. Check the down-riggers; depth seems to be set OK. Bait seems OK. But no fish. Why? The Lord said, "I will make you fishers of men." How long has it been since I caught a soul for Him? None? Not even any

bites lately? We'd better check: Are we trolling where the fish are? No sense dragging bait around where there is nothing to catch. Are we at the right depth? Is the bait right? It's got to attract the fish. Am I presenting Christ attractively? If no bites, why not?

The state of Alaska sets limits per day per license: is it two kings, six silvers, five pinks...? We know what will happen when we get back to the dock. Any fish? If yes, did you limit? It would be almost embarrassing to admit we didn't. Yet for the Christian fisher of men, so many days on the road to heaven end with no catch, not even a bite; and we think nothing of it. Talk about limiting! The Lord sets no limit. Yet some go years without a catch. Caught anyone lately? Perhaps it's time to check the gear. How will you feel when you reach Home Port and the Master Fisherman asks: How many did you catch for Me?

Suddenly, a sound breaks in, the thunder of a powerful engine. There it is—a silver jet climbing heavenward. Evidently the afternoon flight from Ketchikan to Juneau. I'm glad we're down here; on the sea, in the sun. But the passing jet reminds us it is late afternoon. Soon time to head for home. And so it shall be for all of us. We glance astern and muse on the wake left behind. We glance ahead at a seemingly endless procession of waves and swells. But not far ahead, perhaps just around that next point of land, lies journey's end. Have we enjoyed the passage? Have we fished well? Are we ready to tie up at heaven's pier?

Aha! The rod tip jumps! Lift the tip. Clear the down-rigger. Rare back on the line. Oh, the thrill of that response! Another big one hooked and probably soon to join its friends in the icebox. It's great to be alive. Best of all to be alive in Christ!



# ALAS, IT WAS BORROWED!

*First published in the Nov. 1992 Uplook.*

**Jim Cormack**

**W**e understand a miracle to feed 5,000 or to raise the dead, certainly, but for a lost axe?

The young man knew its importance. With the axe head gone, his means of serving the Lord and His people and being able to do the things expected of him were gone as well. Now others would have to do his share as well as their own, and if they were not gifted for it, then the work would be slowed or its quality would suffer.

Gone too were the less tangible benefits of involvement. There is often a special bond between those with a common aim and work, but as an onlooker he would lose the benefit of the close companionship of his fellows. His witness to his friends and neighbors would suffer, too. They would see he was no longer involved and would wonder what was wrong. No longer would he be able to anticipate the day when he would hear his child, perhaps yet unborn, say, "My dad helped build this place. See his mark on this beam?" Knowing one's parents are happily involved in the Lord's work often has a steadying influence on children as they grow up.

Important as these things are, there was one overriding concern in his cry to Elisha, "Alas, Master, for it was borrowed." Yes, he knew he was accountable. It was not his axe. It had been given to him to enable him to do the work. Now the one who gave it would lose the joy of partnership

in the work and the man would have to go home and say that he had lost the thing given him to serve the Lord.

It is hard not to feel sorry for the young man, but axe heads do not come loose suddenly. They loosen little by little. He must have known. He had to work harder as the axe became less efficient; he should have taken time out to maintain it. But he did not stop and now it was gone.

So it is with us. God expects us to maintain the gift He has given us lest we also lose the use of it. What do we do if we already have lost it? The young man holds the answer. Elisha was his contact with God and he immediately sought his help.

"Where did you lose it?" is a question we must answer as well. It probably won't be hard to go back to a time when we allowed something to come into our life when we noticed that all was not right. Our axe head had begun to loosen but we would not stop to put it right. Now the gift and its benefits are gone—but not our accountability.

Elisha then fashioned a new handle for the axe head and threw it into the water. Amazingly, the iron began to swim. Elisha's work was done; the axe again became available to the young man. But it was his responsibility to pick it up and go back to work!

Let us keep our axe head tight. If necessary, let's go back to where we lost it, so we can take it up again and return to the work committed to us by the Master.



## LOVE *at Work* by William MacDonald

*Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* 1 John 4:11

We must not think of love as an uncontrollable, unpredictable emotion. We are commanded to love, and this would be quite impossible if love were some elusive, sporadic sensation, coming as unaccountably as a common cold. Love does involve the emotions but it is more a matter of the will than of the emotions. We must also guard against the notion that love is confined to a world of dream castles with little relation to the nittygritty of everyday life. For every hour of moonlight and roses, there are weeks of mops

and dirty dishes. In other words, love is intensely practical. For instance, when a plate of bananas is passed at the table and one has black spots, love takes that one. Love cleans the wash-basin and bathtub after using them. Love replaces paper towels when the supply is gone so that the next person will not be inconvenienced. Love puts out the lights when they are not in use. It picks up the crumpled Kleenex instead of walking over it. It replaces the gas and oil after using a borrowed car. Love empties the garbage without being asked. It doesn't keep people waiting. It serves others before self. It takes a squalling baby out so as not to disturb the meeting. Love speaks loudly so that the deaf can hear. And love works in order to have the means to share with others. —Nov. 1992 Uplook



# A BUSHEL OF GOODNESS

*God's generosity and one man's gratitude.*

**J. Boyd Nicholson**

Johnny was one of those people in life that you never forget. He was getting up in years when I first met him. Well, my first encounter with this son of Italy wasn't really an introduction. I heard him pray at the Lord's Supper!

When he finished his prayer, I confess I looked up to see who this man was who entered the presence of God with such simplicity, such intimacy, and with tears.

There was nothing of note in his appearance. Not tall, but stocky, a nondescript gray suit draped over what had once been the powerful figure of a working man. He was obviously more at home in his mother tongue than the American English of his adopted land. His accent was still highly seasoned with the characteristics of the traditional Italian immigrant, but that in no way hindered his approach into the Sanctuary.

Oh, those prayers! When he rose to pray before the Gospel meeting to lay hold on God on behalf of lost sinners, his earnest appeals carried us with him into the throne room of the universe. He was a man who appreciated being saved and longed for others to *"Taste and see that the Lord is good."*

Yes, God had been good to Johnny and to his wife of many years. He had never lost the joy of his salvation and wanted my preaching colleague and I to come for dinner so that he could tell us his story of the goodness of God.

We were invited for a noon-hour meal. We realized, as the meal progressed, how much we had to be thankful for—that this was not the evening meal just before we preached! After all, who can translate hospitality into those wonderful aromas, delectable dishes, and spicy marvels like an Italian mama?

The real purpose, however, was not just to set a delicious feast before us for our bodies, but to tell us his story. It took the whole hour of the meal as he spread out before us a more wonderful feast than that crossing our palate. Even after these many years I still relish it.

It is a long time ago now, and no doubt some of the details may be lost to my memory, but I have never forgotten the salient facts.

He, his wife, and children were very poor in Italy. Some of his relatives had made it over to the US and enjoyed the benefits of their new land. To help out, they sent Johnny the fare to bring his little family over to the New World with all its promise and prospects. So they came.

But the promise and prospects had died in the Crash of the late 20's, and the Depression filled the streets with the unemployed. Johnny walked those streets every day looking for any kind of a job that would put food on the table.

