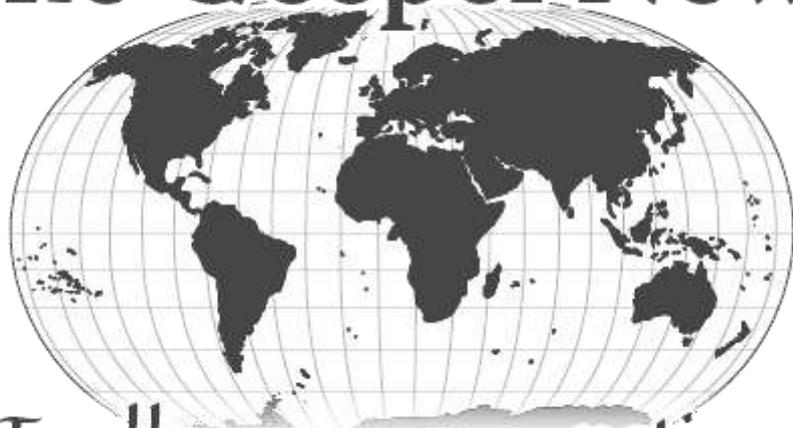
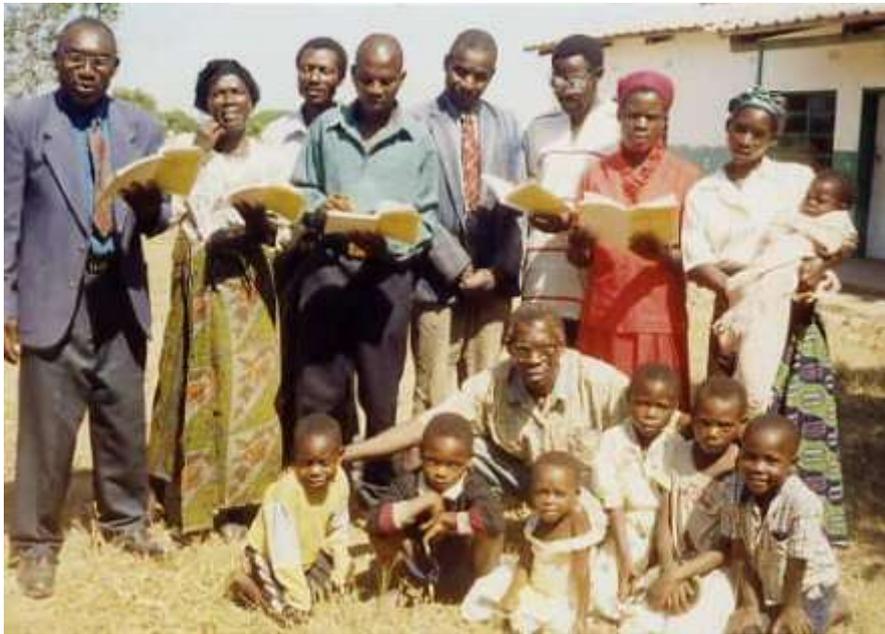


The Gospel News



“To all  nations”



Guest Editorial: Are we fit to rule?

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? (1 Cor. 6:2).

The faithful to rule the world

We certainly want to judge the world for that is what being in the kingdom is all about. We have not been called merely to live in the kingdom, we have been called to “inherit the earth;” “to reign with Christ;” to be “kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Matt. 5:5; II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10).

While the Lord Jesus Christ is the undisputed King of the kingdom, his generosity is such that he shares his throne of rulership with the faithful: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne” (Rev. 3:21). In fact, the saints of this era (ourselves if we remain faithful) are so involved in the rulership of the kingdom that the Lord says to them, “inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34). The wording in Daniel is equally strong: “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High” (Dan. 7:27 and note vv. 18 and 22 where the saints “possess” the kingdom).

“The saints shall judge the world.” What an honor! What a responsibility!

Deciding issues

The apostle makes reference to the saints judging the world in the context of a dispute within the ecclesia. One brother/sister claimed he/she had been defrauded by another, and had taken the issue to the local Roman court for settlement.

The apostle was stunned at their immaturity. If the brothers and sisters were looking forward to judging the world, where great spiritual issues would arise, surely they could settle a money matter between two members of the ecclesia. Paul suggested the wronged brother/sister should accept the fraud, forgive the person who had done them wrong, and drop the case. Those on the spot might feel that would not be a good solution. They might decide simply dropping the matter would encourage the wrong-doer to keep taking advantage of others. They might rather decide that restitution should be paid for the spiritual instruction of the wrong-doer.

Whatever solution at which they arrived, they needed to “judge” in the matter. If they couldn’t “judge” in this case, then how could they consider themselves fit to “judge” the world?

Note the important implications for ourselves in the kingdom: we will be expected to solve problems and to make decisions. We will be expected to apply the principles of God to issues that arise in the lives of the mortal population whom we will be guiding, judging, ruling.

Angels make decisions now

We are given some interesting insight into the working of the immortal mind by noting how angels make decisions in this present era. Consider the visit of three angels to Abraham. (The three “men” who visited Abraham in Gen. 18:2 were representing God, v. 1, and are termed “angels” in Gen. 19:1.)

The lead angel thought over the matter and decided to reveal to Abraham the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing

Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children..." (Gen. 18:17-19). What a remarkable insight into the thinking process of an immortal mind. The angel was reasoning through the situation and deciding what to tell Abraham. Here was no robot, mechanically carrying out the will of God. Here was a spiritually-minded, immortal being fulfilling a divinely appointed mission according to the principles of God and making a decision, on the basis of divine principles, how to handle the details of that mission.

When two of the angels departed for Sodom, Abraham approached the remaining angel and appealed, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city...shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (vv. 23-25).

Abraham assumed the angel was manifesting God and had some discretionary liberty and ability to make adjustments in the mission. And Abraham was right. The angel did not shut him off by telling him that angels are like robots, mechanically following commands. Instead, the angel entered into a dialogue with Abraham, recognized Abraham had a point, according to the great divine principles of mercy and justice.

This angel, sent with two others to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, clearly had the ability and authority to call off the mission if there were at least 10 righteous in the city. According to what is revealed, the decision was up to the angel. He made the judgment. But "unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come," that honor belongs to the immortalized saints of this era (Heb. 2:5; 1:14). In the world to come, the mortals who populate the earth will be looking to the saints, the people of the Most High, to be exercising the great divine principles in their lives. Are we fit to do that? Following the angels who departed for Sodom, we find they also made decisions. Lot was reluctant to leave some family members behind, so the angels took the initiative: "While he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, and set him without the city" (Gen. 19:16).

That was not the end of it, however, for Lot pleaded to escape to Zoar rather than to the mountains: "Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither..." (vv. 19-20). But that town was appointed to destruction. Yet exercising the mercy of God, the angel decided, "See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken..." (v. 21).

The Lord makes decisions

We take great comfort in the assurance: "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Because the Lord remembers what it was like to struggle against the impulses of the flesh, we are confident he will understand our plight and extend merciful help to us. But this assumes he remembers, and acts upon his past experience.

That's telling us something. That's telling us the immortal mind remembers what it was like to be mortal and draws upon that experience in making decisions. If we are blessed with being among those who judge the world, we'll be doing the same. In fact, we're doing that all the time now as we draw upon our past experiences to help others, seeking to put divine principles into practice.

Based on the present judgments we make, are we fit to judge the world?

Our present limitations

Are we ready to rule now? No doubt our answer is, “Of course not, we must be changed at the judgment seat.”

That’s true, but consider the changes to be made: “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (I Cor. 15:53).

While we remain corruptible, we are still plagued with the impulses of the flesh and its propensity to sin, which at times controls our actions.

While we remain mortal, we are unable to discern all the facts and unable to fully understand divine thinking, which at times leads to our making mistakes.

These changes must be made before we can be like the angels.

Character must be changed now

Yet there is a notable omission in what will be changed - nothing is said about our moral attributes of character being changed. There is nothing said about the carnal being made spiritual, the cruel being made merciful, the harsh being made kind, the selfish being made considerate, the unholy being made pure in heart. In fact, the Lord is perfectly clear that, at the judgment seat, it’s those who are already merciful who shall obtain mercy; those who are already pure in heart who shall see God: those who are already peacemakers who will be called the children of God (Matt. 5:7-9).

Early brethren not acting like future rulers

In following on in I Corinthians 6, it’s evident some Corinthian brethren were making a vital mistake: “Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” (I Cor. 6:8-9).

One of the most common errors in the New Testament ecclesias was the idea that godly living is not essential to salvation. Many thought that having right knowledge, or a belief in Jesus as savior was all they needed. “Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 6:9-10).

Writing to the Galatians, the same point is emphasized. After listing various works of the flesh, Paul warns, “...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such thing shall not inherit the kingdom of God...Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 5:21; 6:7). And again to the Ephesians he writes: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience” (Eph. 5:5-6).

James covers the same point in his famous words, “faith without works is dead.” He knew there were people in the ecclesia who rejoiced in having “the” faith and in wishing well for the needy, but did not show mercy in practice. “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” (Jam. 2:14). Exactly the same problem was exposed by John: “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now” (I John 2:9).

In gentile ecclesias and Jewish ones, in the earliest ecclesias and ones at the end of the first century, the problem persisted because of a deep-seated human deception: we want to have the best of the divine while continuing to serve the flesh. We want to rule with Christ, but not make the changes now so that we are fit to do so in the future.

Present behavior determines our future

As world events trumpet the soon return of our Lord, are we fit to rule?

One of the issues stressed in the above verses was “greed,” or covetousness, which is idolatry. Covetousness is one of the pervasive sins of our society. We pray for the needy and the mission work, but many of us cling to our money as a god or devote every dime to ourselves. Our prayers are useless unless we open our hands wide and actually do something for others.

Fornication and impurity has become a widespread spiritual plague of our age ever since the sexual revolution of the 1960's. In some cases, we hide the vicarious enjoyment of these sins in magazines under the couch, or novels in the bedside table. In other cases, more common than we would like to acknowledge, sexual relations are prevalent before marriage. We need to remember the words of Paul that no fornicator or unclean person has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ. And, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4).

We must face the fact that the Lord knows our hearts. However we may look to others, however we may justify our actions to ourselves, He knows the truth about us. He knows whether we are cruel to our spouse and children while we may publicly appear polite and gentle. He knows whether we are self seeking in our decisions even though we may persuade others we seek only the best for the ecclesia. He knows what we are really like. Of course, this can also be good, because many times people misread others and impute wrong motives.

The key thing for us to realize is that for God to consider us fit to rule in the kingdom, the great moral change must occur now. The great physical change will come at the judgment seat, but now we must develop the attributes of character that will make us fit to rule.

Everybody still sins

We can't be perfect now, we're going to make mistakes, we're going to lose our tempers or have impure thoughts. As the apostle John writes: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:8-9).

Yet there is great difference between a chronic liar and a person of integrity who slips and distorts the truth. There is a great difference between a generous person who is occasionally neglectful and a stingy, greedy person who rarely helps anyone. There is a difference between a kind individual who rarely is harsh and a cruel person who rarely is kind. And there is a major difference between a person who deliberately fills his mind with all kinds of impurity and one who now and then has impure thoughts.

The occasional sin does not define a person's fundamental character before God. Our character attributes are defined by our basic patterns of behavior. It's those patterns of behavior, motives and thoughts that God sees and which determine if we will be fit to rule the kingdom.

The Lord is not here yet – there is still opportunity. We have been called to rule the world with Christ. With the Lord’s help, we can all be fit for that honor. As one of our hymns so effectively concludes, “We make the answer now.”

Don Styles

News from Africa

news from cameroon

BAKUMBA

There is total co sickness, wars etc. are all around us. Why? Many scientific studies, doctors, governments etc. have tried to stop these troubles, but there are no solutions. They cannot give the world the satisfaction it seeks. We must be on our guard, but the master key is prayer. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes to the earth – he will be the solution to all the world’s problems. We are happy to announce the baptisms, early last year, of four people, now our Brothers: MOKUBE LUCAS, MOKUBE DAVID, BOKWE HAMMETT, BOKWE WILSON. May they all do the will of our Father on earth.

We regret to report the desperate sickness of, Bro. Joshua Mosume. By the Lord’s mercies he is improving, but please all share with us in prayer in his sickness.

Bro. Mbella Elias

FONTEM

As I have repented, God has overlooked my sins of the past, done in ignorance. I trust I will not return to those times of ignorance, for I am sure God has set aside a day, which is coming very fast, when He will judge the world through Jesus. So I tell my children and personal relatives that when I go to my deep sleep and my body is laid in the ground, “Let no clan’s tradition be attached to my body”. I repeat, “When my days are over and I go to rest in my tomb, it will be done and cared for by the Christadelphians only, and by no other sect. Jesus, my Saviour, will return soon and raise the responsible dead.” Grace and peace be with you all.

Bro. Victor Atabong

NDOP

After a few years I visited the Blind and Handicapped School in Mbengwi and was very happy with the changes I saw – the guest house, new ecclesial hall, new rehabilitation unit, swimming pool etc. Please, I beg a regular copy of Gospel News.

Bro. Songson Simon



Photo: Bro. Simon nailing a fence at the School

news from ghana

SHAMA JUNCTION

Abraham had a difficult time when the Lord called him to leave his country to go to a land that He would show him, Abraham being a stranger there. So is our life; we are now strangers at Shama Junction, making a new life, having stayed at Cape Coast since 1967. Present events in the world tell us that the coming of the Lord is very near and that we are to hold fast until the end by helping one another on the narrow road to the Kingdom where, we pray, we will be received by our Lord. May we all be found worthy in that day.

Bro. Joseph Oppong

news from kenya

BULIMBO

I am a Brother of 20 years old and I was baptised into Jesus Christ last year after being interviewed by Brethren Moses Joumer and Francio Wamaiwa. I was baptised with the sole aim of entering into the Kingdom and this remains my aim today.

Bro. Emmanuel Joumer



Photo: Sister in Christ Sara Joumer and Bro. Emmanuel



Photo: Bro. Bruno O. Ateya, whose letter appeared in the Nov/Dec issue of Gospel News

HOMA BAY

I am still holding fast to my faith. However, my health has not been very good; I have been down with malaria – off and on for about two months – but God has been taking great care of the children who are now coming to terms with single parenthood, except during the times when I am very much down and feel disturbed so much. These problems have been so great on us, but we have to bear them. Even when Jesus was suffering such great pain on the cross he did not say anything out of place. It was the centurion who said, “Truly this was the Son of God” (Matt. 27:54). I’m praying so that I don’t share Job’s wife’s view.

Bro. Isaiah Awino

KAMUKUYWA

I would like two Swahili Bible Basics and also the book, ‘Where There Is No Doctor’ to help

people in my village about health.

Bro. Joseph Wanjala

Thank you for your letter and the Bible Key Cards which are very educative, and request you to send more if they are available. We have a lot of work to do to spread the gospel all over the nation of Kenya, even if three-quarters of the people do not know English. Actually, here in Kenya Kiswahili is the national language. Many friends who received the Kiswahili Bible Basics send their greetings.

We each have different challenges to face us in the battle of life. A display of normal cunning is to be avoided and mere expediency is not sufficient. We must avoid doing 'evil that good may come'. Sometimes the use of fleshly methods may appear to offer the prospects of greater success, but we will fail if we succumb to the temptation. A man can find himself in the centre of a storm, tossed to and fro by its raging, but if he hearkens to the voice of Yahweh and discerns His teaching in the storm, he will ultimately find peace. So let us consider our ways: are they really pleasing God? Let us be yoked together so that we have peace in our ecclesias; this is a service that each one can render no matter how humble our standing might be.

