

THE Gospel News

"To all nations"



Editorial | “Yes, straight away”

We all like to see that attitude from our children when they are little. And the Father seeks the same in us. Mark’s account of the Lord’s living and working amongst men begins with the theme of immediacy:

*“And the Spirit **immediately** drove him into the wilderness... And **immediately** coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens open... And **immediately** they left the nets and followed him... And **immediately** he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat... And they went into Capernaum; and **immediately** on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue... And the report of him went out **immediately** everywhere... And **immediately**, when they had come out of the synagogue... Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and **immediately** they told him about her... **immediately** the fever left her... And **immediately** the leprosy departed from him... he **immediately** sent him away... And **immediately** many were gathered together... And **immediately** Jesus, perceiving in his spirit... And he arose and **immediately** picked up the bed” (Mk. 1:10,12,18,20,21,28,29,30,31,42,43; 2:2,8,12).*

This is not simply giving the impression of a fast moving ministry and progression of events. This is Mark’s way of showing that the Spirit was conducting things. The Lord’s cures were immediate, in contrast to the slow, partial cures of medical science and healers.

Matthew does the same. He sets up Joseph as the parade example of immediate response. Joseph receives three visions, and gets up in the morning and obeys them; taking Mary to Egypt, and then back to Israel, when people rarely travelled more than 50km from their birthplace let alone moved that far. Marrying Mary when she was pregnant not by him, when marrying an already pregnant woman was bound to make the rest of his life very difficult.

Those called to the Gospel responded immediately. Matthew left his money on the table and walked out of the office immediately he was called. *“They immediately left the nets and followed him... they immediately left the boat and their father and followed him”* (Mt. 4:20,22). The way the Lord called people in the midst of their daily lives, and they immediately *“left all and followed Him”* is surely recorded to set a pattern for all future response to Him. Those fishermen who left their nets had heard the message some time earlier, but the record is framed so as to stress the immediacy and totality of response to Him, in the midst of daily life. In a day when the complexity of modern living can become an excuse to justify almost anything as an expression of discipleship, we need to remember the starker simplicities of Jesus’ first call: *“Follow me”*. And the immediate response which was made to it. In this sense, Jesus through His word that makes Him flesh to us, i.e. an imaginable person... still walks up to fishermen, into shops, accountants’ offices, school classrooms: and bids us urgently and immediately leave behind our worldly advantage and follow Him in the way of true discipleship.

The theme of immediacy of response continues with the speed at which people were baptized in the Acts. In the midst of the aftershocks of an earthquake and possible jailbreak, the prison keeper said “Yes, straight away”: *“At that hour of the night... immediately he and all his family were baptized”* (Acts 16:33). There are other examples. “Haste” characterized the Abraham family, the rock from which we are hewn. Abraham ran to meet the Angelic visitors, and then ran to get a calf to prepare for them (Gen. 18:2,7). The narrative of Abraham’s servant finding a bride for Isaac is full of the language of immediacy and speed. He runs toward Rebekah, and she runs to fetch water for his camels and thence runs to tell her family (Gen. 24:17,20,28); Laban runs to the well (Gen. 24:29). Rebekah, representing the bride of Christ, immediately responded: *“I will*

go” when her family wanted her to take ten days to think it over. The same Hebrew word is used in all these references. Abigail is likewise described repeatedly as ‘hasting’ to do things in response to David (1 Sam. 25:23,34,42)

In Preaching

The need is the call. And we encounter others’ spiritual needs all the time. Straight after his baptism, Paul *“immediately in the synagogues proclaimed Jesus”* (Acts 9:20). He later reflects that when he was called *“that I might preach him among the Gentiles- immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood”* (Gal. 1:16). Submission to human structures so often impedes our immediacy of response. What will they think? How might she take it? Am I authorized to do this by the committee? What will the Jerusalem ecclesia have to say about this? In contrast, *“When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them”* (Acts 16:10). The Lord justified His immediate attention to a needy person on the Sabbath, and His unilateral operation outside of the existing religious structures, on the basis that *“Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately draw him up on a Sabbath day?”* (Lk. 14:5). Immediacy of response to God, and His immediacy of response to us, is all part of ‘walking in step with the Spirit’. Submission to human structures militates against this.

In Forgiving

There is an immediate urgency for us to forgive. But too often there is a lag time between the offence and our forgiveness, which can drag on all our days. For the passage of time often doesn’t heal, it only entrenches perceived hurts and positions. We must agree with our adversary quickly, for we are on our way to judgment (Mt. 5:25). The call of the Gospel is effectively a call to go to judgment. If we truly perceive this, and our coming need for the utmost grace, we will settle our differences with our brethren “quickly”. We are living life on a knife edge. The Lord saw men as rushing to their destruction. We are the accused man on the steps of the court, whose case is hopeless. Now is the very last moment for him to settle up with his brother. We’re like the unjust steward, with a knife at our throat because all our deceptions have been revealed. Everything is at risk for the guy. Life in prison, goodbye to wife and kids, poverty... stretch out before him. He must get right with his brethren by forgiving them their debts.

The kind King who immediately, frankly forgave his indebted servant was alluding to the seventh year release for slaves (Mt. 18:26). But this King, despite the insincerity of this servant, simply proclaims the forgiveness and release there and then. This is how King Jesus operates- He makes the seventh year of release the ongoing status in which He lives with men and women. And this is to be our pattern, not waiting until the seventh year, not demanding a passage of time or partial restoration before we forgive, but doing so immediately without attention to issues of sincerity of repentance. The King’s example in immediately offering the spirit of the seventh year release is surely saying that we should forgive and accept without demanding any passage of time. Observation of ecclesial life suggests that in the end, members are often forgiven about anything, but it just takes time. But if forgiveness is going to be granted, why not grant it immediately...

Readiness to leave

Israel ate the Passover in haste (Ex. 12:11,33); their attitude of being ready to leave straight away is representative of the attitude of the faithful as they await the midnight call to leave ‘Egypt’ at the second coming. Lot and his family dithered in leaving Sodom [cited as a type of our

response to the Lord's return] because of the pull of materialism. The parable of the man who built bigger barns taught that in some senses we should be in the Lord's service like there's no tomorrow. He expected His followers to respond immediately, to pay the price today rather than tomorrow, with no delay or procrastination.

There is an emphasis in His teaching on immediacy of response, single-mindedness and unrestrained giving. This is radical stuff for 21st century people in the grip of manic materialism and the planning for the future which characterizes capitalism.

The immediacy of response required is clear in Mt. 24:18. Even grabbing an outer garment, equivalent of a jacket, would lead to unworthiness and destruction. The call to leave must be responded to immediately, with the faith that what clothing we have on is utterly irrelevant. If we are living in a spirit of immediate response to the Lord, then this will seamlessly continue when we realize "He's back!". There will be no delay, but an immediate response to His call. This accords with the description of the righteous as opening the door immediately in response to the 'knock' of the second coming (Lk 12:36).

Response to the Word

The Lord is the greatest example of immediate response. He was of "*Quick understanding in the fear of the Lord*" (Is. 11:3 AV; "*finds pleasure in obeying Him*", GNB). The word 'immediate' is often used of the Lord in this way: "*And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit...*" (Mk. 2:8). A word or hint from the Father, an implication from His word, was enough- and the Lord responded immediately. The same word comes to us as we read it daily. We are to 'run' in response, especially in these last days (Dan. 12:4); "*that he may run who hears it*" (Hab. 2:2), just as Samuel ran straight away to Eli when he heard the Lord's voice (1 Sam. 3:5). David felt likewise: "*I will run [make haste] in the way of your commandments*" (Ps. 119:32). But he also observed that God's word "*runs very swiftly*" (Ps. 147:15). He ran in response to the running of God's word. Hence Jer. 23:21 uses the same idiom to describe how those who spoke forth God's word 'run' with it. The word is to become flesh in us, as it did in the Lord. And so we ask: When was the last time we read or heard something from the word, and actually did something concrete in response? We read of baptism, and went out and got immersed in water; we got wet. But that response is to continue all our days.

The good ground of the sower parable includes all the positive aspects of the other ground types. The seed "*which fell on the rocky ground... immediately sprang up*" (Mk. 4:5). And that was good. When you perceive an opportunity to do the Lord's service, respond immediately. See it as another opportunity for "*redeeming the time*". This is a major Biblical theme. Israel were not to delay in offering their first fruits to God (Ex. 22:29), lest their intentions weren't translated into practice. The Lord told another parable in which He characterized those not worthy of Him as those who thought they had valid reason to delay their response to the call (Lk. 14:16-20). They didn't turn Him down, they just thought He would understand if they delayed. But He is a demanding Lord, in some ways. What He seeks is an immediacy of response. All this is not to say that we should rush off in hotheaded enthusiasm, crushing the work and systematic efforts of other brethren under foot. But when we see the need, when we catch the vision of service, let's not hesitate in our response, dilly-dallying until we are left with simply a host of good intentions swimming around in our brain cells.

We are to be like the man who traded his talents "*immediately*" (Mt. 25:16). We cannot be passive on receiving the opportunity to serve God. We will urgently seek to do something with

what we have been enabled to do for the Lord. The law of the peace offerings was designed so as to encourage the person who decided to make such a freewill offering to execute immediately- they were to eat it the same day they offered it, and the sacrifice would be totally unacceptable if it was killed but left for some days (Lev. 19:5-7). If we have an impulse to respond to the Lord, we should respond to it immediately. This isn't mere impetuosity. The man who refuses to immediately respond to the Lord's call to service says that he must first go away from the Lord and bury his father (Mt. 8:21); the young man went away in sorrow (Mt. 19:22); people hear the Gospel and then go away to all their petty businesses of this life (Mt. 22:5).

Our Slowness

But children typically do not say or do 'Yes' straight away. There is a time lag, an inertia element, and often the request has to be repeated. This is usually not due to rank disobedience, but because it takes them time to process the request, and their slowness tends to frustrate us. The Father and Son must, albeit with greater patience, have something of the same sense. As children grow, lag time between hearing the word and responding diminishes. And so it should be in our path of spiritual growth. As we get older, we ought to see that there is only one thing that matters- our response to the Father and Son. The flesh wants us to delay immediate response, in the hope that we may in fact not have to make the response. John the Baptist aimed to prepare people for the Lord Jesus to use them as a path upon which He would come to Zion. His work was to *"Make his paths straight"*; and that is the same word translated *"immediate"*. There was an intensity and critical urgency about John and his message. He warns people to *"flee from the wrath to come"* along that straight or immediate path (Lk. 3:7). This was what their changed lives and baptisms were to be about- fleeing from the wrath to come. He speaks as if that *"wrath to come"* is just about to come, it's staring them in the face like a wall of forest fire, and they are to flee away from it. So immediate response involves a seeing of things as a 'straight' and plain path. This is not an appeal for simplistic obedience with no thought to consequence or wider contexts, but it is true that we make our choices so difficult. In issue after issue, the choice is in fact simple- for the Lord's way, or not. Our lives become uncluttered and the decisions clear once we are signed up to this principle of immediate response. I wonder if it is intentional that we read that Saul was baptized on Straight street or way (Acts 9:11)- the very same word used by John. 'Immediate Avenue', we could translate. It is the only *"right way"* (2 Pet. 2:15); again using this same word for *"immediate"*. Immediate response is the only right way. Even if we are left with egg on our faces, fools for Christ's sake, in our late night reflections on our choices clutching on to the promise that *"We can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth"* (2 Cor. 13:8).

If only we would live in this spirit. Our quick response leads to the Lord's further response, and the dialogue of our lives with Him progresses quicker. God is in dialogue with man. And it can progress at the speed of light, if we allow it to. For that dialogue, that relationship, is mediated by His Spirit. There were eleven days' journey from Egypt to Canaan (Dt. 1:2). It took Israel a lifetime. And that journey from Red Sea baptism to the promised land is our journey in Christ.

Our delayed response is connected to the conservatism deep within us, the predilection to carry on just as we are and have done. We don't want the new wine, *"for he says [deep within himself], The old is better"* (Lk. 5:39). The Lord here accepts the basic conservatism of human nature- that we will not make the change immediately. In seeking to make the total transformation, we ourselves must realize that however progressive, liberal, flexible, open to new ideas we think we are- when it comes to spiritual change, we are terribly conservative. And it is such unbridled conservatism which stops people changing and accepting the new wine.

There is the assumption in many Christian groups and minds that conservative = righteous, and change is likely to be for the worst. And yet the Lord is teaching that it is our native conservatism which stops the vital, transforming change which is necessary to avoid the shattering of life and personality now, and final destruction at judgment day. We all find change hard; new wineskins are able to be stretched.

But the Lord knows our nature. He saw that our spiritual growth would be an agonizingly slow business; as slow as a tiny mustard seed growing into a tree, as slow as a man digging a foundation in rock, or a seed growing and bringing forth fruit. Such growth is very slow from a human perspective. But He saw the possibility of His blood being wasted if men didn't change from old to new wineskins. The implication is that we shed His blood afresh if we won't change, if we allow the conservatism of our natures to have an iron grip upon us we not only destroy ourselves, but waste the blood of the Son of God.

