

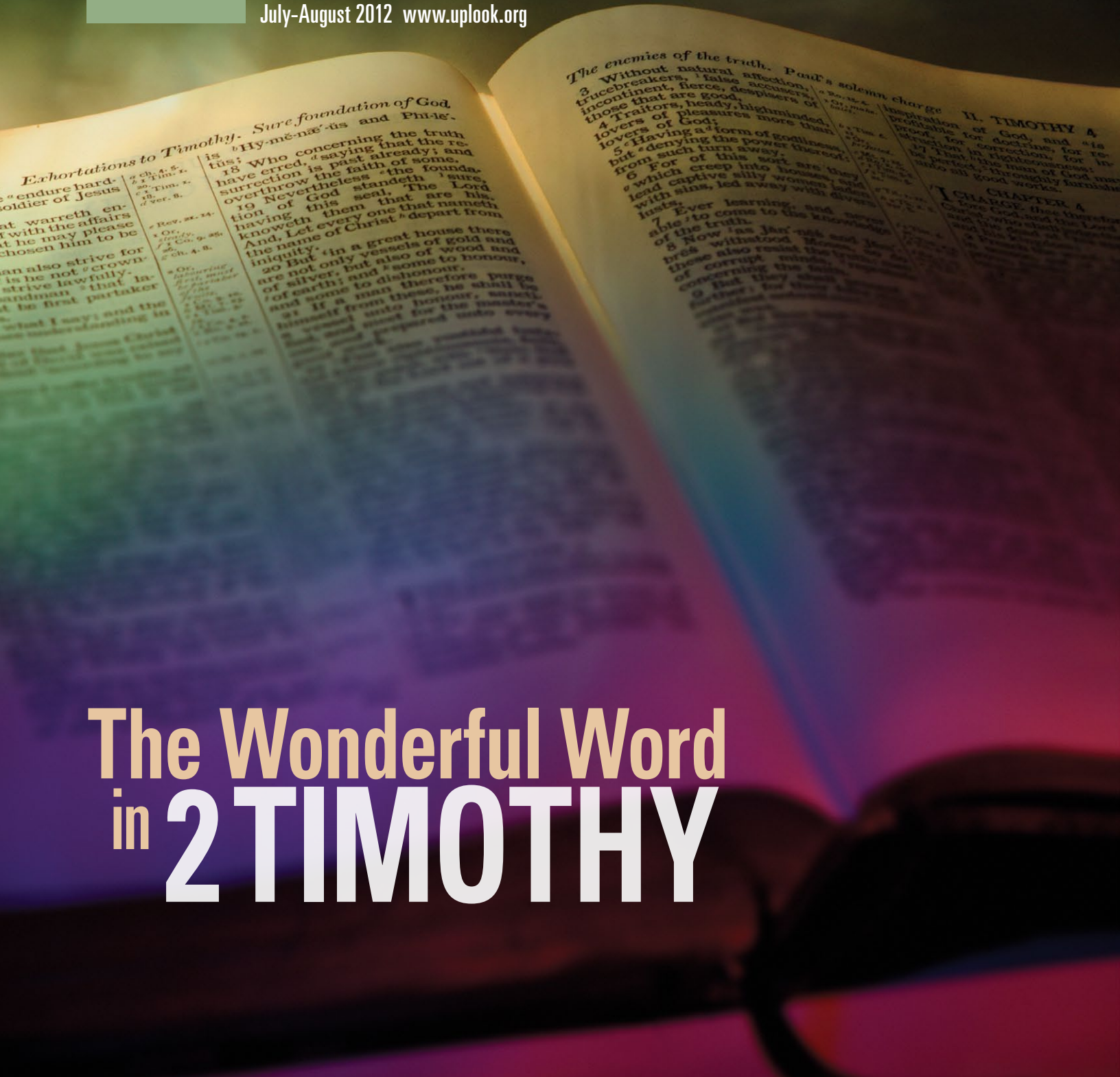
The Uses
of the Word
Jack Spender

An Outreach
for Runners
Eli Banta

Rightly Dividing
the Word
Mike Stoudt

UPLOOK

July-August 2012 www.uplook.org



The Wonderful Word in 2 TIMOTHY

editor's note

An Apostle's Legacy



When we are young and healthy, it is easy to feel (or presume) that we have many decades ahead of us on this Earth. But once a person senses that the end of his earthly sojourn is approaching, there is often a greater appreciation of the value of time and words—now both in short supply.

None of us would accuse the apostle Paul of wasting either words or time. But it is safe to say that, when he knew that the time of his departure had come (2 Tim. 4:6), he was eager to pass on to young Timothy that which was absolutely essential.

What is it, then, that Paul chose to emphasize? There is more than one correct answer to that question. But when reading 2 Timothy, one cannot help but notice that Paul keeps coming back to the Word of God. This book contains the pre-eminent passage on the nature of Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Compressed into these few verses is revelation concerning the balance of the Old and New Testaments, the inspiration of Scripture, and the authority (v. 16) and sufficiency (v. 17) of the Word of God. Furthermore, we learn that the Bible is the basis of our doctrine and our practice, both positively and negatively (v. 16). The rest of the book outlines our duty to God's Word: retain its teachings (1:13), pass it on (2:2), be diligent with it (2:15), handle it accurately (2:15), and preach it (4:2).

Paul had devoted his life to studying the Old Testament and, although it largely remained a closed book to him during that time, there is no doubt that those early years of study were of vast benefit to him once he embraced the Key: "But to this day whenever Moses is read,

a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Cor. 3:15f).

But not only was Paul steeped in the Old Testament, after he met the Lord, it was his privilege to give us much of the New Testament! As such, he was ideally suited to be the one that the Lord used to reveal the beautiful harmony of the two testaments. Acts records his ministry of using the Old Testament Scriptures to prove that Jesus is the Christ (e.g. Acts 9:22); when writing the ultimate exposition of the gospel, Paul stated at the outset that not only is God's plan of redemption centered in the Lord Jesus Christ, but that this is exactly what "He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures" (Rom. 1:2); and all of his writings are filled with Old Testament quotations corroborating the gospel of Christ.

It is no wonder, then, that Paul's final letter to his beloved son in the faith was a letter about the Word of God.

This was Paul's legacy. What is ours? If we faced death today, would we be overcome with regret about a life of wasted time? Or could we, like Paul, say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7)? The answers to those questions will depend upon how we have treated the Word of God.

"And now I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

—James Martin editor@uplook.org

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Here are subjects that are both vital and often misunderstood. **Bill Yuille** gives a straightforward but scholarly overview.

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In this helpful article, **Steve Batts** shows how the perfect Author has provided the perfect Book as the means used by the Spirit to bring us to maturity.

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The Master did it, **Hanniel Ghezzi** reminds us. The early church did it. And the Apostle Paul exhorts us to follow his example in developing both disciples and disciple-makers.

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The saints at **Rockville Bible Fellowship** send us a warm pen portrait of a true Christian gentleman and man of God.

24 The Standard of Sound Words

Using the picture of a retaining wall, **Peter Bolton** illustrates the importance of having the high ground of Christian living fortified by the Word of God.

The Uses of the Word 26

God has thought of everything. As **Jack Spender** reminds us, the Bible is profitable for both doctrine and practice, for instruction and correction.

28 Preach the Word

Shawn Abigail points out the similar maladies in New Testament times and today regarding preaching. Thankfully we also have direct teaching in the Word that addresses this and offers solutions.

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front lines pray around the globe

Urgent prayer is needed!

Over 100 people were killed by Islamic group Boko Haram this past week, who went on a 12-village killing spree in Nigeria's Plateau state. Meanwhile, in Syria, "Christians are increasingly being targeted and driven out of their homes and districts. Some 138,000 Christians have fled Homs, where Christians have been terrorised and churches have been looted and occupied by rebel forces," says the Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin. And Voice of the Martyrs reports: "The murder of Christians and especially converts from Islam to Christianity is increasingly common" in Somalia. Also remember the believers in Egypt where there is great uncertainty about what freedoms they will have under the new constitution. Pray for safety, boldness, and salvation for persecutors.



CONFERENCES, CAMPS & RETREATS

LASSEN PINES YOUTH & FAMILY CAMP

The beautiful Lassen Pines Christian Conference Center is located in Viola, CA between Redding and the historic Mt. Lassen Volcanic Peak. Youth Camp (ages 12 - young adult) and Family Camp (families with children 11 and younger) operate concurrently Jul 29-Aug 3, meeting together for meals and the evening meetings. Activities include lake swimming & fishing, team softball & volleyball, hiking (to the Peak when open), campfire singing, etc. **Contact:** Sid Osborn ph: 714-649-2757 email: sidosborn@cox.net

FELLOWSHIP OF INDIAN BRETHREN

The FIBA Conference 2012 will be held at the Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport Hotel, 1 Hartsfield Center Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30354, from Aug 2-5 (Thursday through Sunday). The conference theme is based on Philipians 1:27, "Living in the last days." Special programs and spiritual activities for children, youth and adults will enrich the conference. **Contact:** ph: 678-642-3447 web: www.fibana.com email: fiba@fibana.com

WEST VIRGINIA BIBLE CONFERENCE

The West Virginia Bible Conference invites you to their annual family camp Aug 5-10 with speakers Joe Reese (ON) and Scott DeGroff (KS). Nursery and children's ministry are provided. The conference is held at Bluestone Camp and Retreat near Hinton, WV, surrounded by beautiful mountain scenery. A detailed brochure can be mailed to you. **Contact:** Brent Jones ph: 304-466-4738 e-mail: brentandhope@frontier.com



Grace McCarthy

BE REFRESHED! ENGEDI 2012 IN TX

College and career age young people are invited to Engedi '12 from August 10-12 for a time of refreshment and encouragement focused on the Lord and His Word. Hosted by South Plains Bible Chapel (Lubbock, TX) this conference will take place at Lakeview Camp and Conference Center in Waxahachie, TX, an hour south of Dallas. Speaker will be Jim McCarthy (CA). For information, visit www.engedicon.com **Contact:** Peter Lambert peter@engedicon.com

INTENSIVE MEN'S BIBLE STUDY IN NY

Pine Bush Bible Camp, Bloomingburg NY, is having their annual study Aug 26-30 with Randy Amos (NY). Cost for 4 nights with meals included is \$100. Register soon. Only first 40 applicants can be accepted. **Contact:** Richie Benitez email: royalpriest4him@yahoo.com Cell: 508-265-3168

LABOR DAY CONFERENCE IN MN

The 101st annual Labor Day Conference hosted by the Twin Cities area assemblies will be held Aug 31-Sep 3. Speakers are Kevin Fitzgerald (MO) and Bill Yuille (ON). The conference begins Friday with a prayer meeting at 7:30 PM and ends Monday at noon. Housing and meals provided. Visit www.mnlcd.net for details. **Contact:** Glen Ellis ph: 763-572-1379 email: glencellis_610@msn.com

LABOR DAY CONFERENCE IN TEXAS

Sponsored by the believers at Golden Bible Chapel, Golden, the conference will be held Sep 1-2 at the Mineola Civic Center, Mineola, Texas. Ken Miller (OK) will be opening the Word. **Contact:** Bryan Hughes ph: 903-569-8880 email: dbryanhughes@aol.com web: www.goldenbiblechapel.com

front lines praise around the clock

YOUTH CONFERENCE IN GEORGIA

Camp Hope will have their annual Youth Conference Sep 1-3. Nathan Bramsen (West Africa) will be speaking. Cost is \$65/person. **Contact:** Jamie Wolfgram ph: 706-650-2693 Camp Hope ph: 770-536-4787 email: camphopega@arilion.com or visit www.camphopega.org for a registration form.