Bro. Patrick Wafula

I was baptised in 2002. I thank God for what He did for me, and thank Bro. Lamas Okoth Muga for teaching me the Truth. May God bless Lamas in his work of preaching the Gospel. Since my baptism I have met many challenges, but have always remembered what I promised God. I have been at Nyagowa ecclesia in the south part of the country; there is another ecclesia, Adiedo. Please send more Bible Basics and Bible Companions as many are in need of them. With abiding love in the Lord,

Bro. Collins Onyango

KERICHO

I would like to thank you a lot for the many booklets you have been sending to me. I received the Key Cards which was much appreciated and welcomed with all my heart. I would like to request that you introduce me and my journalistic work to poets and freelance writers worldwide. Here in Kenya, a third world country, problems are abundant ranging from unemployment, corruption, immorality etc. but when Jesus comes we will be saints in His Kingdom.

Bro. Erick Mutai

KITISE

The gospel was preached to me and I received it happily. In return, I give you all my love in Christ and I rejoice for the books and cards which I received from you.

Bro. Daniel Maingi

KWALE

Greetings dear Brothers and Sisters who are looking forward to and awaiting the second coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to establish God's everlasting Kingdom here on earth. It is my hope that you are already prepared to welcome the bridegroom (Jesus) and be with him. I am very much thankful for the Bible Basics sent to me, I received them in good order and am learning more; it is a great help to me, thank you very much and may God bless you. I am eager to meet with you face to face so that we may share our joy and happiness, but I pray that we shall meet

in the Kingdom when Jesus comes. I am praying for the peace that is missing in the Middle East. Israel and the Palestinians are ever in clashes, but I pray to God that He will bring peace and harmony to His people and to the whole world.

Bro. Gideon Matheka Mukeku



Bro. Collins Onyango

MATUU

You are doing a good work in helping to spread the glad tidings throughout the world. I was pleased that you have now produced Bible Basics in Kiswahili and that copies are available to Kiswahili-speaking countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – this is a very good work. I am doing some translation into Kiswahili and Kikamba of Sunday School Union literature.

Bro. Lazarus Kingoo

MBITA

I got the books, plus Gospel News, which you sent to me and other things. I thank you for what you have done for me. I want you to give my greetings to Brothers and Sisters and tell my tutor, Janet Hobbins, I have lost her address. I am looking forward to the time when Jesus will be back with us and reform the earth with the Kingdom.

Bro. Jared Oketch

MSAMBWENI

Thank you very much for the good service. I have been reading Gospel News and, frankly speaking, it has changed my life (and my wife's). Since I started reading it I have found that life in Christ is peaceful. God willing, I will be baptised soon (Munga is now baptised). Please send to me the daily Bible reading calendar. Currently I'm missing it and it's hard to read the Bible in sequential order without a guide.

Bro. Munga Lugo

NANGO

Dago ecclesia was established in 1987. Our members are doing well and we pray and hope God will keep us together with you world-wide in the one faith. We pray together with you that Jesus will soon come. When we look at the world situation at present, we are convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that the coming of our Lord and Master is at hand. Jesus gave examples and signs to look at, here are a few chapters and verses from the scriptures: Luke 21:29-31,34-36; Matt. 24:4-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5. We hope the day will not catch us unawares and we pray to God to give us everlasting life in His coming Kingdom. May God bless all who are awake and keeping their lamps burning, for we shall soon rise to meet the Lord when he comes from heaven with great glory. We are also very happy for having the Gospel News magazine which we always receive, since it is a great source of blessing to our life.

Bro. Raphael Joni Aimo



Bro. Henry Mwei

NDALU

Basically, a true Christian is one who reads the Bible, understands it and does what it says. Unfortunately it is not so with many, because they lust for so many things in their minds. For instance, the Bible says a true Christian should have love, peace, patience and all the good things that we can think of. In a nutshell, we should be holy because He who called us is holy.

Bro. Peter Simiyu

NDHIWA

Give my greetings to your ecclesia and tell them that I am with them in the Name of Jesus Christ. I was at Okumbo ecclesia, but now am at Ndhiwa (14km from Okumbo) and am in isolation with my sister, Sis. Dorine Adoyo Mboya.

Bro. Leonard Mboya Lar

NYAGOWA

We are 17 Brothers and Sisters in the village of Nyagowa, but I am far away from the ecclesia, but I am happy that we are together 'in Christ'. Everything is possible, because God has a purpose. The Christadelphian faith was introduced to me by Bro. Patrick and Sis. Claudic Opondo. I was brought up in a traditional SDA family. We know that God is the Head of all leaders; leaders in this world acquire their power from God. I am blessed by having been chosen of God and taken from the religion of SDA and promise to stand firm in the faith.

Bro. Amayo Remjus



Bro. Amayo Remjus and Bro. Lamas Muga Okot

PALA-SARE

Some time back we were still conducting our prayers at our Sunday gathering when we were visited by two Brothers, Samwel Masawa from Migori and James Nyan'gute from Kisii. That day the exhortation was given by Bro. James Nyangute. We had interviews with contacts, but only one qualified for baptism. We give thanks to God that on that day Samson Onyango was baptised by Bro. Samwel Masawa. We thank the Brothers and Sisters in UK for saving our lives from malaria by providing the mosquito nets; we can now sleep comfortably and we give you all our grateful thanks

Bro. John O. Kine

SOSIOT

Currently here in Kenya all is not well because unemployment is at a premium, criminal activities and violation against human rights are reported everywhere. To make all ends meet, I have decided to venture into journalism, having been motivated by articles carried in Gospel News. I am happy and contented to know that the Kingdom of God is prepared for those who confess their sins and accept Jesus as their Redeemer. We are eagerly and patiently waiting for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Bro. Erick Kipruto Mutai

TONGAREN

Thank you very much for assisting me in many ways. Your words of encouragement and those from the various messages in the booklets you send are so important to me and my friends with whom I usually share the word of the Lord. At times I have borrowed Bible Basics from my friend, Moses Wafula Sitati, but he also may be using it, thus limiting my usage. I request some more, so that I can have a copy of my own and also for my friends with whom I share God's word; they come from different East African countries. Currently I am undertaking a teaching profession as a secondary teacher of biology and chemistry at the University of Kyambogo.

Bro. Martin Wamalwa

The magazines have made me grow in faith day after day and I will never refuse to read God's word. I like reading and answering questions better than just writing letters, so I request you to send magazines, questions and any other material which will make me write to you from time to time. I have a friend who is a Roman Catholic and we have been studying Bible Basics together and he is after joining me in wanting to be baptised into Christ. He had a question: he was officially married in his church; would he have to be married again in our 'church' as all marriage certificates in Kenya are officially issued from the Attorney General's office. All in all we are living in the last days, so let us be prepared to receive our Lord Jesus Christ and obey his commands.

Bro. Romano O. Ejakaiti

URIRI

Our ecclesia at Uriri village comprises 40 members. We lack many things, but are at an early stage, so we need a lot of help. I'm a primary school teacher, having trained in 1991-92.

Bro. Moses E. Maleya

I wish to express my sincere gratitude for your spiritual and moral support. We have moved our Migori ecclesia to Uriri which is situated about 10km from Migori. We decided to move to Uriri because of expenditure, that is, house rent and the daily travelling costs of meeting our brethren who are located in different parts. We were blessed to have a member offer us a free house to meet in. We also spend much in preparing Bible lessons for the youth forum and also preparing prayers for different members who request them. We ask you to kindly continue sending us the Magazine and help in any way you can. Our mission of preaching the gospel is faring very well.

Bro. Kennedy Kirinya

WEBUYE

Thank you for writing and thank you for supporting us spiritually. Our ecclesia is growing rapidly so continue supplying Gospel News and other material for our new members, AUGUSTINE WAMALWA, BENJAMINE WANYONYI and MARTIN WAKHUNGU. I received the Key Cards and they are of great value, the numbers were from 146-210. If you get time, then please send me other numbers for they are really helping me in Bible study.

Bro. Joseph M. Wanjala

news from lesotho

I have received the book, "Why Are We Here?" Really, I am so grateful for this wonderful book which was sent to me as a gift so that I might read it and increase my knowledge thoroughly of the word of God, and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, whom it clearly describes and explains in the Bible that he died for us on the cross for our sins. I just say 'Thank you' indeed for this book. Here in my beloved country it just seems as though the time which has been prophesied has come, concerning both the deeds and events that are happening, e.g. there is famine in so many parts of the country. Due to starvation, numerous numbers of people have turned to be killers, some have turned to be thieves and break our houses and steal things and sell them very cheaply for their own survival. Also, some have turned to be criminals; they kill people savagely to possess, by force, their goods. There is also a hatred among people; there is no love in the family. Children rebel against their parents and some even beat them up and some kill them. Things have changed and have become worse indeed. So what do these things indicate? Is it that the coming of Jesus Christ is very near, therefore we should be prepared for his coming? Only God knows what is going to happen, for I trust Him and regard Him as both my Shield and Fortress, especially in bad conditions. I pray God that He will give me strength that I will do His will and please Him. Please pray for me that God will hear my prayers in asking for employment.

Bro. Bernard Lintsa

news from namibia

OSIRE

I thank the mighty God for having saved me from the evils. I now belong to the Christadelphians at Osire. I was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo where the war broke out. Until now there is no peace. This war has forced people to flee in different directions. In my case, I found myself as a refugee here in Namibia and living in a refugee camp. When we arrived here my friends and I resumed Bible studies and everyday prayers. I really thank the Lord, for he enabled me to know His word. I am an orphan; both my parents died before the war started in my country. I am not married yet, due to some problems that I am facing in life. After being taught the Christadelphian approach and doctrine, I was baptised on June 12, 2003 here in Namibia by Bro. Leon, Sis. Joanne and Sis. Jen from Australia.

Bro. Kitego Shungaza

news from south africa

BRYANSTON

It is now a long time since I wrote to you, but since my wife fell asleep things have been hectic for me, but I am always praying and standing with the Truth of our Lord. I am now in S. Africa,

having arrived in May last year. Since then I've been trying to locate Christadelphian Brothers and Sisters. I would indeed be pleased to meet Brothers and Sisters in Christ in South Africa. (This has been done)

Bro. Mathias Msimanga

KEMPTON PARK

Just a bit of encouragement – last Saturday PM Paul and I went to visit a student in Florida (west of JHB) who had answered all courses, particularly Bible Basics, exceptionally well and said wanted a visit. This well spoken and better read man of 44 and of Norwegian blood, was waiting for us outside a very dilapidated house and then showed us to some rickety chairs in the garden – all he has is a small servant's room in his mother's house (mother is dead) - he has been relegated there by his brother's Muslim wife who lives in the main house. He has no electricity, or running water, he was retrenched, took the package and lost that on a bad business venture. With no money could do nothing to fix his car so sold it and there he is – pretty stranded, doing carpentry jobs of sorts. His Bible knowledge is outstanding. Has grasped the truth with an amazing thoroughness and is mad about reading – has read the Bible through many times and also Bible Basics four times. Wants to get into Elpis Israel, Christendom Astray etc. So now the challenge for us is to get him to the meeting with no one living anywhere close to him. Paul is fetching him tomorrow and God Willing he'll be baptised next Sunday. Keep strong... always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Sis. Leonie

news from tanzania

ARUSHA

I take the opportunity to thank you all for your concern for me, for sure I was very thrilled to get many, many letters. The Christadelphians have revealed to my family and me the truth about God, so I must also work hard in spreading the Good News. A Sister has also sent me some books and I thank her so much through you.

Bro. Thierry Kabangu

KATUMBA

In your life is there anything more important that you would exchange for eternal life, as we wait for our Lord Jesus Christ?



Brothers and Sisters, visitors and contacts after the Breaking of Bread in Mwanza Tanzania



Bro. Hakiza William

If the answer is 'Yes', I am sorry for you. If not, then God bless you until His Son's coming to establish His Kingdom on this earth. Also I say, be careful in taking alcohol. One bottle can lead to more and more. Be a good example among the other churches and keep away from alcoholic drink.

Bro. Hakiza Ephraim William

news from uganda

BUGIRI

It is because of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are related to the hope of eternal life if we hold fast to the hope which we profess in faith and obedience. The ongoing trouble in Iraq and the Middle East, and world conditions, make us realise that these are signs of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I thank God for all the work going on in Uganda and for the strength God is giving me. I kindly request, if possible, to have more books and leaflets.

Bro. Patrick Morse Opondo

MBARARA

The two photographs I am sending are of a Brother and a Sister baptised in June and July, 2003, at Mbarara.

Bro. Godwin Mugasi



Bro. Amon Ahabwe baptised on June 22nd 2003

news from zambia

CHIPATA

Greeting you in the Master's Name, whom we await patiently to bring peace to this violent world. I went to Chinsali to see my mother, then went back to the bush camp and for our trip to Central and Northern Province. Although we had a road accident, fortunately God was with us and we all are alive, only my left shoulder is still painful. We had 16 baptisms, i.e. seven from Chinkumba ecclesia in Chinsali, and four from my former ecclesia, Chifunsa, also in Chinsali, four in Mandona and one in the isolated ecclesia of Nankonde

Bro. Alfred Bwalya

KALOMO

The gospel of the Kingdom must be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. The rapid spread of the Truth to many additional nations today stimulates us to preach. Here, many are willing to learn the Truth from Christadelphians, but it is not everybody who knows or understands English. It is very helpful to have some of our booklets in our own language.
Bro. Shadreck Mwiya

KAWAMBWA



Sis. Jane baptised on July 6th 2003

I would like to inform you that I and others will be very happy to receive Bible Basics in Bemba – please send six and one must be in English – all sent in one parcel. We wait for them to reach our hands. May God be with you as we all wait for the return of our King, Jesus Christ.

Bro. Mwansa Titus

KAZEMBIA

Due to certain circumstances beyond my control, I have been away for a period of time, but despite my absence my wife, Josephine, was in a position to collect the literature you sent to me. I would like to continue to receive more from you, please.

Bro. James Kanbabe

MUFULIRA

Thank you for the Bible Basics; I gave one to Bro. Alex Mutale from Kitwe who was asking for it. We, as children of God, look to our Father. We give thanks to Him, call on His Name, and make known among the nations what He has done. Thank you for your help and for encouraging me to pass the examination in motor mechanics, level one. Out of 12 students who wrote the final exam, five were picked for Craft Certificate, and the cutting point was 75%. I was one of those; I got 86% theory and 60% final practical exam. Bro. David Nicholls came with a manual for motor mechanics and it is helping me very much. The signs of the times are incredible: terrorism, violence becoming like the days of Noah. The only Hope is the return of our Lord. We thank God for what you have done for us on our way to the Kingdom.

Bro. Charles Daka



One of the photos taken at the Youth meeting, Harare



The first Christadelphian Bible Mission Conference held in Harare, 1987. Back row: Bre. Innocent Kuvuta, Exebio Chakwerera, Walter Mangono, Augustine Garanewafo, Samson M'lauzi, Crispen Zimba, Sis. Nancy Milburn. Front: Bre. Charles McQuoid, James Uprichard, Frederick Matarirano and Sis. Tracy Garanewako

news from zimbabwe

CHEGUTU

I have completed the first part at the Craft Centre. God was with me during my stay in Zambia. God did great wonders to me, and really the hard times I experienced were a test from God to show how strong in faith I am. Yes, I did put everything in His hands and He opened my heart and brain to grasp quickly what I was learning. Now I am back home and would like to thank you for the Bible Basics you sent. I have distributed to some Brothers who were in need of them. If possible, can you send me some more because I had to distribute even my own copy.

