

AUTHENTIC

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MEN'S MAGAZINE

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Charles Price

Time to Wake Up!

We chat to Life FM's Josh Coombridge

CHUCK MISSLER

Examines the Nephilim

5 ATTACKS ON THE SOULS OF MEN

Spotlight on:
Keswick Christian Camp

PLUS

- I Love Rainbows
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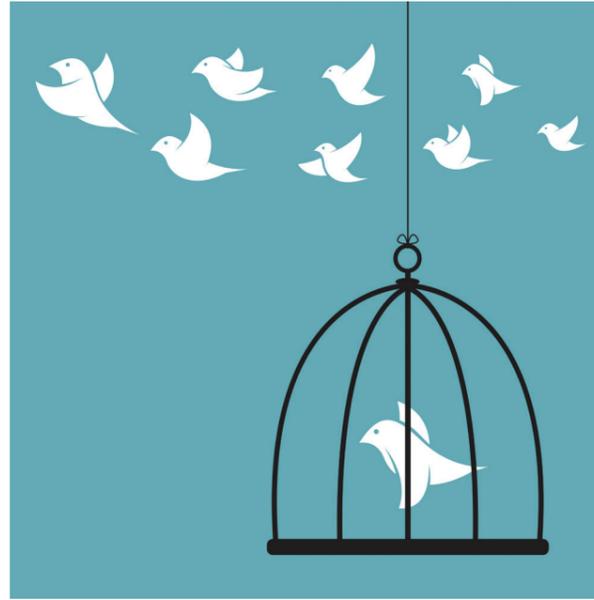
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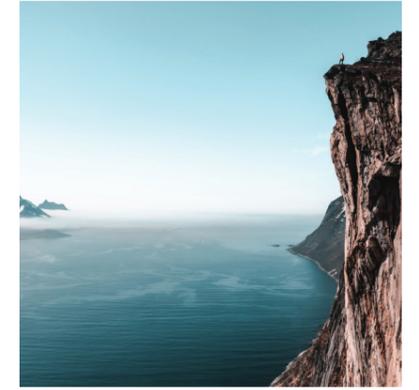
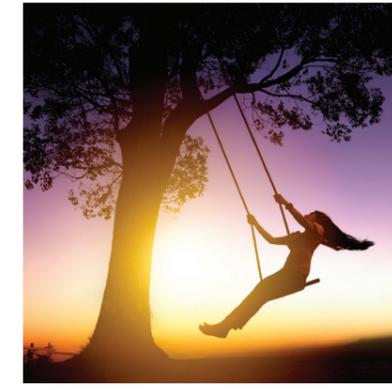
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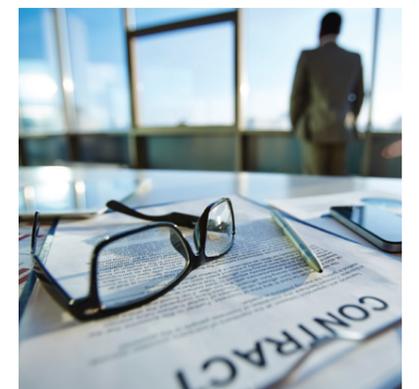
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WELCOME TO THE EIGHTH EDITION OF

AUTHENTIC

We thought this would be it!

So here we are. Not quite two years since the first edition went to print, and issue eight is done. So, we can pack up and go home now, right?

Not quite, The Lord didn't close the door so Authentic Magazine will continue until He tells us otherwise. But now that we're in 'phase 2' and don't have the comfort that this is just an 8 issue, 2 year project, we want to make a few changes to the format going forward.

Therefore we are asking that you give us as much feedback as you can. What you liked, what you didn't like, when you read it, who you gave it to, what your friends said if they saw it on your coffee table, etc.

When you get a minute, please jump online and go to www.authenticmagazine.co.nz/feedback (sorry it's not very imaginative but it needed to be easy to remember). You can fill in the form and answer the questions or just write what you want and we'll take it all in as we prayerfully discern how to move forward with Authentic Magazine. We are also considering putting previous editions online making them fully digital so give us your thoughts on that too.

Something that's been on my mind a lot recently is the importance of 'discipleship'.