News from Africa

NEWS FROM KENYA



KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP |



The situation at Kakuma is not easy. Problems are arising due to the influx of many additional refugees and the reduction of food allowances - owing to the lack of UNHCR funds. In these situations diseases spread easily and as a result hospital patients are having to be treated on the pavements and dirt road outside of the hospital, as the picture right and top of page 45 indicate.



Street hospital, Kakuma Refugee Camp Please remember them in your prayers

KIBERA | Bro Samuel Marinta

Hannah was truly a virtuous woman, as we read in the Bible. She was a woman of powerful prayer and faithfulness in keeping her promise to God.

She teaches us the proper way to approach and view our troubles and our adversaries. Why? Hannah was barren. She wanted a son but God had not granted her one. She begged the Lord for a child. In return, she promised to dedicate this young man to God's service.

Her son was born and she followed the promise. She took the child, named Samuel, to Eli the priest and left him to be raised in the Tabernacle. She continued to have influence over the boy's life through the years. Samuel grew up to be one of the most influential and God-fearing men in the Bible.



Bro Samuel Marinta

NYANGE | Bro Nasong'o Harron

The work here in Nyange Ecclesia is good; friends, brothers and sisters are grateful for the CAT's work. The Christian literature that you always send to us is of great importance. It has given us ample information to explain to friends about the Kingdom of God, our Lord Jesus Christ and our heavenly Father.

Brothers, we are grateful each day for what the Almighty God always does for us. We appreciate every moment of life, and for the challenges that come forth, for they make us stronger in the Christian life. We pray that the Almighty Father will continue to give you strength and ability to fulfil your desires for spreading the word of God.

We have been reading your literature and have seen both our hope grow, and also our ability to explain to our friends about the love of our merciful Master, Jesus Christ. We are in need of Ki'Swahili Bibles, the European Version, because we have new friends and the Bibles would be very helpful, if available.

TONGAREN | Sis Monicah Situma

Praise God, brothers and sisters, as I am by name Monicah Situma. I was a member of the Anglican church, but I thank God that since I joined CBM many things have changed in my life.

I have learnt much in the Bible, and I knew the Truth, so that is why I decided to accept and be baptised into Jesus. I am happy to be in C.B.M. and I will always be there and ready to do the work of God. May God guide me as I walk towards the coming Kingdom, your newly baptised sister.



Sis Monicah's baptism

| Bro Isaac Kapa

Tongaren is very strong in faith as we walk through the wilderness of this world, longing for the Kingdom. Below is the photo of the Bible School we held at Lela Children's Home, Kamukuywa, Rift Valley area. The attendances were 172 brothers, sisters and friends from all over Rift Valley Ecclesias. In that very Bible School we had 17 baptisms.



Rift as a whole is growing rapidly, for it now has 525 members, but many of the Ecclesial buildings are still temporary. We pray that God will open ways so that some of the Ecclesias may build permanent structures to avoid serious damage and deterioration.

I would again request the Swahili Bibles for newly baptised members. May God bless you all.

NEWS FROM NIGERIA



OHAFIA | Bro Gaius U Egwu

Greetings of love and peace in the wonderful name of YAHWEH and the hope we share together in Christ Jesus.

With gratitude of heart I thank you so much for all your support that you always render to me and to those we love in our small Ecclesia, both spiritually and physically. The good God will always reward you. (*'The bread cast upon the waters you will find after many days,'* Eccl. 11:1 and Isaiah 32:20). Once again, thank you so much.

Yes, we have cultivated and planted Cassava and what you sent really helped me in settling those who work with me in preparing the ground. In our area anything that you plant needs fertiliser, but to get it you need a sum of money and mostly it is at the hand of a politician, which makes it hard and costly to get. In fact, things are getting worse every day here, but all is directing us to *'the consolation of the faithful. Therefore let us not grow weary while doing good'* – (attending Ecclesial meetings, helping those in need and the weak in faith, praying for brothers and sisters all over the world) – *'for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart'* (when we will be rewarded in God's Kingdom, when we shall see His face and be like

Him), *'that in the dispensation of the fullness of time He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in Him. In whom we were made His heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who does all things after the counsel of His will.'*

Beloved, I do not cease to give thanks for you in my prayers: may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

If the Lord permit, I will send you the picture of our Cassava Farm, but the one I enclose now was taken at our fraternal gathering, with beloved brother Ibeka Thoms and his two children, David and Leah, and my own two children, Emmanuel and Comfort, pictured opposite.



Bro Gaius, centre, Bro Ibeka Thoms, right and his two children, David and Leah and Bro Gaius' two children, Emmanuel and Comfort

NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



KEMPTON PARK |

Several of our members attended the Study Weekend, held at Ithabiseng Guest Farm near Warmbaths. The studies, from Proverbs 30, proved once again that the Scriptures truly are inspired by a much greater intellect than man's, as we dug deeper into the real meanings of the texts and found incredible parallels to our relationship with Christ and Yahweh. We also took a deeper look at the life of Samson, and discovered that he was perhaps not the shallow womaniser as Sunday School lessons like to portray him.

The weekend was especially memorable for our young Bro Keletso Ndlovu, as this was his first time presenting a Bible study session. We look forward to having him share many more of his thoughts on Scripture with us through exhortations and adult classes.

YEOVILLE |

We enjoyed the company of Bro Itayi Mutseka and family with Bro Peter Muliwa (Kempton Park) who visited our ecclesia. Bro Itayi encouraged us to have "Patience with God". To God be the glory as we celebrate with the angels of God the new born baby in our Ecclesia **Sister Grace Muleso**, the wife of Bro James Muleso, who was baptized on the 7th of August 2016.

Sis Grace Muleso had been studying the truth from home in Malawi, then came with her husband to join Yeoville Ecclesia. Here she underwent extra Bible lessons for two years before her baptism.

A series of talks are taking place in Yeoville Ecclesia on Saturdays, time: 11:30am to 12:30pm, where we enjoy good lectures on different topics and everyone is welcome to join us. Hot tea

and coffee is served during interactive time. The seminar in Alexandria is still in progress, as is preaching in Yeoville.

NEWS FROM TANZANIA



NYARUGUSU



Bro lyendi Absini helping his neighbour after a fire in his house; he got a severe burn on his arm

| Bro Mosses Kivuyo

I hope you're doing well brother. I would like to thank you very much for your assistance, since you send Brother John to see me in Tanzania, and brought to me The Holy Bible, Misingi ya Biblia and one Swahili Bible, New Testament. I again received other resources, one Holy Bible, *Bible Basics*, and one Swahili Bible through the postal address.

Brother John has been a very helpful brother to me, he made a lot of support to me. You send me right person who have a burden to save. God thank you!

I am still learning the Bible through a lot of resources you send me, I am understanding the Bible truth. For sometimes I share the *Gospel News* to my neighboring families, even though I am facing a lot of challenges during presentation due to lack of electricity, projector and lack of enough Bibles, especially Swahili Bibles that can be the good references during learning with a group of people. I hope one day you will visit us. God bless.



NEWS FROM UGANDA



BUGIRI | Bro Samuel Bukisa

Thank you so much for negotiating direct with the Post Master so as to free the mail sent to me whilst I was away for a couple of years. Those letters and literature are already helping to extend

my knowledge of God, and to prepare myself more to be readier for Christ's return to take over the Kingdoms of men and establish the wonderful Kingdom of God.

NEWS FROM ZAMBIA



MAZABUKA | Bro Gibeon Hankamone

I love receiving many copies of 'Gospel News' and it is so uplifting to read and so much encouragement to hear about brothers and sisters around the world who share the same statement of faith all patiently waiting for the Lord Jesus to come and establish God's kingdom here on earth.

The Fraternal Gathering in the south was successful at Daphan Ecclesia in Kalomo. It was attended by ecclesias such as Kafne, Mazabuka, Muzoka, Kalomo and Livingstone. The total number who attended was 88, even though there were others that could not manage to come. The theme of the teaching was '*Principals of Ecclesial Life*' led by Bro Kelly Simayumbula. It was uplifting to see local ecclesias in Kalomo growing in faith.

Postage to the U.K. has been increased in Zambia, so that most brothers and sisters won't be able to afford postage. The current price is now K20 instead of K2.50. This is going to be a big challenge for us. I prefer to communicate with you by e-mail which will be cheaper for me.

We had an opportunity of purchasing a church plot in Mazabuka and we sent the estimates to the Linkman in U.K. and later he said the project cannot be funded at the moment.

For we do not hope in what our eyes can see, but that which we do not see (Romans 8:24-25). And it is through this hope that we are saved. May we not lose hope and spiritual sight of the lasting and eternal hope we love and cherish so much.

NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE



CHIPINGE | Bro Farai Makandeni

We had a good weekend with Bro Steve and Sis Ruth Moore from the U.K. at Hunnington Retreat Centre at Chinhoy. Bro Steve gave us a talk on fellowship matters, emphasizing that we as Christadelphians should learn to be united, that good fellowship only exists if believers walk in light, without sinning. We should learn to love one another in giving and sharing and also to have faith in Jesus Christ as the one who was sacrificed to die on the cross for our sins. In this we remember Jesus when we break bread and drink wine as a symbol of continuing living in his name.



Bro Farai Makandeni

CHISAPE |

We have been thrilled to celebrate the baptism of a new Sister to our Ecclesia **Sis Hister Magoronga**, she was interviewed by Bro Danmore Kaosha and baptized by Bro Ngoni Chikwata, pictured here:



Left, Bro Lamiel Mazvaramhaka (Secretary), our new Sis Hister, Sis Rlina Chikwata (Chishumba) and at the end Hister's sister with a child. Hister's sister took the forty lesson course some years ago and is now revising her studies with the intention of being baptized



We have seven Elders, pictured from left to right: Bre Zvenyika Magoronga Nga, Christopher Mugwagwa, Oswell Makaya, Marison Tafirenyika (Chairman) Moses Muzayazi (Treasurer) Lamiel Mazvaramhaka (Secretary)

MUSHUMBI POOLS | Bro David Luxon Yotamu

I would like to thank CAT for distributing *Gospel News* literature worldwide, with the purpose of preaching to all nations. I thank God who, by His mercy, made me to be part of His family of Christadelphians. May we continue to motivate and encourage each other for the great prize, for Christ, who paved the way for us to follow. May God guide and strengthen your work which you are doing worldwide.

In the Bible we are told that we should always overcome temptation; Revelation 2:1-7. The word *'repentance'* means penitence or sorrow for wrong-doing. The only way to enter the wonderful Kingdom of God is to accept and obey God's laws. His desire is for all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," as we are told in Romans 8:28. May the Lord bless you in doing your work.



Bre David Luxon Yotamu and Shizo Mhako

News from the Americas

NEWS FROM TRINIDAD



| Bro George Constantine

I have been praying for you, and hope things are working out OK. Thanks to God I've been keeping okay. A few months ago working at the school here became stressful for me and after a lot of contemplation and prayers I decided to leave, I have no regrets and my mind is at peace.

For 7 years I enjoyed being busy all day, six days a week, working in the prison school, now I am enjoying my 'retirement'. I have more time for my spiritual studies and exercise, I spend most mornings in the gym. I am keeping up my faith firmly in our Father above, continuing to work on trying to be better in His sight, as we look forward to our Master's return.

The 'older lifers' case before the Privy Council should be heard later this year, God willing. If it is God's will, we junior lifers should also benefit from it.

May God continue to bless you and especially Duncan and family in their great work.

NEWS FROM USA



| Sis Inez Schneider

Would you please send me a copy of the list of 250 New Testament references showing the return of Jesus offered in *Gospel News* September-December issue? I would like to share the

chart with our CYC members and also with any brethren and sisters who would like to have a copy for their Bibles.

Thank you for sending the *Gospel News*. We have a large refugee family from Zimbabwe in our ecclesia and I enjoy sharing the *Gospel News* with them. Several times they have recognized brethren and sisters they knew when they were in a refugee camp for five years. The family is always so happy to take the magazine home. Their older children are learning English and often translate pages with information about brethren and sisters from Africa. It is a great work that you all do!

News from Asia

NEWS FROM CAMBODIA



Sis Grace Butler, from Canada, who spent the summer working with brethren and sisters in Cambodia, kindly shares these photos with us:



Sunday school in the village with Bro Savy



Little Salee joining a Bible lesson



Sisters' class: Sisters Chhe, Theung and Chantrea



Some outreach students

Love in Our Lives (1 Cor 13)

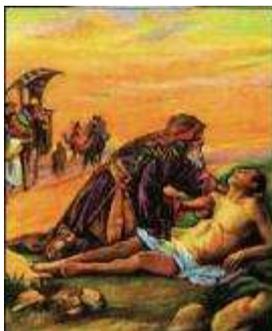
There are a huge amount of reasons we could have come to believe in God. We may have been brought up with a believing family, we may have seen God in creation, we may have felt there was something more to life, been convinced of the truth of the Bible, been astounded by prophecy, had a good friend who was a Christian, been convicted by the death and resurrection of Jesus, or believed because of a miracle, healing or answer to prayer.