Bro. Farai Phiri

HARARE

I thank God for giving me this time to write to you. How are you in the UK? Here everything is OK except the hardships we are facing day by day. We had a Youth meeting in Bulawayo. Everybody was blessed through the programme and the word, which was powerful.

Bro. James Znitete

KARIBA

After the baptism of Bro. David Mhondiwa on May 18, 2003, at twilight we sat down along the shore of Lake Kariba to remember our Lord. Bro. Richard Katongomara baptised David. Sitting on the grass, Bro. Joshua presided for Bro. Innocent, who enlightened us by his exhortation. We thank and praise God for adding to our number, and we pray for His guidance and protection until Jesus comes to set up God's Kingdom.

Bro. Joshua Pakli



Brothers Richard, Joshua, William, Revi, David and Innocent, Kariba



Bro. Richard Katongomara baptising David, Kariba

News from Europe / Eurasia

news from albania

We are pleased to report the baptisms of M, N and E in very difficult circumstances; they need our fervent prayers as they embark upon the life in Christ.

POGRADEC

We are still remembering with joy the visit of Liz, Ben and Abi to us here. We have many more people interested in the Gospel. We are preaching to the high school children here.

Bro. Adem & Sis. Bukurie

news from azerbaijan

Our Iranian Brother and Sisters are still here awaiting a UNHCR decision. They thank you for your prayers. The sisters have been ill and are sick with worry, but are strong in the Faith.



Group discussion at the Indian teachers gathering. Sis. Mary Jane Abel explains about Visual Aids and Activity Sheets.

news from belarus

BARANOVICHI

Sadly I can't come to the Bible School this time, but I have some people here interested in the Truth. I need more copies of Bible Basics to give to them.

Sis. Larisa

BORISOV

I have been left by my husband but I realize for sure that God is with me. I will try to attend the next gathering in Minsk.

Sis. Anna

LUNINETS

Brother Sasha is in hospital, in great pain because of the ulcers. I am sorry for not writing to you all, I have had so little time, but I love you all in the Lord.

Sis. Natasha

MINSK

We are continuing to produce our magazine here but we have some financial difficulties. We pray for you all.

Bro. Gennady

STAI

I have little new in my life here. I continue to be surrounded by people who live by bribes and

alcohol. I earn only \$30 month. It is very hard for me to travel much. I am praying strongly for you all.

Bro. Ivan

TERESHKI

I am surrounded here in this small village by the problem of alcohol. Many pensioners spend their pension within a few days on alcohol. They are then weak and ill for the rest of the month. There is much theft, and constantly I am nervously broken down because of what may happen to me at the hands of drunk people. Even very old pensioners are getting drunk, and the younger people will never find good work because they drink. I am getting older and weaker, the Lord is my strength. I pray only to endure each day.

Sis. Anna

news from estonia

I was just reading 2 Tim 1 v 15: "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes". Can you imagine how hard it was for Paul when the whole area of Asia (modern Turkey) turned away from him? I believe it was quite a challenge for him, but he did not give up. He knew God was on his side. We probably have the same feelings when some betray us in one way or the other.

Bro. Aleksej

news from israel

BEER SHEVA

Viktor has been very weak lately, we are holding on to our lives only just about, so it seems. We so want the Kingdom to come. The situation in this country cannot go on much longer, this is our reason for thinking that perhaps we shall live to see the second coming.

Sis. Nina

JERUSALEM

I would be very interested to receive literature in Thai and to know if there is any ecclesia in Thailand. Thai workers in Israel seem to be very stuck in their ways and need a new direction.

Bro. Anthony Hinchliffe

TEL AVIV

Now our hot summer has ended here, it was hard for me to endure it this year. I am keen to distribute Bible Basics to people here. I pray there will be big ecclesias everywhere.

Bro. Jhosef

May God bless all the efforts to take the word of God to every corner of this planet. We are very much with you in this. We had a wonderful meeting when Bro Jesse Warner was here. It was a true spiritual celebration for us here! I am going back to Russia and Ukraine soon for some time and I am determined to do my part in spreading the word there too.

Bro. Vladimir

news from jordan

You know how weak we are in facing this hard life alone, but what does encourage us is the fact of what we are in Jesus Christ, indeed if it wasn't for him we couldn't continue in the way, I do feel weak sometimes and unstable minded because of the circumstances I face, for sure He is in control, but when you haven't got any power to face that, or you feel like that, then that would be another story, but at the end we have victory over any thing by Jesus Christ, to him be all the glory for ever Amen .

Bro. B

news from kazakhstan

ALMATY

We here are worrying how we will survive this winter. Our clothes are worn out and we need boots. We do not know what to do. Please pray for us.

Sis. Nina

Comment: We have sought to arrange for this need to be met.

We have been living here on very little for the last months as we still can't find anyone to rent our spare room from us which is our main income. My heart is also bad now. We miss you all.

Sis. Lena

KOKSHETAU

Here we have some news in that Sis. Zhenya has now married Bro. Henryk in Poland. I am working on the problem of getting our ecclesia here registered, it is problematic. Don't forget us here!

Bro. Yuri

news from latvia

BALVI

I have had two brothers and a sister living with me temporarily, as they have nowhere stable to live just now. I am continuing my work of translating, but life is such a struggle in every area, we can only struggle onwards with God's help.

Bro. Petris

JEKABPILS

We are just grateful beyond words for the help given to our mother to have a cataract operation, she can see clearly again in order to read the Bible daily, and we realize that we, too, have been helped from darkness to light by the Truth you have taught us.

Bre. Sergej & Sasha

JELGAVA

I am hoping to come to the next meeting and I have invited my mum although she is busy with her work, as she has a job caring for a graveyard. All things are in God's hands. In my preaching I am only doing what I have to do as a believer.

Bro. Janis

LIEPA

I continue to lie here sick, I am praying, I am reading, it is all I can do, I put my trust in the doctor and the commission but I also know not to put my trust in the sons of men who can do nothing without God.

Bro. Viktor

PILTENE

I am learning that the world is full of troubles and many people have more troubles than we have. I am 77 now but I am indeed happy.

Sis. Olga

RIGA

When I cannot come to the meetings I always make the breaking of bread at home. I assure you I read each day with you from the Companion. It is such a joy to me to receive a letter, I am rejoicing for some days because of it. I so love you all.

Sis. Aleksandra

I deeply thank you for teaching me and baptizing me. I am still struggling to make it a daily routine to read the Bible, the things of life and of my work are hard to displace. I remember that my mother who is long since dead was a believer, I should have listened more to her rather than coming to Jesus in later life.

Sis. Margarita

I am very glad to get letters, it reminds me that I am not alone in this world. I wish every one of you God's deepest blessing.

Bro. Anatoly

TUKUMS

We were really so sorry to hear about the death of Bro. Ivan in Kubuli, our home village. But with us here all is OK. Didzis is working and we continue in Bible reading together here.

Sis. Larisa

VECMOKAS

As the season has finished I have now ended my job of gathering apples in a nearby village, so again I am struggling for survival. I have some relatives whom I believe might respond to the Truth and I would like you to send Bible Basics to them as this is to me the best way to get them to the Truth.

Sis. Vaira

VENTSPILS

I thank you for the warm clothes that you kindly sent to me. The receiving of a big parcel was an occasion for me! It arrived safely and I have been moved to tears. The clothes will be applied wisely and with prayer. Thank you for everything you are able to do to help make the world a fairer place for us. God bless you and keep you safe.

Sis. Olga

VILANI

I feel under a lot of stress here, there are so many problems for a Russian old man living here.

The heating in our block will not function this winter, so I worry about that. I worry too about my grandson and his problems at school here as a Russian speaker. I am considering carefully the offer to move in to the housing project. I pray to God about this. I read the Bible daily and try to hear His voice to me in all things.

Bro. Fyodyor

news from moldova

CHISINAU

I am in a bad situation with work, I have nobody here to help me find work. Please pray for me, I have so many problems, and at times I even feel my connection with God gets damaged by my worry about them all. May God bless us all.

Sis. Elvira

I have recently been in Moscow with my young son Evgenij, he is deaf and there was a possibility of having an operation done which might restore his hearing, but it would cost \$25,000 and there is no guarantee it will work. Here in Moldova there is very little facility for educating deaf children. I don't know what to do. I believe the Lord will guide me.

Sis. Svetlana

DUBOSSARY

Through the magazine I want to thank all Brothers who work so hard to feed us spiritually, I promise that I read all the articles and exhortations sent to me, this is more for me than my daily food. I am praying for the Brothers persecuted in Pakistan.

Sis. Tamara

NISPORENI

I am so happy to be baptized! There was always something lacking in my life spiritually, a sense was always with me that in that area I was so lacking. Now I am reading the Bible with new eyes. My favourite verse for the moment is Is. 41:10: "Do not fear, for I am with you".

Sis. Valya

news from morocco

We thank you so much for your love and all you do for us. We know that you are dear to us. Here it seems at times to all be a closed door. If you see the TV news of Morocco you will know a lot about this country. So you will see that it is not an easy thing for us to live here. You can't imagine how sad is our feeling to leave Morocco and live outside and leave the preaching here. Christadelphians must support themselves and we don't want to apply to you always for money. All you can do to help us is to pray for us.

Bre H, I and R

news from norway

It's nice to hear a lot of people are baptized. I read in the Gospel News quite a lot are baptized in Latvia. That's very fine. Soon will be seven years since I was baptized. Time is flying. A lot of things happened after this. I read the Bible according to Bible Companion. In August there was John Benson and Ray Willets from Oslo, and the sister from England. So we were reading the Bible together and breaking the bread.

Sis. Helena

news from pakistan

I am very excited to inform you that our team has been working on a (secret) project for producing audio cassettes. We selected some parts from Bible Basics, and then we encouraged each other to produce it in other languages. This morning we have achieved our goal. Now have we five audio cassettes in my hand, Punjabi, Urdu, Balochi, Sindhi and Persian / Farsi. Urdu and Punjabi were prepared long before by Sis. Esther, but we kept silent until the other languages were ready. I have asked Bro. Farooq to make one audio CD to post you all these five languages. We will then try to make duplicates for nominal price distribution and also free copies to very poor families. As you know our ministry is still among lower class people, many of them cannot read and write, but now they can listen to the doctrine and teaching. This has been our vision, to have as many tools as possible to reach people easily. This is a most wonderful project that we have done with the Lord on our side. Be sure the Lord is on our side and He will continue to use us for His glory leading towards the establishment of His kingdom on this Earth.

In His unfailing love,

Br. K and team

Greetings and prayers. I just got back from my five days trip to Nawabshah. We had a meeting with 12 men and three ladies. They have been reading and answering the lessons from the Bible Basics book. Brother F have been taking questions and our doctrine and beliefs from them. Two Brothers A and I, and one Sister N of 22 were secretly baptized by me in presence of Br. F and some other baptized Brothers and Sister. 23 Bible Basics were distributed there and we will make frequent trips to them to encourage those who got baptized and those who are interested to know more. Meetings were conducted twice a day, 2 to 5 pm and 8 to 10 pm. In the mornings we held unscheduled meetings with those who were interested and shared the gospel according to our beliefs. We introduced www.bbie.org website and you may start receiving responses from there.

Bre. F and K

According to the Bible "no man can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon". Yes, my dear brothers, I want to say this to you, that I cannot serve God and mammon. I can serve only God.

Sis. S

news from russia



The Esperanto team meeting in Poland (Bro. David Budden, Esperanto Linkman with glasses in the Centre) The Esperanto effort has brought a number into the Truth from various Countries. We are pleased to report the baptism of OKSANA (Abinsk); may she hold to the hope of the Kingdom until the end.

ABINSK

Our Brother Vladimir has been teaching a young man, a teenager, and I am hoping to baptize him soon. I have so many problems here. But this has brightened my experience each day, to teach another who seeks for God.

Bro. Sasha

EFREMOV

I just received Gospel News and with such eagerness I always read it, all the way through, to know of my Brothers and Sisters and to grow in my knowledge. I still recall the things we were taught at the last Bible School although it is some time ago now. Although I don't have as much time as I would like for studying, I know that my life has changed very much since my baptism.

Bro. Oleg

JOSHKAR OLA

It's strange for me to make the breaking of bread alone. I am surrounded by people from other churches and I am hoping to be able to persuade some of them of the Truth. I am very much with you all. I remember the Bible Schools. I hold on to the promise that we will all be together in the Kingdom.

Sis. Lena

KALACH

I have received copies of Bible Basics and I have given them out to people in hospital and elsewhere. I am now in the habit of reading by the Companion and I break bread on my own on Sundays at 11 as suggested in Bible Basics. I know that after all the years of being deceived by people, I have truly got the truth now and I can face death calmly.

Bro. Nikolaj

KAZAN

I am praying so much these days, for there to be peace, for the service of the Gospel to continue, that more may come to joy and fellowship in Christ. I am so glad that Sister Ludmila has been baptized now in St Petersburg. I had much correspondence with her and I am so happy for this.

Sis. Ludmila K.

I received greetings after my baptism from Brothers and Sisters in England, USA, Australia, Russia etc, it made me realize that truly I have Brothers and Sisters and am part of a much greater family. I believe I will live with you in the Kingdom of God. This is my message to you.

Sis. Lilija

We are so sorry for not communicating for some time. Things are much better with us as we are now both working and are settled. The greatest joy for us is that our mother Gulnara was baptized by our dear Sister Ludmila!

Sisters Anna and Lilija

I was reading recently from the Acts of the Apostles. I suddenly realized the huge effort Paul made, the effort he expended, and how he endured. I felt I was reading for the first time how he entered hostile synagogues and preached. I am hoping to come to the Bible School.

Bro. Ramil

LIPETSK

I enjoyed reading the latest Gospel News and also the booklet by Bro. Pearce, 'God's Living Proof' which was printed by Bro. Podgaisky. I have been feeling myself very unworthy to be a Brother of Christadelphians, yet I believe also that I am redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. I pray especially for the Brothers in places like Pakistan.

Bro. Sasha

MOSCOW

I am so looking forward to coming to the Winter Bible School, such meetings really give me such strength. I am now working here in Moscow and renting a room with Bro. Vitaly. I am trying to pray for all people I know, so that their eyes are opened to the truth.

Bro. Igor Pr

NOVOUGOLNY

I am so looking forward to trying to come to the Bible School to meet with my one true family. I have so many problems. The Government are now trying to tell me that my pension is not legal for me to receive as I am a Georgian refugee. I continue to trust in God.

Sis. Ekaterina

OKTYABRSKIJ

I am very happy to hear of so many others coming to the Truth. I now am not alone here as Sis. Tamara is now my baptized sister in Christ, and we meet together very often. I remind myself of 1 Cor. 15:58, that we must not be weary in our deeds for the Lord, as there will be a reward.

Sis. Larisa

I'm so grateful for the literature sent to me after my baptism. As a 65 year old widow these things of the truth are the most important for me in the world. I am so grateful to Sis. Larisa for introducing me to you and so to the Truth.

Sis. Tamara

POKROVKA

Thank you for encouraging me to give you addresses to whom we can send Bible Basics. I have three people I have been writing to and this offer came at the right time. I remember the parable of the sower, how we sow and God will give the increase. The winter has already begun here. I always worry how to survive this time of year.

Sis. Svetlana

ROSTOV

I have others here in this area who would like to receive Bible Basics. Whatever wounds we receive in our ministry, we are comforted to know that the end is very near and getting closer.