FALL MEN'S BIBLE CONFERENCE

The conference will be held Sep 7-8 at Camp Living Water in Bryson City, NC. Scheduled speakers are Jonathan Brower (VA) Skip Elliott (SC) James Gibbons (SC) and Jeff Johnson (NC). The conference begins at 4 PM Friday and ends with lunch at 12:30 PM Saturday. Cost is \$40 per person prepaid (\$45 on arrival) and includes meals and 1 night lodging. Visit www.mensbibleconference.com for details. **Contact:** Alan Mojonner ph: 828-277-1211 email: mgart@bellsouth.net

ATLANTIC/LYMAN CONFERENCE

Celebrating 99 years of God's faithfulness and sound Bible teaching, all are welcome at the annual Atlantic/Lyman Bible Conference. Dates are Sep 14-16. The expected speakers are Warren Henderson (KS) and Jack Fish (Emmaus). The Friday night prayer meeting will be held at the Atlantic Gospel Chapel (13th & Elm St.), beginning at 7:30 PM. The Saturday and Sunday meetings will begin at 10:00 AM, at the Cass Country Community Center (West 10th & Palm St.) in Atlantic. Included are children's meetings with teacher Art Manning (IA) and youth activities on Saturday night. **Contact:** Dennis Oathoudt ph: 712-243-6303 email: koathoudt@hotmail.com or Mike Eells ph: 712-254-2530 email: mjeells@yahoo.com

GOSPEL READINESS WORKSHOP

Nervous to talk with your friends about Jesus Christ? Don't know what to say? Or wonder what they will say? Three workshops will help you overcome your hesitations of what to say and help give you the confidence to share the Good News about the Lord Jesus! G.R.O.W. will be a highly interactive afternoon filled with small group role-playing and discussion centered on the subject of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. You'll learn how to break the ice in any conversation, answer common questions, present the gospel visually in less than five minutes, and much more. The whole event, which runs from 10:30 AM-5:00 PM, including lunch, is free.

The third remaining session:

Sep 15 – Grace Chapel,
341 Tenaflly Rd., Tenaflly, NJ 07670
www.graceonline.info

Contact: Call or text 914-646-9722
email: GROWorkshop@gmail.com

JERSEY SHORE BIBLE CONFERENCE

Willie Burnett (ON) will be the speaker at this year's Jersey Shore Bible Conference scheduled for Sep 17-21. Hosted by Know the Word Ministries, this annual gathering will again be held at the Harvey Cedars Bible Conference, a deluxe facility situated on Long Beach Island on beautiful Barnegat Bay. The cost is \$345 per person. Included in the week will a guided tour of nearby Lakehurst Naval Air Station (site of the Hindenburg disaster in 1937) and the anniversary luncheon at America's Keswick. (www.americaskeswick.org). Other interesting activities and events have been planned for the week, sure to make an enjoyable and relaxing finish to the summer months. For more information,

click on www.knowtheword.com or visit online www.stepsofffaith.org or email mkolchin1@gmail.com To register, send full amount by Aug 31 (or sooner) made payable to "Know the Word" and mail to: Mark Kolchin, Know the Word, P.O. Box 305, Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

WEEKEND IN THE WORD IN NJ

Community Gospel Chapel, 20 Bergen Ave., Voorhees, NJ will host their conference Sep 21-23 beginning Friday at 7 PM. The topic is "Viewing The Christian Life Through The Days Of Creation - Genesis 1 & 2" with Randy Amos (NY) **Contact:** Sherman Fray ph: 856-778-1459 email: safray@msn.com

LADIES MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

The Ladies Missionary Class of Northwest Gospel Hall, 1350 Garfield N W, Grand Rapids, MI will host the 2012 Southern Michigan Ladies Missionary Conference on Saturday, Sep 22 from 9:30 AM to 3:15 PM. Speakers expected: Rosemary Konkol (Paraguay), Carolyn Vargas (Spain), Jane Wolcott (for D.R. Congo) and Louise Nicholson (Mississippi and other areas). **Contact:** Joanne Sushereba ph: 616-365-0738 email: josush@juno.com

LADIES CONFERENCE AT CAMP HOPE

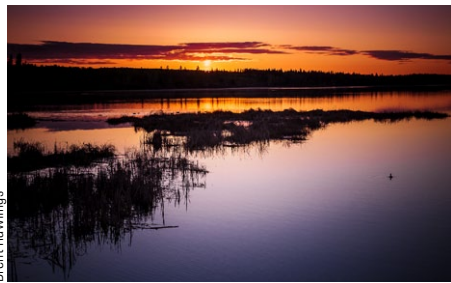
Camp Hope will host their annual Ladies Conference Sep 28-30. Carol Bramsen (SC) will be the speaker. The conference begins Friday with registration at 7:00 PM and ends Sunday at 10:00 AM. Cost: \$60/individual. **Contact:** Barbara Thorpe ph: 706-359-6297 email: sambarb@nu-z.net **Camp Hope:** ph: 770-536-4787 email: camphopega@arilion.com Camp website: www.camphopega.org

front lines continued

MISSION SPRINGS CONFERENCE

The annual Pacific Bible Ministries Conference will be held Oct 1-5 at the Mission Springs Christian Conference Center 75 miles south of San Francisco, CA in the Santa Cruz mountains. The conference begins Monday with dinner at 6:00 PM and ends Friday after breakfast. Speakers expected are Joe Reese (ON) and Al Sculz (CA).

Contact: Max Krieger ph: 323-256-1992
email: maxnbethk@sbcglobal.net



Brent Rawlings

FALL CONFERENCE IN ALBERTA

Good News Bible Chapel of Calgary, AB is having its annual fall conference the weekend of Oct 19-21. The guest speaker is Ed Anthony (TN). His subject will be *"The Making and Modeling of the Church,"* looking at how the church was created, is maintained, and should act as modeled in the Scriptures.

Contact: Brent Rawlings ph: 403-619-2816
email: rawlings@shaw.ca
web: www.goodnewsbiblechapel.org

FALL FAMILY CONFERENCE IN GA

Camp Hope will hold their conference Oct 26-28. Rod Sharp (NC) will minister God's Word to the adults and Phil Guikema (FL) will minister to the children. The conference begins Friday with registration at 6:00 PM and ends Sunday with lunch. There will not be a set charge or suggested offering to the camp.

From the outset, it is realized that many young families would not be able to meet the expenses of such a camp weekend but that the Lord would move in the hearts of others to give above the cost of their coming in order to supply the needs of others. For a registration form, visit: www.camphopega.org

Contact: Steve Roys,
7011 Pony Lake Rd., Dahlonega, GA 30533
ph: 770-536-4787
email: camphopega@gmail.com

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

CAMP POSITIONS AVAILABLE IN ON

The Board of Directors of Beacon Bible Camp, a year-round facility in the beautiful Muskoka region of Ontario, is accepting applications for the full-time, faith-supported positions of Administrator and Office Manager. For further information, please contact Tom or Liz Williams via the camp office address or phone number, found on the website: www.beaconbiblecamp.com



Liz Williams

CWF FUND UPDATE

The purpose of **Christian Workers' Fellowship Fund, Inc.** is to "receive gifts and donations of money from the Lord's people and distribute the same to workers sound in doctrine and associated with assemblies of believers and who are

devoting their time to the Lord's work." Contributions made to the fund by U.S. residents are tax-deductible. All funds received are distributed every month. Only funds designated for expenses are used for this purpose. The directors serve without remuneration. Funds received in the second quarter totaled \$384,163.02, and of this, \$5,303.77 was designated for general expenses, the rest for distribution. A financial report may be requested from: The Treasurer, Christian Workers' Fellowship Fund, Inc., Box 1117, Lawrence, KS 66044

COMMENDATIONS

JOHNNY AND KELLY DOUGLAS

The believers meeting at Garland Bible Chapel, Garland, TX commend Johnny and Kelly Douglas to the work of the Lord in evangelism and the establishment of a new assembly in Ottawa, KS. Johnny and Kelly have both exhibited a great concern for the unsaved and have labored to be a witness for our Lord in the area of evangelism.

MICHAEL AND ROBIN FIORELLO

The believers at Bethany Chapel, Columbia, SC commend Michael and Robin Fiorello to the work of the Lord. The Fiorellos continue to seek the Lord's guidance concerning a Bible teaching ministry, either in the US or abroad. In the years Mike has been in fellowship at Bethany, he has labored faithfully as a Bible teacher to adults while Robin cheerfully serves the Lord complementing her husband's work by sharing encouraging words and acts of service with the saints.

DAVE AND DIANA HOOD

The believers at Rideauview Bible Chapel, Ottawa, ON, commend the Hoods to God's care and direction for full-time service at Rideauview and in the Ottawa area for a period of two years. David and Diana have been active for many years as vital members of our church family. David is much appreciated as a teacher of God's Word for the whole assembly. David and Diana plan to serve in teams set up for teaching, evangelism and pastoral care, with a focus on youth and university students and an emphasis on discipleship. As the Lord leads, David will be available to minister the Word in other assemblies and at summer camps.



JOE MURPHY

The elders of Cheshire Bible Chapel, Cheshire CT commend Joe Murphy to serve the Lord in Ireland, Nigeria and other places as the Lord may direct. Joe has been involved in many ministries in the assembly and is actively encouraging others to grow. He has shown to have a real heart of love for God's people and for those who have yet to know the Lord in a personal way.

CAROLE WOEHLE

The Christians at Hiawassa Bible Chapel, from Orlando FL, commend Carole to the Lord's work in Dublin and elsewhere as the Lord leads. Carole has been in happy fellowship for more than fifteen years serving as a very active leader and Bible teacher of various women's activities and studies.

MISCELLANY

TORONTO CONFERENCE RECORDINGS

Audio resources of the 2012 Toronto Easter Bible Conference are available on CD, DVD or MP3. Messages by Joe Reese (ON): "*The Fourth Cry from the Cross*," "*Eternal Security of the Believer*," "*A Wake Up Call?*" and "*Refuge*".

Messages by Rex Trogon (NC): "*Simon Peter's Seven Downward Steps*," "*My Life Now*," and "*Blessings of the Risen Christ*." A charge of \$20. covers the cost of seven messages and postage. Single messages available for \$3. **Contact:** Bill Allison, 3199 Sovereign Road, Burlington ON, L7M 2W1 ph: 905-336-8101 email: hw.allison@sympatico.ca

STUDY IN ILLINOIS

Announcing a Bible study at the home of Jim and Megan Daghfal, 104 Stonewood Dr., East Peoria, IL 61611 from 6:30-7:30 PM every Friday. Please attend and enjoy Christian fellowship around God's Word, beginning with the Book of John. **Contact:** ph: 309-966-2479 email: eastpeoriabiblestudy@gmail.com

OPPORTUNITY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

A small assembly located in southern New Hampshire is looking for an individual or family to join them with ideas or experiences for growth. **Contact:** Bob Gentile ph: 603-835-6189 email: regent@myfairpoint.net

NOTE: NEWS SUBMISSIONS

The news editor reserves the right to determine those items best suited for the magazine. Editorial decisions are final. Photos accepted. **Send news to:** frontlines@uplook.org

Heavenward Homecall:



Jay & Katrina Erickson ZAMBIA

We were saddened to learn of the sudden homecall of Jay & Katrina. On June 2nd, the mission support plane Jay was flying back toward Chitokoloki, with his wife Katrina as passenger, came in contact with a power pylon, flipped over and then sank in the Zambezi River. Their bodies were recovered the next day, and on June 5th, a large number of people gathered for the funeral, including media and government representatives. The Erickson's two young daughters, Marina (3) and Coral (16 months), have since been reunited with their grandparents (United States).

Two special purpose funds have been set up by CMML: The "Erickson Children's Fund" to help with the care of the girls, and the "Chitokoloki Flight Fund" to assist with the loss of the aircraft. Also, MSC Canada's "Chitokoloki Missions Hospital Fund" is an option.

To learn more or to send help:

www.cmml.us
www.msccanada.org
www.chitokoloki.com

from Apex a Thank You letter



The Believers at **Western Wake Bible Chapel** would like to thank all of you who prayed for, and were involved in, making the Apex, NC outreach possible last month. It was a phenomenal time of fellowship with like-minded believers who share a common burden for reaching the lost. That gave us a big spiritual boost. The volunteering and traveling from across the U.S. and Canada to help us to shoulder this outreach was a great encouragement and blessing to our small assembly. Day after day, the labors of stuffing door packets and distributing them to thousands of doors brought thrilling reports of providential encounters with needy souls, from a 90-year-old woman believer living in a shambles of a mobile home and needing help, to a Muslim man open to talk and wanting us to come back.