Jesus talked a lot about this, and you could argue that he spent his last few minutes on earth



reminding the 11 disciples just how important true discipleship really is! (Matthew 28:16-20)

But we can sometimes get so focused on the topic of 'evangelism' that we miss the main thrust of what Jesus ministry was about.

You see the outflow of discipleship is evangelism! Of course, I'm not anti-evangelism – quite the opposite – I love talking about my faith and sharing with people that don't know Jesus but this isn't because I have skills or techniques to help me, it's because I have a real relationship with my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The overflow of that relationship is what enthruses me to share my faith – and that's when the 'tools' become useful, once we have the passion to share Jesus and that comes from...

Major Thomas (founder of Capernwray/Torchbearers) often preached about 'A Grain of Wheat' – that lovely passage in John 12 where the Lord Jesus explains that, "...unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

He'd also carry around an acorn with him and would explain that it will never become all that it was intended to be unless it dies to all that it is. Then, and only then, will it become the amazing oak tree that God intended when He made that little acorn. Then, and only then, will it produce many more acorns that in themselves could all go on to become oak trees too.

What a simple, profound illustration.

DISCIPLES THAT MAKE DISCIPLES!

One of my favourite human beings is a whacky, American guy called Greg Stier. He heads up a ministry called Dare2Share that trains literally thousands of teenagers to share their faith with their friends (he's also been a featured writer in every issue of this magazine). They used to run massive conferences at basketball stadiums in cities all over the United States but they realised there was a better way to 'make disciples that make disciples' – you see, they discovered that the key to evangelism is DISCIPLESHIP!

So, these days they still connect with teens but they also connect with the youth leaders. They run week-long training programmes helping these teens to understand the importance of discipleship and their role in God's Kingdom. They produce TONS of resources that they make available through their website and they build relationships and support structures to ensure the teens are trained and equipped to live put their Christian walk in their schools, and communities.

Dare2Share are serious about this. They have a vision to see the Gospel shared on every American high school campus (approx. 37,000 of them).

The coolest part is that Greg – the guy with the passion and enthusiasm to drive this ministry forward for the last 20 years - shouldn't even be here. His mum got pregnant from a one-night stand when she was 15 and was planning to have the baby aborted but changed her mind at the last minute. Greg was born, later found Christ and then led his mum to the Lord before she died of cancer. What a story and what an example of what God can do with an 'unwanted' baby!

Your life matters. Whatever you are doing with it right now, the Lord has a purpose and a plan that is better than anything you can come up with. Trust in Him and let Him live His life in you.

The Acorn was never meant to be just an acorn!



■ Dave Firth is the Editor of Authentic Magazine, a Bible teacher, speaker, husband, father and follower of Jesus Christ.

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POSTAL ADDRESS

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Life Has No Meaning?

(9 in 10 Young People in the UK Believe That!)

By Ken Ham



A recent poll in the United Kingdom revealed that 89%—nearly 9 in 10—of young people, aged 16 to 29, “believe that their lives have no meaning or purpose.” This saddening statistic is explained with a corresponding statistic shared in the same article—only 1% of this age group identifies as belonging to the Church of England, the largest denomination in the UK, meaning that very few young people in the UK hold to any semblance of Christianity (half of UK residents are atheists). This is being reflected in decreasing church attendance. In England, such attendance is down to less than 5%.

The study also found that 30% of these young people say they are “stuck in a rut,” and 84% don’t believe they are living “their best life.” But if there is no meaning or purpose to life, what makes you

“stuck in a rut” or not stuck in a rut? What is your “best life”? In this worldview, there is no way even to define these things, apart from arbitrary feelings and opinions.

This belief that life has no meaning or purpose is the outworking of the religion of evolutionary secularism that permeates the education system and the media throughout the UK,

they have purpose here and now (i.e., being happy or making others happy). And yes, they can subjectively decide what purpose and meaning to believe they have now, but the fact is that they know they will die—everyone will! They know it, but I believe they really refuse to accept it, even though it’s inevitable. And, in their present existence, they have to borrow from the Christian worldview to even talk about purpose and meaning!