Bro. Andrej

SARANSK

My baptism truly changed the whole direction of my life. Now every time I get a letter it moves me to tears to realize that someone else in our true family thinks of me, and that I am not alone here. I believe we are really on the right road to the Kingdom of God and that we will get there.

Sis. Aleksandra

SAINT PETERSBURG

I am very much thinking of you all in these hard times and am always eager for your news.

Bro. Valerij

SHANINO

It is now hard for me to communicate with you. I can only do it when my daughter goes out of the village and can post a letter. I continue to pray for you every single day. I realize now that many Brothers and Sisters have an even worse situation than me. My dream is to come again to the Bible School but I am unsure if it will work out now.

Sis. Tamara

SHCHYOKINO

I greatly respect your risking of your life in taking the message to dangerous places, I want to thank you from myself, because it is inspiring to me as I sit here trying to also give my life for the Truth. I pray so much, I would like to know if they really help people or not.

Bro. Boris

TULA OBL.

I feel a great eternal debt to you for so caring for me. Now I must try to repay it by a new life. I pray for you. I want the Kingdom to come soon. I am hoping to get out of my bad situation here by moving to live with a relative in another Oblast.

Sis. Ekaterina



At the second Ukrainian Bible School in Poltava, 2002

ULYANOVSK

I am reading the Bible each day since my baptism, also I am breaking bread regularly. I see now how I wasted my time for 30 years as a member of the Communist party, learning Marxist-Leninist philosophy that in the end cannot give salvation. I am learning a lot from my study of the letter to the Romans. I see the moral demands made upon me personally by all that God did for

me in Christ.

Bro. Viktor

VOLGOGRAD

After a gap of 1.5 years I am planning to visit the Bible School again, I so miss my fellowship with my Brothers and Sisters. I continue to study each day but without fellowship it is so hard.

Bro. Viktor

ZELENODOLSK

Here we are feeling that our small ecclesia is really growing. We are meeting regularly and Sister Ludmila comes from Kazan to help us. She is really a good teacher and we are very serious about our studying of the Bible. We love you all.

Sis. Valya

news from serbia

We are pleased to report the baptism of NENAD and the receiving into fellowship of his close friend ZHELJKO. We pray for these two Brethren as they seek to spread the Truth in this dark land.

God bless you and your Christian families. I have just sent a Bible to a woman in Nis who is interested. May God bless her.

Bro. Nenad

Thank you for coming here and helping us spread the Gospel to our neighbours!

Bro. Zheljko

news from tunisia

Our Brother here has been persecuted badly and reports that he is now shunned but hasn't yet been thrown out of his home. He needs our prayers

news from turkmenistan

We are delighted to report the baptisms of two Sisters here amidst very real persecution. They need our prayers; one has already been fired from her work as a result of Bible reading.

news from ukraine

BILA TSERKVA

After my grandad's death in 2001, I spend most of my time caring for my ill grandma, that's why I don't have much free time. I've translated 'Moses My Servant' by Bro. Harry Tennant. At the third Ukrainian Bible School in Poltava there were 100 visitors present; 13 Brothers and Sisters had come from the UK. There were two speakers, Bro. Stephen Palmer (Cardiff) and Bro. Andrew Walker (Milnsbridge). Bro. Stephen talked about Peter – disciple's portrait – and Bro. Andrew

spoke of Joshua – entrance into God’s Kingdom. Five ladies were baptised into the saving Name of Jesus Christ by Bro. Palmer. Everyone enjoyed fellowship and spiritual unity. I eagerly pray and wait for our Lord’s return to this wicked earth.

Bro. Alex. Tischenko

KHARKOV

I am hoping to come to the Bible School God willing, along with Bro. Anton, he is a pensioner but he so loves to be there and will do all he can to meet with the other Brothers and Sisters.

Sis. Ludmila

KIEV

I am here in Kiev at the moment staying in the flat of Sis. Elena. It is so nice to have some spiritual fellowship with others here. 2 Cor. 7:4 encourages us that God will always comfort us in our tribulations and this has happened for me in this way.

Sis. Tamara

I thought I would just say ‘Hello’ Marcus, as you were my very pleasant tutor more than 10 years ago! My great love to Brethren Andrew Longman and Jeremy Skinner too. They baptised me in April, 1993.

Bro. Henry Ouspensky

POLTAVA

We pray for your wellbeing and hope that we meet again very soon or in the Kingdom when Jesus is back to set it up. (I can work with you to translate the Truth’s literature).

Bro. Yestov Gennedy.

Not so long ago I met Bro. David Vimes in Kyov. He liked my idea of presenting flowers to the newly baptised Brothers and Sisters after their baptism. He took a photo of me and promised to write an article about it in the Magazine but I don’t know whether he has done it or not. Our world is full of evil, and we must support each other in faith and in love in these last days. We pray about the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the language differences will be in the past. I send you big greetings from our Poltava ecclesia and from Veronica, Gennedy and Antony. Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son in truth and love.

Bro. Vladimir

The time I spent in your company at Moscow Bible camp was so great. And your lessons that you’ve been telling us are so interesting and helpful (because your explanations were so clear!) The things we learnt about our newly baptised Brothers and Sisters in other countries who were punished by the religious police was so sad that I cannot even tell you about my feelings. The thing that I cannot help them in any way is awful. They suffer too hard, as none else.

Bro. Anton

We have people here who are interested and I am hoping some will be ready for baptism. I pray for them.

Sis. Ludmila

I am teaching my pupils some Christian songs in English, I have taught them “All things bright

and beautiful” and other songs. We have been able this Summer to get many apples from a collective farm that now has no manager. So we are happy to have them.

Sis. Veronika

I have been thinking much about the theme of Angels, and want to do more research on this. I have some people here who are interested in the Truth and I am working with them.

Bro. Vladimir

Because of financial problems and the need to buy medicines I was unable to get to the Moldova Bible School, this was a great blow to me. I have been feeling rather low recently.

Bro. Gennady

ROVENKI

I have been really sad because I lost a very good Christian friend. I have another friend who reads the Bible with me sometimes and I have given her Bible Basics to read.

Sis. Tamara

TAVRIJSK

May all Brothers and Sisters in Iraq and Iran be kept by God! I am praying for them and am always eager for news from them. May there be blessing and peace for us all from our Father.

Sis. Nana

news from uzbekistan

TASHKENT

I see that what the Truth is all about is life with God each day, prayer, loving our neighbour, spreading the word to others. I am sick and each year I am interviewed to decide whether to give me a pension and I am praying that I will continue to be granted this, I have no other help apart from God, and yet I have learnt that money doesn't solve all problems.

Bro. Oleg

News from the Americas

news from chile

Thank you for your congratulations on my baptism. I'm very happy about the step I have taken and hope to grow in understanding so that I can better preach the Kingdom of God to others. I'll begin by telling you that some years ago I prayed that God would show me the true way and this He did a year and a half ago when I opened the web page www.labiblia.com and I began to find out the truth. Bro. Jim Hunter and his wife sent me correspondence courses to which I replied step by step. Then I received a letter to the effect that some Brothers and Sisters overseas would be coming and studies would be given at the Hotel Gran Palace in Santiago. There I met Sis. Leonie Verster and Bro. Hugo Petrilli and they encouraged me to continue. A little later I received the manual Bible Basics which helped me a lot to understand the truths of the Bible. On the 19 October at 19.00hrs I was immersed in water in the presence of Bre Robert Alderson, Hugo Petrilli, Ruben Barboza, Sis. Gisella Pintado and two students who had stayed after the studies.

This briefly is my testimony. I appreciate your words and hope that you will be praying for us. I'm the first Chileno, I think, to be, baptised – that's something historic isn't it?! A warm hug and greetings to all the brotherhood.

Bro. Bernard Soto Raimil

news from usa

You sent us a copy of Bible Basics in Chinese for a woman who came to our 'Learn to Read the Bible Effectively' seminar. You will like to know that she has expressed an interest in studying for baptism. To God be the glory! We are thrilled.

Bro. David & Sis. Connie Stiles

News from Asia

news from china

BEIJING

There are some people here ready for baptism, I wonder why they don't get baptised. What is it they wait for? Why to hesitate? This Wednesday night I met Raju, Sherrie and Leigh, from Australia & New Zealand, and listened to their preaching, but I didn't listen to all the preaching. I live far from their hotel, so I left early. Every time I must take 90 minutes to go to our meeting as I live in western Beijing, the others live in eastern Beijing.

Bro. Y

DEMERARA

How are you all getting along with the work of the Lord? Doing God's work should be our priority. Bro. Sherwyn is grateful for Gospel News. I am sorry for taking so long to reply. I have my job and ecclesial life and now we are preparing for the Caribbean Camp; we are engaged mostly in practising skit and songs. I am at present doing a programme at University. Thank you for the tracts you send me from time to time, they sure are of great help to the readers. May God continually bless you guys to continue spreading His word in the world.

Sis. Elizabeth Europe



A Chinese Sister with her family up a tree

news from philippines

I'm truly encourage with the contents of the Gospel News especially the news and testimonies of our brethren and sisters from far places. I know that it would be very impossible for me this, but I'm still hoping andwishing that someday I could visit our brethren and sisters in other

countries especially those who're in difficulties spiritually and in life. I hope God will hear me, if our Lord Jesus Christ will not yet return here on earth to establish God's kingdom.



Bangui Sunday School Philippines

I would like to say that the Christadelphians here in the Philippines are growing fast in numbers maybe because this is a Christian country, that has freedom and freewill to preach the word of God. But of course we're also encountering and suffering persecutions, hardship and obstacles in life, but thank God that He is always there to protect and comfort us and He does not allow any form of evil things to destroy our faith towards His Kingdom.

On behalf of Philippines Christadelphians we would like to past our earnest and most warm greetings to all our brethren and sisters in Christ, we would like you to know also that you're all in our thought love and prayers.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works (Heb. 10:23-24).

Sister Marilou

Sharing One Faith in N. Tanzania

The word 'visit' has one meaning but different targets ? business purposes, private issues, changing areas, tourism or relaxing etc. Isaiah 52:7 says, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!'

We are called to care for others, and the most well known story is probably the parable of the good Samaritan. Obviously taking care of others will benefit them, but the great thing is as long as we are serving others by spreading the word of God, 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God'. After a time it could well bear fruit, that means that propagation will be needed, irrigating by the water of life.

We visited and witnessed the newly baptised Brethren and Sisters of Lugufu ecclesia as well as of Rutale ecclesia in Kigoms. We care for them as one body in Christ. If the leg is sick the whole body will be in trouble. Care does not mean that we take all responsibility of a person, but it is revealed in different ways ? through love, in days of danger or days of happiness. Jesus has given us a living example in John 13:14-17

Let us think of Jesus' example of caring by giving his body as a sacrifice for sin. There is no sense in thinking of this if we who are sharing the same baptism, same faith and same hope do not take care of others with whom we share the same belief. As it is for us to care for others who share the same faith, we visited our beloved brethren in Christ here and there.

These photos are from Bro. Benoit's visits to various ecclesias in N. Tanzania.



Kigoma Brethren and Sisters at Rutale ecclesial hall in Kigoma Region



Bro. Benoit Mukeni (Arusha, Tanzania)

Public Speaking – Lesson 3

How to make our meaning clear in order to persuade and convince

Everyone would agree with this simple fact in connection with public speaking:

‘The audience cannot be expected to know what the speaker is talking about if the speaker does not know *himself* what he/she is talking about.’ It is therefore essential to clearly know in your own mind what you are going to talk about. In simple terms it is called ‘setting a goal’.

There are two questions we should ask ourselves: (1) Why am I speaking? and (2) What result do I want to achieve?

Once we are certain of our objective we can commence our preparations. Our last lesson saw the importance of an interesting start and finish and now we will be concerned with making our meaning clear in order to persuade and convince. At the start we must remember that some of the things we will tell our audience by way of doctrine will be difficult for them to understand, as some of our listeners will have believed contrary doctrine for a long time. As a result of this we may not be able to convince them the very first time they hear us. With this in mind we should endeavour to maintain the interest of the audience. They will be interested if they know what we are talking about from the start, otherwise we will lose them as an audience.

Jesus Christ always kept his audience – remember how they flocked to hear his words. There was always a multitude and they followed him wherever he went. We can learn from this example of Jesus and this lesson will help our preaching.

There follows two different methods to help us achieve our results.

1) Be simple

Jesus' teachings were simple and straight to the point. Men and women from all walks of life understood what he meant. The secret of Jesus' simple teaching was comparison. Jesus constantly made comparisons. For an exercise look up the number of times Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like ...". Jesus always used simple everyday occurrences to illustrate his teachings. Again as an exercise look up the substance of all the parables and in every case we will be familiar with the circumstances that go to make up the story of the parable even if we do not understand the full usage of the parable.

Another lesson we learn from Jesus' teachings is found in John 6:52-68. Many of Jesus' disciples went away when they heard his difficult sayings. Jesus is the judge of all men and perhaps his righteousness drove them away. Our position is difficult; we are not judges of men. We have, however, a deep responsibility to preach the Truth about God's kingdom to them. Therefore it is of utmost importance we do not drive them away with complicated or difficult teachings. We must always remember that it took some time for us to slowly, but surely, learn the Truth. So let us not deprive our friends of the opportunity of slow but sure learning.

2) The 'positive approach' method

This is simply getting our hearers to say 'yes' to our propositions. To see how this is achieved we will look closely at the example of Paul in his famous address on Mars Hill in Acts 17:16-34.

The people of Athens were always curious to hear some new thing and as a result they were interested to hear Paul's new doctrine. Paul was invited to speak and he began his address in this manner: "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious". This was true; they were very religious, they were proud of all the gods they worshipped. Paul goes on to prove they were religious with an illustration, "For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD' ". This observation by Paul helped to unite the audience and the speaker and it allowed Paul to tell the Athenians the truth about the unknown God. In addition, he preached the doctrine of resurrection and salvation and he even quoted one of their own poets.

Paul's success in this speech from Mars Hill was due to his ability to create a positive response in his audience. The men of Athens were saying 'yes' to his propositions more than if Paul's approach had been: 'You men of Athens, I perceive you are all wrong. You are worshipping idols of wood and stone, you are heathens. Cast down your idols and worship Jesus Christ and the living God'.

He *persuaded* and *convinced* his audience by the positive approach method and they understood his message.

Bro. John Muyala (Bungoma, Kenya)

Comfort from prayer

We can gain comfort from real deep prayer, by speaking to God concerning the things that are really in our heart. If we want things that are right things, and we want them for the right reasons, if it is God's will He will grant us what we ask. In the book of Matthew 7:7-8 it says, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.' Verse 11, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him.' We ask amiss, and so we receive not.

Let us remember Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:8-28. Hannah had no children as the other wife of her husband. Hannah wanted just *one* child. Her husband said, 'Am I not better to you than ten sons?' However, Hannah saw but one way out of her sadness. She went into the temple to pray earnestly to God. She thought that she was alone, but Eli the priest was there. The important thing was, that God heard her prayer. It is written, 'She was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said that if God would give her a boy, she would give him to the Lord all the days of his life.'

Eli the priest thought that she was drunk because she spoke from *the heart* and only her lips moved. Eli told her that she was drunk but she said 'No, my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk no strong drink, but have poured out my heart before the Lord.'