God answered prayer and gave us many contacts to follow up. We have attempted contact with about half of them, but have found it hard going during the week since most of them are not at home. We will try to finish our visits with all of them by the middle of this week, and those we haven't be able to catch at home, we'll try to contact over the weekend.

By far the greatest blessing has been the awakening of the young people and the saints to evangelism—the sheer joy of doing it and praying for souls to be saved. On several occasions, the young people have gone out witnessing and they have come back excited to report how God used them in sharing Christ with people. The older saints also have been re-energized and are renewing contacts to reach unsaved neighbors, friends, and acquaintances. I can say the same for myself. The outreach has been a huge shot in the arm and the Lord has shown that we the need to devote more time to reaching out to the lost.

Just today I “ran into” a man we have been praying about for several years. He and his wife are Iranian Muslims, and though he has been very friendly and open, when I invited them over for supper, they refused. I then tried again and invited them to meet at a restaurant where we would buy them supper. It looked promising, but at the last minute his wife got scared and had him call it off. Since then I've only seen him once, and that was 2 months ago. Then came today. I was at the hardware store where he works at the register, and I chose his line for checkout. I greeted him enthusiastically and told him I hoped we could still schedule to get together for a meal (he and I had some good spiritual conversations in past encounters). He said he would like that. Then he asked me if I knew anything about garage doors. I said yes. He told me how the chain on his garage door opener came off and showed me a picture on his phone. I said it looked like a link may have broken and it might be an easy fix with adding new links. I told him I'd be glad to go by his house and look at it and see what parts were necessary. So he gave me his address (I never knew it before) and said he'd call his family and tell them I was coming. In this way God in His wisdom “opened the door” for me to get to know his wife and son who were there, just because I was offering to help them fix it. We had a good long talk and by the end of the time she wanted to have June and me over for a meal. That's how God works!!

Please continue to pray for the follow-up contacts that we might see souls saved. Pray also that there would be several who would commit to a Bible study with us. Thank you again so very much for all you have done to further the work of our Lord here in Apex.

Joyfully in Christ,

Jonathan Peck

www.WesternWakeBibleChapel.com

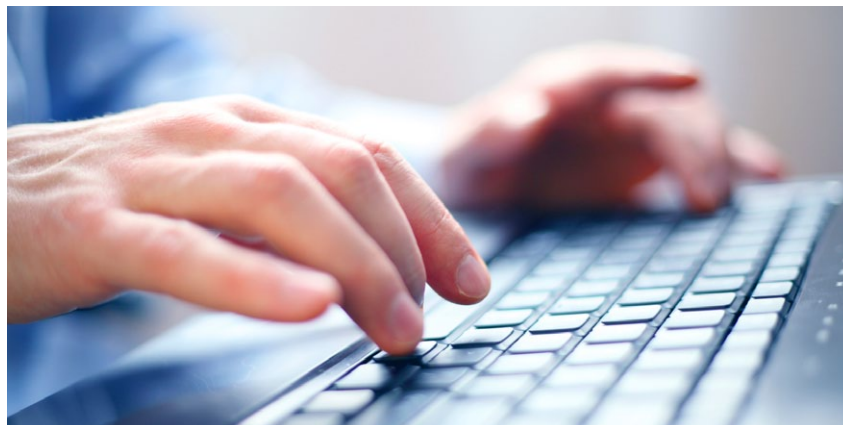


Planning an Internet Ministry

When starting an online ministry, whether it's a local church website or social media evangelism, taking time to plan the ministry is vital. Too many times, efforts are begun with great enthusiasm and soon fade out. Part of this is due to a lack of planning and setting the proper processes in place to help it succeed. Here is an online ministry worksheet you can use to help get started.

1. KNOW WHO YOU ARE. This is probably the most fundamental step in defining your ministry. What skills do you have? What are your weaknesses? What time availability is there for the people involved? It's critical that you be honest with yourself at this point. There's no use putting down abilities that just don't exist. This is not a wish list.

2. KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO DO. Start with a single broad objective. It might be evangelism, encouragement, or teaching. Based on step one, define what skills you can contribute to that overall objective. Once you have the broader vision in mind, write down smaller objectives that fit within it. They might be social media evangelism to a specific group of people, encouraging the poor, sick, and lonely, or posting hymns online. Whatever areas you want to focus on within the big picture, write them down.



3. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. In marketing terms, this is called your target market. In ministry terms, it's simply the people who will benefit from your ministry. Consider who the typical person is and what characterizes them. For example, if your local church is in a high income community, your audience is different from those who are in a poor community. Or maybe your focus is mainly on children instead of adults. The more detail you put down as to whom you are trying to reach, the easier it will be to know how to accomplish your goals.

4. KNOW HOW YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS. So you know who you are, what you want to do, and who you're trying to reach. With that important information in hand, you can now list all of the channels you will use to achieve your goals. How will your ministry use the internet? List as many options as you can. It doesn't mean you will try all of them, but it will help to focus the vision as you explore the options.

5. KNOW WHAT THE PLAN IS. There needs to be a plan of action. This is where many ministries fail. They try to do everything all at once without understanding the process involved. Take steps that you can accomplish and break them down into smaller tasks. Delegate the responsibilities in a way that makes sense to each of the contributors. It's better to start doing a few things really well than to try to do a lot of things with mediocrity.

6. KNOW HOW TO TRACK RESULTS. This might sound a bit odd, but it's the last step in the cycle. Put mechanisms in place that give you feedback on your efforts. It could be simply emailing your followers a short survey to fill out, or the use of Google Analytics to monitor the visits to your website. You can be as creative as you want here, but the goal is to get as much feedback as possible.

The bottom line is that planning is important. For help getting started with your online ministry, contact **mySonlight** at info@mySonlight.com. Also, subscribe to the **Why We Web** blog (www.whyweweb.com) for more ideas, information and inspiration.

—CRAWFORD PAUL

Church & Ministry Websites:

mySonlight believes every church and ministry should have a website so they've made a change. The new plan is simple. Pray about what you can afford and that will be your setup cost. Then they will host the site for a low monthly fee of \$20/month.

To see a list of what's included, visit www.mySonlight.com/pricing.html

THE GAPPER by Eli Banta

Sowing seeds on the x-country trail.



A unique way to reach the lost for Christ.

I started running when I was 24. My motivation wasn't a new year's resolution to lose weight. I wasn't looking for a challenge or seeking to become a better athlete. It was a relationship I was after. The man who is now my father-in-law was a runner. I was going to ask to marry his daughter, so I thought I had better get to know him. So out we went for my first run. What better way to get to know someone than to do what they love to do?

Isn't this just like our Lord Jesus? He was on the sea with the fisherman, at the table in the little home of Bethany, with people where they were, in their environment, involved in their life.

A running race is about being with people while doing something you all enjoy. There is something special about being in a race together. Even though you are competing, in another sense, everyone is on the same team. Races become an annual affair, often drawing the same athletes year after year. Friendships are established and developed over time. These ties compel many people to register. Consider the following statistics from the 2011 National Running Survey. In 1990, 4.8 million Americans finished a road race. That number is up to 13 million now and growing. Holding

a running event can be a great way to reach out to our communities.

The Gapper 5k/1k race is just such an event. The race was established three years ago as an outreach/fundraiser at Agape Valley Bible Camp in Southern Ontario (www.agapevalley.ca). It is held in September when the weather is a little cooler and there are not as many other running events to compete with. Also, many recreational runners are more apt to race in autumn after they have been training through the summer months. Timing is an important aspect to consider when planning an event such as this.

The main goal of the race is to see men, women, and children won to the Lord Jesus Christ. We share the gospel

in several ways. First, every competitor receives a race kit which includes a gospel CD. Second, a very short but complete gospel message is shared during the awards ceremony. Third, the participants are encouraged to send their children to a week of summer day camp where they will hear about God's love and righteousness!

At a road running race, there is usually food provided. Normally this consists of a piece of fruit (like a banana), maybe a bagel, some cookies, and a bottle of water thrown in. The Gapper, however, has a full BBQ dinner for all race competitors. This would normally be very expensive. But because of the donations of the believers, the cost to





Event Photos: John Nicholson

The author's father-in-law, also involved in the Gapper run, has started a athletic club as a way to serve and reach out to home school families in the area. Visit the web site: www.ewac.ca

each runner is kept low. In addition, going to ask for support from community businesses provides an opportunity to witness to the love of our Saviour.

A race often has draw prizes which only a few of the runners present will win. But every year at the Gapper, more than half of the field has gone home with something from the prize table. The top ten boys and girls get medals. The top three male and female competitors from each age group (36 runners) also get medals. All of the above is made possible through relationships of those involved in organizing the Gapper. Afterwards, all the profits from the race go to help fund the day camp operations.

In order to encourage people to participate, it is important that the event have similarities to a normal running event. Where it will differ is in the sense of community, the friendly atmosphere, and the focus on the enjoyment of the whole event. This sets it apart and is a witness to the care of our Lord for the lost.

An event like this can be organized and run by a fairly small group. It is important that whoever leads it is

organized and detail-oriented. It works well to have a single person in charge of the overall planning, and several others to manage specific areas. One person can handle the food preparations and service. Another person can handle the prize donations. Someone else can manage the race details such as course layout, timing, etc. Each of these can assemble their own volunteers, which also assists in securing enough help for race day. The first time the event is run is the most vital in order to establish good working relationships. After the first year, it becomes easier to organize and run. After the second year, the focus becomes more about planning the follow-up activity to water the seeds that are sown.

The entire event takes less than one day. This keeps the burden on volunteers small, but also makes it beneficial if there is an informal follow-up event that interested runners could attend the next weekend.

Those who can't run or be involved in the planning can always pray and show up to cheer on the runners. Spectators are

an enjoyable part of racing. This allows an entire assembly to be involved!

Hosting a race like this is a great way to make contacts in your community.

If you want information on how to hold your own running event for outreach, or need help doing it, please contact me so we can see those without hope get in "the RACE"! ■



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2011 Gapper video by Aly Trotter:
www.vimeo.com/34756550

INSPIRATION AND INERRANCY

by **BILL YUILLE**

When we speak of the inerrancy of the Bible, some object, saying: “The Bible contains material on doctrinal, ethical, and moral matters and is accurate in what it says about these things. Other material on incidental matters may be inaccurate but that does not interfere with the main message. If we get too excited about inerrancy, aren’t we in danger of losing our focus and majoring on minors? Does it really matter?”

Well, it does matter! If the Bible is not inspired and inerrant, the implications are serious and far-reaching. Here are three:

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy leaves us without a solid reference point from which to build. In fact, it begs the question, “Why should we read the Bible at all?” Dr. James A. Borror says, “To the extent that you weaken inerrancy, to that extent you weaken inspiration. To the extent that you weaken inspiration, to that extent you have a garbled revelation. To the extent that you have a garbled revelation, to that extent you have a weakened authority. And when you weaken the authority of the Bible, you launch upon a shifting sea of subjective uncertainty.”¹

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy overthrows the biblical idea of faith. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by

the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Faith is believing what God has said (e.g., Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6). In the absence of certainty as to what the Word of God is, superstition prevails and not faith.

Rejecting inspiration and inerrancy is historically the first step down the path of departure. Students of history tell us that a denial of inerrancy inevitably leads to further departures from the truth, and to a loss of vital interest in evangelism and missions. Harold Lindsell observes, “From my perspective, God is glorified by the mind-set that attributes perfection to Scripture, rather than by the mind-set that attributes error to the written Word of God and always leads to further concessions until at last, if not halted, it leads to a full falling away from the holy faith.”²

With so much at stake, it is important to ask: What do we mean by *inspiration* and *inerrancy*, and what does the Bible tell us about them?