One day someone told him that an Italian preacher, Caesar Patrizio, was preaching the gospel at a nearby meetingplace, and invited him to attend. Johnny wasn't too interested, feeling that he had his own religion. But time lagged in those days and there were few distractions, so one evening found Johnny slipping into the back seat to hear the Italian preacher. The message was simple, the text was the Golden Gospel Text, John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

Johnny didn't get much out of the message. His mind was already thinking about tomorrow and the daily hunt for a job. But there it was, "For God so loved the world..."

Well, thought Johnny, if God loved the world, just maybe that included him, and maybe this God could get him the job he needed. So he sent into heaven his desperate prayer, not for his soul, for his salvation, or for heaven, but just for a job. "O God, if You love me, please get me a job, so I can feed my wife and kids."

The very next day, at the market, a man offered Johnny a job, loading vegetables on the trucks, for 75 cents a day! "Wasn't God a-good to me?" he said. Then he went on, "The next day, he hire' me again—an' I got a promote; he pay me a dollar a day! Say, wasn't God a-good to me?"

At the end of that long, hot day, the boss said, "Hey, Johnny, you look hot. Here, drink this Coke," and handed him a bottle of pop.

"Tank you, boss," replied Johnny, "But you keep the Coke and give me the nickel instead, an' I buy a loaf a' bread for my kids.

"Oh, Johnny," laughed the boss, "Drink the Coke, and here's the money for a loaf of bread for your kids, too."

By this time Johnny was beaming as he told us again,

“Say, wasn’t God a-good to me?”

But his story isn’t over yet. The next day, after a hard day’s loading of trucks, the boss called him over, “Johnny, d’ya like a cabbage?”

“Sure, boss.”

He tossed a large fresh cabbage into a bushel basket. “Like potatoes, Johnny?”

“Sure thing.”

“What about squash and cauliflower?”

“Yes, yes, we like them all,” Johnny gasped as he saw the boss fill up the bushel basket to the top with delectable vegetables and fruits.

“There, Johnny, take that home to the wife and kids.”

We could hear it coming. And the tears in his eyes primed ours, too, “Say, wasn’t God a-good to me?”

He hoisted the bushel of vegetables and fruit onto his shoulder and set out to walk across the city, seven miles to his little home. “An’ my heart was-a sing,” he laughed.

Johnny always had difficulty with his prepositions. “Under this roof” was “A-bottom this roof.” “In front of the house” was “A-top-a the house.” So he arrived home at last, perhaps a little later than usual because of the load of blessing in the bushel basket, and his wife was “a-waitin’” for him “a-top-a the house.”

Once inside, he put down the bushel basket from his shoulder and explained their good fortune. Then, after some silent moments, Johnny spoke again, “Wife, if God goin’-a love me like-a this, I goin’-a love Him back.”

No doubt Heaven was moved at the sight of that little family, bowed in the presence of the God of John 3:16, drawn in loving response and obedience by the evidence of

the goodness of God in a bushel of vegetables. For as Johnny would learn, “*The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance*” (Rom. 2:4).

How good God has been to us in these Western lands! Not just with a bushel of vegetables. “*He daily loadeth us with benefits.*” Think of the food we eat, the ability to eat it and the appetite to enjoy it. A measure of health and soundness of mind. A bed to sleep on and shelter from the elements. Meaningful employment and a paycheck which God enables us to earn. “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*” (Jas.1:17). Friends and loved ones around us, and God handing us a breath at a time without fail, “*The God in whose hand thy breath is*” (Dan. 5:23). Yet the greatest evidence of His goodness and wondrous love is still emblazoned in John 3:16, the gift of His only begotten Son.

If indeed God has so loved you as Johnny found out, do you love Him back? Have you obeyed His gospel call? Has there ever been a time when you got down before Him and thanked Him for all the riches of His goodness and received His greatest Gift, His own beloved Son as your Saviour? If not, why not? God is not good to us because we are good, but because *He* is good.

Well, Johnny, his dear wife, and the Italian preacher laugh and sing and serve together in a Land where the fruit doesn’t come in bushel baskets, and the trees never lose their leaves. They are at home with the Lord, to bask forever in the sunshine of the riches of the goodness of God. And there, in the House of the Lord, Johnny will “love Him back” forever and forever.

Isn’t God good? —*first published in Uplook Nov. 1992*

## HIGH Society?

A prominent woman in Shunem showed hospitality to Elisha whenever he passed that way. Eventually she suggested to her husband that they build an extra bedroom so the prophet would have his own room. Desiring to reward this gracious hostess, Elisha asked what he could do for her—perhaps an introduction to the king or to the commander-in-chief. Her simple reply was, “*I dwell among my own people.*” In other words, “I am happy with my lot in life. I love the common people among whom I live. I don’t particularly desire to move among the upper crust. Hobnobbing with famous people holds no special attraction for me.”

She was a wise woman! Those who are never content unless they’re socializing with the famous, the wealthy, the aristocratic, often have to learn that most of earth’s choicest people never make the front page—or the society page, for that matter.

I have had some contact with big names in the evangelical world but I have to confess that, for the most part, the experience has been disappointing. And the more I have seen of what is ballyhooed in the Christian press, the more disillusioned I have become. If I have to make a choice, give me those humble, godly, solid citizens who are unknown in this world but well-known in heaven.

—WILLIAM MACDONALD

*This article appeared on the back cover of the Jan. 1992 Uplook*



# THOU ART WORTHY

*This is heaven's song. Come join in!*

**David B. Long**

**O**ur glorious Lord is the foundation of all the work of God in every age; the source of every blessing for His people of all times; the unique element of cohesion in the whole universe; whether physical or spiritual, historical or moral, on Him everything depends. He is the One in whom: “*all the fullness was pleased to dwell*” (Col. 1:19); “*in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily*” (Col. 2:9); who is the visible form of the invisible God (Col. 1:15).

This One is the exact expression of the personality of God (Heb. 1:3); who ascends to glory as “*this same Jesus*”; who will come again exactly as He went away (Acts 1:11); and who is “*the same yesterday, and today, and forever*” (Heb. 13:8).

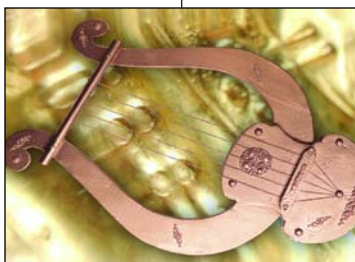
What He was in the past, both in eternity and in time, He is today, and shall be forever.

Only as our eyes, minds, and hearts are filled with Him in all His love, power, holiness, majesty, and total worthiness can our lives as Christians ever be what God wants them to be. Only then can we know true satisfaction, joy, and peace. Only while beholding Him as He truly is, in all His transcendental power and beauty, shall we find fulfillment and fruit in our service. Only while we are completely occupied with Him—not questions about Him—shall we know true worship.

The Scriptures are full of illustrations of this. Abraham found his joy in seeing Christ’s “*day*,” the day of His supremacy (Jn. 8:56). Isaiah saw His glory and worshiped Him before he was sent out in service to “*speak of Him*” (Jn. 12:41). The psalmists and poets sang as they mused on His greatness. The prophets poured out their hearts in the most moving and sublime prose as they “*all gave witness to Him*” (Acts 10:43).