While it may have been any of those things that brought us to Christ, they should no longer remain our primary focus. Each one of the things we first believed points us in some way toward love: the love of God to us, and the love we should show to each other.

In Corinth people were arguing about which spiritual gifts were the best. None of them were the best, but each of them was a single aspect of love. In the end love is what it's all about. *"Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there is knowledge, it will pass away."* (1 Cor 13:8).

In the end it's not how well we know prophecy or can argue creation or who our friends were, or how many miracles we have seen that will count. It's whether all these things have translated into love in our lives. Let's develop love. Love is what the gospel and the kingdom of God are all about.

Love One Another



John 13:34-35 says: *“A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Jesus talks about us loving one another. Just as he himself loved us, so we too must show that love to one another. It is very important for us to have a good relationship with one another, and when we love, something amazing happens – one is loved back, beyond measure.

Matthew 9: 10-11: *“And as he sat at the table in the house, behold many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’”*

Here is the Son of God, who lived a clean and perfect life here on earth. He understood what love was really like. He saw that tax collectors and sinners really needed the love and care that came from him. Here is a challenge for us, we must likewise show love to everyone we come into contact with. It could be our neighbours, workmates, old school friends, street kids, the homeless, the sick and all kinds of people. The whole gospel is tied together in one great name, and that is love. Paul in Corinthians says, *“Hope, faith and love abide, but the greatest of these is love.”* Love shall continue even in the Kingdom to come.

Luke 6:32-35 speaks about the love that our Father has shown to all mankind, and we have seen how Christ loves the un-loveable and even died for us all. We can go to our Sunday service of worship and be inspired to live and love as Christ has done for us all. When we read God’s word we can see His great plan and purpose for all mankind, yet we can find it difficult to love those whom God and Jesus Christ love.

To love our neighbour is about being compelled to love them regardless of how they love, or not. Let us show the same kind of love to those around us that God and Jesus show us. We should be obligated to love those the world has termed unworthy of love. We must choose to love as a child loves, being completely open, without judgement and allowing ourselves to be vulnerable (Matthew 18:4) – not to stop loving even if others may have stopped loving us.

“And the King will answer them, ‘truly I say to you, as you did to one of these my brethren you did it for me.’” (Matthew 25:40)

May we show love to others just as God and His Son Jesus have loved us. God bless us all as we journey Zionwards.

Love

There is no greater love than the love that holds on where there seems nothing left to hold on to.

“Love never fails ...”

1 Corinthians 13:8

Bro Gideon Hankomone (Mazabuka, Zambia)

True Wisdom

“The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,” said Paul hundreds of years ago and the world’s wisdom today is just as foolish in God’s eyes as it was then (1 Cor.1:18-27 and 2:6-10). Since Paul penned these words man’s wisdom has increased manifold in almost every area except in the things concerning God. Knowledge has been increased as Daniel predicted, in Daniel 12. Men can now fly at the speed of sound and split the atom, but still the Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Daniel wrote this many hundreds of years ago. We see today that Daniel and Paul correctly assessed the present-day situation.



What are the wise of the world thinking about today? It certainly is not about God! Their lives and minds are filled to the brim. Some work all day and spend their evenings in night schools and self-improvement courses; others are engaged fulltime in the Colleges and Universities, while every industry runs courses, seminars and conventions where personnel are taught the latest methods, procedures and systems to increase sales, production, etc.

There is so much to know about any subject. All of this worldly wisdom has created great prosperity, advances in science, more free time for sports and recreation, but no time for God. Boating, bowling and football are all on the increase. Here again there is much to learn and hours of practice to become proficient. One does not take an expensive yacht out into the open sea without hours of study in navigation. All of these things are part of the wisdom of this world, which is so foolish to God. When we have done it all, what have we really got? So we have become an expert in electronics, an authority in accounting, a specialist in medicine, a crack golfer or champion bowler – so what? Life surely is more than this. All of these wise, worldly leaders take time to lie down and die, and then what becomes of their accomplishments? It’s easy to see the folly of the fool Jesus described in His parable, who pulled down his barns and built greater ones, only to die and leave it all to others. But what about that person who lives in our shoes, who perhaps hasn’t been quite so successful and who hasn’t yet died? Have we learned from the mistakes of others to *“lay up our treasure where moths and rust can’t get at it and where no thieves can break through and steal?”* (Matt. 6:19-21). Where is our treasure? Our hearts and minds are where that is. This is why the wisdom of this world is so foolish with God. Their treasure is here, and all their wisdom, which is considerable, goes no higher than their heads and lasts no longer than their life. This is not the case with those who have set their affection upon things above. Their thoughts are constantly upon the things of God. We don’t find them in business, industry, sports or the Universities. God’s name is rarely mentioned except in a profane way. It is the duty of man to glorify God’s Holy Name and it isn’t being done. Man is using his time, talents and wisdom for worldly things.

No wonder all this is foolishness with God and will soon be destroyed when God sends his Son to fill the whole earth with His Glory. In the meantime, are we being wise? What are we thinking about all day long? It had better be different from those around us. Those that *“Think upon His Name shall be mine, says the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.”*

Bro Moses Komanya (Mwanza, Tanzania)

Oneness

Jesus showed those who wanted to see, just what God is like. He said to his disciples, *“Have I been with you for so long, and yet you have not known me? He who has seen me has seen the Father. The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father, who dwells in me does the work.”* He had come in His Father’s name with God’s authority, because He came to fulfil God’s initiative to display the Divine characteristics of love, mercy, grace, kindness, compassion and suchlike. For he was God’s only begotten Son. He lived, died and rose again to bring us to the Father and give us an opportunity to become members of the family of God. *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing.”* This was his own sacrifice, and in so doing he would unlock the chains of sin and death and set His people free (John 14:9-10, Rev. 5:12).

God formed Adam from the ground and then formed Eve from Adam. Eve came from Adam, thus Adam and Eve were originally one. When a man and woman leave their parents and are joined together in marriage, they become one flesh. They are again one, denoting a very close and intimate relationship. They are made for each other – this is what God intended. Though the beginning of marriage is clearly marked by a man leaving his parents and being united to his wife, no end is indicated; clearly it is intended to be a lifelong relationship. No other partners are mentioned, marriage is with one husband or wife. A man or woman cannot be one flesh with many people. Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immorality (Rom.7:2, Hebrews 13:4).

Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? asks the prophet. Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing? If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the Lord have done it? Those who read the words of the prophets will learn God’s plans from them. Surely the Lord does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. More than that, like Jeremiah at a later stage, Amos was unable to keep quiet when God had given him a message. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy? There is a simple Biblical test. If what the prophet claims really happens then he really is a prophet of God.

Bro Melusi Ndlovu (Kwe Kwe, Zimbabwe)

A Virtuous Mind

The mind of man is the human consciousness that originates in the brain and is manifested in thought, perception, emotion, will, memory and imagination. The mind is what makes us do what we do and be who we are. To have a virtuous mind is to be a virtuous person.

The greatest virtue that the human mind can possess is a deep love for God. Jesus Christ said, *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind: this is the first commandment”* (Mark 12:30). Faith in God is wonderful, and hope in God is indispensable, but love for God is the greatest virtue, now and for ever. *“And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love”* (1Corinthians 13:13). The mind that loves God is a virtuous mind:

1| Virtuous minds are also courageous. An obvious form of mental courage is the willingness to hold unpopular views, graciously. Another important characteristic of a courageous mind is its willingness to look at its own views and conclusions analytically, and to rethink its positions where it is necessary to better conform to truth.

2| Virtuous minds are stable. Minds that lack virtue often surrender ground at the slightest whiff of opposition. Other minds that also lack virtue hold dogmatically to their beliefs which are erroneous. But a virtuous mind will progressively gain a further understanding of truth.

3| Virtuous minds are humble. A virtuous mind is humble about itself, and increasingly so as its knowledge grows. A person with a humble mind does not triumphantly pounce upon errors it sees in other people's thinking. Instead, such a person is gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient (2 Timothy 2:24). Oh to attain to a virtuous mind, but a virtuous mind is not attained by simply adopting proper mental techniques. Why? Because the attainment of a virtuous mind is a moral enterprise, not merely a rational one. In the final analysis, the attainment of a virtuous mind is possible only by surrendering our mind to the grace and work of God upon our minds (word of God). Our part, then, in maintaining a virtuous mind includes constantly pushing back against the grain of our human nature- against vanity, against laziness, against pride, against rebellion and against every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:5). To maintain a virtuous mind we must continually surrender our minds to God's word and submit our thoughts to His rule. That is true virtue. *"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Romans 12:2).



From left: Bro Dafydd Jenkins, Bro Gaius Egwu and Bro Philip Oram

Bro Gaius U Egwu (Ohafia, Nigeria)

The Gospel in Eden and Today

We need to know more about ourselves and our human nature. From the time we received the good news of the Kingdom of God, we have been informed of many things that are very different from what we believed in before. For example, our gospel tells us that there is no personal Satan that causes us to sin or who tempts us to do sin, as it is recorded in the Holy Bible especially in the book of James 1: 13-15.

Brothers and sisters, if there is no Satan and if the sin that we do comes from our evil desires, we need to dig further to find out what brings those desires within us. Although many people say that there is a Satan who plants these desires in us, is it really true? The answer is 'No'. Read Mark 7:18-23. Having read this, the Bible says that all kinds of evil come from our heart (the first

century term for what we now know as the mind). Yes, it is within our heart (mind) that evil originates.

Someone may ask, 'How does the heart manufacture these evils within it?' The Bible tells us that the heart is deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9). But why is the heart so deceitful? The answer is found in what happened in the Garden of Eden back in the time of Adam and Eve.

Remember, the Bible tells us that Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating from the forbidden tree. What was the name of that tree? It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What does that mean to us? See Genesis 2:15-17- the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened so that they knew they were naked. This tells us something about the tree: it was able to make men and women to know about things which they never knew before then. What does this mean to us? See Genesis 3:6-7. The Bible further tells us that the tree was able to make one wise! See Genesis 3:6.

Wise in what way? Remember it contained two things which are very special in themselves in transforming man's thinking. Remember it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: knowledge is knowing about things. If this is so, then Adam and Eve knew good and evil from the day they ate of the fruit of that tree. Genesis 3:22-24 tells us what that means.

It means that all of us know good and evil. And this knowledge is in our hearts. It is part of our nature, making us able to do good as well as evil since we are born with this kind of nature inherited from Adam and Eve, our original father and mother. This shows us that sin originates from our heart because there is evil in us (Ecclesiastes 9:3-5).

Knowing our nature, we are ready not to blame anyone else about our sin. It is man that has sinned against God and it is God who wants to save us because we were all condemned on that day when our parents Adam and Eve sinned. Thus we need to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ, the only man born of our nature who never obeyed its desires. He lived a selfless life and followed God in all his life by obeying through learning (John 3:16-19; Hebrews 2:14; 4:14-16; 5:7-11). We only have hope of life through believing in Jesus Christ. Amen!!

Bro Timothy Kaambeu (Kabombo, Zambia)

Examine Yourselves

Do you practice self-examination? Do you often set aside a little time to “*examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, proving your own selves?*” Here are some questions to help you:

- Is your desire to keep the commandments as strong now as when you were first baptized?
- *Is God really your chiefest joy?*
- Do you pray regularly?
- *Are your prayers fervent and sincere?*
- Do you really hope the Lord will come soon?
- *Honestly, do you prefer the present life to the one promised?*
- Do you labour for the Kingdom of God as earnestly as you labour for your daily bread?
- *Are you looking for the Lord, and do you love his appearing?*
- Do you do your daily readings, thinking and meditating upon them throughout the day?
- *Is the reading of the Word a delight to you?*
- Are you trying to grow in the knowledge of Christ?
- *Do you speak often one with another upon Divine things?*
- Do you try to be meek and humble always?
- *Do you sincerely want to live the kind of life the Truth enjoins upon you?*
- Is your home ruled by the principles of the Truth?
- *Is the Truth uppermost in your mind; are you able to witness for it before those with whom you come into contact?*
- Can you be distinguished from the world?
- *When trials come, do you complain or accept all as for your own good?*
- Do you submit to evil for Christ’s sake, or do you try to retaliate?
- *Can you love those who have done you wrong?*
- Do you indulge in foolish talking?
- *Are you sure to be at the Breaking of Bread as Christ has commanded you, or do you sometimes make excuses for absence?*
- Do you “suffer” the word of exhortation and see if it applies to you, or do you resent it?
- *The Truth’s work requires means to further it. Are you liberal, as a faithful steward of what God has given you, even to the denying of yourself?*

Lucifer



**Lions following on the hunt | Patterned wall from the city of Babylon, constructed in 575 BC
Artifact of Iraq saved by Pergamon Museum in Berlin**

It is commonly believed that Lucifer is another name for “the devil”. In a publication of the “Bible and Watch Tower Society” (“Let God be True,” page 47) we read: “The Devil was not always the Devil. There was time when he enjoyed a high position in God’s family. He was a spirit son of God whose name was Lucifer. Contrary to the opinion of some, he was not an ugly creature with horns and tail, but he was beautiful. The Bible describes him in Ezekiel 28:12-13, *“Thou sealest up the sun, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, thou hast been in Eden the garden of God, every precious stone was thy covering”*. In keeping with his being a son of God, he was given a position of great trust and responsibility; that of overlord of humankind. The designated term for this office was, as stated in the Bible at Ezekiel 28:14: *“the anointed cherub that covereth.”*

Is this a correct understanding of the Scriptures? It will not be difficult to show it is otherwise.