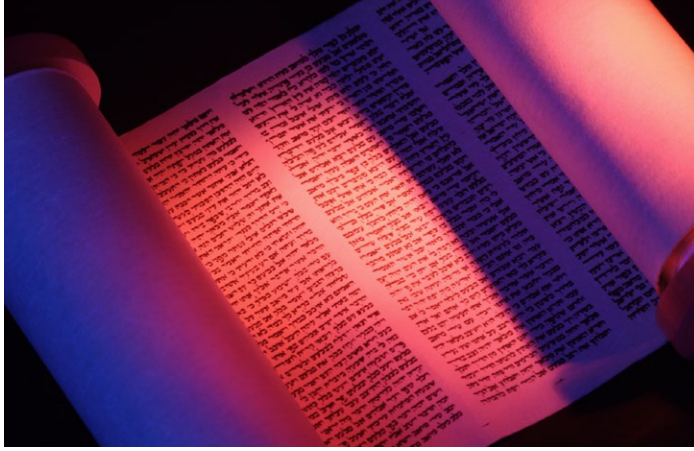
SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED

God took the initiative and was involved in the writing of Scripture

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). Literally, this means that Scripture is “God-breathed.” The breath of God elsewhere refers to that

which emanates from God and is living and active and powerful. Just as He produced creation by His breath (Ps. 33:6), so He has produced Scripture—all of it. Paul may have had the Old Testament in mind, but we need not limit his statement to the Old Testament, because in his earlier letter to Timothy, he applied the term *Scripture* to Deuteronomy 25:4 and also to Luke 10:7 (1 Tim. 5:18).

Peter agrees with Paul: “No prophecy is of any private interpretation” (2 Pet. 1:20). He refers to the origin of prophecy: it did not come about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things; it was not his idea. “For prophecy never came by the will of man; but holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” The verb translated *moved* was used of a ship driven along by the wind (Acts 27:15, 17). The prophets, so to speak, hoisted their sail and the Spirit of God bore them along and directed and controlled them as they wrote. And, if that was the experience of the prophets, it is surely significant that Peter places the writings of New Testament apostles (2 Pet. 3:2), and those of Paul in particular (2 Pet. 3:16), on the same level as those of the Old Testament prophets.



Closeup of a Hebrew torah scroll

Inspiration must not be confused with revelation

Sometimes the writers were aware that what was written had been revealed directly to them, but on other occasions they wrote about things they already knew or had experienced, and sometimes they used the writings of earlier authors. Luke obtained information from eyewitnesses (Lk. 1:1-2). Paul writes, “Concerning virgins I have no commandment from the Lord...” (1 Cor. 7:25) i.e. there was no previous teaching by the Lord and Paul was conscious of no revelation from the Lord on this particular point.

But whatever the source of the material, inspiration means that the Spirit of God assisted the writers and controlled what was written. “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:13). William Kelly renders the last part of that verse in this way: “communicating spiritual truths in spiritual words,”³ so that the words they used were God’s words.

Inspiration does not mean dictation

The Scriptures were not dictated by God to writers who were no more than robots accurately writing down what they received. Were that the case, we would expect that the personal element would have been eliminated and that there would be consistency throughout in vocabulary, grammar, style, etc. Inspiration means that the Spirit of God so directed the writers that the finished product was precisely what God intended.

SCRIPTURE IS INERRANT

Since God is the source of Scripture, and since God does not and cannot lie (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2; Num. 23:19), and since God is not ignorant in any area but is all-knowing (e.g. Dan. 2:22; Heb. 4:13), it follows that Scripture is perfectly accurate in all that it communicates.

Does the Bible claim to be without error?

An inductive study of Scripture confirms that it is inerrant. Peter describes how he had witnessed the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus and then adds, “We have also a more sure prophetic word” (2 Pet. 1:19). i.e. the Word of God is more certain and more reliable than his experience and we should pay attention to it (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

The Lord Jesus had a similar attitude towards Scripture.

- He believed Scripture, including the stories about Adam and Eve, Jonah, Noah, Abraham, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, the Queen of Sheba, etc. And He expected others to believe Scripture, too (e.g. Lk. 24:25).
- He obeyed and fulfilled Scripture (e.g. Mt. 4:3-4; 5:17; Lk. 4:21).
- He taught Scripture (e.g. Lk. 4:16-21; 24:27; Jn 5:39).

Perhaps His view is best summarized in His own statements:

- “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail” (Lk. 16:17).
- “Thy word is truth” (Jn. 17:17).
- “The Scripture cannot be broken” (Jn. 10:35).

But aren’t there discrepancies in the Bible?

It might be objected that there are discrepancies in the Bible. However, many apparent discrepancies have, with the passing of time and the acquisition of further knowledge, been shown not to be discrepancies at all. There is good reason to suppose that difficulties that remain are difficulties only because of our lack of understanding.

We should look to the Lord to do for us what He did for the disciples when “He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures” (Lk. 24:45).

OUR RESPONSE

The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy in its Chicago Statement included the following: “Holy Scripture, being God’s own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God’s instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God’s command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God’s pledge, in all that it promises.”⁵ ■

ENDNOTES

- 1 Earl D. Radmacher, *Can We Trust the Bible?* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1979), p. 10.
- 2 Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), p. 183.
- 3 William Kelly, *Notes on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: G.Morrish, 1878), p. 51.
- 4 J. I. Packer, *God Has Spoken* (Sevenoaks: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1979), p. 141.

Rightly Divid



“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

In the second chapter of Paul’s second letter to Timothy, he uses several images to instruct believers. With each image, there is a lesson the Holy Spirit is making: the soldier must not become entangled; the farmer must be patient, and so on. But the image we want to consider is that of a workman. The workman must rightly divide the Word of truth if he is going to be approved.

Many dear saints have memorized the verse in a translation that includes the word “*divide*,” but a more practical and updated translation of the word can be found in the English Standard Version: “*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of truth.*” The idea is that we ought to know how to handle the Word of truth so that we can handle it responsibly and with discernment.

Regardless of the translation, the exhortation to Timothy is that he was “neither to mutilate, nor twist, nor torture, nor break in pieces the Word of God, nor keep on the outside of it, as those do who never touch the soul of a text, but rightly to divide it, as one taught of God to teach others.”¹

Whether you prefer the translation “*rightly dividing*,” “*cutting in a straight line*,” or “*rightly handling*,” the point is clear: correctly using the Word of truth takes work, effort, purpose, and discernment.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING

One of the interesting truths that must be inferred from this exhortation to Timothy is that if the believer is exhorted to rightly handle the Word, then it must be easy (at least possible) to mishandle the Word or to wrongly divide the Word. Throughout history, heresy has been promulgated by well-presented arguments, loving attitudes, and the use (well, misuse) of Scripture. It seems as if that is stating the obvious, but it should cause believers to be on their guard, recognizing that a careful study of the Bible is essential to prevent one from being misled or, worse, misleading others! A believers cannot let his guard down when studying the Word, presenting the Word, or hearing the Word.

This phrase speaks of one of the most important principles in properly understanding the Bible: we must “*rightly divide*” it. That is, we must recognize the

distinctions it makes. Let’s consider some of the most fundamental distinctions we need to recognize.

1. ***Recognize that God has dealt with man differently throughout history.*** This concept is often called “dispensationalism”—a big word with even larger significance. It simply means that God has worked in different ways at different times. God dealt differently with Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses and the Israelites, etc. Is that not evident? Do we worship God in the same manner the Israelites did? Of course not! Does God deal with us in the same way? Will He, for instance, ever flood the whole earth again? No, in each of these periods, man is given a deposit of truth and a test associated with how he will handle that truth. Much more could be written, but it goes beyond the purpose of this little article.

2. ***Recognize a distinction between the church and Israel.*** Even a casual student of the Bible will recognize that Israel has a unique and special place in history. He will also recognize that something changed after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; a new

ing the Word

BY MIKE STOUTD

body was formed, a body very different from Israel. While casual students may recognize this, a careful student must distinguish between that which is biblical, but wholly relegated to Israel, and that which is for the body of Christ (the Church) today. Much confusion is caused if a Bible teacher or student ascribes to the Church that which is Israel's (or vice versa). Such confusion leads to a wrong understanding of what lies in the future for the children of God and also leads to a wrong understanding of the roles and responsibilities for believers today. In general, the Church is a heavenly body with spiritual blessings and an eternal focus. Israel is an earthly nation with physical blessings and a temporal focus. A wrong understanding of this concept can also lead a student or teacher to spiritualize God's plans and promises to Israel or to import Jewish concepts (altars, incense, garments, etc.) into the Church.

3. Recognize that there are two times when the Lord will come to the Earth. In Old Testament prophecy, there are numerous verses that speak of a Messiah who will come with meekness and humiliation (e.g., Ps. 22). These scriptures present a Messiah who will be forsaken by God and rejected by man. But there are also scriptures that foretell a victori-

ous Messiah who will come to restore Israel, reclaim the throne of David, and judge the Gentile nations. Failing to discern the difference between the first and second advents of the Son of God has led many to miss the first because they were looking for the second. Sadly, it will also cause many to experience the second advent without having embraced the first. Eternity is at stake when we wrongly handle the Word of truth.

4. Recognize that the believer has two natures. Born-again believers receive a new nature at the time of their new birth. God, in His perfect wisdom, allows the old nature to remain until that day when *"we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is"* (1 Jn. 3:2).

5. Recognize the difference between truths that pertain to the believer's position and those that pertain to his practice. A believer's position is the result of the finished work of Christ on the cross. It is perfect upon his new birth since it is solely the result of the work of God. His practice, however, is entirely different. Truths pertaining to the believer's practice are often presented following truths about his position and involve exhortations on how believer's ought to behave. Consider this example in Colossians: *"If you have been raised with Christ, seek*

the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (Col. 3:1-2). The verse starts with the believer's position in Christ (*"raised with Christ"*) and then tells us of the practice that ought to follow from that position. Mixing the truths relating to a believer's position with those related to his practice can cause much heartache and confusion.

6. Recognize the difference between "faith unto salvation" and "service unto rewards." Salvation is a free gift offered by God to sinners; rewards are given by God to believers for their faithful service to Him while here on earth. Many a misguided soul has confused the two and preached a "gospel" that leads straight to eternal judgment.

IN CONCLUSION

There are other areas of truth that require a careful handling, but these examples should suffice to give the reader a basic understanding of the necessity of heeding the Holy Spirit's instruction to Timothy, thereby enabling each and every believer to be a worker who need not be ashamed, but one who is approved to God. ■

ENDNOTE

1 C. H. Spurgeon, Sermon #1217.

Go to the Ant

Ah, summertime! I love summertime. It's a time for baseball and picnics. It's a time for hiking and going to camp. If you are a kid, it's time for no school! And it's a time for bugs!

I don't mind most bugs. If they are outside, I won't kill them just for the sake of killing them; but, if they enter my home and infringe on my domain, watch out! *Raid*, fly swatters, shoes, bare hands—whatever it takes, they're mine!

PROVERBIAL SCIENCE

I know what you are thinking, "What bee has gotten into *his* bonnet?" But actually, it's not bees that I have on my mind—it's ants. The Bible admonishes us about the need to have a strong work ethic and to be those who save when we can: "*Go to the ant, you sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest*" (Prov. 6:6-7).

The field of science which concerns itself with the study of insects is known as entomology. Recently, I was speaking on Christian Evidences to the senior teenagers at Horton Haven Christian Camp in Tennessee. When we discussed entomology, about half of the teenagers started referring to this field as "ANTomology." This field has really only be around for a couple centuries. Prior to that, our understanding of bugs was very limited

and focused chiefly on their relationship with agricultural matters. However, God knows everything about insects and included some fascinating details about them in His Word long before man discovered the same truths.

A French naturalist by the name of René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur was the very first to identify that the vast majority of ants are, in fact, female.¹ This goes only as far back as 1742.² Today, we know that all worker ants are female. The males only exist for procreation, and they are fairly lazy. The females do all the work.