The glory of this One so dimmed every other light and superseded every other loyalty that for love of Him, men, in the measure in which they “*saw*” Him, left all and lost all just to be His and to serve Him with no thought of self. His was the first name on their lips as they found new life in

accepting His Lordship. His was the last name they whispered as they yearned only for acceptance by Him while they died for Him in the stonings of Jerusalem; through the obscene agonies of the Roman arenas; the pogroms of the Dark Ages; the massacres of China, Japan, South America and the Near East; the horrors of the Inquisition; the fires of Smithfield; the exterminations of Alva and Claverhouse; the cannibalistic orgies of the South Seas; torture and death in Africa.



For Him all is given, all is attempted, all is suffered. To Him all is surrendered, all is devoted and dedicated. But it is to Him, as He truly is, in all His fullness and glory, and not to some limited, watered-down, phantom-Christ who, though called Emmanuel (God with us) and prophetically named The Mighty God, yet supposedly found Himself with inward conflict

between two opposed natures. It is not an unreal Christ who either emptied Himself of His power and knowledge, or else while “*possessing*” them could not use them in acting as God in case some mere man should disqualify Him from being the Saviour for so doing. And it was certainly not a Christ so sectionalized that He could know things (as God) and not know them at the same time (as man); could do everything and yet could do nothing.

No, it is a full-orbed Christ who, displaying the wounds of His humiliating yet triumphant death, drew from the prostrated disciple the almost gasping exclamation of awe and worship, “*My Lord—my God.*” It is the Christ who now sits above waiting to appear as “*Our great God and Saviour*” and who, this same Jesus, will burst the clouds radiating the title “*King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*”

It is the One who now walks among the churches in all the majestic wisdom of “*the Ancient of Days,*” who sees everything, knows everything, can do everything, and is everything (Rev. 2 and 3). And it is the very same One who is seen “*in the midst of the throne*” in Revelation 5, the very seat and center of Godhood and to whom heaven, earth, and hell are prostrated while the redeemed of the Lord chant with the music of the heavens, “*Thou art worthy!*”

—*from the Dec. 1992 Uplook*

# SCIENCE & YOU

VISIBLE CREATION SHOWING US THE INVISIBLE GOD

## Is God Dead? Or Just Improbable?

**H**istory does seem to repeat itself. The old 1960s philosophy that “God is dead” has been updated in the new millennium and is now marketed as “God is not probable.” That is, one can’t say for sure whether God is alive or dead without one actually being God. But by using a statistical method, supposedly one can estimate how probable or likely it is that God exists. In the July 2004 issue of *Skeptic* magazine<sup>1</sup> the editor, Michael Shermer, reviews a recent book that calculates the likelihood, or chance, of God existing as 67%. This surprisingly high, better than 50-50, chance of God being real does not sit well with Shermer who asserts that “religious faith [has] little or nothing to do with probabilities, evidence and logic.” Shermer puts his own values into the formula and produces the much more, shall we say, skeptical probability that God exists, of 2%. Apparently both God’s popularity as well as His chance of even being real is down among the ranks of skeptics.

Shermer graciously allows for a 2% chance that he could be wrong about God. I’m sure in reality he believes the chance is 0% but he wants to convey the impression that, compared to the optimistic figure of 67%, it is highly improbable that God exists, and that people of faith believe in God despite evidence, logic and probabilities. He gives the 2% figure to avoid the criticism that to know absolutely that God does not exist one would have to know everything—but if one knows everything, then one would, in fact, be God, something that even a skeptic like Shermer is hesitant to claim.

What he seems to not realize is that a 2% chance means one chance out of 50 that God exists. That means his estimate of God’s existence is actually much, much more probable to be true than his own evolutionary faith that a single small protein molecule, made up of specific amino acid building blocks, would form by random chance. Such calculations about the chances of simple protein formation have been widely discussed and vary from one incomprehensible number to another, depending on the size of the protein and other assumptions. A number like one chance in  $10^{40,000}$  has been calculated by Sir Fred Hoyle<sup>2</sup> as the probability of a single small protein forming by random processes. Henry Morris, in his book *The Biblical Basis of Modern Science*<sup>3</sup> says, “This number is so miniscule as to be equivalent to zero. That is, there is no chance whatever that it could have happened by chance.” By contrast, then, the figure of 1 chance in 50 given by Shermer for God’s existence seems like absolute certainty when considered in the light of the impossibility of even a simple protein forming by chance, let alone the entire “tree” of evolutionary life-forms. Even a skeptic’s worst case probability of God’s existence is billions and billions and billions of times more likely than even the best-case scenario of the biochemical evolution of a single protein.

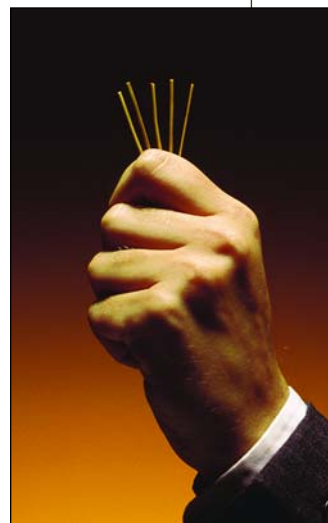
Whose faith then is the more improbable?

MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, PH.D.

1 Shermer, M. “God’s Number is Up.” *Skeptic*, July 2004, p 46.

2 Hoyle, F. and Wickramasinghe, C. “Where Microbes Boldly Went.” *New Scientist*. 91:412-415, 1981.

3 Morris, H. *The Biblical Basis of Modern Science*. Baker Book House, 1984.



# REFLECTING THE LIGHT

*There are two great lights in the spiritual realm as well.*

**Steve Hulshizer**

*“And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also” (Gen. 1:16).*

God is a God of order, and this is clearly seen in His creation (1 Cor. 14:33). Usually, when we think of order, we think of the order of arrangement. This thought is found in the New Testament word “world” (*kosmos*), which means “an orderly arrangement” (Jn. 1:10). The placing of the members in the human body is a good example of the order of arrangement. Our arms, legs, nose, mouth, eyes, and ears are arranged in a balanced, orderly fashion.

However, the primary order which God establishes in His creation is the order of authority, or government (Gen. 1:26). Without government, any order of arrangement would not last long. This too can be seen in the human body. The members of the body need to be governed, or disorder will result. The head of the body provides this needed government.

The universe that surrounds us is also in orderly arrangement. The movement of the planets is not haphazard, leaving us guessing whether or not the sun will rise in the morning. These heavenly bodies are witnesses to the Creator’s eternal power and deity (Ps. 19:1-6; Rom. 1:20). Here again we see that God not only established the order of arrangement, but also the order of authority. The sun was to rule the day, while the moon was to rule the night.

There are many truths that one might glean from God’s stellar arrangement and government. The truth of headship is clearly illustrated. In the absence of the sun, the moon rules with the light given to it by the sun. So it is in God’s government. God has given all authority to the glorified Christ (Eph. 1:22). During Christ’s current absence from the earth, His authority is delegated to the man to lovingly govern in the family and in the Church (Eph. 5:23,

25; 1 Tim. 3:1; Jn. 10:11). It was this headship order that was set aside in the Garden by the man and the woman, but is now reestablished under the Headship of Christ in the new creation (Gen. 3:6; 1 Cor. 11:3). The new order of headship under Christ is also symbolically demonstrated by the uncovered head of the man, and the covered head of the woman in the spiritual gatherings of the saints (1 Cor. 11:10).