Eli then knew that she was sincere and said, 'Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant you your petition that you have asked of Him.' Hannah had that great faith that *God* would answer her prayer and we are told that she went home and did eat and she was no longer sad. And the simple words are, '*The Lord remembered her*'. Her son Samuel became one of the greatest judges of Israel and found favour with God. When she took him to the temple she said to Eli, 'For this child I prayed: and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord. And they worshipped the Lord there.'

James 5:16 says, 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed *earnestly* that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain.' We have many examples in the Bible of those whose prayers were answered in dramatic ways and we can be assured that if we pray for the right things and our words are for

the glory of God and not for selfish things, God will answer our prayers. If then we consider the worthies of old whose lives are written for our example, we can gain strength and comfort in the days that remain, and hold fast until the end.

We ought to communicate to God through His beloved Son who for our sake died shamefully on the cross. Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, always prayed to the Father for comfort and strength. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 Paul says, "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We can comfort each other knowing that they with us will share the glories of the Kingdom, and we shall live and reign on the earth with Jesus who will be King over all the nations. The future is worth working for because we are told that in that day, not only shall we be given eternal life, but that "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Verse 7, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

Revelation 22:12: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Bro. Joseph Oppong (Shama Junction, Ghana)

A Prayer for Forgiveness

Be merciful to me, O God,
O God, O God,
Be merciful to me, O God,
For your love is consistent.

I am always conscious of my sins,
Conscious of my sins, conscious of my sins,
I am always conscious of my sins,
You are right in judging me.

Remove my sin and I will be clean,
I will be clean, I will be clean,
Remove my sin and I will be clean,
I will be whiter than snow.

Put a new and loyal spirit in me,
A new spirit in me, a new spirit in me,
Put a new and loyal spirit in me,
Do not take your holy spirit away from me.

Give me joy from your salvation,
From your salvation, from your salvation,
Give me joy from your salvation,
I will teach sinners your commands.

(Psalm 51:1-19)

Bro. Erick Mutai, (Kericho, Kenya)

The Pre-existence of Christ

There is considerable misunderstanding of this subject at times and so a special series of three in-depth articles has been specially written by Bro. John and Sis. Sally Palmer to explain and also answer some of the verses which are raised on this issue.

PART TWO

So, how can we understand some of the Bible verses that seem to say that Jesus DID exist before his birth? We will look at some of these in detail later, but first we must understand about the foreknowledge of God. This simply means God knowing things before they happen. God is omniscient ? this means that He knows everything. He knows our thoughts, what will happen to us in 10 years? time and He even knew us before we were born. Psalm 139 is a beautiful psalm that talks about how much God knows each one of us. This is hard for us to understand because we think that we know everything about ourselves, but we don't ? our knowledge is limited, we cannot see into the future to know what we will say or do, but God can and does.

Ephesians 1:4 ??for He chose us before the creation of the world? .?

So God knew that I was going to be born even before He created the world! What a wonderful thing ? that God chose me to be a Christian over 6000 years ago before creation. I was in His plan for the world. He wanted me to be one of His spiritual children. And this is the same for all the baptised believers of God. They have been chosen to do God?s work. God said the same to Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 1:5 ??before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart, I appointed you as a prophet to the nations? .?

God had chosen Jeremiah to do this work of a prophet for Him before he was ever born. Maybe this can help us to understand the way that God speaks about Jesus, because Jesus was the most important part of God?s plan for the world. Jesus had been chosen for the most important work of saving humans from sin and death. Look at Revelation 13:8:

??the Lamb WHO WAS SLAIN (or killed) FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.?

Jesus is the Lamb of God and here it says he died before creation. Now we know that Jesus didn't die before creation ? he died about 4000 years after creation, so what does this verse mean? It must mean that in GOD'S PLAN, He knew that His son, Jesus, would have to die to save people from their sins. It wouldn't happen for many years but it was part of God?s plan and everything was working toward this. Now we would never say that you or I or Jeremiah

existed before the creation ? so why do people say that Jesus did? *God is using the same language to talk about you, me, Jeremiah and Jesus, all in God's plan before the world was created.*

Read the lovely words in Romans 8:29,30. These are difficult verses, but basically they are saying that God knew from the beginning who would accept Jesus (foreknew) and so worked in the lives of those people to bring them to a knowledge of His son (predestined). He put them through experiences so they would learn about Christianity (conformed to the likeness) and then gave them the opportunity to follow Jesus (called). If they accepted and became baptised, their sins were washed away (justified) and if they keep following Jesus they will be in the Kingdom of God (glorified).

Remember, too, that God has foreknowledge (He knows what will happen in the future). When God says something is going to happen it ALWAYS happens. So God sometimes speaks about things as though they HAVE already happened because He knows they will happen!! For example, in Genesis 15:18, God says to Abraham, ?I have given you the land? , yet we know that Abraham never received the land in his lifetime, and won't until Jesus returns to the earth and raises him from the dead. In Genesis 17:5, God says to Abraham ?I have MADE you a father of many nations? ? but Abraham didn't have any children when he said this! But God can speak like this because NOTHING can make Him break His promises. We may think sometimes that God's promises are like ours. If I make a promise I may have to break it because I fall sick or have an accident or run out of money ? but these things can't happen to God. It is impossible for God to break His promise and so we always know that what God says is going to happen.

Romans 4:17 ??the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were ?

Isaiah 46:10,11 ??I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come...I say, My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please?what I have said, that will I bring about: what I have planned, that will I do.?

These verses are showing that when God says something will happen nothing will stop it, even though it may not happen for a long time. There is no doubt that it will happen eventually. **So God can talk about something that has not happened as if it has already happened because with His foreknowledge He knows it will happen.**

Because God was so certain that He would have a son who would die for our sins, He sometimes speaks in the Old Testament as if it had already happened. But we know that Jesus didn't exist or die before his birth ? this was just in God's plan for Jesus.

1 Peter 1:19-20 ??Christ?was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake??

These verses explain clearly how Jesus was in God's plan from the beginning but he didn't exist until he was born, when he, the Son of God, was revealed to the world. Finally read **Hebrews 1:1,2** .

??in the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His son whom He appointed heir of all things and through whom He made the universe.?

God created the earth with the purpose of everlasting life (Titus 1:2). This was His wise plan and He knew that as part of His plan a Saviour would be needed to bring that everlasting life. **So God spoke to men and woman through prophets in the Old Testament but when the time was right, He created His son who the prophets had talked about ? and sent him to speak to the people (Galatians 4:4-5).**

I am in Christ!

The door closed and the bus picked up speed and we were on our way. It seemed nobody else knew that I was going on my way to meet with my great dream. It was the 5th Bible School of my life. Earlier I had only attended the young people's studies, this was the first Bible School I attended as an 'adult' It was so wonderful for me, the Bible School in Kishinev, hearing another language and meeting with new people. I quickly found friends there, and by the time we arrived at the location of the Bible School, I already knew many new people.

It was wonderful weather and beautiful natural surroundings where the School was held, and this all added to my good mood and my feeling of being strengthened. In the course of several years hearing the word of God and meeting many sincere Brothers and Sisters, there had arisen in me a great desire to be with God and have the hope of being in His Kingdom. I dreamt of being able to be a member of God's family. So I made the decision to be baptised, I wanted to be with the Lord and to offer to serve Him with my whole soul.

So on the first day of arrival at the School I revealed my secret desire for baptism. The lectures were interesting and sincere and there was a great feeling of unity and friendliness amongst the family of Christ gathered there. I already knew the brother who organized the School as sincere and a true Christian, and this encouraged me in seeking for baptism.

And so I came to the great moment that every true believer must go through, the moment of baptism. I was asked in the water: 'Lena, do you believe in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ?'. I wanted to reply straight away loudly with the words: 'Yes, I believe, I very much believe in them,' but the words somehow caught in my throat as I said them. Anyway, the faithful and reliable hands of my brother put me under the water? and then there came the greetings and congratulations from many of my new Brothers and Sisters. I really didn't want to come out of the warm water of the Dnestr river, I wanted to continue that wonderful experience as long as possible. I was so happy! I am in Christ! I want to just thank all who organized the Bible School and helped me, especially Sis. Luba Meshkova.

Sis. Elena (Poltava, Ukraine)

Choices

I recently read a good article which encouraged us to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). Despite the specific difficulties we face in Israel because of only one day off and long work hours, we can still make the effort to meet together through writing to each

other and telephoning each other, even sending a postcard. So I am bold enough to write this article. There are miracles going on in the life of each of us, even if they appear just to be in the ordinary nature of things. We must remember that God's greatest creation was man himself, i.e. your own body. In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve, and gave them freedom of choice, even to the extent of them making mistakes. This freedom of choice was real and not just a semblance. We continue to have this amazing freedom of choice, right up to the second of our death. Every minute, we have this freedom. We can choose what and whom to believe, to reply or keep silent, to be patient or not to. To approach someone or not; to reach out our hand in help, or to just not notice.

We have as it were a kaleidoscope of events and choices, and yet in reality there is always a black and white choice for us. Faith and love must show themselves in action – whom we love, how we love, our choice for unity or division. Each choice we have, we move either closer to God or further away from Him. When we make choices which move us closer to God, even this is just the beginning, as we must then follow in a way which involves keeping His commands and understanding further His character. These characteristics are all consistent, for with Him there is no change or shadow brought about by turning (James 1:17). By mixing with our Brothers and Sisters we are strengthened to walk in this way as we see them also being changed by making the right choices.

The epitome of all these things is to be found in the events in the garden of Eden. Man was created a living soul, after the image of God (Gen. 1:27; 2:7); he was 'very good'. Man had everything required in order to live acceptably before God. But then the snake entered the scene. He was intelligent, but surely not more intelligent than Adam and Eve. They should have been intelligent enough to know that God had really said, 'You shall surely die,' whereas the snake said that they would not surely die. It was of course all in God's plan, because in Num. 22:28 an ass was also enabled to speak. So God gave man a temptation from his inferior, an animal. The real nature of their failure was not because the snake was cleverer than them, but because they loved themselves more than they loved God their Creator. Eve wanted to eat what looked pleasant to her eyes and senses. She herself had full choice, and could not blame the snake. The snake didn't say 'Eat it, Eve!'. He just said 'You will not really die.' The decision to sin, to eat the fruit, was taken within Eve. The snake suggested that if she ate the fruit, she would be like gods, knowing good and evil (Gen. 3:5). This was a fantasy for Eve, and she wanted it for herself. She failed to believe, that God alone is God and there is none like Him (Deut 4:39). We must serve Him and not ourselves.

We also are always under the temptation to think that we can take what we want for ourselves, that it will be nothing so terrible if we do. Adam was deceived by the voice of the woman Eve, just as she had been by the snake. Neither Adam or Eve lived up to the place of responsibility which they had been given, for if they had, then they would not have made the wrong choices. Adam's mind was lazy. He didn't make any effort to resist sin. When God asked Adam if he had eaten of the forbidden tree, he should have replied: 'Forgive me Lord, but yes I have'. But No! Adam blamed his wife (Gen. 3:12). He even implied God was in the wrong for giving him such a wife. We cannot blame anyone for our sins, not even Adam. He failed to see the difference between light and darkness; he thought that the lack of God's visible presence meant that he was unseen in making the selfish choice. Our human nature makes the same mistake. But God has shown us what is good and it is our choice not to walk in that way (Mic. 6:3,8). God said that Israel were like a vineyard, and He could not have done more to enable them to bear good fruit

(Isa. 5:3,4). We must believe that God will not tempt us in a way that is too great for us to endure. He will provide a way of escape in such cases.

God does not tempt anyone (James 1:13). He has given us the potential to overcome each temptation. We must ask that He will open our eyes to understand His word, that He will teach us strengthening things from His lips (Ps. 119:18). And we have the example of Jesus, who was faced with choice after choice and yet never sinned. Like us He must have had things that initially He didn't understand; or debated within Himself the possible meanings of Scripture, as He did during His wilderness temptations. Knowing all this, let us choose life, that we may live.

Sis. Natasha (Karmiel, Israel)

Love and Unity

Blessed is the place where love is, for God is always there.

How can we love one another? In 1 Cor. 2:2 Paul shows the way; "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ." Jesus left two significant words on how we as Christians should be related to one another: UNITY AND LOVE, which lies at the centre of the Christian message.

Unity

"That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us: so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21).

Our Lord's prayer for unity is in our hearts. Unity encourages faith among those who do not believe. Paul added this in Gal. 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

There are signs of great disunity all over the world in churches/ecclesias and in outside organisations. We are greatly weakened in faith and in some cases actually halted and by such action – disunity – the growth of anti-Christian forces results. Unity is very important.

Love

Jesus said "Abide in my love". "My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you," (John 15:12). It is not a suggestion but a commandment, and in John 13:34-35 he said the same.

It makes me worried to see that in some cases there are quarrels in ecclesias. As a result ecclesias cease. This is God's ultimate judgement upon ecclesias that do not love and seek unity. All Christians over the world should pray for love and unity.

Indeed there are serious matters that divide most of the Christian groups. Let me mention a few of them:

- Control of finances.
- Proper interpretation of scripture.
- Tribal conflicts.

- Missionary policies.
- Leadership roles – democratic or autocratic.
- Worship style – and so on.

One of these points I have mentioned may cause divisions in some Christian groups or denominations. If you read the pamphlet “One Bible many Churches” you would get the point. Christ is the source of our Unity and Love. It is to Christ that we point all humanity. Let us make our ecclesias a home for every Christian where Christ’s love fills everyone. Christ must be the centre of our fellowship and life together as believers. “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you,” said Jesus. “Now remain in my love.” (John 15:9).

We would not be as a branch thrown away and that ultimately withers. These words are a warning to us. It is very disappointing to see that we can be the source of misunderstandings in our ecclesias. Love is the foundation of Christianity because God sent His beloved son to save us, John 3:16. The greatest commandment is: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Matthew 22:37), and the second we “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

If we love our God and our neighbour, we will be like a man who built a house on top of a hard rock. Jesus also told us to go and do like the Samaritan in Luke 10:33-37. He did all that because of the love he had for that man and for God’s commandment. God is love, so we should unite and love each other so that God will add some more days to us to repent before Jesus comes on this earth to establish God’s Kingdom.

Bro. Simeon Mwakalinga (Iganga, Tanzania)

Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of Man: Exhortation at the Zambian Bush Camp

From the beginning God planned to forgive men and women for sins. He promised in the Old Testament that He would do this through His own Son, Jesus Christ, who would take away the sins of all men and women who believed in him as their Saviour.

Jesus was both the son of Mary and the Son of God. When it was the right time in God’s plan for Jesus to be born, He sent an angel to talk to Mary and tell her that she was to have a baby boy. Mary was told that she must call him Jesus, which means “God is salvation”. The angel also told her about the great work that Jesus would do:

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins? (Mat 1:18-21).

Jesus did not exist before this. He did not come down from heaven and change his form to become a little baby. He grew in Mary’s womb and was born like any other child: “But you art he

that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly. (Psalms 22:9, 10.)

Mary was also told that her son would be the great king who would rule over Israel just as God promised to David. Through Jesus all the promises about the Kingdom of God on earth would be fulfilled: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32, 33.)

When Jesus was born, all the angels in heaven were happy and sang a song of praise to God because he had remembered His promises: "and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:13, 14).

From his Father, Almighty God, Jesus received an understanding of God's ways and a desire to be like his Father. From his mother, Mary, Jesus inherited a nature just like ours. He was tempted to do wrong but, unlike us, he never gave in to temptation: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15).