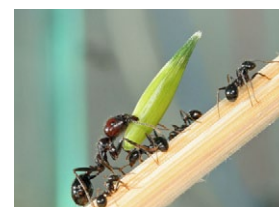
In light of that, it is interesting that Solomon specifically uses the female pronoun to describe the worker ants. I am sure that students of linguistics will be quick to point out that this is a result of the Hebrew word for ant, namely *nemalah*, which is a feminine noun. I won't argue the point, except to say that the pronoun used is spot on in light of the species in view. The rest of the verse, however, evidences a remarkable insight into the practices of ants.

Solomon writes that ants "*have no captain, overseer, or ruler.*" We know now that this is exactly the case. Deborah Gordon, Senior Fellow at the Woods Institute for the Environment and Biology Professor at Stanford University, has done extensive research on the management practices of ant colonies. "All ant



colonies have in common that there is no central control. Nobody tells anybody what to do. The queen just lays the eggs. There is no management. No ant directs the behavior of any other ant."³ There is considerable research underway to determine just how it is that ant colonies are so well organized. Once again, the Bible is accurate.

Solomon culminates his verse with a statement about how ants store their "*supplies in the summer, and gather food in the harvest.*" Today, we have whole classes of ants that are referred to as "harvester ants" because they do exactly that. "Harvester ant nests are easy to spot. A mound up to 70 cm across made of clipped grass and plant stems marks the site of the nest. Inside the nest are several separate storage areas called granaries. The granaries hold seeds that the ants have collected and are saving for future meals...the main sources of food for harvester ants are the seeds of different types of grasses."⁴



Harvester Ants

It is not enough to be busy.

So are the ants.

The question is: What are we busy about?

—Henry David Thoreau

Solomon penned the words of Proverbs 3,000 years ago. Yet, entomology has only been around 300 years. This is just more evidence that the Mind behind the Bible is sourced outside of our time-space-matter universe.



William Kirby

A BUG BELIEVER

Perhaps more than anyone else, William Kirby (1759-1850) advanced the study of insects to the level of an academically accepted, formal science. For this reason, he is called the father of Entomology.⁵ In

1815, he co-authored a work with William Spence entitled *An Introduction to Entomology*. Historians consider this to be a seminal work on the subject.

Interestingly, the study really took off as an applied science due to its use in forensic analysis. Researchers at Scotland Yard, and across the English Channel in both France and Germany, began to see the value such a science could play in solving crimes. For example, the maturity of maggots within a corpse can help determine the time of death for homicide victims. Other, more obvious, uses related to agriculture also propelled the field.

William Kirby also happened to be a minister of the gospel for almost six

decades. He saw his scientific pursuits as an opportunity to glorify the Creator: “In no part of creation are the POWER, WISDOM, and GOODNESS of its beneficent and almighty Author more signally conspicuous than in the various animals that inhabit and enliven our globe.”⁶

Kirby is just one scientist in the long line of scientists who were true Christians, believing in the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures⁷ and in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ!⁸



Who knows? Maybe the next time I see an ant crawling around in my house, I'll stop and think about William Kirby and just how these little creatures serve to glorify God—at least long enough to grab my shoe and squash him...or rather, her!

A WORD OF THANKS

A special thank you to Susie Henderson of Emmaus Bible College and the teenage campers at Horton Haven Christian Camp who helped in the preparation of this article. —ROB SULLIVAN

ENDNOTES

- 1 <http://bit.ly/antblog-gender>
- 2 <http://bit.ly/antfarm-question>
- 3 <http://bit.ly/DeborahGordon-Digs-Ants> (see Deborah Gordon's *Ants at Work*)
- 4 <http://bit.ly/glosso-harvester-ants>

5 <http://bit.ly/WKirby-father-Entomology>

6 William Kirby, *The Seventh Bridgewater Treatise on the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God as Manifested in the Creation: The History, Habits and Instinct of Animals*, Vol. 1, i, (1835).

7 <http://bit.ly/creationist-real-scientists>

8 <http://www.icr.org/fb/Kirby/>

The Sufficiency of the **WORD** Steve Batts

“That the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:17).

As we consider 2 Timothy 3:16-17, we see that the Word of God makes a man “perfect” or “complete.” Yet many times, we do not look to the Bible for the answers to life’s most troubling questions. We seek our own solutions. We often look for man-made help for many of our problems.

The believer should be looking to God’s Word for the direction we need. Peter tells us that “*according as [God’s] divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness*” (2 Pet. 1:3). He doesn’t just say some things but all things. The verse also tells us how we receive these things: “*through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*” How do we gain knowledge of Him? Where else but through the Scriptures?

THE PERFECT BOOK

How sufficient is Scripture in making me a complete person? It is the only book on the entire planet that can tell me all about myself. The Bible tells me where I came from; it records the beginning of mankind, dictated by the only One who was there when it happened. It goes on to record human history so

accurately that archeologists today still look to the Bible for clues and insight into ancient civilizations.

Through the Word, we see where we are going. Only the Bible accurately tells (not predicts) the future. God says that He tells us what is going to happen and then makes it happen (Isa. 46:10). We see how God has planned and ordered human history to accomplish His purposes. He brings kingdoms and powers into existence when He sees fit, and He has them fall on His command.

God’s Word can probe the depths of our soul better than any person on earth can. Hebrews 4:12 tells us, “*For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*” Think about how precise that is! Using the analogy of a sword, the author describes the penetrating power of the Word to pierce our inner being. Following that same analogy, he demonstrates how God, through His Word, can go precisely to the problem, just as a surgeon does with physical problems. It is

powerful enough to penetrate through the bone and precise enough to divide the joint and the marrow.

Explaining his analogy, the writer tells us that the Word can even discern our “*thoughts and intents.*” For years, men have tried to understand the thoughts of others. God’s Word can not only understand our thoughts, but it can do something we sometimes can’t even do for ourselves: understand the intents of our thoughts and actions. We often rationalize our actions. God, through His Word, cuts deep and exposes our intentions for what they really are.

The Word of God also accurately describes the human heart. It tells us that, deep down, we are wicked, and that, left to our own devices, we act wickedly. This is contrary to what the world tells us. How many times have we heard the world tell us that, deep down, everyone is basically good? That is simply not true, and it is evident in our lives. If it were true, the world wouldn’t be in as bad shape as it is now. God tells us repeatedly “*there is none that doeth good*” (Ps. 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Rom. 3:12). Of course, the



Each peice of divine truth
is exactly fitted to mesh
with every other truth,
providing everything we
need for godly living.

good news is that not only does it reveal our plight, it also tells us the solution. Through faith in Christ, we can be forgiven of our sins and given a new nature that does not have the same bent toward evil as the old nature. God shows us the way of life—real life—through His Word.

Scripture teaches us how to be a good husband, as well as a good wife. It teaches our children to be respectful and to obey their parents. It shows the proper employer-employee relationships. It warns us about discriminating against people simply because of their socio-economic situations.

God's Word relays to us stories of individuals and their struggles with every possible scenario we might face today. We can look to Job as a case study in dealing with catastrophic loss or to Joseph in how to handle being betrayed and unfairly treated. From King David and others, we see how a single act can destroy a family. Every human emotion is explored in Scripture.

Philosophically, the Bible contains more than enough material for even the deepest thinkers. The poetry of the Psalms and the Song of Solomon is unparalleled. The wisdom contained in Proverbs is as applicable today as it was then.

THE PERFECT AUTHOR

The reason the Bible can be as relevant today as it was when it was written is that the Creator of mankind wrote it, and human behavior hasn't changed over the couple of millennia since the Bible was penned. It only stands to reason that since God has chosen to communicate to us by His Word, the Bible would be the source of all the direction we need in this life.

Over the course of my career, I have written a few instructional manuals for various pieces of equipment. The difficulty with writing a manual is that you have to include every detail about the equipment for which it is written. The idea of the manual is that someone can follow the instructions and rely on it for

operation of the equipment without having to go anywhere else for help.

If the very One who made us gave us an instructional guide that not only teaches us how we got here, why we are the way we are, but also how to live, don't you think it would be a complete guide? Would He leave details out that are vital to our lives? Of course not!

IMPERFECT ADHERENCE

So, then, why do we doubt the sufficiency of His Word? The problem might be that we don't always like what His Word says. Sometimes we don't like to admit that the Lord always knows best; we want to follow our own plans. This is nothing but the old man surfacing in our lives. Just as an unbeliever may hear the Bible tell him he is a sinner on the way to a lost eternity and reject it by claiming to be a good person, we can do something very similar. For example, we may hear God's Word tell us not to store up treasures here on earth (Mt. 6:19) and then turn around and come up with a thousand reasons why we need to collect this world's possessions and store up this world's money.

This is really a matter of belief. Will we trust Him for all things? If we will, then we will find the Bible to be completely sufficient for everything in our lives. In fact, we will find His Word more than enough for anything we may encounter in this life. We just need to trust in Him and realize that He is able to do "*exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*" (Eph. 3:20). Let us take God at His Word! ■

Looking for a Few Good Men

Are there any candidates?



H.R. Ghezzi

Half a lifetime ago, while still in my teens, a teaching opportunity for my parents resulted in our move from a busy metropolis to the frigid, nickel-mining capital of Canada. In spite of my spiritual apathy in those days, my parents looked up the local assembly, and, upon our first visit there, were particularly impressed with the Sunday school class for high school students. The class had three leaders covering the topic of New Testament church principles: a man in his twenties, a middle-aged man, and a man in his seventies. This absence of a generation gap was especially appealing to my parents and was a major deciding factor in my parents' decision to enter into fellowship with this assembly, which placed a premium on the biblical principle which I would come to know as "discipleship." This set the stage for the Lord's direction in my life, as I have the privilege of committing what I learned from the men of my youth to some of the youth of today.

ON THE JOB TRAINING

Paul's charge to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2 reveals the timeless New Testament succession plan. Timothy was no stranger to the effect of discipleship,

having been personally trained by Paul. Years earlier, during Paul's second missionary journey, he encountered the young recruit who "*was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium*" (Acts 16:2). It's worth noting that Timothy's reputation preceded him. Evidently, this was enough for Paul to recruit him to help him with no small task: pioneer Europe with the gospel. Young people desiring to enter into the Lord's service, take heed. Once saved, the only two qualities you really need in order to be discipled are to be teachable and to be available. If you possess neither quality, do not expect to be included in such vital ministry.

Before long, the apprenticeship of Timothy resulted in Paul essentially working himself out of a job. Notice the replacement of the phrase "Paul and Silas" by "Silas and Timothy" by the time Paul departed from Berea in Acts 17:14. To say that Paul and his associates were on the move would be an understatement. This was no less than rigorous, on the job training! Nevertheless, what is clear is that Paul worked with Timothy, and Timothy quickly became a contributor to the work of the Lord.

Notice how Paul never tried to turn Timothy into another Paul. Instead, he recognized the unique gift that the Lord had given Timothy (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). Likewise, all who are in a mentoring position need to take heed that they recognize disciples as the Lord's legacy, not their own.

"GO, THEREFORE AND MAKE...DEPUTIES OF ALL NATIONS"?

Some of us may have experienced a degree of success working for organizations. Corporate models depend on qualified deputies and lieutenants to carry out tasks on behalf of the executive, be it a CEO or president. Such hierarchical structure provides for the needs of the executive to be met. With few exceptions, executives don't necessarily require the same qualifications as their subordinates. Recent examples include newly-elected world leaders without any prior executive experience and the current NBA Coach of the Year, who lacks any professional basketball-playing experience of his own. If this model has been so successful in the world, why not apply it to discipleship? The answer is that it is impossible for mankind to

*“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses,
commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”*

2 Timothy 2:2

organize something spiritually organic like the church (cf. 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:20-21).