The sun and the moon also illustrate our responsibility to personally glorify Christ. John spoke of himself, not as the Light, but as a witness to the Light (Jn. 1:8). Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, John reflected the “*Light of the world*” to those around him. This should be true of us as well. In ourselves we have no light, but Christ lives in us, and we are to reflect Him to the dark world around us (Mt. 5:16).

The taking of the gospel to all nations is also illustrated by these heavenly bodies. The Son has given the Church power, in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to take the gospel “*to the end of the earth,*” even to the darkest areas (Acts 1:8).

Lastly, a very practical lesson can be learned from these two great lights of heaven. The moon is at its brightest when there is nothing between it and the sun. Its light is diminished as the earth moves between it and the sun. So it is with individual Christians and the Church. As the world comes between them and the Son, their testimony is diminished (1 Jn. 2:15). We may bring so much of the world into our lives that there is no testimony for Christ at all (Rev. 3:16). When the things of the world take the place of the Son in our lives, we spend less time with Him, and our witness for Him is reduced accordingly (Col. 1:18). The more time we spend with Him, the more we become like Him, and the more we reflect Him to those still in the kingdom of darkness (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6).

As we look into the heaven above us and see these two great lights, may we be reminded of these important and practical truths, and may we reflect the light of the Son to a dark world. —*first published in Apr. 1991 Uplook*



# BORNE OF FOUR

*A veteran soul winner and disciple-maker calls for some cooperation in the work.*

**Vernon B. Schlieff**

In Mark 2, we see four men bearing a fifth to the Lord for help. Notice how they dealt with the obstacles they encountered on the way. Nothing deterred their resolute determination to accomplish their task, namely, to bring a needy soul to Christ.

The very first wall was the crowd, *“the press.”* This would have ended the trip for the modern-day, half-hearted, non-committed, so-called soul winner. But these four would let nothing keep them from their committed purpose. In the same way today, we are often pressed (don’t they call it “peer pressure”?) by people to keep from being soul winners.

Notice too, how these four removed a portion of the roof—the second obstacle—so they could let the sick man down to Jesus. Herein is a deep lesson in cooperation. They worked as a team. Each man had to attend carefully to his corner of responsibility, holding the bed steady, keeping his attention focused on the goal—to get a needy soul to Christ.

Each man had to consider the other three and work in accord as they encountered the third obstacle. Self, the “flesh”—is most often the most formidable barrier, making cooperation with others difficult. Each of the four had to depend on the other three. It had to be an effort of teamwork—togetherness. Otherwise the poor, helpless man might never have been brought to the Saviour.



There could be no self-seeking for individual glory by trying to outdo the others, no acts of stubbornness or self-will. Only selflessly acting in unison could get the job done, to overcome the hindering walls, and get the needy soul to Jesus. What a demonstration of interdependence and grace on the part of each on this team!

The Lord enjoys seeing individual Christians whether in one assembly, or in groups of assemblies, acting in dependence on Him in faith, and cooperating harmoniously together. Thus we can overcome walls whether of people, wood or stone, or of the flesh. In a Spirit-led assembly, there will be no contesting for power, glory, place, or recognition. Each will be esteeming the other better than themselves. There will be no backbiting or devouring of one another. May we learn from *“the four”* and with His help learn to take a firm hold on our corner of responsibility in the assembly, and, in cooperation with others, carry it to completion. By being steadfast in the faith, in harmony with Christ and the saints, in subjection to the elders, and putting our hands to the work, we will see lost souls brought to the Saviour, Christians edified, and the assembly built up. —from Oct 1991 *Uplook*

## Are YOU Rich?

They huddled inside the storm door—two children in ragged outgrown coats.

“Any old papers, lady?”

I was busy. I wanted to say no—until I looked down at their feet. Thin little sandals sopped with sleet. “Come in and I’ll make you a cup of hot cocoa.” There was no conversation. Their sandals left marks on the floor.

Cocoa and toast with jam to fortify against the chill outside. I went back to the kitchen to work.

The silence in the front room struck me. I looked in.

The girl held her empty cup in her hands, looking at it. The boy asked in a flat voice, “Lady...are you rich?”

“Am I rich? Oh, no!” I looked at my shabby slippers.

The girl put her cup back in its saucer—carefully. “Your cups match your saucers.” Her voice was old with a hunger that was not of the stomach.

They left then, holding their bundles of paper against the wind. They hadn’t said thank you. They didn’t need to. They had done more than that. Plain blue pottery cups and saucers. But they matched. I tested the potatoes and stirred the gravy. Potatoes and brown gravy...and a roof over our heads.

I moved the chairs back from the fire. The muddy prints of small sandals were still wet upon the hearth. I let them be. I want them in case I ever again forget how very rich I really am.

—MARION DOOLAN

# RENEWAL THROUGH HUMILITY

*It is still the only way forward.*

**Colin Anderson**

**W**hat is the greatest need among assemblies today? A variety of answers might be given to that question, but certainly one of them would be the subject of leadership, its form and quality.

We seem to be clear as to the form of leadership required by the New Testament. Plurality is the key word—plurality of elders. We rightly condemn all substitutes in form. One man doing most of the preaching or having the final word in decisions affecting the church is a violation of scriptural principles—a departure in form. But if, to our credit, we have not permitted substitutes in form, can the same be honestly said about quality?

True elders are at a premium today. Many assemblies do not have functioning elders. There are those who could, with more sacrifice, do the work but they will not; they have other priorities. Then there are those who are called elders but are disqualified by the quality control standards given in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Few men are to be found who are both willing and able. This is very serious. Scores of assemblies are experiencing spiritual decline because of the lack of qualified leaders.

## COMMON EXCUSES

Whenever we are convicted about something, our first instinct is to rationalize. “No one could be expected to satisfy all those requirements,” we say. Why not? Did the apostles appoint men who did not meet their own standards? That is to accuse them of hypocrisy.

“Well,” someone else says, “in those days, things were a little different; business was not so demanding. It was easier to devote yourself to the things of the Lord.” How so? Are we saying the Scriptures were written for first century Christians only?

Is it really true that the two passages to which we have referred are too exacting? Do

you not think that a normal Christian ought to strive after these qualities? We believe that is why an elder must have them. He is to be an example to the flock, a model for them. They are called to imitate such leaders (1 Pet. 5:3; Heb. 13:7).

“An elder must be...” Is that as demanding as it sounds? Yes, it is! How would you respond if someone said to you, “I know it says we ‘*must be born again*,’ but, failing that, surely God will be pleased if we do the best we can.” Or suppose another said that, in spite of our Lord’s clear statement that “*the Son of Man must be lifted up*,” they thought the cross was not a necessity; God could have found some other way? Dare we downplay the strength of that same word “*must*” in Timothy and Titus?