Atheists just don’t want to face the fact their worldview means, as Bill Nye said to me, “when you die, you’re done.” In other words, an atheist has to admit that when they die, that’s the end of them since everything is purely material in that worldview. So ultimately, nothing matters! More and more the younger generations, who have been indoctrinated in evolutionary naturalism (atheism), are realizing the hopelessness and purposelessness of the naturalistic worldview.

But as God’s Word teaches in Romans 1, God has made it evident to all that he exists, and so everyone is without excuse. God’s Word clearly teaches where we came from, what our problem is (sin), and what the solution is—Jesus Christ.

And the incredible inconsistency is that, from an atheistic perspective, eventually everyone dies, the whole universe dies, and no one will know they ever existed. So, why do so many of them get so emotional over fighting Christians/creationists? The fact that they

get so emotional about it is because it’s a spiritual battle, and in their heart, they know they’re rebelling against God. Otherwise, they wouldn’t care! It shows their hypocrisy and utter insecurity in their ultimately meaningless and purposeless existence in the here and now that, to them, is doomed to become. . . nothing!

Where do meaning and purpose come from? It comes from our Creator! It comes from having a proper perspective on the history of the universe and humanity—one that starts with God’s Word. We’re not accidents, the result of millions of years of random, chance processes. We’re fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14) in the image of our Creator (Genesis 1:27). He has given us his Word, which clearly tells us our purpose and meaning. As Ecclesiastes puts it, “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13). We’re created to bring glory to our Creator and enjoy him forever. That’s ultimate meaning and purpose.

We can only find this purpose, and the joy that comes from walking in it, when we repent and put our faith and trust in Christ alone for salvation. When this happens, we die to our old selves and our old ways of thinking and living, and we are remade to live for him (2 Corinthians 5:17)—and we find great joy in doing so (Psalm 119:162–168)! If you want true meaning and purpose in your life, turn to Christ. He alone satisfies (Matthew 13:45–46; Isaiah 61:10; 1 Peter 1:8–9). | 

the United States and even here in New Zealand. When you adopt the religion of atheism, you have to deal with the consequences—and one consequence is that ultimately there’s absolutely no meaning or purpose to life!

Now, many atheists get all emotional about this and say

■ Ken Ham is the founder and president of Answers in Genesis and pioneered the world famous Creation Museum and Ark Encounter attractions in Kentucky, USA. For more information from Answers in Genesis visit www.answersingenesis.org



YOUR AGE DOESN'T MATTER

By Nathan Johnson

We often get fixated on age and what is allowed (or not allowed) at certain ages.

It makes sense that young kids shouldn't have the decision to have dessert before dinner, but Biblically, it seems that age is of little significance to be used by God.

For example, Abraham was 100 when he had his son Isaac. Caleb stormed the mountain of giants (Hebron) and expelled the three sons of Anak (the famous family of giants) at age 85. That's not even to mention the numerous descendents of Adam (remember Noah?) who lived for hundreds of years old.

Or go the other direction and you have Jesus at age 12 teaching the teachers in the Temple. Scholars tell us that David fought Goliath sometime between the ages of 8-14. And since the duty of caring for the flocks were the duties of the youngest members of the household, there is a good chance that the angels announced the birth of the Messiah to teenage shepherds.

In all these cases, it is not age that mattered, but faith. Each of the people mentioned above all lived lives of faith in the power, provision, and providence of God. Age doesn't seem to matter. Yet faith is everything.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who



through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to fight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might

obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trials of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance 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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (see Hebrews 11:32 – 12:2).

I'm cheering you on unto that end!
|A



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How to deal with Christian troublemakers

A Biblical Perspective:

By Chuck Missler

An elderly couple passed away in their twilight years, and when they got to heaven the husband was simply astonished! He discovered that it was far more magnificent than he could possibly have imagined. It was fantastic! He turned to his wife and observed: "You know, if it hadn't been for your yogurt and bran muffins, we could have been here ten years ago!"

Paul seems to echo a similar sentiment in his letter to the Philippians: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil 1:21); and, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better

(Phil 1:23)." Paul knew suffering, and Paul knew true joy. And he knew joy through suffering. And in his darkest hour, he wrote a letter to encourage his most intimate friends.