We are very fortunate that Jesus understands all of our problems and temptations. He can do this because he had them himself. We praise and honour him because he never gave in to temptation even though it cost him his life. God gave Jesus a great work to do. He had to show people what God is like. He did not show people what God looked like. He showed them what the character of God is like. He did this by the way he behaved and spoke to people. To help him in his work, God gave him great power to work miracles, to feed and heal people. But Jesus never misused this power. He only used it for the things God showed him to do. Some people said that Jesus claimed to be equal with God because of the work he did; Jesus always denied this and explained how everything he did came from God: "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth" (John 5: 17-20).

Jesus was so close to his Father that he tells us, "I and my Father are one". They were in complete agreement about what work needed to be done and how to do it. Jesus understood the thoughts of his Father and made sure that his own thoughts and desires never got in the way of what God asked of him. Because of this, God has given him authority to judge the world: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father? For as the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:22, 23, 26, 27).

This will happen when Jesus returns to the earth as king over God's kingdom. When he returns he will come with great power and glory. No one will doubt any more that he is the Son of God; but it will be too late then to change your mind about him. At his return he will reject those who reject him now. But he will also accept all those who accept him now as the Son of God. These

are the people who will be with Jesus in his kingdom for ever.

by Bro. John Kasanda

Austria

It can't be very often that *all* the Christadelphians resident in a country meet together, at least not in Western Europe. But that is exactly what happened to the Brethren and Sisters in Austria in September. OK, there are only four of us; but two of these had never physically met before, so it was a pretty special occasion.

We met for the weekend of September 13/14 in Innsbruck, in the Tyrol, where Sis. Mary Knecht lives. Mary is English, but has lived most of her life in Austria – now widowed, her husband was an Austrian.

Sis. Ichinka is the Austrian-resident Christadelphian who Sis. Mary had not met previously, largely because they live at other ends of the country, and neither has her own transport. Sis. Ichinka (Ichinkhorloo Dashbaljir, to give her full name) is from Mongolia, and came to the truth while studying in Russia. She is currently living and studying in Vienna.

Sis. Ichinka travelled to Salzburg on Friday, to the home of Bro. Matt and Sis. Anita Clements. Bro. Matt (English by nationality) has lived in Salzburg for 4 years; Sis. Anita comes from Esslingen in Germany, and has lived in Salzburg since she and Matt were married in summer 2001.

On Saturday, we travelled to Innsbruck to meet up with Mary, and enjoyed a lovely afternoon and evening with her, and with Bro. Bob and Sis. Barbara Clare from the UK, who were spending a week or two's holiday in the area visiting Mary; Bro. Bob is the CBM Liaison brother for Austria.

Two more arrived on Saturday evening to swell the numbers – Bro. John and Sis. Valerie Freer made a small detour en route for their annual trip to Hungary, and completed the feast of fellowship.

On Sunday, we met together at Mary's flat for our memorial service, presided over by Bro. Bob and with Bro. Matt leading the thoughts. It was a great joy to be able to meet together around our Lord's table here in Austria, and to enjoy the power and the pleasure of fellowship, united in our belief in our Lord, despite our varying backgrounds, first languages, etc.

After the meeting, we were blessed with a glorious day in which to be able to enjoy the beauty of the Alps, and shared lunch and a walk together in the fabulous Stubaital valley, before starting to head off in various directions as the weekend drew to a close.

We give thanks to our heavenly Father for the opportunity to meet in this way, for the freedom with which we can meet, and for the joy of the fellowship we shared together – really a wonderful and very happy experience. Even so come, Lord Jesus.



In how many ways was David like Jesus Christ?

Summary of his early life and rise to power

- David was from the tribe of Judah, the eighth son of Jesse, from Bethlehem. He was handsome, courageous and faithful to God.
- Samuel anointed him after Saul's rejection as king.
- As a teenager David defeated the Philistine giant called Goliath.
- He was a good musician and was employed to play the harp in order to stir the emotions of the moody King.
- He was the best friend of Jonathan Saul's son.
- David lamented at the news of Saul's death, and later moved from Philistia, where he had escaped to Hebron where he was declared King of Judah in the south. Seven years afterwards, David became king of a united Israel.

David's achievements

David is often referred to as the ideal king or real founder of Israel. This is simply because it was he who realised the nationalistic dreams of Israel, namely by being superior to other nations and in the worship of the one God. These dreams were realised through his political, military and religious achievements.

1. Political Achievements

- Reunited the northern and southern tribes of Israel
- Made Jerusalem the capital of Israel after defeating the Jebusites.

- Restructured Israel by introducing administration and bureaucracy in the style of Egypt, making Israel a state to reckon with.

2. Military Achievements

- Created a strong efficient standing army commanded by Joab
- Conquered and subjugated the rivals of Israel, such as the Philistines, Amalekites, Edomites. In this way the boundaries of Israel were extended. The subjects were taxed reviving Israel's economy.

3. Religious Achievements

- Jerusalem became the religious capital when he brought back the Ark of the covenant, making it known as the city of God.
- The worship of the one God was revived.
- Since he was a man after God's heart, God made a covenant with him promising to make him a "house". This promise was made through Nathan the prophet.
- David was a psalmist

Though David sinned, he was forgiven by God and accepted the trials and sorrows as a merited "punishment" and he reigned for 40 years. David died and was buried in Jerusalem.

Significance of the life of David

David was like Jesus Christ in 3 ways:

1. Shepherd.

He tended his father's flocks and later was pastor of his people. Jesus was the good shepherd, ready to lay down his life for his sheep.

2. Deliverer.

He delivered his people by overcoming Goliath and delivering the Israelites from the yoke of the Philistines. He was the figure of Christ the Saviour, delivering from the slavery of sin.

3. King.

He was a king who gathered the 12 tribes in unity and he achieved this not by making himself feared, but through love. Our Lord who will be King, will gather all the children of God into the Kingdom of the Father.

Bro. Julius Asong (Kumba, Cameroon)

Is there any hope?

Is there any hope? Is there any Gospel news? About 2,000 years ago in the land of Israel, an angel announced the following news, "Be not afraid, for, behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people, for to you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour,

who is Christ the Lord? (Luke 2:10-11). Isaiah 61:1-3 predicted the birth of Jesus Christ and the good things he would do for mankind: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise?."

The meaning of "gospel" is "good news". Is there good news with you today? Good news of salvation frees one who has sins. If you become a new creature in Jesus you will have true happiness and peace indeed. Isaiah 12:3 states, "with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation". Suppose you were given a one million dollar cheque as a reward. Would you cash it in a bank without signing it? Jesus Christ has given you a reward of salvation which is FREE. But you can't receive the reward of salvation until you "sign" by accepting him to enter your heart, so that he may be your saviour for ever. Being a Christian doesn't mean you are exempt from encountering problems, but it strengthens you, so that you are never downhearted when problems come. You have somebody, the Lord Jesus, to lean on for assistance. There is always hope that a solution to your problems will be found.

Bro. Levi Mategwa (Kakemega, Kenya)

This Man Receiveth Sinners

Luke 15:1-10

As the "publicans and sinners" gathered about Christ, the rabbis expressed their displeasure. "This man receiveth sinners," they said, "and eateth with them". By this accusation they insinuated that Christ liked to associate with the sinful and vile, and was insensible to their wickedness. The rabbis had been disappointed in Jesus. Why was it that one who claimed so lofty a character, did not mingle with them, and follow their methods of teaching? Why did he go about so unpretendingly, working among all classes? If he were a true prophet, they said, he would harmonise with them, and would treat the publicans and sinners with the indifference they deserved. It angered these guardians of society that he with whom they were continually in controversy, yet whose purity of life awed and condemned them, should meet in such apparent sympathy with social outcasts. They did not approve of his methods. They regarded themselves as educated, refined and pre-eminently religious; but Christ's example laid bare their selfishness.

It angered them also that those who showed only contempt for the rabbis and who were never seen in the synagogues should flock about Jesus and listen with rapt attention to his words. The scribes and Pharisees felt only condemnation in that pure presence. How was it then that publicans and sinners were drawn to Jesus? The Pharisees knew not that the explanation lay in the very words they had uttered as a scornful charge, "This man receiveth sinners". The souls who came to Jesus felt in his presence that, even for them, there was escape from the pit of sin. The Pharisees had only scorn and condemnation for them; but Christ greeted them as children of God, estranged indeed from the Father's house, but not forgotten by the Father's heart. And

their very misery and sin made them only the more the objects of his compassion. The further they had wandered from him, the more earnest was the longing, and the greater the sacrifice for their rescue.

All this the teachers of Israel might have learned from the sacred scrolls of which it was their pride to be the keepers and expounders. Had not David written; David, who had fallen into deadly sin, “I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant”? (Psalm 119:176). Had not Micah revealed God’s love towards the sinner, saying, “Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy” (Micah 7:18).

Bro. Jackson Nyakambiri (Mvuwi, Zimbabwe)

Let us be the Light of the World

We must be the light of the world by preaching the gospel to it. As Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 5:14-16, “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven?”.

To all baptised brethren and sisters, do not turn off your lights, let us tell the world the Truth in which we stand firm, so that the world will know it. Our teachings are truthful teachings from the Bible and are not human creative teachings. In Matthew 28:19-20 it says, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the world?”.

Let us put all our efforts into what we have chosen to be. If we are truly Christians who are dead and buried with Jesus in baptism, we must not fear to tell the Truth to all nations. Even when things become harder and harder, let us turn on the lights.

Bro. Jackson Nyakambiri (Mvuwi, Zimbabwe)

Wilderness Journey

When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea it symbolised their baptism into Moses and they entered into obedience to Moses’ leadership. Furthermore they’d survived the armies of Pharaoh that had tried to kill them. This was the time of their starting on their wilderness journey to the promised land. Imagine wandering in the huge desert for forty years without reaching the promised land, the land of milk and honey and a land of their forefathers. In addition, they used the same clothing and shoes without them wearing out. Is this not wonderful? Then think of their food, they fed on manna always. And yet they persevered and continued on their journey under the wise leadership of Moses.

We can fully compare the wilderness journey with our immediate baptism when we follow the wise leadership of our Lord Jesus Christ and the way to the Kingdom. But we should always remember that this journey is not easy and we shall only enter the Kingdom through suffering and perseverance, the Lord himself being the best example of all. No true believer will ever sail through life joyously without affliction. The great comforter on our journey is the word of God which we should always read, and we must do it for our own salvation (2 Timothy 3:15-16), while we wait for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to save us.

Willian Kilui (Kamukaywa Town, Kenya)

True Happiness

Happy are the humble,
Who are humble,
Who are humble,
Happy are the humble,
For the promise of God is theirs.

Happy are the merciful,
Who are merciful,
Who are merciful,
Happy are the merciful,
God will be merciful to them.

Happy are those who work for peace,
Who work for peace,
Who work for peace.
Happy are those who work for peace,
God will call them HIS CHILDREN.

Matthew 5:3-9

Bro. Erick Mutai (Kericho, Kenya)

Fearfully and wonderfully made: Psalm 139:14

Part 3

The hymn begins with the expression: ?Oh! Blessed are the eyes that see the living way, to grasp the glorious prize of everlasting day,? and another of our hymns has the line, ?God be in mine eyes and in my looking,? which is a plea that God will help us to control the things we look at,

whether in books, newspapers, or on television, as there is so much these days which could have a defiling influence on our minds.

We get our first mention of eyes in Genesis 3:5 where the serpent says to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die, for in the day you eat of it (the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her and he did eat."

Saying that they would "not surely die" was the first great lie in history.

The psalmist says in Ps 94:9 "He who formed the eye, shall He not see?" This statement is amplified and all embracing in 2 Chron 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to Him". When Job was pleading with God he asked, "Do you have eyes of flesh?" David also said (Ps 25:15), "My eyes are ever towards the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net." And (Ps 34:15), "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry."

Coming to the New Testament there is the case of the man born blind and in order to cure him Jesus made clay from saliva and dust and anointed his eyes with the clay and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam, and he came back, his sight restored.

Mark's account of this incident suggests that the cure was gradual, because in reply to Jesus' question, "Can you see anything?" he responded, "I see men as trees walking."

Let us keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus so that our vision may be on the Kingdom, which he is destined to establish in the very near future.

Bro. J Wilson (Windermere, England)

Our Real Future

Although the world is greatly worried about all the troubles that are happening on the earth, we know that these are the signs that God is working His purpose out and that He will send Jesus back. There will be peace instead of war, adequacy of food instead of famine, and happiness instead of sadness.

But before Jesus returns to bring peace to this earth, there will be great trouble in the world. We know that we shall be taken away to the judgment seat of Jesus suddenly and without warning, and there all those who have known the Truth will be judged according to the life they have lived. Knowing we face Christ's judgment we must be careful to always do our best, but also knowing that we can ask God, through His son, to forgive us when we fall.

If we are constantly trying to be like Jesus, who is our example, this is what will happen to us in the day of his appearing and our acceptance by him: we shall be like Jesus (1 John 3:2) as we sing in our hymn.

'We shall be like him', O how rich the promise;
What greater could our Father's love prepare?
Few are the words, and softly are they spoken
But who can know the blessings hidden there?

'We shall be like Him', pure in heart and sinless;
But His redeeming mercy ends not there;
These bodies like to His shall then be fashioned,
And we his resurrection glory share.

'We shall be like him', raised above all weakness,
For ever passed all weariness and pain;
Even death itself shall have no power to reach us,
When with our risen Lord we will live and reign.

So in the hope of bearing his bright image,
Rejoicing in his present gift of grace,
His love shall keep our hearts in patient waiting,
Till we in glorious beauty see his face.

This is the real future that is promised by God for us, if we do our best to please Him day by day. We are to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21), and to do good unto all men (Galatians 6:10). This is not easy, but Jesus did just that. Speaking before his death, Jesus spoke to the faithful "Because I live, you shall live also" (John 14:19). Jesus was raised to eternal life, a life that knows no ending nor pain. We can share in this same hope if we keep on trying to please God and praying and asking for strength to live a good life. We can then have an answer of peace from Jesus Christ in the day of his return. God has promised that Jesus Christ is coming and his promise cannot fail. Likewise we must not fail God in our ways, in our speech, in our love for others and in our obedience to His word. We must pray that God will give us strength to win the prize of eternal life and joy. The grace of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, be with us to this end. Amen

Bro. Joseph Oppong (Cape Coast, Ghana)

Ugandan Atrocities

The reports of violence in North Eastern Uganda are getting steadily worse. Our brothers and their families in the area are safe but have had to flee their homes, leaving crops and animals. They are presently living in rented accommodation in Lira and cared for by charities and the World Food Programme (WFP). Paul Boyd and Kevin Rawlings met them during their recent trip and we have been able to send money to them to help them rent land so that they can try and grow crops for the future. Returning to their homes is impossible as fellow villagers have been ambushed and killed during their unsuccessful attempts. Dawn brothers and sisters in the same area have also been displaced and they are staying in a nearby town called Dokolo. All brothers and sisters and fellow villagers need our prayers.

We have been monitoring the Uganda news media and noted that the situation is worsening by the day. We had cancelled the proposed trip by Paul and Kevin recently and instead the brothers travelled to meet them. The brothers are obviously scared but their faith remains strong and they see the events as a sign of the times. Paul writes: "The three brothers did meet us late one day, having been delayed by security forces. They arrived tired and worn out, with stories of horrific acts by the rebels. When they said goodbye to their families that morning they did not know if they would see them again. We let them talk, then took them out for a meal. Once fed we were able to talk about their needs and spiritual matters. We were able to meet all their needs... They were very grateful for all the help received. They may need more in January, since we only paid for their accommodation and daily needs until the end of the year. We asked them to make it last as long as possible."