## SEEKING A WAY OUT

Even if the leaders of a local congregation excuse their inability to function, they will soon sense that they cannot handle the situation in which they find themselves. Various expedients are then adopted. A present fad is to change the form. “We are too busy; we will call in a man to do this work. We will still hold to the plurality of elders, of course...”



Another way out of the dilemma is for current leaders to become more rigid and autocratic. It is easier and less costly to rule by edict rather than example. But either of these methods or any others lacking in scriptural warrant is doomed to failure. The trouble is, they seem to provide an immediate and practical solution. But, in the long term, the whole church leaves adherence to the principles of the New Testament behind, and expediency becomes the rule rather than obedience. What “works” wins every argument and decides every question.

Is there a more excellent way? We believe so. The writer has witnessed the spiritual reviving that takes place when what he now recommends is put in place.

### A BIBLICAL APPROACH

The first step is confession. It is not enough to make general statements of inadequacy. “I’m not worthy to be an elder; I am sure I do not measure up; I’ve got so much to learn myself...,” etc. Be specific. Look honestly at the

might have special problems and be difficult to handle. What about the other four? We must remember God does not judge people by isolated incidents of failure or sin, but does it seem to be a pattern? Is the elder-to-be characteristically at fault in any of these important areas?

How about his ability to teach? You are right if you say he does not have to be a gifted Bible teacher, but can he handle the Word appropriately and helpfully in public and/or in private? Do people seek his help in the area of understanding and applying scriptural principles to their daily lives? Where present leaders find there is failure, they need to admit it—first before God, then to their peers and, if need be, before the assembly. But no precipitous action should be taken without careful consultation.


In some cases, each member of the present oversight may discover they are not qualified to serve. They should be prepared to act as interim leaders until the Lord raises up or sends to the assembly those more qualified. But the important thing is, there should be no pretense that they are elders. It would be better to be honest and drop the title rather than carry on with a spiritual sham.

The whole assembly should then be made aware of the stand these men have taken and urged to join them in earnest and persistent prayer that the Lord would provide for this need in His flock. Such a step calls for great humility, but will leave room for God to work. And the congregation will be taught that the Head of the Church is still responsive to the needs of His Body when its members genuinely cry to Him.

This spirit of self-humility and dependence on the Lord is most healthful for the church, and when the Lord provides (either by strengthening and enabling some of the present leaders to overcome their deficiencies or by bringing in experienced help from the outside) then the congregation at

large will see this to be the work of the Lord and thereby be encouraged to respect and submit to the elders the Lord has provided.

Let us not lower God’s standards to accommodate our present condition. Rather let us give them their full force and humble ourselves before God, asking for His mercy and grace. The Word of God then guarantees that true renewal will take place.

*“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time”* (1 Pet. 5:6). 

—This article first appeared in *Uplook* in Mar. 1991



qualities expected of an elder. Some of those qualifications have to do with one’s personal life: *“temperate, prudent, respectable, not addicted to wine...”* Others encompass his domestic life: *“the husband of one wife...hospitable...manages his own household well...children under control...”* Still others deal with inter-personal relationships: *“not pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious.”* Business relationships are also concerned: *“above reproach, free from the love of money...”* One has to do with maturity: *“not a new convert.”*

It is not a question of perfection, but the standards are high. A man might lose his temper in a situation. The question is, does he often do so? One of his five children

# TRUESTORY

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

## JESUS WANTS ME FOR A SUNBEAM

*For five weeks, in spite of a battery of tests, Fred Cameron stayed, undiagnosed, in the hospital. Then he recovered as quickly as he became sick. This story provides the remarkable reason for it.*

**H**ello, this is Dr. B. calling. I have the results of your blood tests, and would like to have some more tests done.”

“OK. When should I come to your office?”

“I want to have these done in the hospital, Mr. Cameron.”

“Will this not take some time to have the arrangements made, Doctor?”

“I have already made the arrangements.”

“Alright. When is it? Next week?”

“No, this week.”

“But this is Thursday. Shall I come tomorrow?”

“No, I want you in at 2 o’clock this afternoon.”

A sudden call like the above is enough to put the shakes into the most stout-hearted Christian. But I did not feel too bad, so I didn’t worry too much. Within three hours I was in what was to be my bed for the next five weeks.

I introduced myself to the other occupant of the room I was given by saying, “I guess I’m your new roommate.”

My speech betrayed me, for he replied, “So you’re a Scotsman. Where do you come from?”

“Paisley,” I replied.

“It’s a small world. I come from Barhead.” Now Barhead was about fifteen minutes in the trolley car from Paisley, and here we were about 4,000 miles from home and only three feet separating our beds.

“For me,” I told him, “Barhead was a place to pass through. The only times that I went there were if there were any special meetings in the Gospel Hall there.”

Then his history came out. He said that he had been compelled to go to gospel meetings until he was seven-

teen years of age when he ran away from home and joined the army.

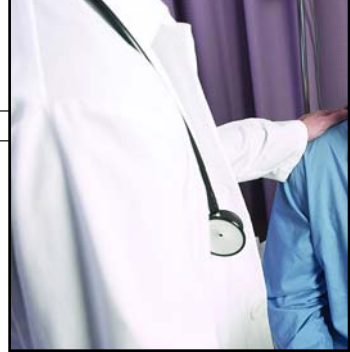
This began a week of talks about the meetings of the Lord’s people in Scotland. We spoke about the preachers and about gospel tents—everything but his soul. When the moment came, he sensed it, and would turn away or leave the room. And I, a soldier of the cross, was too much of a chicken to jump out of bed and grab him and say, “You need to accept Christ as your Saviour right now.”

However, when he left at the end of the week, he gripped my hand and said, “This has been the most unusual experience of my life to spend a week in this room and discuss all these things with you.”

The next man to come into my room was Walter. When he came in, I introduced myself by saying, “I suppose you’re my new roommate. My name is Fred.”

“My name is Walter,” he responded simply. Walter had been brought into the room in a wheelchair and I saw he was having some difficulty getting out of it into bed. I asked him what his problem was. He said he had very bad arthritis in his hips. The worst of it was that he had lost his wife six months before and was trying to continue to live alone in his own home. It was just too much for him. His family had suggested that he go to the hospital for some treatment.





“Walter, I can’t sympathize with you as I ought to because I haven’t passed through what you have. I still have my wife. But you have my sympathy for your situation. When I get into problems like that in life, I pray about them, and I’d be glad to pray for you.”

“Oh, are you a religious man?” he inquired.

“I guess you could call me a religious man.”

“I see you have a Bible there.”

“Yes, I do, and I read it every day.”

“What kind of work did you do when you were working?” I asked, to continue the conversation.

He said, “I worked in a liquor store.”

“Were you their customer too?”

“Yes, I was a customer, too.” So we talked about his life. Did he go to church? No, he wasn’t a churchman at all. So I went on talking to him about prayer and about himself and how a Christian could depend on the Lord. He hadn’t been in the room an hour at this point, and I thought that maybe I was coming on too strong too quickly. I lay back in my bed and so did he; the curtain was half pulled around between us so we couldn’t see each other. We lay quietly for a few minutes.

Then, suddenly, Walter began to pray! “O God, You know the kind of man I am. You know the kind of life I’ve lived. Come into my life and help me; there’s no one can help me but You.”