Recent years have brought heartache and suffering to so many. Our world has profoundly changed—permanently—and we need to adapt to the new realities. And the coming years may also have their own unpleasant

surprises and threatening trends. Paul, who wrote virtually half of the New Testament, wrote a highly relevant letter whose theme is “joy through suffering.” There may never have been a time when this letter could mean more to those families which have been impacted by the events of the recent past. It also has many practical implications for each of us. It was written from the then capital of the world to one of the most strategic centers in the Roman Empire: Philippi.

PHILIPPI

Philippi was founded by the great Macedonian king whose name it bears. Its natural advantages were considerable; however, its primary importance was its strategic geographical position commanding the great road between Europe and Asia. The almost continual mountain barrier between the East and West has a depression here which forms a gateway for this thoroughfare between the two continents. It was the advantage of this position that led Philip the Macedon to fortify the site.

It was this which marked out the very battlefield where the destinies of the Roman Empire were decided, and which led the conqueror to plant a Roman colony on the scene of his triumph. Philippi was the scene of the decisive battle ending the Roman republic in 42 B.C. Brutus and Cassius, murderers of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., were defeated by the combined forces of Mark Antony and Octavian, who later became Emperor Augustus. Because of Philippi's assistance, Augustus not only granted Roman citizenship to these Philippians when he became emperor, he conferred upon it the coveted privilege of “Italic right,” giving its

inhabitants the same rights as if they were living in Italy. (Their resultant pride is essential to understand and fully appreciate the tensions involved in Acts 16.)

Paul's first visit to Philippi is recorded with a minuteness that has few parallels in Luke's history. Luke joined Paul just as he crossed over into Europe, and he was with him during his stay in Philippi. (Many assume that it was Luke who was the man seen in Paul's vision.) Paul's visit ended abruptly in the middle of a storm of persecution, and the apostle left behind a legacy of suffering to this newborn church. The afflictions of the Macedonian Christians, and of the Philippians particularly, are more than once alluded to in Paul's letters.²

HERE IS A LETTER THAT IS PREGNANT WITH INSIGHTS ON THE REAL PRIORITIES IN LIFE, ENCOURAGEMENT DURING DIFFICULT TRIALS, AND GUIDANCE DURING THE INEVITABLE “DARK TIMES.”

Paul's ultimate appeal to Caesar challenged the hostility of the greatest power the world had ever seen. The very emperor to whom the appeal was made bears the ignominy of the first systematic persecution of Christians, which raged for several centuries, and which ended in establishing the Gospel on the ruins of the Empire.

Paul's letter to the Philippians is remarkable: He himself was a prisoner at the time—and it was he who was providing encouragement to them, the faithful believers at

Philippi! Paul, addressing a Roman colony while himself a prisoner in the Roman capital, writing as a citizen to citizens, exploits their very political franchise as an apt symbol of the higher privileges of their heavenly calling, to their political life as a suggestive metaphor for the duties of their Christian profession. Here is a letter that is pregnant with insights on the real priorities in life, encouragement during difficult trials, and guidance during the inevitable “dark times.” Yet joy is the main theme of this intimate letter. “Inner joy” occurs 16 times in these four brief chapters.

CHRISTIAN TROUBLEMAKERS

Paul also deals with some of the thorniest issues among us: how to deal with Christian troublemakers. Jesus warned his disciples that they would betray one another.³ Paul speaks of those who preached Christ out of “envy and strife” and “contention.”⁴ Paul is reporting that they preached Christ out of unworthy motives: jealousy, strife, and partisanship. These “Christians” were trying to get Paul in trouble with their preaching! (Christians are well known for arranging their firing squads in circles!)

He also alludes to this friction in other letters: he indicated that most of the Christians had deserted him. It is not generally recognized how poorly Paul had been received in Rome. The pastors were jealous of Paul. They neglected him for that reason. When the pastors forgot their duty, the people followed suit. In time Paul was almost forgotten.