Although the biblical model for success is decidedly different than the world's, that's not to say that the church is without order. We are to recognize authority and leadership in the church (1 Thess. 5:12). Having said that, assembly elders would be wise to refuse any substitute for biblical discipleship, however effective it may seem in the corporate world. Sadly, some assemblies have demonstrated all too clearly that discarding the New Testament succession plan results in alienating an entire generation (intentionally or not).

I'm grateful for the early interaction I had with biblical elders. One elder baptized me, while another discipled me in the Word. I was driven to my first men's conference by one of my elders. In our first year alone, each of the four elders set their dinner tables for my family at least once, several did this repeatedly. Years later, I lived in the home of my elder and his young family for an entire summer. They exemplified hospitality before I ever discovered its relevance in Scripture. One retired elder agreed to host a weekly, lunch hour Bible study at my school and did so for several years. When distressing circumstances invaded my life during those high school years, that elder's counsel was the only audience I sought. These elders could just as well have delegated these tasks to others in the assembly, but they took it

upon themselves to equip me and many others. Only after they personally demonstrated discipleship did they refer me to helpful books on the topic. Incidentally, that same assembly lacked anything desirable to the flesh. There was no showcasing of sensory devices that many so-called strong (translation: popular) assemblies were renowned for. Show me an assembly practicing discipleship and I'll show you a strong assembly.

UNSUNG HEROES

Discipleship is not without setbacks and disappointment. In Acts 8, we read of a pioneer evangelist named Philip. Most remember Philip as the baptizer of the Ethiopian eunuch, but we must remember that he was also the baptizer of a former sorcerer named Simon. In the case of Simon, *“he continued with Philip”* (v. 13) until his profession was proven false (vv. 19-24). In the case of the Ethiopian, his profession of faith was genuine, yet Philip was taken away before he could disciple him (v. 39).

The diverse results from Philip's ministry are a reminder that the Holy Spirit does not work in accordance with our personal agenda. Rather, we are to continue in accordance with His. Had we been in Philip's shoes in Samaria, we might have felt cynical or depressed about the prospect of continuing in God's work after seeing a professing believer exposed by his own personal desire. Doubtless many workers in the gospel since Philip have had their own “Samaritan experience.” Additionally, how anticlimactic

it must have seemed to Philip when he was removed by the Spirit before having a chance to disciple the Ethiopian. Have you ever begun a promising interaction with a new believer, only to be separated by an abrupt move or departure? We may have to defer to another brother or sister in the Lord better equipped to disciple a certain convert. Remember, we don't have the luxury of discipling only those we want to!

THE GREAT COMMISSIONER

On a final note, the New Testament Commissioner never required His disciples to do anything that He hadn't first done Himself! The expression, “those who can't do, teach” does not apply to the Lord Jesus. Luke summarizes the Lord's ministry as *“all that Jesus began both to do and teach”* (Acts 1:1). The Lord would not depart this scene before His disciples were equipped, thereby commissioning them to disciple others (Mt. 28:19-20). Since then, this pattern was continued by the apostles and continues to this day. That's not to say that His influence is discontinued upon separation. The Lord still teaches us through His written Word.

The Lord's ministry cost Him His life. Has it cost you yours? ■

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it’” (Mt. 16:24-25).

BROTHER

Arthur Garnes

An Example to Follow

June 2012 marked the 100th anniversary of his birth, a milestone he almost reached.

Submitted by the saints at Rockville Bible Fellowship, Maryland.

Dr. Arthur L. Garnes distinguished himself in the world's eyes as a consummate gentleman who excelled throughout undergraduate and medical school, going on to become America's first black plastic surgeon. But for those of us who knew him as believers, that was just the beginning of his greatness. The consensus of those of us in fellowship in the same assembly is that he was the most gracious, capable, humble, courteous, steadfast, and encouraging brother we have had the blessing of knowing.

Born in New York City on June 13, 1912 (shortly after the sinking of the Titanic), Arthur Garnes was raised in a godly family where his father had a Bible reading after supper every night, and his mother taught he and his siblings hymns and Bible lessons at home. His parents also belonged to, and helped found, Grace Gospel Chapel in Harlem.

Brother Garnes was saved at age six and, as a child, listened to the Bible studies held in his home. "It sounded like those men were eating ice cream, they enjoyed the Scriptures so much." In response, his childhood prayer was that God would give him that same joy and understanding of the Word. God answered that prayer, as well as another, at

age 10 when he asked that he would be enabled to be a teacher of God's Word. He was asked to "give a word" at age 11, and, at 14, he had his first opportunity to speak in the open air. At 20, he recognized that the Lord was answering his prayers, and, at 22, his brother William was saved in response to his preaching.

Garnes excelled academically as well. He was accepted into Townsend Harris High School, a public school for gifted students (attending with Jonas Salk, the developer of the first polio vaccine). He went on to shine at the City College of New York and Howard University. One brother revealed that Garnes had scored the second highest in the nation on a certain pharmacology exam. But Garnes kept the Lord first despite the academic pressures. He remembers attending all six weeks of Grace Gospel Chapel's special meetings on Exodus, despite the strain of his advanced high school education. During college and medical school, he kept a rule of studying his Bible until getting something from the Lord before studying his textbooks. As a result, God honored him in his studies and exams.

He recounts, "Prof. McKinney taught us histology and was famous for examining the 'fine print.' The morning of

his final exam, I got up at 5:00 am, read the Bible, prayed, and asked the Lord to guide me; the Lord led me to four different subjects. Do you know he gave five questions and four of them were the four I reviewed? Then two days later he came to me in the anatomy laboratory and said, 'Garnes, I congratulate you. You got exactly 100%.' That was God—not my brain. I still say that He will do the same thing today as He did in Daniel chapter 1. I firmly believe that."

Garnes received one of 24 internships among 100 applicants. Again, the Lord had led him in independent study two weeks prior to the oral interview, allowing him to answer medical questions he was asked which were beyond the material applicants should have known at that stage.

He had such confidence in the Lord's faithfulness that he did not share the worries of his peers. Going through medical school during the Great Depression, he reported that many of the medical students would turn to gambling, drinking, and smoking to escape the pressures. "My relief was to get in my room and open the Book." When he entered a room,



they would say, “Here comes Garnes; he only drinks water.” If only they had known the Fountain from which he found his satisfaction.

As an undergraduate, he was asked about joining a fraternity in order to have “brothers” everywhere. “But I said, ‘I have that already.’ Everything that they would present, every advantage, I had already in the Lord Jesus Christ.” His advice to any believer is, “You are already a member of the best. You are a child of God. That is the highest society in creation. The bride of the Lord Jesus Christ—you can’t beat that.”

Garnes’ internship was at Harlem Hospital, where he studied in the fields of pathology and, later, surgery. He realized that the Lord was clearly leading him into plastic surgery—not cosmetic, but reconstructive surgery for the hand, with skin grafting, treating burns, injuries, and tumors.

After turning down offers to join three doctors, since they were not believers, he started his own practice in New York City in 1943. About that time, he had also begun to perceive it was the Lord’s will for him to have a wife and he prayed for the Lord’s clear guidance. He had met his future wife, Vivian, at

her assembly in Brooklyn, and she later worked as a nurse at Harlem Hospital while he was completing his internship. They were married in 1944 with the common goal that they were going to go into the Lord’s work “full time” after he finished his medical practice, but they did not wait to be active. They were tireless in youth work, gospel outreaches, and teaching and shepherding in the assembly. He said that he never thought the assembly took too much of his time.

During the time of his private practice, Garnes had an influence on both the physical and spiritual health of his patients. Almost all of his patients, he believed, knew of his faith, assembly, and values. He spoke to many of them openly about the gospel. Garnes treated one young man who had been blinded with lye by his own mother. Garnes’ loving treatment led to him having the thrill of leading that patient to the Lord.

His stories ranged from delivering twins in the chapel when a sister unexpectedly went into labor, to being called to treat a woman in urgent need at a seedy club with “five-watt bulbs.” He distinctly remembers his prayer that day in the club, “Lord, please don’t come until I get out of this place!”

After private practice (often *pro bono*), Garnes granted a request from Harlem Hospital to head the new burn unit that they were creating. In the hospital setting, speaking of religion was discouraged, but Garnes’ testimony had a profound influence on patients nonetheless. Patients would ask him to pray with them before their surgeries, whether he was their doctor or not.

He followed his own repeatedly-given advice, “Don’t retire, *refire!*” In 1978, he was commended to the Lord’s work

from Grace Gospel Chapel and retired to Maryland with his family. In the past he had refused an offer of a job with a very large church, complete with high salary, car, and housing. In contrast, he and Vivian understood the Lord’s leading to join themselves to Rockville Bible Fellowship—then consisting of a few families meeting in a home. Garnes became involved in teaching and was soon recognized as an elder in the assembly. He was diligent during his 32 years of “retirement,” devoting himself to the teaching and study of the Bible and in caring for the assembly.

One of his recurring message themes would come out around election times. He would endorse “his Man,” looking to the time when the Lord Jesus would reign over the earth. His confidence was always in the Lord. He never sought men or movements to bring about changes in society—rather he steadfastly prayed and set his eye on his Lord and Savior, awaiting His return and His righteous reign.

Vivian suffered a stroke in 1998, but they both went home to glory in 2010.

Well done! ■



Retain the of

STANDARD SOUND WORDS

Peter Bolton

“For this cause I also suffer these things; but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard My deposit unto that Day. Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit given through the Holy Spirit indwelling in us.” 2 TIMOTHY 1:12-14

When higher ground has the possibility of sliding or eroding away, people will often build a retaining wall along the edge of the portion of land. This keeps the land intact, and it also makes a clear distinction between the higher ground and lower ground.

Such is the role of “*sound words*” in the life of the believer and of the church. What we believe sets us apart and sets us upon higher ground. But there are forces that tend to pull us down, causing us to slip and stumble toward the worldly and ungodly lifestyle from which we were saved. We should carefully note the gravity of the threat of such spiritual erosion.

The tone of Paul’s second letter to Timothy and the condition of some of the people he describes are evidence that “*holding fast*” or “*retaining*” is not a work that is automatically done for us by the Holy Spirit; it is something we are commanded to do. If we don’t take it seriously (as Paul certainly did), we can easily fall.

Although Paul’s letter is somber, and even sad in parts, the charge to Timothy is positive. It is not just a prevention of slippage and destruction that he has in mind. Rather, he wants Timothy to focus on the soundness of what he has been taught and the standard of Paul’s own example.

NOT WHAT BUT WHOM

The strength to do this is not from ourselves. It starts with the example set by God Himself. Notice verse 12. There we read that God has us and holds us. Saving faith involves entrusting our souls to the Lord, not just to save us but to keep and lead us. Paul could fully commit himself—even to martyrdom—because he had complete confidence in the character and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

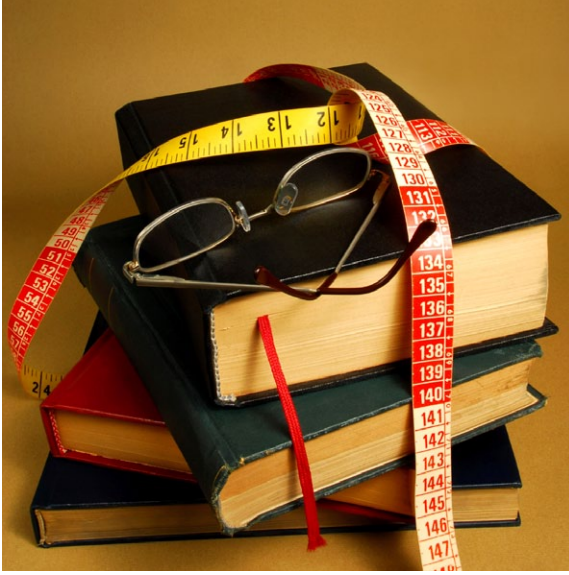
So it isn’t only about *what* we believe, but *Whom* we believe. The soundness of the words is a direct outflow of the soundness of the divine mind. If we know the character of God, we will value His words. The standard Paul set for Timothy was

set for Paul by the Lord Jesus Himself. Second, notice verse 14. We have the Holy Spirit indwelling us. When we take to heart the command to “*hold fast*” and then “*guard*,” we find the Spirit ready and able to make it happen. If we live in humble dependence on the Lord, our retaining wall will stand firm. There will be no erosion and the higher ground will be maintained for the Lord’s own possession.