I waited for a few moments to hear if there was any more. But Walter was finished, so I added a hearty “Amen!” I spent about a week with that man, telling him the details of the gospel, that it wasn’t just a cry to God, but all the Lord Jesus had done for him. When that man left, I thought he would never let me go. Actually I had been moved to another room by that time. He clung to my hand, tears in his eyes, so glad he had met me.

Anytime I saw Walter in the hospital after that, he was always beaming with pleasure and wanting to cling to my hand and tell me how much he appreciated his discussions with me about the gospel.

One morning, a young man came into my room. He told me he was studying psychology at the university and he spent a forenoon every week going around the hospital wards speaking to people who wanted to talk to him about anything. He said to me, “Do you want to talk?”

“Yes, I would be glad to talk.”

“What do you want to talk about?”

“Well, I have just been reading my Bible. I would like to talk about that.”

“Oh,” he said, “that book. That book’s full of contradictions.”

“Is it? Well now, that would really give us something to talk about. If it’s full of contradictions, you should have no trouble,” I said, “picking out one of the contradictions, just one, and you and I will discuss it and see what we come up with.”

“Oh,” he said, “I don’t want to talk about that.”

“Well, you asked me if I wanted to talk and what I wanted to talk about. So I said, yes, and I gave you my subject. I think the reason you don’t want to talk about it is because you don’t know anything about it. And you’re probably just repeating something you heard some of your teachers saying in the university.”

“Yes, we have a professor, and, every time the Bible comes up for discussion, that’s what he says: ‘Oh, that book’s full of contradictions.’”

“Well, if you’re studying psychology, young fellow, take it from me—you better start using your own head and do a little thinking for yourself, and reading.”

He was not at all upset by that, and we talked for a while about general things and away he went. But I bumped into him the day I was leaving the hospital, about four weeks later. He spoke to me about our conversation, but there was no sign of conversion. I hadn’t really preached the gospel to him, but perhaps he would think twice before he idly attacked the Word of God.

One night, I was standing in the hallway, speaking to a man when another man came along.

“What are you gentleman discussing so seriously?” he inquired. “The immortality of the butterfly?”

“No, we’re not talking about the immortality of the butterfly, but if you would like to join the conversation, I’d be glad to discuss immortality with you. You know, we’re all mortal; that is why we’re in this hospital. The doctors are trying to stave off the inevitability of our mortality. Have you ever heard the expression, *immortality of the soul*?”

“Oh, yes, I’ve heard that expression.”

“I want to tell you something. When the Bible is discussing the subject of mortality and immortality, it’s never talking about the soul; it’s always talking about the body. What’s wrong with us is that we have mortal bodies that are subject to death. And the hope of the Christian is that one day this mortal will put on immortality—we’re going to have real bodies in the eternal state. That’s the hope of the Christian. We are not going to be like little puffs of



smoke out of a genie's lamp or anything like that, but real, immortal bodies. Jesus Himself said, when He rose from the dead, *'Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bone as ye see Me have.'*"

"Well, you have your religion and I have mine. And besides, I'm feeling fine anyway and I'm going home tomorrow morning. The doctor said I can leave tomorrow morning. Good night," and he left me standing with the other man I had been talking with.

At six o'clock the next morning, there was a bit of commotion outside the room next to mine. It was where the man who thought he was immortal—for a little longer, at least—was staying. The doctors and nurses were running back and forth. This went on for about an hour. I lay in my bed until I saw his son-in-law at about a quarter to eight.

I signed for him to come into the room. I had met this young man before. "What's going on in your father-in-law's room?"

"He took a serious stroke at six this morning and he has just passed away."

It gave me such a feeling in the pit of my stomach. I wonder if I made things clear to that man the night before. He was gone into eternity and he had brushed me off with what I told him.

There was a man who used to walk around and around the ward. It was a very large ward and he never seemed to talk to anybody. I thought one night that I would watch for him and walk around with him and ask him how he was getting on. So I slipped on a housecoat and waited for him. When he was just passing my door, I stepped out and said, "Hello. Can I walk with you?"

"Oh, yes, yes."

"How are you getting on?"

"Oh," he said, "I don't know. I have to go for surgery and I'm worried."

"You're worried about it? You know, I'm a Christian and I pray about these things." There was a bit of quietness and he didn't answer me.

"I don't always get the answer that I would like," I continued, "but I get an answer; and another thing I get is the assurance that My Father in heaven will do what is best for me." So gradually we talked a little bit, but I couldn't get much out of him. I only took one or maybe two turns of the ward with him, and I found he wasn't going to communicate with me at all, so I said "Good night" to him and went back into my own room.

The next day, two nurses came in and said, "We're mov-

ing your bed and you over to the other side of the ward."

"Who is my roommate going to be?"

"That big man who walks around the ward all the time."

So they wheeled the bed around and into this man's room. I said, "You've got me as a roommate. I hope I'll be some encouragement to you because I know you are going for a fairly serious operation." He didn't say too much at all. They took him away the next day for his surgery. He was expected to be away for three or four hours—but he was away for eight. I was being taken away for tests at different times as well, so it was the following day before I saw him.

He appeared to be sound asleep, or still under the anesthetic. His wife was sitting on a little stool by the bedside, with her head very close to his. She had a big Bible in her lap which had some markings in it.

"Oh, you have a Bible, Mrs. Smith," I said.

"Yes, this is his Bible. He called me and told me to bring his Bible down."

"Where are you reading?"

"I'm not reading," she said. "It just happened to open there. He had a bookmark in there."

"Where is it?"

"In Joshua chapter 1."

"Oh," I said, "do you know that in that chapter it says four times, *'Be strong and of a good courage'*? And I was telling your husband that I pray about these situations and I will be glad to continue to pray for him and you both."

She thanked me very much. I went to lay down in my bed and, after the visiting hours, his wife went away. The nurses came and attended to him.

About 6 o'clock the next morning, I heard him say, "Would you read the Word of God to me, Mr. Cameron?" Now, ordinary sinners don't usually speak about the Bible that way.

"Yes, I would be glad to read the Word of God to you," I replied. So I took my Bible over to the little stool and sat fairly close to him. I opened up to Isaiah and read those wonderful verses: "*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,*" and so on. He seemed to sort of fall asleep again, so I closed my Bible, had a word of prayer, and I went back to my bed.

The following morning, he asked again if I would read the Word of God with him. Then he said, "I would like to ask you a question."

"What question?"

"Do you think if a man is a Christian that God deals

with him in discipline?"

"Well, we had better turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews and I will read that to you. *'Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.'*" I spoke to him about God's discipline of His children because by this time I sensed that this man was a Christian, even though he hadn't told me.

"The first night you spoke to me," he said, "you couldn't have hurt me more if you had stuck a knife into me."

Now that wasn't a nice thing to hear. "Oh, I am so sorry. What did I say that hurt you?"

"Well, the first thing you said when you stepped out to walk with me was that you were a Christian. I had been in this hospital two weeks before you came and nobody knew that I was a Christian. I haven't been living like a Christian. And I believe what you read to me, that the Lord has been disciplining me for the way I have been living."