Did you know that Paul very likely lost his life as a result of the trouble caused by the “Christians” in Rome? The information that

exists from the early church period about the events that led up to the death of Paul points to this conclusion. Envy led some Christians to denounce Paul and, as a result of their denunciation, Paul (and perhaps others also) was presumably executed under Nero. When Onesiphorus arrived in Rome, no one seemed to be able to tell him where Paul was. It was only by a diligent search that he found him.⁵

When Paul began to make converts through the Praetorian Guard, his views spread throughout Rome, provoking jealousy among the leaders of the Roman congregation. Paul alludes to that here and in his second letter to Timothy. Suetonius, a Roman historian who wrote about the lives of the Caesars, tells us that “since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chesus [Christ],” thinking that Christ was the ringleader. Claudius expelled them, both Christians and Jews, from Rome.⁶ A Roman Christian, Clement, wrote a letter to the believers in Corinth about 90 A.D., warning them about the bad effects of jealousy which had resulted in suffering and death among God's people. He alludes to seven examples from the Old Testament, and seven from more recent times, including Paul.⁷

THESE FEW VERSES TEACH THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST, HIS PRE-EXISTENCE, HIS EQUALITY WITH GOD THE FATHER, AND HIS INCARNATION AND TRUE HUMANITY.

■ Chuck Missler was an author, Bible teacher, engineer, and former businessman. He was also the founder of the Koinonia Institute. Chuck Missler sadly passed away in May 2018.



While this intimate letter deals with the practical issues of suffering, it also includes one of the greatest flights of Christ's glory.

THE GREAT PARABOLA

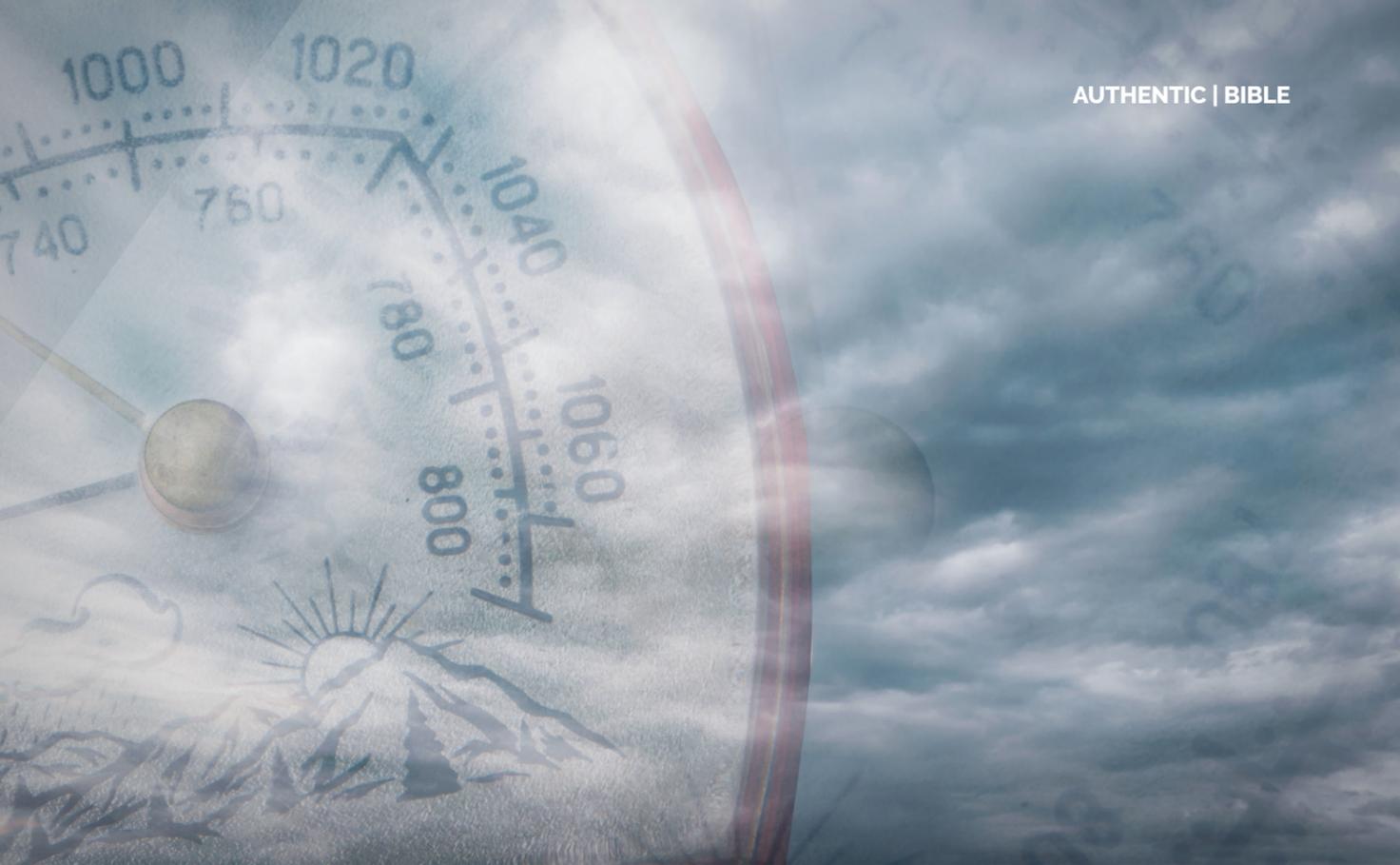
This passage, known among scholars as the Kenosis, is among the most glorious sections of the New Testament.⁸ It follows the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ from the highest position in the entire universe, down to the death on the cross, and then up again to see Him seated once more on the throne of His glory, before which every knee shall bow. In only a few verses, we sweep from Christ's life in eternity past to eternity future and are admitted to the breathtaking purposes of God in human salvation. These few verses teach the divinity of Christ, His pre-existence, His equality with God the Father, and His incarnation and true humanity.