The reference to Lucifer is in Isaiah 14:12. The name appears in no other part of the Bible, and the prophecy of Isaiah dates to some 3,500 years after the creation. This means that if the reference in Isaiah is to the time of creation, then thirty-three centuries passed by before the revelation of what really happened was made!

Not a “Fallen Angel”

However, not only is the reference in Isaiah to the times of the prophet and subsequently, but also, if we read the early chapters of Genesis, there is not the slightest inference or suggestion of the existence of “fallen angels”. The account in Genesis is entirely self-contained. It records the usage of a serpent with the power of speech as the medium of test and trial of the man and woman who had been made.

A simple command was given them; this was sufficient as a basis of trial. They failed the command and reaped the consequences. In the words of the apostle, *“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ...”* (Romans 5:12).

In all this there was no need whatever for the interference of any super-human monster of power, certainly not of any “fallen angel”. It is in Milton’s “Paradise Lost” where such an idea will be found. It is not any teaching of God’s inspired word.

To what then does Lucifer refer? The context is perfectly clear. The prophet addresses (ver. 4) the king of Babylon, and speaks of the time when his oppressive subjection of God’s people was to cease: *“In the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this proverb AGAINST THE KING OF BABYLON.”*

A Great King’s Downfall

Then, in figurative language, is the fall of Babylon described. The “*whole earth is at rest.*” The “*trees rejoice*”; the kings of nations, already in the grave, rise to welcome the Babylonian monarch; he is like a star that falls. The great king had aspired to world dominion; he sought, as it were, Divine equality (how like the later power described by Paul in 2 Thes. 2 – the latter day Babylonian, Papal, power). Verses 4 to 15 vividly describe the rise and fall of the king and nation of Babylon, and in the end the prophet asks, “*Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?*” (ver.16)

The word Lucifer is not a translation of the Hebrew at all. The marginal rendering of the word is “day star”. The revised version substitutes this for the word Lucifer. The figure is this of a star – “the bright morning star.” “Lucifer” is the Latin name for the star “Venus”. The word in the latin means, “lightbearer” and it is recorded that “The church fathers attached the name to Satan – and thus the word has come to be used to denote the fallen archangel” (Everyman’s Encyclopaedia).

Personification

The assumption regarding Lucifer is, of course, based on the belief in the personality of “the Devil” and “Satan”. The Bible uses personification – and this is very different from attributing actual personality.

In conclusion, does Ezekiel refer to the “Devil” in a former state of “beauty”? Again, a reading of the context will show that the prophet makes no such reference. Ezekiel 28 refers solely to the ancient city of Tyre and to its decline and fall.

The truth will never be learned by taking passages out of their context and making them apply to circumstances of imagination. The truth as to the “Devil” and “Satan” is not difficult to discern and articles in these Booklets will seek to show true Bible teaching on what is an important doctrine, the right understanding of which is essential for salvation.



Above: Silver Shekels from ancient Tyre

An Ambassador in Chains

Can we not think of Paul smiling somewhat whimsically as he dictated the words, “*an ambassador in chains*”? An ambassador was sacrosanct. He should not be imprisoned but sent back to the power he represented. Nero did not recognise Christ or His ambassadors. But the embassy was to all, rulers and ruled, and imprisonment did not restrain Paul from discharging his mission. He spoke boldly to those who visited him; he sent letters to those far away. And his work, in God’s arranging, has been imperishable.

Bro John Carter

Bro S Jeacock (United Kingdom)

Tell It to the World!

People of today do not have the serious, reflective minds of forty years ago and this mental change seriously militates against the acceptance of those Divine truths which it is our privilege to put forth: the Gospel of the Kingdom of our Lord.

I have often heard it said, "Oh, people do not want the Truth", so this article is written by way of critical enquiry ... Are these things so?

Empty Chairs - Why?

This state of mental apathy is often seized upon by brethren and sisters to explain the lack of interest in our meetings and the absence of strangers therefrom. I have often heard it said, "*Oh, people do not want the Truth*", and sometimes this is taken as sufficient excuse for sitting back and not putting the amount of effort which is needful in the Lord's service. Some have even closed down their lecturing efforts, or hold such addresses infrequently. So this article is written by way of critical enquiry. Are these things so? Is it really the fault of the people around- their listlessness and indifference to things eternal- or is it possible that our methods may also be at fault?

Avenues of Enquiry

Therein lies a great question. We know that we have the greatest message, the mightiest truth: "*The Hope of Israel*". But how do we present this truth? Often the procedure is to insert an advert of two or three lines in a local paper and then wait for results. In other cases, leaflets are given out spasmodically. Here again arises more enquiry. Is the message attractive? Does it grip the hearer? Is the title of interest? Is it timed rightly? Has it got a real human appeal? Is the speaker one who can hold attention? These and many other factors come into this arena of enquiry.

Now let us consider the business field instead. If we have a commodity which we know to be excellent, how do we sell it? How do we advertise it? Do we sit at home and wait for people to come and buy our wares, or do we send out salesmen whose job is to find prospects? Do we publish it on hoardings and tell the world about its advantages, stress its values far and wide? I think so. The successful merchant never attained the top place by sitting in his warehouse, or by placing a small advert in the local newspaper. He made his advertising matter interesting, compelling, appealing. He went about telling everyone about it. He made a noise about it. If his advertising matter was cheap, poorly written, lacking appeal and devoid of interest, it would militate against successful business. These are facts well known amongst business people. I often think that we find a far greater degree of efficiency and effort in business life than in the Lord's service.

Returning to the greater subject – the field of the Gospel – the comparison is far above those mundane matters of daily life. We have been given the knowledge of something which is far greater than material commodities: the message of life eternal. Jesus and his disciples went out into the highways and byways. They often preached by the great caravan routes which ran from Galilee down to Arabia and many times they must have told their message to the concourse of people passing by. Jesus had said to them, "*Come, and I will make you fishers of men*". Most of his followers were fishermen. They were used to the patient watching for the sign of fish, those shoals which come and go. On the other hand, they often watched the lake in vain and caught

nothing, even after much toil. But the fisherman was a patient fellow. He knew the right bait, the right place to fish and he used all his skill. We, too, are fishers of men.

I have seen brethren who, on finding someone with a knowledge of spiritual things, proceed to demolish the spiritual foundation of the one who is looking for more light, instead of building upon the foundation already there. To show the better way from the Bible, instead of condemning another's ideas is more successful.

Attractive Matter and Titles

Then again, people today are simply not interested in such subjects as whether the devil is a person, or the precise moment in which Adam's sin brought so much difficulty into the world. They are much more interested in the human story of life's adventure, its meaning, purpose and identity and the coming of Jesus to alter the present and state of world affairs. I am not suggesting that doctrinal subjects – especially those fundamentals we know so well – are of little worth. They are. They form the basis of the Gospel. But no fisherman ever caught fish with the hook only. It was the attractive bait on the hook which was the magnet. If the disciples were here today, it is very probable that their foremost theme would be – in such an outstanding era as ours – the return of Jesus Christ and the sequel, and also its effect upon the lives of mankind.

Thus I would stress firstly that the foremost message for today is the coming of the Lord Jesus. I would hammer away with this message week after week with the same main heading, but varying sub-titles. Undoubtedly there is a serious time ahead, and I would dwell on it. As we read in Luke 21: *“These are the days of vengeance that all which is written might be fulfilled”*.

I would stress firstly that the foremost message for today is the coming of the Lord Jesus. I would hammer away at this message week after week

Must Make People Think

Another need today is wide publicity. That which has been heard in the ear should be shouted from the housetops. It is no good sitting back and thinking that a ½ inch newspaper advert will stir people. I would tell it by flaring poster, by stirring leaflets, by shop window card adverts, by posters on the sides of cars, by newspaper articles, by radio and in any other way which would make people think. Brethren and sisters should be canvassed one by one and asked to take an interest in these things instead of showing the deadly complacency which seems to be settling down on the brotherhood in many parts of the world. The day draws nearer and the signs deepen day by day. What we want is more of the individual approach, more of the door to door canvassing, more of the personal testimony and appeal. I would like to see more of the Sunday afternoon street meetings.

Our Own Apathy

Many members do not come to the meetings at night – many could, but do not. They do not realise the effect of their absence, both on the speaker and to themselves. The coming of the Lord is fearfully close. I say “fearfully” because of the tremendous issues – both personal and national – associated with it. We cannot afford to treat this subject lightly. How can we enthuse other people if we ourselves are apathetic? How is the stranger affected when he finds the hall sparsely filled, even when the subject is so alluring?

If we knew the Lord was coming next Wednesday, what would our reaction be? We would rush about to make sure of the last minute things. We would try and fill in many things we had left out. We would be sure to go to the meeting, and this can happen any day.

A Part for All

Now for the personal side. A meeting can be greatly helped by personal contact, that is, by members going out and seeking their audience. They can persuade others to come along and listen. The personal factor is a great one. Jesus and the disciples used it in their day. They had many a private conversation, and apparently they concentrated upon many people as individuals. At work, or in conversation, people can be asked to go along and listen to a good speaker and his message. Even in this seemingly apathetic age there are still people who can be influenced to think upon divine things. A few minutes here and there during the day might work wonders. If brethren and sisters would try the personal factor more than is done, it would probably yield better results.

These are stirring times. Never was the Gospel of the Kingdom charged with such mighty possibilities which are so near.

Let us remember the illustration of “one-get-one” campaign. It is this. If ten people could persuade another ten in one year, how much would this amount to, in the same ratio year by year, at the end of 12 years? The answer is startling, for it is 20,480. All that is necessary is that one person should gain another one each year. It is obvious from our small numbers that many have not gained even one for a long time.

Surely, on review, it must be agreed that we need to put into this great work much more effort than we have in the past, if we hope to interest people. We need to overhaul our methods, make each member of the meeting an ambassador and an advertising agent for the Lord Jesus. All should be conscious of this high office to which they have been called. There is more need for addresses on the coming of the Lord, more need for warning the people around of the judgements that are near, and the mighty changes that will shortly take place on earth, and their effect upon people generally. The Hope of Israel commenced with a promise to Abraham and an assurance of the ultimate peace of the world through this promise. Therefore it is a sure message for a chaotic world and we need to present it as if it were the only thing in the world; we need to stress it, tell it everywhere and on all occasions.

We need, too, friendly meetings, where the stranger is made to feel welcome. We need interesting speakers who have studied the subject beforehand, and, lastly, we need efficient publicity. These are stirring times. Never was the Gospel of the Kingdom charged with such mighty possibilities which are so near. If these remarks have stirred any to think upon the possibility of improving our presentation of the Gospel, then this article will have fulfilled its mission, to tell the world.

Bro Charles French (Australia)

The World of the Apostle Paul



Ruins of Amphitheatre, Ephesus



Roman chariot in a fight of gladiators

Living as he did in a world which was, in political outlook, Roman, but in social life was imbued with Greek customs, the Apostle Paul makes frequent allusion to contemporary conditions with which we are totally unfamiliar. It will be profitable therefore briefly to consider some aspects of the life of the ancient world which so constantly appears as the background of his Epistles.

Such allusions may be classified under the four main topics to which they have reference – athletics and the theatre; philosophy and religion; political organisation and military matters. To the first of these Paul makes reference in 1 Corinthians, where, speaking of his sufferings for the sake of the Gospel, he introduces the subject of the theatre by way of illustration:-

“For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death, for we are made a spectacle (marg., a theatre) unto the world, and to angels and to men” (1 Cor. 4:9).

Now, the theatre ‘shows’ included gladiatorial combats which always came last in the programme, and of each pair of combatants, usually unequally matched, one was bound to be slain unless the whim of the presiding magistrate decided otherwise, and turning his thumb downwards he bade the victor stay his hand. Moreover, of the gladiators, the very last to be set forth were the worst of all, those held to be of no account.