The following is some news from the Uganda media and is also reproduced on John and Sally Palmer's Mail Africa ISP site. It sums up the horrible situation:

"Ugandan guerrillas kill 60 in village rampage IOL, 8:00GMT 10 Nov 2003 Rebels shot and hacked to death scores of civilians in northern Uganda this week, beheading some of them, in apparent revenge for the killing of a rebel commander, the army announced on Saturday. The Vatican missionary news service said rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) killed about 60 people on a rampage through Lira district, forcing some villagers to watch as they beheaded fellow villagers they had just killed. Local priests reported villagers as saying rebels had set fire to many huts with the inhabitants still inside but this could not be confirmed.

Scores of civilians were killed at around midnight on November 6 in Alanyi and Awayopiny villages in Lira district, Lieutenant Chris Magezi, a spokesperson for the army's Third Division, said. Scores of civilians were killed at around midnight He had suggested the toll might exceed 100 but later said there was no confirmation the toll would be that high. Thousands of terrified civilians were fleeing a number of villages and seeking shelter in and around Lira town, the main settlement in the district of the same name.

The guerrillas, led by self-proclaimed prophet Joseph Kony, are feared for their brutality and for abducting thousands of children for use as sex slaves and front-line fighters in the east African country's 17-year-old civil war. They are cutting off people's heads. Every time we hear of an incident, it's a new level of brutality, said Father John Fraser, who helps run the Catholic church-owned radio station in Lira. People have been pouring into town for the last three days, he said, estimating the influx at between 2000 and 3000 people a day. Magezi said Kony appeared to have ordered the raid to avenge the army's October 29 killing of LRA No 2 Charles Tabuley, a move widely seen as likely to weaken rebel operations.

The army blames Tabuley for several massacres of civilians in northern and eastern Uganda over the past 16 months. The government deployed 14,000 troops backed by helicopter gunships and tanks against the rebels last year, but LRA attacks have since intensified and pushed further south towards Kampala.

In Rome, the Vatican's missionary news agency Misna quoted unnamed missionary sources as saying about 60 people had been killed in the attacks. They said more than 30 civilians were killed in Awayopiny and Alanyi, 20 people were killed in Omarari village and nine were killed in North Omoro village.

The LRA says it wants to topple the government of President Yoweri Museveni but it has never spelt out its demands publicly. Sudan and Uganda in October renewed a pact to co-operate in

removing rebels from southern Sudan. The deal allowing Ugandan troops to pursue the LRA in southern Sudan expired in September.

Uganda accused Sudan in September of resuming the support it once gave to the rebels. Khartoum denied the accusations and said it would deal seriously with rogue military officers it suspected were collaborating with the LRA.?

The horrific accounts on TV recently about the LRA confirm the situation. The really sad thing is that the leader of the rebels, Joseph Kony, claims that he is doing all these things in the name of God, as he has the Holy Spirit. Please pray that God will protect our brothers and sisters and that he will also stop the violence and stop people from defaming God.

We have today 2nd December 2003, had a letter from our brothers in Dokolo, Uganda. They thank us for help and prayers. They are only eating twice a day to save money. There are now 400,000 displaced people in Lira municipality and in the camps. People are dying because food is not plentiful. Some people have gone back to the villages to get food and have been killed by the rebels. On 18 Nov rebels entered Lira Municipality in 2 groups and killed 47 people and abducted many. Local politicians, church people and UN are trying to stop the fighting and put pressure on the Ugandan government to do something. There has been 2 acres of land given over to the burial of those displaced people that have been killed or died. Rich people are running to Kampala and Buganda region, others to Masindi district to escape. The brothers write: For us we are living in Lira Town and shall not run anywhere. Our main work is to read the Bible and pray for Jesus' return to be very soon so that we get everlasting comfort and peace.

Transport is very risky unless escorted by military trucks. They ask us to keep monitoring the situation and to pray for them. They also say: .. continue to be concerned to us even if it is giving you a very big burden. We are faithful and enduring because it was predicted and very Biblical for the sign of Jesus' return (Mt 24:1-51). Reaching us is very difficult. We are living in a place like the island of Patmos which needs a flight from Kampala to Lira by plane and is the only means foreigners use to go to Lira town. They will try, God willing, to meet us at the Bible School in April 2004, but they fear for what may happen next week. They send greetings.

Bro. John & Sis. Sue Mathias

Justified by the Grace of God

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:1-2).

Sometimes, people may struggle with the word 'justify'. One may understand that when someone justifies his/her actions, he/she is trying to make excuses for them. In the context of the above mentioned verses, that may not really make any sense. By means of technical analogies, we can understand the use of the word 'justify' in the context of Romans 5:1-2.

Often, when you look at a page of typed text, you will see that the left hand margin is straight and the right hand margin is uneven. When you work on a computer, you can change the alignment

of the text so that the right margin is also straight. You will see an example of this if you look at your Bibles. When you align the text to have both margins straight, this is called 'justifying' the text. What it actually does is to automatically put some spaces on the line between words so that the last letter is against the right margin. Now, the analogy goes like this: There is a line (the plumb line) that has been put in place by Jesus Christ. He set the example; this example is the right hand margin. We are all lines on the page, we all try to reach the right hand margin but all of us fall short. Some of us by a long way, others by only a short distance, but God will justify us through our faith so that we all reach the line. We do our part and He does his part, it is a two-way thing.

We have to be careful though that we do not become too confident. We know that we cannot attain salvation by ourselves and that if we have faith we will be justified and saved by grace. This could tempt us to go through our lives without really trying to live in obedience to God or, to quote from Romans 6, 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?? Living a life where we are not attempting to be obedient to God is not a life in the direction of the kingdom. In that situation we have turned away from God and so He will have turned away from us. You cannot justify a line that is printed the wrong way on a page. You can't do anything with it, just as God will not do anything with someone who is not trying to reach that line set by Christ.

Moreover, each and every Christian – not only Sunday church-goers and denomination fanatics – should remember:

'Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him' (James 1:12).

'No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it' (Heb 12:11).

It is a training, an opportunity for spiritual growth. Scripture tells us how Christ was made perfect through his tribulations, 'In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering' (Heb 2:10).

Bro. Karegeya Deogratias (Rondebosch, South Africa)

In Spite of

In spite of the terrible situation in Uganda our Brethren and Sisters still put the work of the Truth as their top priority as the following letter from Brother Bosco demonstrates.

Dear Brother Marcus, loving greetings in Jesus name. Good to see the booklet "What is the Gospel" you sent to me to translate into Lango. I am happy to say that I am working on it. It will take long time because I and my family are displaced from our home village where we grow food and cash crops. This is because of the rebel group called 'Lords resistance army', they have burnt everything, houses, crops, cutting people with knives. So life is very hard for my family. I make a request for prayer, that you all pray for us. I know God will not leave us in the hands of the enemies – May God bless you all.

Bro. Bosco Opio.(Uganda)

"He is with us always"

So many times in ecclesial and family life the troubles seem as if they will never end, no matter how hard we try. Here are some more thoughts on suffering for sin and so we suffer for our sakes, and take consequences, or even suffering of a different nature, for His sake really is for those who seem (in their minds) to be in continual suffering. The Jews must often feel that their compounded level of anxiety is different from that of others, for it never ends for them. Their road in life is full of (being the stated punishment of God for their disobedience). If they believed Him, and worked as His people, they would be more spared.

However, we need not view our own catastrophes as punishments from God. Job taught us that. They are more the refining processes to bring us closer to Him. It is God who sees the big picture over what is best, and so discipline in the overwhelming and seemingly irresolvable trouble, may be an outcome of His better will, and love for us better than that of our own will, or resolve.

Suffering should never be regarded as a fearful thing, where we kick against pricks. If He is "with us always", Matt 28:20, He is there in the suffering, as well as the blessings. His discipline with love is what grows our returning love for Him. If we can regard trouble as working out of His will for us, so that we can be more refined in Him, we will begin to see the light. Each day we come to Him in our despair, the light grows brighter, and we shoulder more burdens than we ever thought we could in our immature days.

In our immature, and trouble-filled days, we thought we could deal with no more. Now that we have grown, we know that more is always possible for Him. God gives us strength to move on towards acceptance of His will, for are stronger beneath the shadow of His wings. If we can look up out of the pit, never down, if we have our feet planted firmly on the rock, and our minds understanding His word and will, He will be living in our hearts. Then we will see Him above, for He will recognise our hunger for Him. Those eagle-like wings can lift us out of the pit of despair, and take us to where He warms and fills us. I am not saying that we do not slip back to, when seemingly God does not answer, or answers with a terrible answer. It is in the slip when we need each other's encouraging arms to move forward again. "Up, look up," we say, "and go there".

Perhaps it is not like a gentle slope toward Him, but a series of steps, when we sometimes seem to linger long on the present flat, before moving to the next elevation. It does help if people listen, and say they understand, and are encouraging in finding solutions. Even if we do not like the condition, or even hate the sin, we can say we understand the troubled one's feelings of despair need not resolve the situation, but we can say we are sorry, and that we understand. But we should make sure the resolve being done by someone it seems to me that no one is immune from trouble. We know that now, for we do not hide the troubles, as was our wont. Our peer and buddy support has opened up, and grown and we know now not to despise the troubled ones, or to isolate and exclude them, and turn our heads away.

We expose our weaknesses now, without fear of being thought a failure, or being told that we might "weaken the ecclesia". And we are all more secure in the situation, it seems, of needing help at some time or another in our lives. The trick is to be a good example in the suffering, so that people can learn how to do even that suffering "well". If we truly walk beside Him, or are

carried by Him, we will do it “well”. What a wonderful way God teaches us about suffering, that sometimes we give comfort, and sometimes we receive it. Neither state should be viewed or pitied as more vulnerable than the other, for both in giving and receiving there is a lesson in mercy and compassion, and growth enriching ourselves to bear, and help others to bear suffering and grief.

God gives us for growth. So, if we eschew help we could give to others, we miss out on growth opportunities. This impotence leaves the whole body of Christ a lesser unit than it could have been. Then we all suffer the loss of that growth, because one of us turned away from the wounded must take the God-given opportunities, we suffer for it, but not only that, the whole body suffers for it. All grievance, tragedy and sorrow be a blessing for all of us, those who are “in it”, and those who soothe it, if only we can see the loving hand of God is there.

Sis. B.R. (Sydney, Australia)

Sisters In The Ecclesia: Further Thoughts

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 11:16 about the question of sisters wearing head coverings in the ecclesia: “If anyone wants to argue, we have no such custom, nor the churches of God?”. It seems that Paul knew there would always be those who wanted to argue about this matter. As if he knew this matter would be somewhat unclear, but maybe it is there simply as a test of obedience, as to how seriously we will take the inspired word of God and be obedient. It is especially a problem here amongst the ecclesias of the ex-USSR, and the West, where women were trained in worldly wisdom, and can act as if the word of God came out from them rather than to them. It is hard for women from this background to obey Eph. 5:22, which tells women to be in subjection to their husbands. There is in the world a spirit of competition between the genders and this must not be allowed to affect us. We also are in a world where we are trained to do whatever we feel like doing and not to be governed by the feelings of others or by the word of God, and this too is a matter which leads to problems in this area for us.

Abraham’s wife Sarah is presented to us as an example (1 Pet. 3:1-6); she was in subjection unto him, but there was a time when God told Abraham to listen to Sarah’s voice and do what she said rather than what he thought was best (Gen. 21:9-12). This shows that God does not make women subject to men automatically but there is always a context. It is a matter of roles. There are different roles for men and women, but this doesn’t mean that women are slaves of men, and the sister is to glory in the roles she has been given. The description of the wise woman in Prov. 31 is the example for sisters.

Bro. Gennady (Poltava, Ukraine)

Spiritual Ears and Eyes

Eyes and ears – how could we see and hear the beautiful things God has created without them? We often read in the Bible about spiritual ears and eyes which the disciples didn't always understand, and it is the same with us today. In Matt. 13:10 the disciples questioned Jesus, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" He answered, (v 13), "Because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand". And in Isa. 6:9-10 we read, "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (see also Acts 28:27)

Today in the world of Christianity many are still deceived by what they hear and see; they believe that which is not scriptural. One of the main reasons why it is easier to be deceived is the lack of knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures sent by God, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16) and, "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20-21).

What the eyes see and the ears hear and the flesh feels are only present realities of the mind. But for us, as our range of recognition extends, the distant, unseen things are become facts.

Unfortunately, few only understand what the spiritual eyes see because their eyes can only deal with what they can actually see and sense what they can feel. In Gen. 3:7 after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, their eyes were opened.

As we struggle with our human nature, let us meditate on what the apostle James says (1:23-25), "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But who looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Sis. Liberty Mandap (Hong Kong)

Hannah Called Upon God and He Helped Her

There was a certain man called Elkanah who lived in Ramah of Mount Ephraim. This man had two wives. One was called Hannah, and the other Peninah had children but Hannah had no children and was troubled in her heart. However, her husband Elkanah loved her but the wife was not happy because she had no child.

After she had eaten in Shiloh she went to the temple where Eli (the priest) lived and prayed to the Lord. She wept sore and said to the Lord, remember thy handmaid and do not forget me.

Now Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. And Eli said unto her, "How long wilt thou be drunken?" And Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and my grief have I spoken." Then Eli answered and said, "Go in

peace: and the God of Israel grant thee the petition that thou hast asked of him.? And she said, ?Let thy handmaid find grace in thy sight.? So Hannah went her way and did eat and her countenance was no more sad.

And they rose up early and worshipped before the Lord and returned and came to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah knew his wife Hannah and she conceived; and the Lord remembered her. She bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, ?because I have asked him of the Lord.? And Elkanah and all his house went up to offer sacrifice and his vow. But Hannah said, ?I will not go up with you until the child is weaned and then I will bring him to appear before the Lord and there abide for ever.? The husband agreed and said, ?Do what is good to thee.?

So when she had weaned the child she took up with her three bullocks and one ephah of flour and a bottle of wine and brought him to the house of the Lord to Eli, to abide there for ever, because the Lord had heard her petition.

The Lord hears the prayer of believers and often gives them their wishes, but the gift should be used to the glory of the Lord.

Bro. Charles Aboagye (Agogo, Ghana)

Newspapers as a Prayer Guide

?How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.? Isa 52:7.

World events move at such an alarming speed that we have hardly recovered from one shock before we receive another. The clash of bitter rivalries of ordinary people make headlines with such regularity that we are in danger of becoming hardened to the most heartbreaking stories. Perhaps one of the greatest disadvantages of modern newspapers is that they have made man immune to the heartache and suffering of his fellow men. This may not be the fault of the newspapers for they record, and do not create, events. True in the reporting there may be bias but the facts remain substantially the same.

To make prayer modern and realistic, we will find it profitable to read our newspaper with a mind geared to prayer. The truth that must be kept to the forefront of our minds is that, ?Thy God reigneth?. However bad the news that we read, remember that God has not surrendered His sovereignty over His world. It is still God?s world, whatever man may be trying to do to it!

Reading with a prayer-mind, we will be able to penetrate beyond the news to those who suffer in mists of obscurity: the mother behind the criminal; the parents awaiting the return of the runaway child; and so many others. As we pray for others, our spiritual vision will be enlarged and our prayer life wonderfully deepened. I link my prayer-power to the world in which I live and move.

Bro. Stanford Kuuzha (Karoi, Zimbabwe)

“Behold a Sower went forth to Sow”?

Everyone in the Truth is familiar with the above words. Various things affect the work of the sower, such as the fertility of the soil and the weather in its seasons; all the factors are put there by God.