Paul includes Jesus Himself in his pantheon of examples. As a friend of mine once observed, “If you squeeze an orange, you get orange juice. If you squeeze a lemon, you get lemon juice. If you squeeze a Christian, you should get Christ.”

The book of Ephesians is a letter—with some striking parallels to Jesus' letter to the church at Smyrna—which also provides a rich reward to the diligent student.⁹ This letter is an encouragement for our own time, indeed. Commit yourself to a careful review of this epistle: it will surprise you. | **A**

1. Acts 16:9,
2. 2 Corinthians 8:2; cf. notes on Philippians 1:7, 28-30.
3. Matthew 24:10.
4. Philippians 1:15ff.
5. 2 Timothy 1:16-17.
6. This expulsion is alluded to in Acts 18:2.
7. 1 Clement, Chapters 3-6.
8. Philippians 2:5-11.
9. Revelation 2:8-11.





A Spiritual BAROMETER

By Nathan Johnson

The phone was silent. My question hung in the air as I patiently waited for the young man to respond.

I already had a good guess at his answer, but I waited for him to process the question and force a response.

"Well ... um ... it hasn't been good. I mean ... well ... it could be better."

For the past several weeks I had been mentoring a young man and during our phone call he explained how his previous two weeks hadn't gone well—so I asked the question I typically ask all young men I mentor: *"Tell me about your time in the Word."*

His response—filled with pauses, "wells," and "ums"—was disheartening, but I had a good

guess that he would answer as such. After a decade of mentoring young men, I've found that the victory, triumph, freedom, peace, and joy in our lives is intimately connected to our involvement in God's Word.

The Bible, in essence, becomes a barometer for our spiritual lives.

THE BAROMETER

A barometer is one of those instruments weather stations use to measure atmospheric pressure, but Webster also defines a barometer as something which reflects changes in circumstances or opinions.

Your spiritual life often reflects the level of engagement you have with God's Word.

D.L. Moody is known for saying that either the Bible will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from the Bible. Perhaps if I could help clarify Moody's point, it isn't merely carrying a Bible in your coat pocket that keeps sin away, rather, it is your involvement and interaction with the Word which transforms your mind and heart, and in turn, makes sin less desirable and powerful in your life. I've certainly found that true in my own life.

God's Word isn't some magical rabbit's foot we rub to ward off

temptation and sin—we must heed its truth and walk in obedience to all God has called us to. But you'll never find lasting victory, triumph, joy, and peace apart from Him and His Word.

In Romans 12:2, Paul tells us, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." How do we transform our lives and renew our minds? Psalm 119 tell us: "How shall a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. With my whole heart I seek You; do not allow me to wander from Your commandments. Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (119:9-11).