The Apostle draws a most appropriate parallel from this custom, when considering the perils which he encountered in his unequal combat with the powers that be, and even his own countrymen. Regarded with contempt by all men, as were the gladiators who were generally of servile origin, he and his brethren were made as the filth and offscouring of the world (v:13) and the word here used signified disused olive oil, after it had been poured on and scraped off the body to cleanse it. Their lives were continually in danger, they were *“as it were appointed to death,”* and after providing a spectacle to all men, their ministry was cut short by the cross or the executioner’s block.

In the ninth chapter of the same epistle Paul likens our labours to attain to the Kingdom to those of the athletes who competed in the games. The Corinthian brethren would be well acquainted with the great ‘Isthmian Games’ which were held annually near their city. Indeed, the majority of them would have been regular attenders thereat until they knew the Truth, after which, they would have held severely aloof, for, in addition to many other reasons, the fact that games were

always held in honour of some god would have been sufficient to deter them. But once again the comparison is almost complete:-

“Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (vs 24-27).

The severe discipline of the athlete had to be undergone in detail, and as Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:5), *“If a man also strive for masteries (Diaglott, the games) yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.”* The account of the thirty days’ training for the Olympian festival shows the extreme rigour of the conditions. The capabilities of the competitors were tested, and all who were in any way unfit were rejected. Inquiries into parentage and eligibility were carefully carried out: disobedience to the orders of the trainers was severely punished. At the close of the training period the competitors were gathered together and thus addressed: *“If you have exercised yourselves in a manner worthy of the Olympic Festival, if you have been guilty of no slothful or ignoble act, go on with a good courage. You who have not so practised, go whither you will.”* Then all swore to use no unfair means to secure victory, and the contests began. That was indeed the touchstone which proved the work of the previous days. Then it was that carefulness and strict observance of the prescribed course earned their reward. Amidst toil and sweat and bodily discomfort men strove for the mastery, to gain the coveted Greek prize of a wreath of dried wild celery leaves, (Changed by the Romans to a pine wreath) to hear the loud acclamations of their fellow men, and to receive honours from the city to which they belonged. This was the end of all their labour – a withering prize of dried celery leaves, to hear the loud acclamations of their fellow men, and to receive honours from the city to which they belonged. This was the end of all their labour – a withering prize and short-lived glory. *“Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.”*

O faint not brother for thy sighs Are heard before his throne: The race must come before the prize, The cross before the crown. (A.N.)

Indeed, how much better is the crown which our Lord offers to us – a golden crown (Rev. 4:4) of glory and eternal life. But the conditions are no less exacting for us. None who have indulged freely in the carnal pleasures of this life can hope to gain the victory, nor those who have acted deceitfully or unworthily. To them it will be said, as to the unworthy athletes, *“Go whither ye will – Depart from me ye cursed.”* Just as with shame and mortification the unsuccessful saw the victors run on to victory and heard the poets sing their praises in terms which exalted foolish pride to the very skies, so will the rejected turn with weeping from the Great Tribunal, to behold from afar the joy of the redeemed, and to hear the sweet strains of saints praising in angelic voices Him to whom alone all praise belongs.

How the Apostle must have laboured and subdued his body in order that he might not become a castaway. The word he uses means, “not standing the test,” applicable to one who is unable to endure unto the end to gain the prize of life everlasting. He speaks of the preparation needed for the race for the crown of life which needs to be every whit as careful as that of the athlete. And just as in the games the runner divested himself of all clothes that might impede him, so Paul exhorts us to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us.

At the sides of the course stood the crowds of encouraging spectators, urging on the runners, who could look to the winning post and see the prize hanging thereon. So Jesus endured for the joy which was set before him: and Paul, following in his footsteps, could say at the end of his ministry: *“I have finished my course; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.”* We, in our day, striving towards the same goal are compassed about by the great cloud of witnesses of which Paul writes in Hebrews 11, the contemplation of whose work cheers and encourages us likewise to endure unto the end. What if the race be tedious, the toil seem long? We can see the great prize at the end of the course, and when the dust and the heat have all vanished away, and the mind rejoices in the realization of suffering past for ever, the righteous Judge will come forth and acknowledge the victors in the presence of all the holy angels.

“Like Father - like Son”

Here on earth, family ‘likenesses’ impress us. We see facial images and other recognizable expressions in our newborns. Later, characteristics and personality traits are more evident in maturity. By these we KNOW we belong to a family and have a rightful part to play, responsibilities to face up to, with service to render and joys to share.

There, in heaven we would see even greater likenesses. The Heavenly Father, delighting in the presence of His own Son; right there, alongside Him, sharing in the vital, on-going work of glorifying His Father, and at the same time, redeeming ‘the lost sons and daughters’ - His Father’s unique creation. But it began here on earth, with our Lord bearing the same experiences and nature as we have. We might say, the Lord Jesus Christ was then, now is looking upward, looking downward at the same time?

The Word of God reveals the matchless beauty of the Father/Son relationship between Yahweh and Jehoshua (The LORD and Jesus). We can ponder the process of how this happened. So much of this beauty and uniqueness is “lost” to those who mistakenly believe in the Trinity. Think over these few features:

- 1| His Father was able to watch him grow in *“grace and favour with God and man.”*
- 2| The Father was able to claim Jesus as His own offspring. *“This is MY beloved Son – hear Him!”*
- 3| The Son was always “free to choose” to follow “the Way” and to complete His Father’s will.
- 4| The Son revealed the Father’s love each day by word, example and humble submission.
- 5| The Father both raised His Son from the grave AND granted Him the full rights of Divine Sonship.
- 6| The Father appointed Christ as *“heir of all things...”* and the High Priest forever over His House!

We have two scenes in the Word of God that will draw our attention to how it worked.

- 1| Abraham and Isaac - *“...so they went, both of them together.”* A willing son - a purpose driven father. Genesis 22:8.
- 2| Pharaoh and Joseph - *“...only in the throne will I be greater than you.”* An all powerful king and a God-fearing, lifesaving servant. Genesis 41:40.

In both examples, theirs was the choice! Isaac could have overpowered Abraham. Pharaoh did not need to give so much honor to a public servant! Our Lord is a unique combination, more

willing even than Isaac, more honored even than Joseph. Jesus would have appreciated these two accounts even more than us.

Now for some homework!

Many fathers and sons appear in the Word of God as having 'good' and not so good relationships! Below is a short list of other examples AND some descriptive qualities that you might like to line up? And of course there is the supreme example of Joseph, Mary's husband and the Son of God!

The Truth we enjoy is all about UNITY – not just authority.

In date / time order

Adam and Abel / Seth
Noah and Shem / Japheth
Amram and Moses
David and Solomon
Rechab and Jonadab
Zacharias and John
Paul and Timothy / Titus

In random order - *you choose!*

Cooperation
Protection
Education
Loyalty
Submission
Preparation
Spiritual Unity
Endurance
Faithfulness
Trust
Obedience
Dedication
Humility
Service

Bro Neil Todd (New Zealand)

The Sermon on the Mount

The discourse known by the name of “The Sermon on the Mount” is an epitome of the blessings that await the children of God, and of the commandments to be observed by them if they would obtain those delightful blessings. It was intended to be a guide for their conduct exclusively – not for human organizations known as “society,” with which it has nothing to do.

Jesus describes the characteristics – essential qualifications of his servants. They must be poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering after righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and willing sufferers of persecutions, when such is brought upon them by their good works. With that fact in mind (and undoubtedly Jesus had it in mind), we can well understand that were it not for the few who rigidly comply with his commands and teach men to do so, the earth would become entirely corrupt. That is undoubtedly why Jesus, having outlined these characteristics of his followers – those who carried out the things already expressed, being poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness – immediately refers to the fact in verse 13: *“Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”* Salt is a preservative, and when applied as a figure to the saints, it means that their presence in the world saves it from utter corruption and destruction. The world calls upon the servants of God to assist in the defence of its institutions. It regards their attitude as utterly useless – indeed, as a hindrance to that object. It little realizes that their presence in the earth saves it from complete putrefaction, and that when they are taken away (as one day, and we believe, very soon they will be) – destruction and utter corruption will inevitably follow. There will be nothing left worthy of preservation.

The references to the Law of Moses are very important. Jesus did not oppose the Law, or in any way deprecate it. He upheld it, and came to fulfil it. He condemned hypocritical compliance with the letter of the law to exclusion of its spirit. Again, all the commandments that Jesus gave in this discourse find a counterpart in Old Testament declarations. Abraham’s dealings with Lot are a perfect example of seeking peace and making it. ‘Resist not evil’ has many aspects in its application, but David often acted on that principle.

One great lesson for us in our relationships, in our worship, our praise, our gifts of service and sacrifice, are unacceptable to the Almighty whilst we have in our hearts ill-feeling toward one another.

“As Ye Would”

If I should see a brother languishing in sore distress,
and I should turn and leave him comfortless,
When I might be a messenger of hope and happiness,
how could I ask to have what I denied,
in my own hour of bitterness supplied?
If I might sing a little song to cheer a fainting heart,
and I should seal my lips, and sit apart,
when I might bring a little sunshine for life’s ache and smart,
How could I hope to have my grief relieved,
if I kept silent when my brother grieved?
And so I know, that day is lost wherein I fail to lend,

a helping hand to my brother and wayfaring friend;
But if it show a burden lightened by the cheer I send,
Then do I hold the golden hours well spent,
and lay me down at night to sleep in sweet content.

Bro Atkinson (United Kingdom)

Taking Time



In this busy world it seems increasingly difficult to find time for Bible study. But I have found that you don't find time – time isn't something you just happen to find. *It's there*. Just so many hours, minutes and seconds of it in each day. So you can't make time either. But you can *take time*. You can take it and do whatever you want with it.

You can make up your mind that the reading of God's Word should have a preeminent place in your life and therefore determine to spend the very first part of each day with God.

When you've made yourself jump out of bed an hour or so earlier than usual, you'll have found that you really weren't sacrificing sleep in a cosy bed – you were discovering great treasures and becoming exceedingly rich.

Perhaps you've tried keeping your Bible on the night stand, and just sitting up in bed to read when the alarm sounded. But that didn't work, did it? Soon you were fast asleep again. You have to get up out of bed and go to a table to read and study His Word.

Rarely will a little less sleep do you any harm. Indeed, the spiritual nourishment gained thereby will make you wise, rejoice your heart, enlighten your eyes, and convert your soul. (Psalm 19:7-8)

The Sisters Magazine

Ecclesial Life is Family Life

We can easily overlook the importance of being together with our brothers and sisters of the ecclesia, just as we can overlook the love and responsibility we have towards our natural family members, simply because we are with them so much. We are not just the same people who attend the same meetings regularly, but we are a called out people who have the common purpose and understanding of the Gospel. We are one body, one family, in our Lord Jesus Christ. We are together when we pray together, God sees us all saying and thinking the same words to

Him as one family. The body cannot exist without each individual member, and likewise, we are all important to God, and therefore we should all be important to each other. The world tries to lead us away from really loving each other, it tells us to worry about so many things which are not worthy to worry about, and to forget our family, spiritual and physical.

If we keep meditating on what we read daily in the Bible, we will see that love of our brothers and sisters is a really basic thing that God expects of all who believe in Him. We know that God's Kingdom will last for ever, and that all the faithful will be there, so it means that we will all be together for ever, and that process starts right now in this life. We are, of course, imperfect, but 2 Cor. 3:18 says that we are all being changed to reflect the Lord's glory, bit by bit. So love for each other must not be simply an emotion, a feeling, words. We must come to the agape love, the love that is beyond these things, and show it to our brothers and sisters and feel it for them. It is this love which will make true unity, in families and in ecclesias. Through our frequent contact with the words of God in the Bible, we see and know His love and the love which His true people had for others, even if they were weak. The prophets of Israel are the great example.

We must really be serious about this need for love and unity amongst us. By it, we can convert people to the Truth. And yet we are we doing this? Is the love so great that they see we are something very special? So I am writing this in the hope that I can reach the hearts of all brethren in the world and show them all the importance of true love for each other.

Sis Liberty Mandap (Hong Kong)

Be Patient in Tribulation

As spiritual darkness in our world increases, so too does the prospect of difficult times. As a result, our faith, our conviction of things that are unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18) must also increase. A significant factor in this is our prayerful reading of, and meditation on, God's word. It is not enough to develop intellectual knowledge of what is written: it is vital to become more and more conscious of the fact that "*in him we live and move and have our being*" (Acts 17:28). Our minds must become more alive to the wonder of eternal realities: hence genuine faith.

With this spirit in our minds, we can be calm or, rather, patient in tribulation when others are overwhelmed by anxieties. Paul has many valuable points to make in writing to the Romans about this need. After his exposition about God's plan for both Jews and Gentiles, the power of his appeal to all believers in chapter 12 needs to be fully absorbed into our minds.

These are soul-stirring words of encouragement on Christ-like daily living in the eleven verses. These are the foundation on which all must live and work together. Do they stir us? It sounds simple to say "*Let love be genuine*" (verse 9) but love has to be demonstrated by actions, not just by talk.