So that week we prayed and read the Scriptures together. When that man left the hospital, tears ran unashamedly down his cheeks when he said goodbye to me. He said, "Mr. Cameron, I will never be the same man again. I am so glad that I have been able to spend this time with you. I have been restored to the Lord."

One night, there were two nurses on duty. A fairly old man had been brought in who was evidently senile. He was shouting for his wife, his daughter, and for the nurses, making a noise that disturbed the whole ward. The nurses were very busy and couldn't be attending to him all the time as there were one or two very sick patients on the ward. So I got up from my bed and went down to this old man's room.

When I went in, I discovered he had been restrained in the bed with straps and a restraining harness to keep him from getting up. He was almost half-strangled with it as he had been struggling and kicking. He had kicked all the bed clothes off. With what little strength I had, I hauled him back up to the middle of his bed and covered him up with his blanket.

"What are you making all the noise for?" I inquired.

"I'm not making any noise."

"You've been shouting for your

wife, your daughters, and the nurses. What do you want? What's wrong?"



"Nothing's wrong. I'm not shouting for anybody."

"I think I detect a Scots accent," I said. Are you a Scotsman?"

"Yes."

"Where do you come from in Scotland?"

"I come from Bairdmoores."

"Bairdmoores? There's no such place as Bairdmoores. I know a large factory at a place called Parkhead—Bairdmoores Factory."

"Yes, Parkhead, that's it, Parkhead," he said.

"Did you, by any chance, go to the Gospel Hall Sunday School in Parkhead?"

"Yes," he answered hesitantly.

"Do you remember anything you learned in the Sunday School in Parkhead?" There was no response. He began shouting again, and calling and wriggling about in the bed. I managed to settle him down a bit, but he couldn't continue any more of the conversation. Evidently he just had a few moments of lucidity, then his mind would go completely blank. He got settled down and I went back to my bed. He remained quiet and the rest of us got to sleep.

Two days after, they took the restraining straps from him and he was allowed to walk around the ward. He wandered about and couldn't find his own room and wandered into mine.

I said to him, "Have you lost your room?"


"Yes," he responded simply.

"You're the man who told me that you went to the Parkhead Sunday School when you were a boy." He nodded. I said, "Do you not remember yet anything you learned in the Parkhead Sunday School?"

He stood there quite still and his face got red—and then redder still. It seemed to me that his mind was struggling away back almost 90 years. He was trying to get a grasp of something. Suddenly, he said to me quite loudly, "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam."

I could have fallen through the floor! Having said that, he turned and walked out.

Here I had been in the hospital for five weeks. I had had every conceivable test that they could give a man to find out what was wrong. The doctors came and told me they were sending me home undiagnosed and they thought that my blood condition was settling down. So all that time in the hospital, and they couldn't find out what was wrong with me. At home, I made a full recovery—that is about twelve years ago.

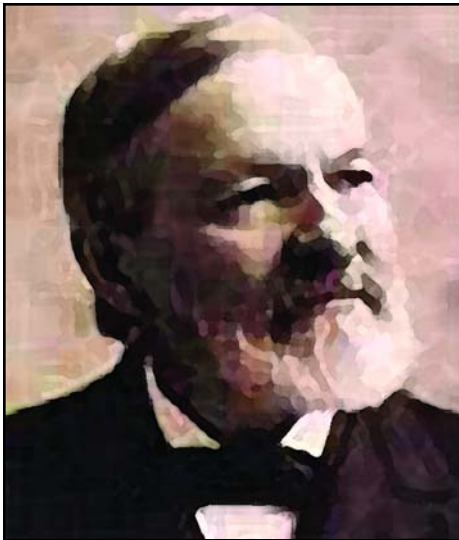
But it dawned on me that the reason I was in that hospital was simply this: that Jesus wanted me for a sunbeam. 

# GRACE

*Nothing like it in all this world.*

## “ THANK YOU, JOHN ”

John A. Broadus (1827-1895) was a widely-respected teacher, preacher, and scholar. He is remembered for his books in the field of homiletics: *The Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* and *Lectures on the History of Preaching*. He also authored several commentaries. He was a professor of Latin and Greek at the University of Virginia, and held teaching posts at several institutes of higher learning across the southern states. “A man of consummate scholarship, deep piety, wielding an influence for righteousness second to no man of his generation,” it was stated at the time of his death.



Dr. Broadus was born and born again in Culpeper County, Virginia. The day after his conversion, he spoke to one of his classmates, Sandy Jones, a red-headed, awkward fellow: “I wish you would be a Christian, too; won’t you think about it?”

“Well, I don’t know. Perhaps I will,” Jones responded. Sure enough, Sandy Jones began attending the meetings where John Broadus had been saved, and one night put his trust in Christ. Without waiting for the conclusion of the service, he ambled across the meeting house to where Broadus was sitting, held out his hand, and said, “Thank you, John. I thank you, I thank you, John.”

Eventually Dr. Broadus left the little town where he was born, becoming a renowned scholar and president of a theological school. Every summer, however, he returned to his hometown for a visit. Somewhere in town he would see Sandy Jones, now a local farmer. Jones would cross the street, stick out his raw-boned hand, and say: “Howdy, John. Thank you, John; thank you, John. I never forget, John.”

When John Broadus lay dying, he said, “I rather think the sound sweetest to my ears in heaven—next to the welcome of Him, whom having not seen I love and have tried to serve these many years—will be the welcome of Sandy Jones, as he will give me his hand, and say: “Howdy, John. Thank you, John. Thank you, thank you, John.” —from back cover Mar 1994

# CLIMB THE MOUNTAIN

*A regular and much appreciated contributor to Uplook writes about the uphill road.*

**Donald L. Norbie**

**Y**ou have to be committed”—that’s what he said. We were climbing Mt. Sneffels, one of Colorado’s great mountains, 14,150 feet tall. I was talking with a friend as we climbed. He said, “My wife is along, but she’s not committed to making the top. If she gets tired, she may turn back. It’s no big deal with her whether she gets to the top or not. But me, I’m committed. My goal is to reach the summit. My muscles may be aching and my body wanting to quit, but I’ll push on.” Ah, yes, those are the ones that reach the top.

In the Old Testament, God is compared to a mountain. *“Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds, Thy righteousness is like the great mountains”* (Ps. 36:5-6). The Christian life is like a mountain climb, climbing the mountain of God. God is our mountain to which we cling as we journey toward heaven.

Some like to stand at a distance and admire a mountain. What a grand sight it is! But they never get to know the mountain. It is those who struggle up it, who taste its toughness, its difficulty, these get to know the mountain. It is those who cling to the rock when there is exposure and danger, who experience the awesome might of a storm, all the hazards, these get to know the mountain.

Some like to stand at a distance and study God. One may sit in his paneled study and discuss theology, arguing Calvinism vs. Arminianism, dispensationalism vs. covenant theology. It becomes a profound, intellectual exercise, stimulating to the mind. But you do not really get to know God through academic study.

Before climbing a mountain, one should get maps and read what he can about the different routes to the summit. But the only way to get to know the strength and force of the mountain is to climb. This requires time, pain, and struggle.

And it is true that we only really get to know God as we experience the pain and struggles of life—and keep on

climbing, clinging to our Rock. This takes commitment. The first and great commandment is: *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”* (Mt. 22:37). And so I must ask myself, “Is God first in my life? Am I committed to Him above all else? Am I committed to reaching the summit, or, if the going gets tough, will I drop out?”