The secret to the Christian life is living according to God's Word.

When I counsel and mentor young men and hear how their weeks have gone, I can typically predict their interaction and involvement with the Bible. Those who walk in victory, joy, and peace often comment that their times in the Word and prayer are amazing, life-changing, and delightful; they look forward to spending time with Jesus. And the reverse is often true as well—those who are struggling or spiraling out of control tend to have little to no engagement with Jesus through prayer and the Word.

Sure, this isn't a hard fast rule but again we are talking about a barometer. If you find yourself not getting into the Word for a length of time, notice how the hardships,



THE BIBLE ISN'T A MAGIC WAND THAT MAKES THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE GO AWAY, BUT IT GIVES US PROPER PERSPECTIVE IN THE MIDST OF THE CHALLENGES.

trials, and difficulties of life become all the more challenging, how staying pure and victorious is difficult, and relationships can quickly lead to frustration.

The Bible isn't a magic wand that makes the problems of life go away, but it gives us proper perspective in the midst of the challenges. When we are faced with temptations and trials, the Spirit will bring back the Word we have hidden in our hearts to encourage, convict, and challenge us to walk in obedience.

So take a hard look at your life and then tell me about your time in the Word. Are you growing? Are you hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Or are you becoming bored and apathetic?

Please don't sputter, like the young man I mentored, with a bunch of "wells" and "ums"—remember, your involvement and interaction with God's Word becomes a barometer for your spiritual life—so be transformed as you find delight in God's Word (see Psalm 1:2-3 and 119:16). | 



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Is God Glorified in your Work?

By Paul Curtas

How would you answer this question: “How is God being glorified through your job at the workplace?” It is a tension that Christians seem to grapple with. What does God think about your work? For that matter, what does He think about work period? The idea of work either came from God’s character, or you must prove to God that your work or workplace is somehow worthy of His approval. There are two extremes people seem to gravitate toward in trying to figure this out.

DETERMINING SUCCESS

One extreme leads people to think that God gets greater glory through your work to the extent of your ability to achieve success and gain status in it. It goes like this... the more you achieve, the greater opportunity you have to be used of God. There is nothing wrong with achieving and being promoted,

it is commendable. However, you do not need to reach a certain status level in the business world to be a success in glorifying God. Oh yes, God uses this, but it is not what determines success in His eyes. One of the many wonderful stories in the Bible is the story of Gideon, the farmer. One day he was out working in his field and God sent an angel to him with a

message. The angel addressed Gideon by saying, “The Lord be with you...O valiant warrior” (Judges 6:11-12). Gideon was astonished by the presence of the angel but even more astounded by being addressed as a “valiant warrior.” God did just that, He used Gideon, the farmer, to defeat a fierce enemy. The way God did it still baffles military strategists.



When God is working through us, He does things that confound human statistics and strategies. God is producing in us an eternal weight in glory that will outlast the fading records or achievements of humans.

PROVING WORTH

The other extreme to which people can go is to try and prove that their job is worthy to God by somehow doing something spiritual in it, to give it divine value and approval. Just talk about the Christian’s responsibility at work and you will see this mindset arise. There can be an immediate association of the value of work based on whether or not you witness or evangelize to people at work. There is nothing we can do to give intrinsic value and purpose in work. This comes from God Himself...the fact that He worked in creating the world

(Genesis 1) and that Jesus worked as a carpenter (Mark 6:2-3). This tells us that work was not some idea He thought up...instead, it is part of who God is. We are made in the image of God which makes work a part of our makeup as a person. When you do your work wholeheartedly as unto Him, you reflect something about God that He designed to be seen as you do your work (Titus 2:9-10).

THE SOURCE OF OUR VALUE

But there is another angle we must not miss. Though the basis of work is good and holy, because it comes out of God’s character, it is currently being affected by sin and evil. We are working for people and with people that have no interest in God. Both sin and selfishness can infect their work, but our working under these conditions points to our calling to shine as

light in darkness, and to be like salt in tasteless and deteriorating work situations. God has put His people on the move out in the world with a mission. As children of light, we will confront the darkness of people, not belligerently, but naturally in our contact with them. Our witness is twofold: We are to act out the Gospel of Christ to people, our coworkers, and then be ready to speak as opportunities present themselves. This will come naturally as we see our jobs as a service unto God first, then unto people and to the companies under whom we work.