Bro Goodwell Mubanga (Chinsali, Zambia)

Romans 8:28

Whilst I was reading a commentary on this verse, I was reminded of the times when people reassure a hospital patient or someone who has been in an accident, that they were not to worry as everything would be alright.

On a First Aid Course we are told to comfort the patient. If we were to see that they may lose a limb or that they had severe heart problems, although we may know nothing about surgery, our words are meant to instil confidence knowing that soon the surgeons would do their best. We wouldn't be so cruel as to say, "You may lose a leg," or "You may not recover from your heart attack." To give words of comfort is the best thing to do, knowing that the patient will soon be in safe hands, although the outcome could be serious.

What does it mean to LOVE GOD ?

Although we may not know anything about the injuries, nevertheless we have done our best under the circumstances. But here in Romans Chapter 8 Paul is giving 100% assurance to Christians verse 28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"*.

Unlike ourselves at the scene of an accident, Paul spoke with authority. He was a man called by God and well aware of the blessings brought about through the sacrifice of our Lord. Because of his knowledge he could say with confidence, *"All things work together for good to them that love God"*. If you love God, then there is a relationship *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God"* (Romans 8:14).

The assurance that Paul gives in verse 28 cannot apply to everyone. It is directed at those who love God, and to those who are called according to his purpose. What does it mean to LOVE GOD? It means to be obedient to Him and obey His commandments. The scriptures tell us: *"In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."*

Throughout his life, Paul was no stranger to suffering – persecutions and hunger. He accepted these things because he loved God and through his conversion he had been called to God's purpose, which is that all the earth should be filled with His glory in a Divine, Eternal Kingdom. So, for those who are called of God and are baptized into the saving name of the Lord Jesus, all things work together for good. Good is the objective and reward. However, it is wrong to think that our life will be without difficulties and disappointments.

... It means to be obedient to Him and obey His commandments

Let us look at some passages of Scripture *"Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God"* (Acts 14:22).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The "Good" of Romans 8:28 is not how much wealth we have, or our comfortable home or good health. It is conformity to Christ and acceptance at his hand to a place in the Kingdom of God. *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"* v18. The good is summarized in vs29-30; *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be*

the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

All things will work together for good to those who love God

We have examples in the scriptures of the glories ahead. Consider the last words of David in 2 Sam 23:4-5 *“And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. **Although** my house be not so with God, **yet** he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.”* There are two key words in v5: **although** and **yet**. We remember how David had sinned before God and the punishment he received, so he says that although his **house** was not perfect, yet God made a covenant with him. *“All things work together for those who love God.”*

Another example is Habakkuk 3:17-19 which records a disaster *“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olives shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls: **Yet** I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation”* The key word is **yet**. *“The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instrument.”*

Hebrews 12:1 is a great example we have of truly understanding that all things work together for good. *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Very briefly, the writer to the Hebrews is exhorting us to prepare ourselves fully as in a race, to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. He lists only some of the dreadful things that our Lord endured, until he was put to death upon the cross. During his life, he endured the shame of it all; and he did it by faith in the promise of God, by which he saw the joy before him; and encouraged by this prospect, he was sustained and triumphed and is now at his Father’s side.

We may not be asked to give our lives, but we do have the example of the Lord Jesus to follow, and if we do this faithfully, then when our Lord returns to establish his Father’s kingdom, we pray that we may be invited to share in the glories that will be revealed. We will then fully understand that all things will work together for good to those who love God.

Bro Roy Soffe (Fareham, UK)

Nurturing the Seed at Home and Scattering “Abroad”

Soweto

The group photo (page 26) is of a weekend fraternal held in July where we were blessed with visitors from far and near. Bro Steven Palmer from Wales led the studies on Urgent Exhortations from the Apocalypse with emphasis on Ephesus. Brethren and sisters joined us from Pinetown, Bloemfontein and Mafekeng making for a spiritually enriching weekend and time of special

fellowship. The prelude to the weekend was the joyous baptism of our youngest brother, 14 year old **Lebo Nlitseng** at our Bible Class on the Thursday afternoon before.



Bro Stephen Palmer with newly baptized Bro Lebo Nlitseng

The Soweto ecclesia is strong and vibrant with many members involved in local preaching through the Saturday seminars and literature stands and also a good number are dedicated to outreach preaching beyond.

Swaziland

After too many years to count, we had the unexpected pleasure of receiving a call from Bro Fanuel Sithole in Nhlanguano, Swaziland. Despite a number of serious challenges in his life he is still strong in faith. As we had a “free” weekend at the beginning of August it was decided to reconnect with our brother and at the same time hold a seminar in Manzini. Sis Jane Samwell from Adelaide was with us and not averse to visiting Swaziland again as she had accompanied Leon and Joan Shuker on one of their preaching stints in Swaziland before the turn of the century. We set off with Bro Emmanuel Mphambo (JHB ecclesia), first to visit a student in Mahlahleni (Witbank) and then to head for Nhlanguano. It was a very happy reunion with our Bro Fanuel, during which we were able to catch up and clarify some misunderstandings that had occurred.

We arrived in Manzini at dusk and were surprised by the growth of the town, and the new network of roads. The topic requested by Bro Fanuel for the Saturday seminar was “*Do we need prophets today?*” The venue was excellent but the interest was well nigh non-existent – two people – one being the cook who kept disappearing to presumably check on the lunch. Unwittingly we had chosen the day the King of Swaziland, King Mswali 3rd had called his people to meet him at an “imbiso” - and meet him they did. (The King sometimes calls all the people to come and listen to him in person and 80,000 did just that.) Our main objective of rekindling our association with Bro Fanuel had been successful so we left thankful about that.

Botswana

The following weekend was Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, and this time we were accompanied by Bro Lucky Sekhasembe (Soweto) and sisters Debbie Payne (Pinetown) and Zanele Khumalo (Soweto). Again the topic requested for the Saturday afternoon seminar was “*Do we need Prophets today?*” On Friday leaflets were distributed in the central pedestrian mall. The locals are very polite and willing to listen and seven came just from the billing - unusual - but perhaps the topic attracted them or Lucky and Zanele with their engaging ways had charmed them!

From the newspaper advert there were another nine students and six regular students attended, all making for a most interesting seminar. Bro Lucky was well prepared and question time was

very lively with some students staying on afterwards till dark. It was really helpful to have sisters accompany us, as about half of the students are women. There is a very good spirit among the Gaborone brethren and sisters and so encouraging was the fact that our newly baptized brother Stephen Kethokile (baptized in December in the Shashe river near Francistown- see photo) managed to join us. It was heartwarming to see the Gaborone brothers and sisters embrace him so heartily into the family. We are very blessed to have the use of a guest house with kitchen, lounge and dining room which all helps to create a warm family atmosphere. Bro Kgamakwe Mokoena (Mafekeng) has taken responsibility for the preaching in the Gaborone area and visits at least once a month.



Bro Stephen Kethokile flanked by Sis Leonie and Bro Paul Verster



Bro Lucky Sekhasembe, standing, teaching at the seminar in Gaborone

Postscript: *Bro Leon Shuker has taken up the challenge of moving from Paris to “exile” in Gaborone where he is assisting the small ecclesia there and holding seminars every Saturday. We salute Bro Leon for his tremendous preaching spirit and being willing at his advanced age to move out of his comfort zone and be about His Father’s business in a strange land.*

Limpopo

A few days after Botswana it was Limpopo with Bro Daniel Makhado and Sis Precious Madzivhandila (both are Venda speakers from the Soweto ecclesia). Because the postal service is SO unreliable we have had to think of a new strategy for the correspondence courses which seems to be working much better than expected. We had placed an advertisement in the local Limpopo Mirror for the Bible courses in March and made a trip with Bro Daniel to make the personal contact and hand over the material. Daniel did another trip on his own two months earlier and this one was the third. Because black folk are such ‘people-people’ - their greeting ‘sowabona’ (‘I see you’) reflects just that. We are finding that making the personal contact really seems to work.

We left at 6am and got to Louis Trichard (now Makhado) by 11.00 having met one student in Pietersburg (Polokwane) en-route and were then able to see all eight students Bro Daniel had arranged for us to meet that day. Going north all along the Zoutpansberg through umpteen villages we came out at Sibasa and Thoyandou, big towns some 100 kms east of Louis Trichard,

and then returned south of the Zoutspansberg through beautiful countryside rich in tropical fruit and tea plantations to our self catering unit in Louis Trichard. Daniel, who is from the area, stayed with family as did Precious who grew up with her grandparents in Tshakuma - known for it's large fruit market.



In Thoyandou we met Susan - such an amazingly keen lady who works for Aardvark, a big hardware shop. We were ushered into her office, chairs were found and a white lady also warmly greeted us - when I said to her "So do you and Susan share the Bible together?" She was VERY quick to say "Oh no I leave that for Susan". If only she knew what she was missing! The next day was even more hectic. Thankfully Bro Daniel knows the area like the back of his hand and so we didn't waste time trying to find the students, often in far flung villages - some at work, some on the side of the road, others in their homes etc. En-route to meeting Daniel we had gone off on a dirt road and met a student in the road - no verges here and amazingly this student had met us in 1998 when visiting with Bro Duncan Heaster! He had moved to Durban and lost touch but now is back - he had seen the advert in the paper and wondered if we were the same people. It was a very happy, if not a little incredulous, meeting but such are the ways of Providence. Three of his family took the course and he was excited to see *Bible Basics* in Venda (translated by Daniel) and delighted to be able to read it in his mother tongue. It wasn't long before a group had gathered and Precious had her work cut out explaining the courses in Venda, to the increasingly large and curious crowd. One lady said she couldn't wait to study the Bible for herself as she was "tired of hearing lies".



Sis Precious Madzivhandila preaching from back of van

The upshot of this Limpopo "experiment" is that the response in terms of students faxing their answers back has been excellent. We are now planning to hold a day seminar and invite all the students. God willing. We pray that in due time our Father will give the increase - ever thankful for these opportunities to offer the joy and peace of the true gospel to those hungry for truth and real hope.



Bro Paul and Sis Leonie Verster (South Africa)

Our Duty

On reading Daniel 9 there are a number of good lessons we learn. One of these is the humility portrayed by Daniel himself and I am sure we can take this as a good example. He says in verses 4-5, *“Oh Lord, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled, we have turned away from your commands and laws.”* He acknowledges the greatness of God and his faithfulness and contrasts that with the wickedness and sinfulness of himself and those on whose behalf he is praying, and consequently realizes how desperate they are for His mercy.

Now Daniel himself, as we know him, was not a bad man yet he speaks subjectively of Israel’s wickedness. This means he is aware that nothing good lives in his sinful flesh (Rom. 7:18). Unlike the Pharisee he does not consider himself holier than the rest. Instead he realizes that there’s no difference, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But perhaps the most beautiful verse in Daniel 9 is verse 18; *“We do not make requests of you because we are righteous but because of your mercy.”* Is this sincerely the spirit in which we pray? If it is not, then may I suggest some introspection here?

You see, if we fail to realize the simple truth that we are not necessarily entitled to what we request, then we are not only self-righteous but we are also effectively commending ourselves. It means that we are saying, *“Why have we fasted and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves and you have not noticed?”* (Is. 58:3). And the apostle Paul says, *“It is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.”* (2 Cor. 10:18).

Many will agree that often we request something from God and when we don’t receive it, we are upset. Why? Could this be because, in our self-righteousness, we feel that we are doing so much for God that it is unfair for him to deny us this little thing that we are asking for? If so, our sense of duty is suspect! The Lord Jesus Christ says, *“So when you have done everything you were told to do, say we are unworthy servants, we have only done our duty”* (Lk. 17:10). Against this background Daniel is a good example in that, although it was said of him, *“You are highly esteemed”*, he did not see this as any ground for self-righteousness. Let us take his example. When we make requests let us not be presumptuous, because we don’t know for sure what is good for us and what is not. You see, *“a man’s life is not his own, it is not for man to direct his steps”* (Jer. 10:23). Let us therefore trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our

understanding. In all our ways let us acknowledge him and he will make our paths straight (Prov. 3:5-7).



Daniel prays in sackcloth and ashes (Dan 9:3)

One thing is needful

Many of us run energetically around, almost grimly determined to serve Him, growing weary in our labour and perhaps a little angry with our brethren. Let us learn the lesson that Jesus taught Martha, that our service is not a self-inspired attempt to minister to Him. It is for us to resort to Him, allowing Him to feed us, so that we can rise in quietness of spirit and deep humility of mind to minister to His needs.

Melva Purkis "A Life of Jesus"

Bro Obed Mafifi (Kempton Park, South Africa)

Carelinks | Australia



In Queensland we spent three days with brother Jafari, who was baptized in Namibia in 2003 by the Versters from South Africa. Older readers of Carelinks may recall our visits and work in the refugee camps of Malawi and this bore great fruit. For not only was Jafari baptized but in due course his wife sister Beatrice, and they have between them 14 children and a grandchild. Brother Marcus has mailed them literature in the various camps they have been in, in Swahili and French, and now this has all come to bear fruit.