It’s a glorious feeling to finally break over the summit and to stand there, gasping for air, legs trembling with fatigue, to see that magnificent vista of mountain range after range unfolding before you. Then you turn to your climbing companion and shout, “Yahoo! We made it! We made it!” You feel your own smallness and the greatness of God. And below, you see the route that was difficult to see as you came up, but now it is all in plain view.

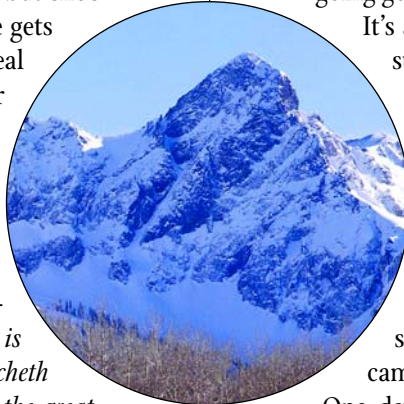
One day, the climb of life will be over. We will reach the summit, turn to our fellow climbers and shout, “Hallelujah! We made it!” And we will see the Lord Jesus, face to face, and delight in the presence of Almighty God—awesome experience. We will look back down the mountain and see the route which God so tenderly laid out for us, all plain now. At times, when we were climbing, it seemed so dark and confusing. But now it is all clear. How good God has been!

In the Swiss Alps, there is an epitaph on a tombstone for a Swiss guide: “He died climbing.” May this be true of us as Christians.

Make us Thy mountaineers;  
We would not linger on the lower slope,  
Fill us afresh with hope, O God of Hope,  
That, undefeated, we may climb the hill  
As seeing Him who is invisible.

Let us die climbing. When this little while  
Lies far behind us, and the last defile  
Is all alight, and in that light we see  
Our Leader and our Lord, what will it be?

—AMY CARMICHAEL



# SO WHAT?

*Statistics have their place, I suppose, but don't lose your way in the number mumbo-jumbo.*

**L**ike kudzu, the oriental vine creeping its way across the landscape of the southeastern U.S., statistics are crawling into every area of our lives. Nothing seems beyond reach. And it seems nothing can stop the thing. By definition, *statistics* deal with political facts and figures on the *status* of the *state*. Now statistics refer to anything—even the Church. In many places, it has become the basis of ecclesiastical decision-making. It was not so long ago that the measure of an assembly was its spiritual temperature. What was the tone of their worship? The fervor of their prayers? Their knowledge of the Word? Their zeal for souls? I don't recall the size of their building, budget, or congregation, or the effectiveness of their telemarketing coming into the conversation.

We would do well to examine the way the Lord assessed an assembly. We need not guess. The Revelation gives us His appraisal of seven. There is no mention of numbers, nor methods, nor what the community thought of them. There is commendation for faithfulness to responsibilities, hatred for the things He hates, endurance in difficulty, purity of doctrine, tenderhearted service, suffering for righteousness, and identifying with His name in the day of His rejection. There is also chastening: for having divorced labor from love; for following Balaam in cultural, religious, and social compromise; for following Jezebel in the corrupting of divine order and divine truth; for allowing, by neglect, the assembly to become so weak that it is in danger of dying; and for becoming so confident in their own resources that they felt little practical need of the ministry of Christ in the assembly.

If, on the other hand, we were to use a statistical method to assess the churches of Asia Minor, Laodicea might have come out quite well. But the voice of the Master had been stifled; His presence was no longer sought—it seems no one noticed He was missing! Their goods had wooed them from heaven's gold. Their haute couture had spoiled them for the simple, white, linen garments of heaven's priests. And like a man growing slowly blind, they had learned to adjust by squinting at life. Any hope? Some suggest we measure the problem quantitatively.

I confess my lack of confidence in statistical analysis. How does it help me to know that the majority of churches in America are relatively small? Should I conclude that churches in America are small because a) the West is a tough part of the world to grow a church, or b) we're not working very hard at it because the octopus-world has us in its embrace, or c) God intended assemblies to remain at this manageable size (like the Lord getting the multitude to sit down in fifties and hundreds), or d) true Christianity always has been a little flock? Could it be that our statistician friends are no closer to the truth after they have gathered their numbers than before?

Would Philip have left Samaria with its mighty stirring to meet the Ethiopian if he was using statistics? Would Paul have enjoined the assembly at Corinth to stand against the lax moral standards of the city; to separate themselves from ecclesiastical compromise; to clearly define the distinctions between the man and woman in church order—knowing these issues would undercut the popularity of the Corinthian church in the community? Did he suggest an assessment of the pagan expectations for the assembly and then redesign it to make them feel comfortable there? For a man with such a consuming desire to see souls saved, he never suggested the introduction of Greek drama to enhance their outreach.

Stats are plastic; you can bend them into amazing conclusions. When I hear them used to assess the condition of the church, I'm not impressed. My reaction is "So what?" I identify with Charles Dicken's David Copperfield: "Mrs. Gupp had indignantly assured him that there wasn't room to swing a cat there; but, as Mr. Dick justly observed..., 'You know, Trotwood, I don't want to swing a cat. I never do swing a cat. Therefore, what does that signify to me?'"

Like statistics in the church, very little. —*This article by J.B.N. first appeared as an editorial in the Apr. 1992 Uplook*

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The Greatest Thing in the World	Drummond, Henry	Jul-Aug 2003	Working Women	Nicholson, J. B. Jr.	Sep 2004
The Helmet of Salvation	Amos, Randy	Jul-Aug 2004	Worship	Nicholson, Boyd	Jun 2004
The Incomparable Son	Rose, A. C.	Jan-Feb 2003	Yes, Good Works	Nicholson, J. B. Jr.	Sep 2004
The Inspired Word	Nicholson, J. B. Jr.	Jan-Feb 2003			

## **THOU REMAINEST**

### **JOHN HAWTHORN**

*We pass through the year with chastened hearts. Sorrow has touched many in the past days. From many homes the light has gone out. New problems and difficulties present themselves, and the darkness of the last days deepens around us. The kingdoms of the world are being shaken, to be finally replaced with that ‘abomination of desolation’ (Mt. 24:15), and no hope or comfort can be drawn from man’s ever changing, earthborn hopes.*

*We turn therefore to the assurance that “Thou remainest” (Heb. 1:11). He who spoke the universe into being, who holds the earth in the hollow of His hand, who gives to all life, and who spared not His Son but delivered Him up for us, is our Father. He changes not. He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him. With Christ He will freely give us all things. His gifts forbid us to doubt His love, His divine purposes display His wisdom, and His longsuffering reveals His patience. He will perfect that which concerns us. The good work begun in us will be complete in the Day of Jesus Christ.*

*This knowledge brings with it rest, a rest prepared for us, and which we are invited to share (Heb. 4:9). Rest, the outcome of ceasing from our own struggles, of casting ourselves on Him by faith. Rest, the result of putting our life’s cares and burdens in His hands. Rest, the enjoyment of which depends on our learning of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and who found it His food and chief delight to do the will of His Father. —reprinted from the Dec. 1992 Uplook*