SLIPPAGE AND EROSION

Paul was concerned about Timothy, who seemed to be struggling with timidity and, possibly, self-preservation (1:7-8) under the pressures of ministry and persecution. His son in the faith needed encouragement to be strong and to work diligently with other faithful people (2:1-2). In other words, Timothy needed to remember the higher ground and stay up there.

Paul refers to several cases of people who did not retain the standard of



If you want to see the power of His words, look at creation. Look at your conversion. Look at Calvary!

sound words (1:15; 2:14, 16-18, 23; 3:1-9, 13; 4:3-4, 10, 14-15, 16). It is instructive for us to read of these and take warning.

Paul was a faithful guardian of the Word, and he set a standard that would be helpful if followed (1:11; 2:2; 3:14). So those who choose other paths could be leading themselves and others to lower ground. It is necessary to seek godly examples to follow. Only Christ is perfect, but it is the proud and potentially destructive person who thinks that he or she will set a better example than that which has been set for us (Eph. 5:1; 1 Cor. 11:1).

Let us be clear that the standard has already been set; there is no need for us to be innovative in how we read our Bibles. When we play around with the words, we erode the faith of those who listen to us. Newer or younger believers are watching and learning from the example we set. The standard is to be modeled, not just guarded.

Let us also be clear that not all words are of equal value. Compared to the way Christ spoke, much of what we engage in as believers is just chatter. It is not motivated by the glory of God, and it is not led by the Spirit. Many come up with their own “truth” and seek a following. It is like unhealthy, self-absorbed cells in the body; they become a cancer that will almost certainly not stay localized if left to continue their poisonous growth.

If we shift our focus or passion away from the One in Whom we have believed, we can end up almost anywhere else, but it will definitely be lower, since His standard is the highest and holiest.

There is one more problem with this shifting that is not just about our own loss or the way it could bring others down. We can see in Paul’s concluding section that he personally felt a great loss and loneliness at having once had good fellowship with many whom he could no longer count among the faithful because they had shifted their priorities. When we slip down, we grieve and weigh down those who continue on in the standard of sound words.

HIGHER GROUND

The instruction to “*hold the standard of sound words*” does not end there. The verse adds, “*in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*” This removes any justification for pride and judgmentalism. Many an assembly is “*holding a form of godliness, but denying the power of it*” (3:5). Holding fast to New Testament church principles concerning order is essential. However, we must do so in a way which also holds fast to New Testament church principles concerning character: faith and love.

We are to take our retaining wall seriously and ensure it is well-constructed and solid. But it isn’t the Lord’s will that we stay on the wall, living in fear of

erosion or occupying ourselves with the way others might be slipping. He is the One who will keep us intact; our priority needs to be on living on the higher ground, demonstrating to others what faith in, and love for, Christ Jesus looks like. It is an entirely different level of life than the world knows.

Traditional marriage vows have included the words “to have and to hold from this day forward.” Such is the concept of Paul’s instructions to “*hold fast*” or “*retain.*” Confident in the person and the vow, and staying committed in faithfulness, a new life is built together.

The standard has been set and modeled. The soundness of the words is beyond dispute, since they are those of the Lord Himself. So it is not only right and wise to hold fast to that standard of sound words, but it is how we can enjoy the abundant life that Christ paid for (Jn. 10:10). What a blessing it is for us individually and corporately when we humbly take this to heart! It will be a most effective way of proving to the lost around us that Christ is all He claimed to be, and that eternal life is a glorious—not religious—thing (Jn. 13:34-35; 17:22-23).

In spite of Paul’s concerns, and even some loneliness, he concludes his letter with confidence and victory, knowing Whom he had believed and knowing that he had run the race well. Timothy was invited to run the race with him, and the offer is extended to us, today. ■

The **USES** Jack Spender of the Word

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”

2 TIMOTHY 3:16



The story of how God’s living Word came to man stretches throughout history, but it is described in two important New Testament verses: 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21. The first tells us the divine side: all Scripture is inspired or “God-breathed.” The second tells us the human side: holy men spoke as they were moved or carried by the Spirit of God. The wonder of it! A cooperative work between God and man, all under the sovereign guidance and protection of the Lord! And so Holy Scripture is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12) and therefore, as our verse says, profitable.

We are not left to speculate about what profit God has for His people through this revelation. The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. These four works ensure that the Christian believer can become fully mature and properly equipped for every good work.

I like to think of these four great terms as describing the narrow road upon which the believer walks: the way of righteousness. Both their meaning and their order are significant. Look at it this way:

Doctrine describes the path on which the believer walks. Reproof (or conviction) tells us when we get off the path.

Correction tells us how to get back on the path. And instruction (or training) in righteousness helps us go along more successfully next time. Thus, we continue toward spiritual maturity and fruitfulness which glorifies God.

DOCTRINE

Anything of value in this life can be traced back to the Word of God. *Doctrine* means the teaching of truth from God, and it must come first in any list. This is seen, for example, in the activities of the early church as recorded in Acts 2:42. God speaks first, and a number of effects will necessarily follow. Wherever the Word of God takes hold, life springs forth.

Now there are many different types of literature in the Bible: history, poetry, prophecy, letters, etc., but, taken together, they present to us God’s complete revelation. Through them, we know God, we learn of God’s redeeming love for sinners, and we learn how to live our lives for Him.

Because His Word is both living and life-giving, it does more for the believer than just educate him. It actually changes us to become more like our Creator. As one old preacher used to say, “When you

read your Bible, try to understand it; but if you don’t understand it, read it anyway because it’s food for your soul.”

In speaking of this process, the Lord Jesus said, “*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (Jn. 8:32). The person who exclaims, “I’m a practical person; don’t give me a lot of doctrine!” does not yet grasp the meaning of the Lord’s parable about the wise man who built his house on the rock (Mt. 7:24f).

Paul told Timothy to “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee*” (1 Tim. 4:16). The reference is not to initial conversion to Christ (after all, it includes Timothy) but rather to the outworking of inner salvation (cf. Php. 2:12).

Healthy doctrine brings life more abundant; false doctrine brings harm to the church and to the soul.

REPROOF

This word can also be rendered *conviction* and refers to that special work of the Holy Spirit that takes place in the heart of a Christian when he or she sins. When God’s truth (or doctrine)



Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. Psalm 86:11

is disobeyed, the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to trouble the soul of God's child so that we realize we have stepped off the path of righteousness.

Of course, all people have a conscience, or degree of light, from God that gives them a basic knowledge of right and wrong. But the Christian can enjoy a far more intimate sensitivity to the right ways of God because of the ability to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:14).

As we read our Bibles, we should not be searching for passages that confirm our words and ways, thus making us feel better about our lives. Rather, we should have the heart of King David who prayed, *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting"* (Ps. 139:23-24).

The wise man wrote, *"He that refuses instruction despises his own soul: but he that hears reproof gets understanding"* (Prov. 15:32). We ought to count as friends those who love us enough to reprove us when necessary.

CORRECTION

Having stepped out of the light, we are not left to wander in the darkness. The inspired Word gives us clear guidance about how to remedy the problem. No acts of penance or fretting are required. Psalm 32:5 provides the key: *"I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'; And You forgave the guilt of my sin."* Upon con-

fession, we are instantly restored to walking in the light. What a wonderful provision through the finished work of our Savior!

We as believers must understand that no matter how quickly we confess our sin, we are always the second one to speak. The word confess means "to agree with; to speak the same thing." The Lord says, "That was sin." We respond, "Yes, Lord, that was sin." When two are agreed, they can walk together (Amos 3:3) and we are enabled to continue along the path of righteousness.

It is only our adversary who seeks to keep us lying in the darkness, feeling sorry for ourselves by reminding us of our failures and past sins that have been confessed and dealt with. In some religions, poor souls are persuaded that they must keep offering sacrifices to God, hoping to obtain favor. But the way we first came to the Lord was simple and not dependent upon our efforts and merits. The way we receive correction, as dear children, is exactly the same.

INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Sometimes rendered *"training in righteousness,"* this expression is the subjective side of doctrine. In other words, it is the practical application of truth in our lives through daily experience, including the various disciplines allowed by the Lord to shape and mold us. The root word used is actually "child training," such as a godly father would use in seeking to train up his children.

The Christian life is a walk of faith, for only through faith can we please God

(Heb. 11:6). Such a faith looks beyond all situations, trials, and hardships and sees our heavenly Father in the background, working all things together for good for those who love Him (Rom. 8:28). It is not through the strong will of the flesh or self-determination that the believer gradually learns to keep on the path of righteousness, but through the gracious training provided by a watchful Father who never sleeps. One little child explained: "He loves me too much to hurt me, and He's too smart to make any mistakes."

THE RESULT

What will be the outcome of allowing these four works to permeate the life? In beautiful simplicity, the text says that the man of God will become spiritually mature (perfect) and will be furnished or equipped for every good work. Both in character and actions, such a believer will bring delight to the heart of God because of the reflection of the glory of His Son who was the perfect Servant of the Lord and who *"went about doing good"* (Acts 10:38).

The psalmist described such a man when he wrote Psalm 1. By delighting and meditating in the law of the Lord, he became a fruitful tree that never stopped bearing fruit in dry times because it was intimately connected to the living water. Similarly, after speaking about the fruitful branch, the Lord Jesus affirmed, *"In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples"* (Jn. 15:8). Let us not complicate the matter: the God-breathed Word makes Christians fruitful. ■

PREACH



SHAWN ABIGAIL theWORD

“I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5

In recent years, the proclamation of the Word of God has suffered from a number of influences. Some churches have fallen back on professionalism, ignoring gift in favor of formal training. Other churches pride themselves on not requiring formal training but end up doing nothing by way of discipleship and gift development. Some preachers seek to entertain the crowds, and, regrettably some crowds

appreciate this “ministry” more than they do sound words. In some cases, men seek to draw attention to themselves rather than to Christ. As a result of these factors, in many places, the church is suffering terrible biblical illiteracy, even among those who preach or teach.

The current situation would be grim if the Bible did not address this topic. Best known for the exhortation, “preach the Word,” 2 Timothy 4:1-5 is a wake-up call for the church as a whole and concentrated instruction for preachers in particular. The passage begins by reminding us that it deals with a solemn matter. Paul is not a man known for frivolity, so, in what is probably his last written epistle, he says to his son in the faith, “I solemnly charge you.” This is of the utmost importance, both for Timothy himself and for the church for all time. This solemn charge is made in the presence of God, for there is no one higher. This solemn charge is also made in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead. And, at the end of this verse, we are reminded that this is by His appearing (most likely referring to the Second Coming) and for the sake of the Kingdom.

SERIOUSNESS

So Timothy is given this solemn charge: “preach the Word.” Preach is literally, “to proclaim,” and could refer to the message of salvation or to the edification of the saints. Verse 3 suggests that teaching is in view, while verse 5 suggests that it is evangelism. This serious exhortation is applicable to both cases. This should give the preacher pause to reflect on the seriousness of his task. He will be judged more strictly (James 3:1), and taking his task lightly may result in loss of reward at the judgment seat of Christ. He must speak as one who is proclaiming the very utterances of God (1 Pet. 4:11). As we prepare and preach, are we consciously aware of the seriousness of the task before us? Are we engaged in spiritual work using spiritual means?

The work described in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 is not the work of a man who is focused on helping people to merely enjoy life or to think positively. It is neither the work of the man who avoids the hard passages, nor of the one who avoids speaking of repentance and the blood of Christ. It is not the work of the man



“We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5).

comes when we realize that, in ourselves, we are insufficient for the task at hand, and we cry out to the Father for help by the Spirit.