All 17 of them are now in Australia, living in one fairly small bungalow. Along with Phil and Miri Worsnop, Mike and Betty Flaherty and Ray Wheeler we were pleased to baptize four of these many children, brother **Leon** and sisters **Zabibu**, **Riziki** and **Flora**, it was also Flora's birthday. The word "joy" comes to mind; they were really so happy. Ray, Phil and Miri have visited them several times and hold regular Sunday School lessons with them and also teach them English. Jafari still has the copy of *Gospel News* magazine with the photo of his baptism dating from

2003 and has carried it with him through all his various sojournings in refugee camps before reaching Australia.

It's quite interesting just from a human experience point of view to observe how this wonderful family of 17 function together, with children everywhere... how many chickens it takes to feed them... etc. They are desirous to fund another relative to come and join them from Congo, and also to send funds to other converts in Congo to build a shelter under which they can hold their ecclesial meetings. We are open to donations towards this. And even with child support, it costs a lot of money to feed and clothe so many mouths. You can see a video of it all from the link at the end of the article. It's well worth the watch just to catch the spirit of joy in Christ which exudes from these people, Congolese war refugees now safely in Australia after so very many traumas. The scene on the beach at Moreton Bay was so similar to the scenes seen recently on the beaches of Italy when we likewise baptized African refugees. The same Lord is at work from Italy to Australia and His work somehow bears a common hallmark.



Baptisms in Queensland: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGERxJ-Pmjk>

Carelinks | China

Bro Donald reports as follows: *"I baptized brother **Yuan** in a swimming pool. He grew up in a single parent family, his parents divorced when he was very young so he spent lots of time with his grandmother going to church in his childhood. Those experience influenced him later. He is rich in material things as his father fought for wealth in the city for many years and compensated him for lack of love. But Brother Yuan was very poor in spiritual life. During weekends he has nothing to do but sleep, playing games and watch TV, this is not the life he wanted. So he searched spiritual life on the internet and got in contact with us. Now he is studing Bible with me online every Sunday morning, we watch Bible related movies, answer Bible multiple questions and reading **Bible Basics** .5.2. 'The Kingdom Is Not Now Established' is one of brother Yuan's favourite chapter. He said Jesus is not yet come to establish his kingdom as violence grief, these bad things still happens. There will be only happiness when the kingdom is established, no more death etc. Please pray for us. God bless"*



Bro Donald, right, with Bro Yuan after his baptism

Carelinks | Fiji

It's so encouraging to see two Western businessmen, brothers John and Guy, taking time out from their work in New Zealand to get out to Fiji and preach. Both John and Guy participated in the Carelinks Missionary Training Program a few years ago; great to see the ideas put into practice. Here's an extract from the diary of their recent visit:

John and Guy travelled to Fiji again for ten days earlier this month to conduct Bible training for previous contacts and to further the truth in Fiji. They spent time on the streets in the town square central area of Suva handing out hundreds of *NEV Bibles* and *Bible Basics* and booklets on Biblical baptism. Before handing out the literature, we asked two provocative questions which led into many deeper and important conversations.

1| *Where are you going when you die?* Most Fijians profess Christ and so the normal answer is: "*heaven*". We would then show them John 3:13 that no man has gone to heaven. The stunned looks are always priceless and then we continue to explain the true gospel of the Kingdom on earth at Jesus' return.

2| *Have you been baptised?* Many in Fiji have only been sprinkled as babies so we were able to teach about the need for true belief, repentance and baptism.

It is easy everywhere to have conversations about the Bible as most are Christians and are happy to chat. We chatted to a school, service station attendants, taxi drivers, bakery workers (pictured bottom right), shop workers etc. It is actually very refreshing to be in such an open place to the gospel. We also conducted a Bible study one night and our two main contacts, Steven and Sikeli, attended as well as three others. Steven has had some 25 years in other churches in pastoral and teaching roles, and is overjoyed to finally be hearing the truth and connecting all of the things in scripture he never understood. He is a humble person and also arranged for us to conduct a second Bible study with about 12 adults from his extended family – most of whom have been disillusioned by Pentecostal experience. Sikeli is also increasing in his zeal to know more truth and Skypes us regularly with further questions that he wishes to understand. God willing, we are planning to get them both across to us here in New Zealand for a one to two week concentrated Bible study seminar. They are both so keen they volunteered to pay their own fares.



We baptised ***Jovilisi*** near Rakiraki. Jo (as he is known as) recounted how his Father was head superintendent of the Methodist church in Fiji but has passed away six years ago. His passing very much unsettled Jo, and he has been drifting ever since. Jo sought help on how to get back on track with the Lord. He was convicted to be baptised the next day, pictured above. At the accommodation where we stayed, Guy had been very open about telling the staff that we were here for Bible teaching and invited any to come and talk to us.



Carelinks | Greece

We spent a most encouraging time recently with the group in Athens. It was a pleasure to baptize an extended family- they are Iranians but have been in Greece about 15 years and are established there. The mother, **Zohreh** (far right in the photo - a former Muslim who has never eaten pork nor tasted alcohol in her life); her son **Hadi**, her daughter **Diba** and her husband **Farhad**; and her other son **Mehdi** and his wife **Bahareh**.

They were initially attracted to the Gospel by our simple presentation of the Lord Jesus, without all the theology which they had encountered elsewhere which made it so hard for them to clearly grasp what Christianity was all about. Here we are enjoying Greek coffees together afterwards. Several were in tears after the baptisms. The real Christ was the One they had searched for for several years- and now had found. So many prefer to spend a lifetime searching, but others know the truth they are looking for when they find it and are unashamed to say they have found it.



Carelinks | Italy

We continued the feeding scheme and outreach in September, supporting brother Joseph and his amazing house group of genuinely interested folks. We had a great team from the UK, and it was truly a spiritual experience to work together in catering, food and clothing distribution, as well as Bible distribution and reading those Bibles together and with others.



Baptism service at coffee shop in Italy

The migrants are kept in 'camps', such as disused schools. They are taken from the beaches when they arrive on to the camps where they can stay for six months. But food and clothing are not provided, although local organizations provide some camps with these things. The camps therefore vary immensely. Muslim organizations take food for the Muslims, who are the majority

in the camps; some say that the Christians can also have the food, but there are complaints that this doesn't happen, or that the rice for the Christians is urinated on by Muslim extremists. Our association with brother Joseph, who is a long term resident of Italy with a car, job and apartment, was based around his interest in our doctrinal positions; he accepted these and was baptized earlier this year. But his passion is to take both the Truth and also material aid to these camps. So we rented a house in the mountains near his town, and from there prepared hot food which we took down to the camps for breakfast and supper each day. We also fed folks in the open air on a beach, at Joseph's house church [about 20 packed in to his apartment] and at our rental property. This property was providentially situated close to a camp in a disused school high in the mountains. The folks there are stranded as there is no bus service into town, and it will soon get quite cold. We encountered Muslim opposition at one of the camps. We wrapped our rice and stew in blankets to keep it warm and distributed from the car boot, in disposable dishes, after gathering the migrants around the car for a prayer of thanks for the food.



After feeding them they then filed back inside, as we were not allowed into the buildings because of Muslim tensions. We also distributed Bibles along with the food.



The folks have little to do all day. Some of the Muslims study the teachings of Islamist extremists all day and become radicalized by them; whereas our folks spend their days reading the Bibles and *Bible Basics* which Joseph has already given them. It was a pleasure to see them with those Bibles, and at the feeding sessions at our rental home and at Joseph's place there were Bibles on the table as we fed and taught them further. It was a great mesh of providing both spiritual and physical food.



Feeding at Bro Joseph's house church

Many thanks to those in the East Anglian ecclesias who donated clothes which Roy brought over with him. Joseph has a great pastoral responsibility now, which he takes very seriously. We would like to repeat this program, but there is real potential here for some to go live there for a few months and do great things. We are praying the Lord will raise up someone. We drove to the beach one day with our contacts, and held an open air baptism service at a cafe and then baptized **Augustin, Michael, Wisdom, Victor, Terry** and **Peter**. Bro Wisdom was a great help teaching us how to prepare and cook yams and plantain, pictured below. They all have amazing

stories of their journeys across the Sahara, the nightmare of life in Libya and the migrant prisons there, and then the equally nightmare journey across the Mediterranean to Sicily or Lampedusa. Bro Wisdom's boat capsized and he was rescued, actually by a British boat, who then passed him over to the Italian coastguard. His testimony is recorded see YouTube links opposite.

There were many genuine expressions of thanks for all the meals and support.

Thank you all so much for enabling this and for your prayers. Clearly the Lord's hand is active in all these lives. There we were on a mountain top in rural Italy with fantastic views, cooking yams and fellowshiping together with a group of 17 or so Africans. We put together a video of the Lord's work at the link below. We really recommend you have a look and share this and try to drum up support for what is really a very effective way of both caring and preaching.

Migrant Feeding, Italy: https://youtu.be/hgXfm_kz75Y

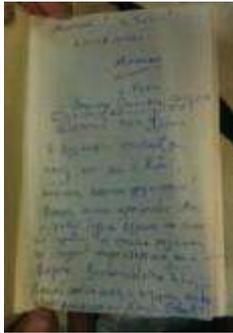
Bro Wisdom's testimony: https://youtu.be/eOx3zpnco_g



Carelinks | Latvia

We continue feeding the ecclesia and friends here and there have been a string of baptisms. One very moving event was the baptism of **Alexei**, he is the son of Brother Vladimir, a former Red Army officer baptized by Brother Maxim earlier. Vladimir and Alexei had not met since Alexei's babyhood, 37 years ago. They met by an amazing Divine coincidence, and Vladimir immediately shared the truth with his son. It was a wonderful moment when Alexei was baptized after Bible class. We studied John 19, the crucifixion, and Vladimir read it with emotion and tears such as we have never heard the account read.

Afterwards, we had the baptism and Vladimir wrote in the NEV Bible which we traditionally present to all newly baptized, pictured right. It was a wonderful message, rejoicing with his son and saying that his baptism makes him now more than a son, and that they now have the hope of eternity together, and holding fast to our calling is the greatest thing. We just marvel at how the Lord is working amongst people, making connections and reconnections, and giving abundant blessing to those who humble themselves to come to Him in spirit and truth.



Cindy, Ieva, Evia and little David then went off on a mission trip to Eastern Latvia where again the Lord's saving and ever supporting hand was evident. Sister Cindy reports as follows:

"We are using a very small car here in Latvia and travelling long distances wouldn't work well with a fully packed car so I went off with Ieva, Evia and David with some trepidation, leaving Duncan and Daniel in Riga running things.

*First stop was sister Valya who was baptized 16 years ago. Really encouraging to see someone so full of the truth, reading her Bible daily and really thrilled to be visited. She is about 3 hours from Riga. We had such a great time with her, reading and breaking bread together, that we were delayed leaving. Our next stop was to visit and baptize **Santa**, who is really 'in the middle of nowhere' right on the Russian border. It's wonderful how the gospel message can reach such remote locations. I had booked a hotel from the internet and drove to where Google maps said it was, only to find an old farm house down a dirt track. I called the hotelier who then explained how to find his actual location. He met us on the main road so we could follow him - I had no clue where I was going, just following his tail lights in the darkness, farther and farther from the road. We got to his place, a half derelict building. He had clearly run out of resources for finishing his 'hotel'.*

With a couple of dogs barking around us, he let us in, there were of course no other guests. Thankfully the room itself was finished, and we managed to find clean linen in the adjacent room. Ieva and I prayed for safety. I was so glad I had her with me! We all slept together in one room, there was no lock on our door. He slept in another part of the building. All was OK, and morning broke revealing a lovely lake outside, and also how totally isolated this place was.

From there we set off to try to find Santa, who lives in a similarly isolated farmstead. My experience of getting lost in that area the night before now paid off, because Santa lived just the next bus stop along from where we had been. Santa lives with her elderly grandmother, effectively as a subsistence farmer, in a farmstead far from anywhere much. She had contact with our Latvian sister Ilva, who helped her practically and introduced the Gospel to her when she was in the UK. She accepted the Gospel with a thankful and appreciative heart, but wasn't baptized. She returned to Latvia penniless and made her way back to her old grandmothers

place, far in the middle of nowhere. Eastern Latvia is now largely depopulated with most younger people working in Riga or in Western Europe. There are virtually no job prospects in such remote locations.

She is really absolutely sincere. I baptized her in a lake and broke bread with her, gave her some money, and some nappies for her toddler. She is far from anywhere and with no money, let alone a car, transport is a real problem. She would like to move to a larger town and work, but finding childcare, a job and a suitable living arrangement is very hard. Please pray for this really sincere new sister. The house she lives in with her grandmother is not much more than a shack, with just a hole in the ground outside for a toilet, no running water, just a well. Living there through the Winter is going to be really difficult, especially since their potato harvest wasn't very good this year."