We are told in the book of Genesis that “out of the ground made He (God) to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food”. This was the state of Eden before Adam and Eve sinned and when a sower sows his seeds, how he would still like to see the growth to be “pleasant to the sight”.

In the creation God said “let dry land appear” and it is only when there is the soil available that God can use it to “bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed?”. It is this availability of land which also gives us the opportunity to go forth and start sowing unsparingly. Basically, there are three types of soil: clay, sand and loam. The last of these is best because of its richness. In the parable of the sower, reference is not made to the type of soil nor to the season. As Paul encourages Timothy, “Be instant in season and out of season”.

But what about the type of soil? Suppose there is only sandy soil. What can the sower do? Definitely he still has to sow but he can improve the soil, such as by using fertilisers and organic matter.

When we read the Lord’s parable of the sower, do we think of these aspects? I would say “Yes?” and “No?”. Yes, for brothers and sisters where agriculture is the means of life. No, where a great majority of brothers and sisters in the West have never known what sowing and planting is in reality! What I would like to think about now are the ways to succeed in sowing spiritual seeds. As with sandy soil which needs extra attention, so with spiritual soil. Extra attention can produce amazing results.

Consider an area, the Caribbean, Africa or elsewhere. The seed is sown as in the Lord’s parable: some on the wayside where the fowls came and devoured it; some in stony places with no deepness of earth and were scorched when the sun was up and because they had no root they withered away; some fell among thorns and the thorns sprung up and choked them.

But could the sower have foreseen these problems and taken measures to avert them? What precautionary measures could have been taken?

I was once shown a letter from a brother where a missionary week in Africa had produced the first converts to the Christadelphian faith but the Truth is now at a standstill, or had vanished altogether in some places. I thought how this situation could have been prevented. Jesus says, “No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God,” and, “For which of you, intending to build a tower sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost whether he have sufficient to finish it?”

Remember that as a sower going forth “to sow the seed” it is your responsibility to take the necessary measures before you sow, and also after you have sown until the harvest!

There is a tendency for a sower to only give attention to seeds on good soil. What about the other soils? Where the soil is poor, I think we should give extra attention with fertilisers, manure, feeding and watering to also produce amazing results. I should like to mention something about sowing in villages compared to urban areas. Experience tells me that village sowing is very

much easier and the results are tremendous, but urban places are a different story. Preaching in big towns can cost five times more than in villages for a similar result. Therefore the town soil is stony; but often this is not considered by sowers!

In many ecclesias in the world, new converts have never been heard of even where the ecclesias have been in existence for more than a decade! Sad to say, the sowers who began the work have never asked themselves why this is so. Do they realise what is still their duty? Or do they think they have finished the work?

In Uganda, especially where I come from, while the first step is of vital importance, continued monitoring is very necessary; this involves weeding, pruning, etc, without which the ground becomes weedy and eventually the plants die off! The sower must use these considerations? fertilisers, manure and all the technology within his means. We live in a sophisticated age and things which would have taken months in the first century can now be done in hours or minutes. We live in an age of spiritual bankruptcy, so we must be sure to use all methods possible. As the apostle Paul says, 'I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some and this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you'. Yes, we must use all possible methods to win souls for Christ. If we are serious sowers we should be prepared to face all the challenges of the different categories of soil. The aim is to get a good harvest, which requires all our efforts.

In the Lord's parable of the sower there are three types of soil. The first is not good, the second is doubtful and the third is really good: 'He that received seed into good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty' (Mat 13:23). The enormous returns came where the soil had been thoroughly prepared.

In the case of our Lord, there had been considerable preparation: 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain' (Isa 40:3, 4). These prophetic words are recorded in all four gospels applying to John the Baptist preparing for 'one who was to come whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose'. The work which John did before the Lord came is the same work needed by sowers before the spiritual sowing of the word. Also, we cannot sow and then leave the plants unattended. They need tending and the removal of weeds; those who are literal sowers will understand the very hard work that is needed.

Hard toil is inescapable: 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground'??.

There is no other remedy. There is no harvest without toil. The soil must be cleared of thorns and thistles 'in the sweat?', but remember that the weeds then come up and must be removed. The effort continues all the time until harvest, which means that the sowers have a great task to accomplish. Do not forget the spiritual meaning of the parable of the sower. Hence the words of the Lord in the gospel of Matthew 24:46, 'Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing?.

Bro. John Ouma (Jinga, Uganda)

Maintaining Daily Victory

Victory is the beautiful thing in the Christian life. If we gain victory, there will be no condemnation or guilt and we will not sin any more.

The greatest battle of our lives that has the greatest consequence is the battle against sin. It is a fight that every man and woman is engaged in during their daily lives. If we are defeated in this battle, you will have sorrow on earth and suffer for eternity. Satan (the flesh) desires that it will keep all mankind in sin to enable *it* to have victory.

The joy we have is that God has made a plan and a way of escape, to give us freedom from sin, and happy living with Him for eternity. We are told of this victorious life in Psalm 119:1-3: ?Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord.? The Bible talks of this group of people who have discovered the way of victory as being blameless and spotless. They neither walk in the flesh nor live in sin. They do not fall and rise, but seek the Lord wholeheartedly and walk consistently in the law of the Lord. Iniquity does not arise in their private homes, in their conversations or in their places of work. They hurt nobody, speak evil of none, steal nothing belonging to anybody else, commit no adultery or fornication, or act in any mischievous way among people of the world. They pattern their lives after men like Enoch who walked consistently with God; Joseph, who discovered the secret of living a righteous life in a dirty environment (Egypt); Samuel who walked before the Lord blameless; and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who stood firm and refused to bow when millions around them were falling down to worship Nebuchadnezzar's idol. Daniel purposed in his heart never to defile himself with the dainties of the king's food and would rather go into the lions' den, if necessary, to retain his integrity and righteousness. Paul the apostle counted all things as dung and dross that he may be found not in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of God. Such people in the time of provocation and temptation, rest in the peace of Yahweh and are victorious over sin. They put their eyes, bodies, ears, feet, tongues and thoughts under control in compliance with Paul who said, ?I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.? (1 Cor 9:27).

The grace and power of Yahweh and the light of the gospel in their lives. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. Partnership with God is the source of this kind of victory, which is only possible when Christ lives within and fights against the flesh and the world. We will need to pray daily to have victory and to maintain it.

Christ in Us and We in Christ

We live in sin and sin is in us all. People are worldly because they are in the world and the world is in them. But to gain this victory is to turn around, to be transformed; in short, to bring Christ into them and them into Christ. Abiding in Christ is the source of this victory as confirmed in John 15:5: ?I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me, ye can do nothing.? Christ here emphasizes the necessity of all being in Christ and Christ being in them. Abiding in Christ means a change of attitude. An empty sack cannot stand upright. So Christians cannot have the victory without Christ. A graceless Christian cannot live in the grace of Yahweh. A lamp without oil cannot shine; a Christian without Christ and without the spirit of Christ cannot walk according to the light of the gospel. Such Christians are like a vehicle without fuel.

We will walk in the path of victory if we allow Christ to live in us and we in Christ. When this radiant light shines in us, gossiping, back-biting, stealing, embezzlement, falsification of

accounts and lying will be things of the past. Christ says in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me." If there is any besetting sin defiling our life from day to day, making us feel guilt all the time and we find ourselves crying like Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin (flesh)?" (Romans 7:24), then Christ the Victor and sin-bearer is at the door waiting to deliver us. But we must take a bold step to do away with that immorality and sin. Control our temper, and make him our Saviour, Redeemer, partner and companion and we will be new creatures as stated in 2 Cor 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This verse does not refer to a person outside of Christ, a church-goer, somebody with a familiar spirit or one who takes cover in one of the many denominations. Being "in Christ" is different from being in riches, politics and society. If any be in Christ, his or her name is in the book of life: he or she has the joy of salvation and is on the way to eternity. Being "in Christ" is the greatest, most important, most powerful, extraordinary spiritual and eternal thing that can happen to anybody.

The Means of Victory

1 John 5:4, 5 says "For whatever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ overcometh worldliness, lust of the flesh, the pride of life, temptations, superstitious belief, worldly enticements and defilement.

Some people who claim to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are not only overcome by these sins but are still found in gambling circles, cinema houses, film shows, drinking and dancing halls and night clubs where they mingle with thieves, idol worshippers and those involved in the occult. An overcomer always thinks of victory, plans to be victorious and removes every stumbling block in the way of victory.

He or she does not hesitate to obey the word of Jesus which says, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." (Mat 5:29,30). We are to cut off any bad friends, neighbours, men, women, businesses or relationships that tend to take us to those things we have already forsaken. Avoid besetting sin or any object of temptation, as you would avoid a snake; see victory as our greatest need and possession.

Escape for Your Dear Life

"Escape for thy life, look not behind thee" (Gen 19:17) was what the angel said to Lot and his family. Similarly, we must run away from sin, from the things of this world and run to Christ. The moment we relax into conversation with sinners and false prophets, the messengers of satan, we will lose the victory. The young prophet in 1 Kings 13 made this mistake and was deceived by the old, backsliding false prophet. "He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke unto me by the word of the Lord saying, Bring him back with thee into the house that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him." (1 Kings 13:18). It is significant that this old false prophet met the young prophet of God when he was resting under an oak tree forgetting that the only resting place is Yahweh. There is no reason to rest here on earth, but he was resting in the wrong place at the wrong time. The lesson for us is that we cannot stop

praying, reading the Holy Bible daily, fighting against sin in the flesh and running the race set before us. Paul strictly warns us in Ephesians 4:17, "That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind."

If we wish to escape with our lives by maintaining a daily victory of life in Christ, sin will never destroy you or drag you down.

Bro. Friday E. Umese (Oboro, Nigeria)

Should We Preach Only Smooth Things?

The suggestion appeals, but it is not in accordance with the pattern of the word. It would be nice to follow the philosophy of the world which is expressed in the statement: "We do not find it pleasant to draw attention to errors of teaching or of practice that may be gaining a hold in the brotherhood, but it is a duty upon which we must engage unless we shirk our responsibility. It would be far more gratifying to the flesh to imitate the ostrich and hide our heads in the sand, refusing to acknowledge that danger looms, but such an attitude is a negation of the demands of the Truth".

Isaiah was told, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sin, (Isaiah 58:1). Was it to a people completely irreligious to whom he had thus to speak? By no means. Yahweh continues, "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness". They were a people self-deceived because they refused to face the facts. They became impatient at the warning of the prophets and demanded that unless they could speak "smooth things" they should keep quiet (Isaiah 30:10). Because of their spiritual, self-inflicted blindness, because of their refusal to hearken, the indictment of God became even more outspoken through the prophets, and the nation was warned that because ye "despise this word", it would be completely overthrown (Isaiah 30:12).

Did those prophets render a service or a disservice to Israel? Was it an advantage to the nation or a disadvantage that the errors manifest in its midst should be openly revealed for all to see? Obviously it was the highest form of patriotism and service that the prophets could render. Such considerations should govern our attitudes today. Not that I would suggest that we have a commission such as was given to the prophets and the apostles, but it is the privilege and prerogative of every member of the brotherhood to fearlessly examine the state of ecclesias in the light of the word and with uncompromising vigour, and call for a return to the true standards if there has been any departure therefrom.

Remember the condemnation that rested upon the Laodicean Ecclesia was not that it was affluent, but that it was spiritually blind. It "knew not" its true state (Revelation 3:17). Its members saw an increase in the material possessions on every side and were filled with a sense of self-sufficiency in these things to the extent that they simply could not recognise nor acknowledge how spiritually "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked" they were. The same indictment can rest upon ecclesias today, because they exist in an environment that can induce such a state of spiritual blindness, where sickness exists. Early treatment can effect a cure, but if it is neglected, it can become so deep-seated as to refuse to respond to such. Let us all by

mutual consent ignore the problems facing the brotherhood today and soon we would be faced with a condition of things that will defy any curative treatment.

Bro. Patrick Wafula (Kamukuywa, Kenya)

Love is not Jealous (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Love forgives the wrongs of others and keeps people in unity. As brethren, our aim should be to live at peace with all men. He who thinks evil about his friend does not have love in his heart. No matter how many people we help, if we do it without love, all the works will not amount to anything. Love gives and cares for others, just like God our Father loved us so much that He gave His only begotten Son for us to believe in and worship as our Lord and Saviour. Do we give or do we just expect people to give us something? Start to give and this will really show that you have love. A person of love is not proud; God loves a humble person and lifts such an one up, but He opposes the proud. Are we proud over nothing? Then let us change and ask God to forgive us.

I would like to encourage all the brethren across the world to do the work of God in love, knowing that love forgives, and let us do the work of God, not to show off to other people, but to do so because we love God.

Bro. Herbert Tigerepasi (Lusaka, Zambia)

Confession is a Declaration of Faith

Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven?" (Mat 10:32-33). God's word further says in Romans 10:10, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." You will be glad when you openly declare your faith in Jesus, the Son of God, and allow him to become Lord of your life. You will do exactly the same thing the Ethiopian eunuch did when he declared, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" (Acts 8:37).

Bro. Jackson Nyakambiri (Mvuwu, Zimbabwe)

The Day of the Lord

I stand before the judgment seat of Christ
and I see the plan He had for me.
I could have been strong,

if only I had taken His way and not my own.
Now I see how I prevented Him from helping me,
how I went away, leaving Him alone at times.
I would not yield my will and listen to His word.
I see disappointment in my Saviour's eyes,
even though he loves me still.

He wanted that I be rich,
and now I stand here poor.
With earthly beauty gone,
I stand before him with only a bit of graceful beauty left.
I want to retrace my steps,
but then I see the gates behind are closed.
My painful heart is close to breaking point,
with tears I cannot shed.

I cover my shameful face with empty hands,
I bow my uncrowned head.
Then I walk up and see that it is not too late,
some years are still ahead of me.
Lord, I give them all into your hands,
take me and mould me as you see fit.
Your love is great, your ways are good.

John Dadzie (Senya Beraku, Ghana)

Speech

We should speak of Christ to those who do not know him. We should do as Christ did. Wherever he was, in the synagogue, by the wayside, in the boat thrust out a little from the land, at the Pharisee's feast or at the table of the publican, he spoke to men of the things pertaining to the higher life. The things of nature and the events of daily life were bound up by him with the words of truth. The hearts of his hearers were drawn to him, for he had healed their sick, had comforted their sorrowing ones, and had taken their children in his arms and blessed them. When he opened his lips to speak, their attention was riveted upon him, and every word was to some soul a savour of life unto life.

So it should be with us. Wherever we are, we should watch for opportunities to speak to others of the Saviour. If we follow Christ's example in doing good, hearts will open to us as they did to him. Not abruptly, but with words born of divine love, we can tell them of him who is the 'chiefest among ten thousand' and the one 'altogether lovely' (Song of Solomon 5:10,16). This is the very highest work in which we can employ the talent of speech. It was given to us that we might present Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour.

Bro. Jackson Nyakambiri (Mvuwi, Zimbabwe)

Christ's Superiority

Jesus is greater than the angels,

Greater than the angels, greater than the angels,

Jesus is greater than the angels,

God's angels worship him.

Jesus is greater than Moses,

Greater than Moses, greater than Moses,

Jesus is greater than Moses,

He is the high priest of the faith we profess.

Jesus is the great high priest,

The great high priest, the great high priest,

Jesus is the great high priest,

He feels sympathy for our weakness.

Bro. Erick Mutai (Kericho, Kenya)