READINESS

A readiness to preach is important. This does not merely mean an eagerness to preach. Sometimes a young man gets it into his head that it might be nice to stand at a pulpit and have everyone listen to him. This is most emphatically not what is spoken of here. Neither is it a reference to older men who might be tempted to monopolize an open meeting.

Readiness starts with spiritual preparation to ensure we have a consistent spiritual life. It also includes personal study of the Bible. We cannot preach an authoritative message unless it is rooted in and grows from the Scriptures. Those who would preach the Word must be prepared to exert the effort to first get a solid grip on the Bible so that they are sound in doctrine, and then diligently study and prepare so that their messages are accurate, fresh, and coherent.

Readiness also suggests organized thoughts, so that a sudden opportunity (whether for the gospel or edification) is not wasted. We can summarize this readiness in the words of a dear brother who noted that when the cupboard is full, you don't need to worry about unexpected guests.

THE HEARERS

In verse 3, however, we see a warning. It starts by saying that a time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine. In many places, that day is already here. Many have made it quite clear that they do not want to hear messages from only the Bible. They do not want the meat of the Word of God. They don't want to hear anything which is thoroughly biblical and yet is somewhat controversial in a permissive society. They want to have their ears tickled; but, the interesting thing about verse 3 is that it doesn't say that they will fall away from attending meetings of the church. They will still go to church meetings, but it will be a church that preaches a message more in keeping with their tastes. And, regrettably, there is no shortage of churches today that will appeal to them—short on truth and long on entertainment.

In contrast, both Timothy and today's faithful preachers are directed along a different path. It is a path that is difficult. It is a path which may be unpopular. There is hardship, and we might never have a large audience. This is not to say that large churches always compromise and that small churches are always faithful, but the individuals who preach God's Word must be firmly convicted in their own hearts and minds of the need to heed Paul's charge to Timothy. Or, in the words of the Puritan Richard Baxter, “I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.” ■

who teaches that the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is really just a means of getting more material possessions. The man who wants others to speak well of him is warned, as is the indolent brother who would rather watch television than prepare his sermon by study and prayer. This isn't speaking of a preacher who is casually looking for something to say about a passage. It also might be helpful to mention that the godly preacher will not be locked into a grim and scolding mindset, for the Lord Jesus Christ Himself used winsome words to draw men and women.

A man who is frivolous, self-centered, or has some standard other than the Bible cannot be used to reprove, to rebuke, or to exhort. A man cannot be a stand-up comedian and preach a message of conviction. The Holy Spirit will move with power among us if, as preachers, we cast ourselves upon Him, acknowledging that we are unworthy servants, needing an enabling of the Spirit to reach people with the Word of God. This enabling does not involve flashy signs and wonders. There is no mechanical formula by which we obtain this enabling. It only

Living in the Light *Part One*

BALANCING RISKS AND BENEFITS

Some years ago, I spent two weeks backpacking with a group of friends in a mountain wilderness area. To lighten our packs, we did not bring tents and we lived outside, exposed to the sun and unpredictable mountain weather. When I returned home, it felt strange to be indoors. Years later, the feeling that people were never intended to live inside wooden boxes lit by artificial light remains with me.

From the Bible, I understand that humans were originally created to live outside wearing only our skin. As a scientist, I understand how human health is supported by daily skin exposure to sunlight. These two concepts are consistent with each other since both the sun and our skin come from the hand of the same Creator. Comparing human physiologic needs with the world we live in reveals the Creator's intent to provide a world whose features perfectly match our basic needs and where the risks and benefits inherent in life are balanced.

Consider the following question. What do gardens and strong bones have in common? The answer is that both require sunlight because both need the products of photosynthesis; but there are two types of photosynthesis. The first is found in plants and algae cells that use chlorophyll to capture the sun's energy and convert carbon dioxide and water into starches needed for growth. Plant



“The day is Thine, the night also is Thine: Thou hast prepared the light and the sun” (Ps 74:16).

fruits and roots are also a primary human food source, and we could not live without the oxygen produced by plants and algae.

The second type of photosynthesis happens in human skin. That's right, our skin performs a type of photosynthesis, called cutaneous photosynthesis, which makes vitamin D from skin cell cholesterol. Vitamin D, in turn, promotes absorption of calcium from food. And calcium is needed, of course, to build strong bones. So both plant cells and human skin cells make substances vital for human life: oxygen, food, and vitamin D. And both types of photosynthesis are fueled by the same freely available energy source: sunlight.

Humans have certainly changed since creation. Most people now live inside boxes that prevent sun exposure and many live at latitudes far from the

equator where the angle of sunlight is such that, much of the year, even direct exposure to sunlight does not stimulate adequate vitamin D production.

In fact, about half of the people around the world who live north of the latitude of Atlanta, Georgia or south of a similar latitude in the Southern hemisphere are vitamin D and calcium deficient. For those living at higher latitudes, the best solution for this is to take both vitamin D and calcium dietary supplements since it is difficult to balance sun exposure to stimulate vitamin D, yet not burn the skin. And, unfortunately, intermittent sun exposure, sunburn, and tanning all increase the risk of skin cancer.

This raises the question for Living in the Light, Part 2: Wouldn't the first people have had plenty of vitamin D but also plenty of skin cancer?

—MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, PH.D.

TreeMendous Confusion

“I see men as trees, walking” (Mark 8:24)

There was a remarkable miracle performed when the Lord Jesus met a blind man in the town of Bethsaida. Remarkable because only Mark tells us about it (8:22-26). And remarkable because it was the only two-stage physical miracle recorded in our Lord's ministry. Obviously the miracle's second stage was not to make up for failure on the Lord's part, nor because the man's condition was especially challenging for Him.

We might find it interesting to hear about Post-Blind Syndrome, where blind people who benefit from surgery still struggle to make sense of what they see. They gather fragments, but are not able to “form a complex perception.” But those who read the context find an answer more immediate than one illuminated by a fact of modern medicine.

In the early part of the chapter, Jesus fed a multitude with seven loaves and a few fish, and the twelve saw it. Or did they? In the very next incident, we find them worried because they had left home without lunch. The Master rebuked them: “Having eyes, do you not see?” (v. 18). He reminded them of His feeding of the 4000 and the 5000, then quizzed them on how many leftovers there were! When they told Him, He sadly responded, “How is it you do not understand?” (v. 21).

Now comes the story of the blind man, who illustrates for us the humbling fact

that we may have *sight* and yet not have *clarity*. It was not only the Israelites who would fall under the divine prognosis, “Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not” (Isa. 6:9). The disease is with us to this day.

I've met people who have evidently had a divine touch on their lives, yet they still seem to have a confused outlook on life. To see “men as trees walking” must mean that the details are blurred. Two legs meld into one trunk; facial expressions are as meaningless as a mass of green leaves. It is this inability to discern that leaves a person with the unsettling impression of rootless trees and faceless men. Something is there, but what is it?

And yet it is not only new believers who struggle with this condition. I recently was asked: “Since God's Holy Spirit comes to reveal the truth, how do we who call ourselves Christians come to so many different views on Scripture?” In part, I answered as follows:

1. Some who *call* themselves Christians are not even saved. Of them the Scripture says, “The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor 2:14). Some of these are so-called Bible scholars but they are unsaved and do not have the Holy Spirit to teach them. No wonder they disagree!

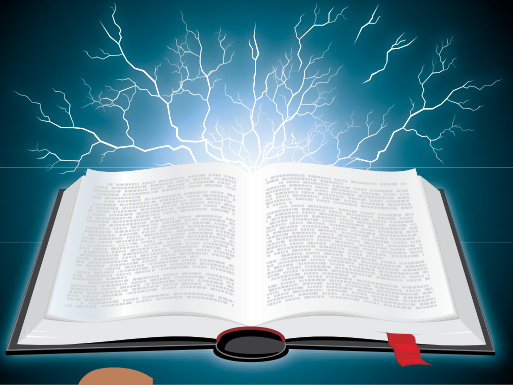


Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527-1593): Winter, 1563, Musée du Louvre

2. Some people live for their desires and turn their ears away, hiring preachers who tickle their fancy. “And they...shall be turned to fables” (see 2 Tim 4:2-4).
3. Some people simply have made a mistake: Of Hymenaeus and Philetus Paul said, “Who concerning the truth have erred.” Taking Bible ideas out of context or out of balance or out of proportion leads to confusion. But perhaps the most common danger is presuming we know something when we really don't.

There is no verse that says we should just agree to disagree. Paul writes, “If in anything you are otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this to you” (Phil. 3:15). The Lord is eager to reveal His truth to us, and His desire is that we might “come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

Ultimately what saved this fellow was his honesty. When Jesus “asked him if he saw anything” (v. 23), he could have responded, “This is much better; that will do me just fine.” But if he had said that, his world would have been like an out-of-focus Giuseppe Arcimboldo nightmare. His honesty gave him the clarity he did not have. And I daresay there is good reason why the Lord “made him look up” (v. 25). Where else will we find help to see things clearly? —J.B.N.



Is the Bible Losing its Influence?

True stories, retold by Jabe Nicholson

SITTING around the expansive Pell dinner table in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was a school like no other. You never knew what light would shine from Heaven into your heart. I can't recall a meal there—and I ate hundreds in that dining room—where earthly fare was served without a brimming dish of the divine included.

I also can't think of a meal served there when only the Pell family partook. There seemed to always be some guests. It was on one of those occasions when a guest ventured to suggest that the Bible might be waning in its influence in society. With gentle grace, Bill Pell simply told this story to prove otherwise.

It was late at night. He was sitting in the out-of-the-way train station at Burlington, Ontario. To utilize his time until the early morning train arrived, he had a Bible on each knee and was copying notes from an old tattered Bible into his new one. He was the only passenger; the station master kept busy behind the counter.

Suddenly two unkempt men pushed into the station and rushed halfway to the counter when they saw Bill and his two Bibles. And stopped dead in their tracks. A few furtive glances between them and they turned on their heels and hurried back out into the night.

Shortly a policeman arrived, noted Bill as he passed, and spoke for some minutes in hushed tones to the station master. Several times they looked in Bill's direction, but said nothing to him. The officer then left, with a final glance at Bill.

The sky was beginning to lighten when two women customers entered and approached the counter. "You look like you've seen a ghost," one of the women observed. "What happened?"

"You see that man with the two Bibles?" asked the master. "He just saved my life!"

"What?" the incredulous women replied. "How did he do that?" Bill kept his eyes on his work but waited eagerly to hear the answer.

"Two crooks broke out of the Don Jail (in nearby Toronto) and were determined to come in here, kill me, and rob the station. But when they saw that man with his two Bibles, they couldn't do it. So they went and turned themselves in to the authorities."

Without another word, Bill rested his case. God's Word is still *"living and powerful"* and can cut even hardened criminals to the heart. Was it their mothers' Bibles they saw that night?

Of course our Bibles need to be open and activated if we want to see what God can still do with His Word, even among a cynical, materialistic and unbelieving generation.

The story was a surprise to everyone at the table that evening. Bill had never told it before, even to his own sisters. Perhaps he assumed that everyone had stories like that. He frequently saw the wonder-working power of God.

He was travelling once in a crowded bus on the 60-mile journey from Lansing to Grand Rapids, and was standing in the aisle. In front of him was a man, and then a woman who was smoking one cigarette after another—this in the days when most women didn't smoke.

"Lady," said the man, "if you keep smoking like that, you'll kill yourself!"

"Well, you only die once," she said flippantly.

Bill couldn't let *that* go by. "Ma'am, I have a Book in my pocket that says you can die twice. Are you interested?" She nodded affirmatively.

Turning to Revelation 20, Bill read the solemn words from verse 11 and concluded with the final gripping words: *"This is the second death."*

"Let me see that," she asked and, taking the Testament, she again read the words to a now-hushed busload. Bill reached for his little Book.

"Ma'am, I can't leave you like that. This same Book tells me you can be *born* twice," and now he read to the whole bus the story of Nicodemus and the offer of new birth. I look forward to finding out what the Spirit did that day in the hearts of those travellers on their way toward eternity.