Cindy, Santa and Ieva, and Evia and David at the well, from which Santa has to get all water for her, her toddler and grandmother

Carelinks | Summer Camp - Northern Latvia



Thanks to all who enabled Cindy's mums and kids camp to happen at the housing project in northern Latvia. And thank you to all those who worked so hard to renovate that property some years ago now.

It was wonderful to see the conference room full with visitors, and to hear the noise of little feet scampering along the corridors. Even more wonderful was to see secular women coming alive for the truths of the Lord Jesus. Women Cindy met over the years taking the children to the park, or who came from friends of friends, now baptized and with something so much more to live for than the usual Latvian middle class life, lived as is all secular life, in the mire of mediocrity.

Various teaching sessions were held, a puppet show on the parables, an evening session on Moses at the burning bush held around a bonfire. Living, cooking and eating together is always a

way to bind together, and to witness in practical ways to those who were present, along with their husbands, who are not yet full believers in the Lord.



Carelinks | Turkey



Another visit was made recently to the refugees we earlier baptized in Turkey, and there were another 22 baptisms. Brother Andy Taylor reports:

“When I arrived back in the UK, owing to a rail strike, I had to take a taxi to re-unite myself with my car which was parked on a sister’s driveway quite near Gatwick Airport. The taxi driver was a Muslim who knew the importance of the area of Turkey I had just been in to first century Christianity. The point is that there is a large community of Iranian refugees in the 600,000 strong city of Denizli, which is within less than 10 miles of Laodikaeia [Laodicea] and Colossae. A large number of these ex-Muslims have accepted our Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. It was our privilege to baptise 22 men and women last Monday, in an indoor swimming pool at a simple rural hotel, in idyllic surroundings in an area with so much importance to the first century church. A simple breaking of bread followed, and a meal of local whole fish was prepared for us, which we all enjoyed. The next day Bro Peyman, who was such a great host, our new Bro Javad and I were privileged to visit the Laodikaeia site, which archaeologists are still working on. Jesus indeed still stands at our door and knocks (Rev 3). We have wonderful new and ‘old’ brothers and sisters in Denizli, who would love more contact with those of us in the ‘West’”.



Carelinks | United Kingdom

Our house church in Croydon has progressed well, with many baptisms; indeed there has been a baptism most times we meet.

We had a very special and spiritual meeting when brother Leon Shuker visited us, giving us a talk about the nature and possibilities in our life together as ecclesias or house groups. It was the fruit of a lifetime spent in Christ and in missionary work and worth listening to. We were converts old and new, with folks born in so many countries- Iran, Poland, South Africa, Latvia, Estonia as well as the UK. We felt very much the presence of the Lord Jesus amongst us, and encourage all in the London area to come and be with us.

Here's Brother Leon's report:

“There is a profound joy in meeting brethren and sisters in Christ and breaking bread with them that can bring tears of joy to one’s heart. This is particularly true when those brethren and sisters have a variety of backgrounds and have been called of our Father in a variety of circumstances.

This was my experience when meeting brethren and sisters in Croydon, England, where I had travelled from Paris, my temporary home: Katrina, Wacek, Cardia, Debs & Jon, Hilary, Lucinda, Duncan & Cindy, Marcus & Gwladys, Sarah, April and Mojtaba. That uniting family spirit (“all one in Christ Jesus” Gal 3:28) had united a sister Lucinda, who had responded to a national advert in the Daily Mail for free Bibles and been baptized in that same home, Mojtaba a former Moslem from Iran, to a Polish family who were committed to preaching Jesus both in my adopted country of South Africa, and now their second adopted home of England.



It was a house meeting (common in the early days of preaching Christ recorded in the Epistles - Acts 2:46, Rom 16:5, Philemon 1:2). The institution of the Breaking of Bread service was because our Lord had declared “with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I

suffer” and was matched with the disciples’ desire to prepare that feast (Matt 26:17). By contrast many of us have experienced and felt guilty of such meetings descending into ritual and formalism and as such destroy our joyful intimacy with our Lord and with His close fellowship. When it is so we need to seek our Lord’s forgiveness.

It is an ultimate paradox to have great joy in celebrating the death of one who did not deserve it – and that with others one has never met before yet are my brethren and sisters and share an intimacy that is rarely, if ever, the experience of natural families.

Together we meditated on Paul’s letter to the Romans and chapter 12, rediscovering how to dedicate ourselves to our God in our ordinary, everyday lives, and in so doing recognising that, like a finger or a toe, we are closely united members of His body. And so Paul then encourages to “take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life – and place it before God as an offering” (12:1). And so I returned to Paris, my exiled home for a while, having experienced a spiritual “holyday” in England. I had not thought it possible in my home country with its reputation for ungodliness. I wish I were nearer to help fan into flames the flickering light of the Gospel there. But maybe others will? I pray that this will be so.”



Bro Leon giving his uplifting exhortation

Carelinks | USA



Some years ago, James and June Dishman found the truth from *Bible Basics* online and were baptized; now they are running a house church in Holladay, Tennessee (pictured right) and invite any in the area to join them. Let us know if you’re interested. They have in attendance a Jewish brother, Allen, who also found the truth through *Bible Basics* and was baptized by a local brother.

Prayer Request

Please do remember to pray for our brothers and sisters throughout RUSSIA who, due to the new enforced laws, can no longer preach and gather for worship freely

Carelinks | “Go into all the world, proclaim the gospel...” Mark 16:15

A dear sister, who raises funds for Carelinks through market stalls, shares some ideas: “If you are like me, you read each Carelinks newsletter and get really excited about all the valuable work being done. Perhaps you want to share in these efforts by contributing financially, but maybe you are on a budget and funds are tight, or maybe you, like me, think “I really should help out with this effort....but I'll do it later”. We all have good intentions, but unfortunately too many of us procrastinate and think “when I get a raise, I'll make more and then I can give more”, or “when I retire and downsize, I won't have so many expenses and THEN I'll give more” (I'm speaking from personal experience here!). Giving more can always be out there in the future somewhere never NOW when it is needed.

There is something very interesting in Exodus 36 regarding those Israelites who were asked to donate materials to build the tabernacle. Many gave willingly again and again, but no doubt there were some who had good intentions and planned to do it, but it was put off until tomorrow or next week. Eventually the time came when there was no more need for donations. Moses announced one day, “Don't bring any more”. There had been a window of opportunity to be generous and give, but there was also a day when the opportunity to give no longer existed. Just imagine the procrastinators who finally got around to digging out their pieces of bronze, scarlet cloth or gold jewelry and showed up only to be told, “We have enough, but thank you anyway” and they took their treasures back to their tents. Every time they saw the Tabernacle they would know in their hearts they had not contributed anything at all to its building! I found that terribly sad and a stark warning to myself that I'd best get busy and do my donating NOW while it is needed. A day will come when I will no longer be here or Jesus will have returned and the opportunity will be gone.

Not everyone may have a lot of cash on hand especially in these difficult economic times, but there ARE ways to raise funds. Here are a few ideas for fundraising which you can do individually or as an ecclesia:

1| Have an individual or group “garage sale”, “yard sale” or “rummage sale”, whatever it is called in your area, with all proceeds going to Carelinks. The more people who donate items, the bigger the sale and the more money you are likely to raise. Pick a good weekend (near the first of the month is usually considered best), put up lots of signs and, of course, PRAY for the effort, I bet you'll get good results!

2| Have a bake sale “auction” or “silent auction” at the hall with proceeds going to Carelinks ...you just might get someone to pay \$25 for a batch of delicious homemade cookies if they know it is for a good cause. Even ten or fifteen donated items COULD possibly raise a couple of hundred dollars! A similar “auction” could be held for all sorts of donated merchandise. I'll bet almost everyone has at least one or two nice things sitting around the house or yard that you don't really need or use - a lamp, a framed print, jewelry, a piece of furniture, a beautiful potted plant, etc. Make it into a fun event with refreshments. If it is organized and given with prayers it will be profitable.

3| Sell items on Ebay or Craigslist (or by putting ads in your local paper). I know someone who paid for 2 years of college for her child by selling items she picked up at garage sales on Ebay! Vow to donate a portion or all of your sales to Carelinks.

4| Setting up a booth at a local flea market is a great option. Almost every community has one or more markets, some weekly and some once a month. Normally you will have to pay booth rent

and possibly table rental which cuts into the profits, but the flea market provides the advertising and you get a larger crowd. This could be an even better option if several went together and set up a booth (selling plants, or crafts or collectibles or just nice “junk”) with all proceeds going to Carelinks.

5| *If you are blessed with “valuables” such as antique furniture, jewelry or other items of value, decide to sell something (or some things) and donate the proceeds to CARELINKS. Don’t ever forget, what we’ve been blessed with isn’t really ours, it all belongs to God. We are just custodians of it for a while and are supposed to be good stewards of what He gives us. Trust me, you won’t miss things when they are gone and the joy of sharing in the work far outweighs an empty spot on a shelf or on a wall.*

So lets all get busy and be creative - there are lots of ways to raise funds and every bit helps! Lets share in the work of building the present day “Tabernacle” before it is too late!”

Here are some of the wonderful preaching initiatives that are taking place around the world. May we all be inspired by the efforts of these diligent brothers and sisters.

AUSTRALIA - Sydney



We had a request for 32 of our NEV Bibles with commentary by a hotel in Sydney who wanted to put one in each of their rooms. We were pleased to oblige and John Thatcher duly delivered them all and gave the Managers a *Bible Basics* for good measure, pictured below. We were then approached by the CEO of the company which owns the hotel, explaining that he is very impressed with the Bibles, and would like copies for the rooms of three retirement / care homes which he also operates! This makes us wonder whether other hotels could be persuaded likewise... in your areas?



Bro Thatcher with his willing young helpers, Evia and Daniel, handing out New Testaments on

the streets. Below, students browsing through the NTs.



Sis Cardia distributing invitations to join our house church in South Croydon

UNITED KINGDOM - Dorchester

For over 15 years every week Bro Peter and Sis Margaret Woodall, pictured above, have hired a market stall offering free Christian literature in the Dorchester Market. Bro Peter and Sis Margaret said: *“Apart from the locals it is a regular stop for UK tourist coaches and overseas visitors. Lots of literature is taken and particular interest is shown in the children’s section. They enjoy the sticker books and some letters of appreciation from parents have been received. Once the children get interested the parents show more interest in the other literature. Seems a children’s section could encourage more interest in others literature displays. Often those who browse and take literature are reluctant to talk. A few just want to have an argument and we don’t encourage them as they can get very heated and put other people off.”*

A big thank you to all who donate to enable us to print this literature and get the Word out there for free



Bro Peter and Sis Margaret Woodall beside their stall in Dorchester Market

UNITED KINGDOM - Totton

Bro Paul Hoskins writes: *“I have three tables at the Totton Car Boot Sale, and one table is for the gospel literature, with a little standup notice to say that everything on that table is FREE. There are some childrens activity packs which Sis Joyce Cousins prepares for me, Glad Tidings magazines, “Introducing Bible Basics”, a Carelinks Ministries Mug, a Bible, and a few other items. The A-Board itself has rather a lot of detail this time, covering a number of weeks topics in our Bible Hour programme. A few people stop to read the A-board and ask questions about it but not many. The A-board also goes outside the door of the nearby Community Centre while we have our meetings.”*



Bro Paul's car boot stall at Totton

USA - Ohio

Bro Jay baptized himself after an extensive study of our material, and was accepted as a member of the Toledo, OH ecclesia. Our brother manages a gas station but in his spare time is distributing our literature and NEV Bibles and trying to start a Bible study group. Our brother reports: *"I set up a table at Owens Community College (Toledo Area Campus, Ohio). I'm passing out flyers, Bibles, pocket New Testaments, Bible Basics, and talking with students... Two Christadelphian sisters from Michigan have expressed interest in helping me evangelize"*. It's pretty hard to do this kind of thing alone and to be so self-motivated; may our brother inspire us all to witness the more.



Bro Jay is pictured above with Sis Emily, left, and Sis Trudy, right from Michigan

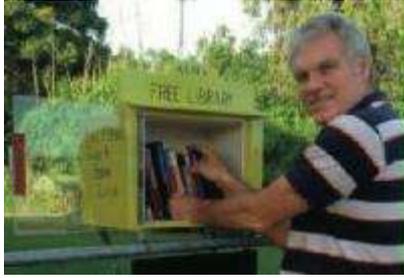


Bro Jay has also produced a bumper sticker for his car - a great idea we can all copy

AUSTRALIA



Bro Colin Green has copies of the NEV Bible and *Bible Basics* beautifully packaged in his Chocolate shop where customers can take them for free.



Bro Mike Flaherty has made a 'Tiny Free Library' box which is positioned next to his home where people can take and share a book. Inside are copies of our literature.

SOUTH AFRICA



Mobile literature stand for outreach work

A Sister in Christ