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”
Colossians 3:23-24 | 

■ Paul M. Curtas is the General Director of FCAP. He is also the author of the book “When God Shows Up at Work”, which is now available in German and Spanish, as well as English. Visit his website for more details - www.godinwork.com



NETFLIX is calling

Teaching, community, food and prayer.

By Ryan Kilfoil

This is my simplified version of the early church as described in Acts Chapter 2.

I've come to realise that in the busyness of life, it's easy to over-complicate things, which can then become a barrier to them happening in the first place!

Even as I sit down to try and write this article, I note that it has taken me over two and a half hours longer than I had originally planned, to even just make a start.



DISTRACTIONS!

Some urgent, some important, some both. And then all the other non-urgent & non-important things which seem to suck up my time and eliminate hours from my day like they were mere seconds (thank you Netflix!)

So sometimes it's good to get back to basics.

But *maybe* those "basics" aren't what the world is telling us they are. We're constantly bombarded with messaging that focuses on, and builds up the self:

- "Do whatever makes you happy, as long as you don't hurt anyone else"
- "Take that holiday with your family, you've been working hard this year"
- "Go ahead and buy that new car/pair of shoes/item of clothing/jewelry because you deserve it!"

I've definitely been influenced by that way of thinking in my life. And don't get me wrong, I'm not against buying nice things or going on a vacation, but I do think it's healthy to question our motivations - am I being influenced by the world or by the Lord Jesus when making these decisions?

As followers of Christ we are called to be different. In the world but not of the world.

Paul reminds us:

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."
Romans 12:2 NIV

I believe our minds are constantly being renewed, one way or another. Either by the world around us, or by Jesus Christ!

So what information are you letting shape your thinking? What sort

of people are you surrounding yourself with? Where are you spending your time?

I know Netflix is calling (or maybe for you it's work, emails, trademe or facebook), but perhaps you are being nudged by the Holy Spirit to spend time in prayer, study the Word of God, or simply share a meal or a conversation with someone. To be the church.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" Acts 2:42 NIV

What are you devoted to today?

May you be encouraged to seek the Lord Jesus afresh today. See what He has in store for you when you fully submit to Him and let Him live His life in you and through you!
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Millions of Years— Are Souls at Stake?

The discussion around Biblical Authority

By Ken Ham

When creationists take a strong stand that God created the earth six thousand years ago, they're often accused of making this a salvation issue. Well, it isn't a salvation issue—but it is!

Because 'Answers in Genesis' and other biblical creationists take an authoritative stand on six literal (approximately 24-hour) days of creation and a young (approximately 6,000-year-old) age for the earth and universe, some have mistakenly taken our unwavering stand to mean these beliefs are salvation issues.

However, nowhere does the Bible even imply salvation in Christ is conditioned upon one's belief

concerning the days of creation or the age of the earth or universe.

For instance, Romans 10:9 states, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

It does not state, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, *and believe in six literal days of creation*

and a young earth and universe, you will be saved."

Salvation is conditional upon faith in Christ—not belief about the six days of creation or the earth's age. So these are not salvation issues *per se*. But it is a salvation issue in an indirect sense. Let me explain.

Many Christians, including Christian leaders, believe fossils, the earth, and the universe are millions or billions of years old. I contend that

when they accept this timeframe and try to fit millions of years into the Bible, they are violating three vital issues.

AN AUTHORITY ISSUE

One cannot get the idea of millions of years from the Bible. This idea comes from outside of Scripture. When a Christian adds millions of years to the Bible and reinterprets the days of creation or tries to fit this extra time into the first verse in Genesis or a supposed gap between the first and second verses, he is allowing fallible man to be in authority over God's Word.

So I assert that such compromise (which I believe it really is) is setting an example for others that fallible man can take ideas outside of Scripture and reinterpret God's Word to fit these in. Ultimately, accepting this view means God's Word is not the final authority and is not without error. It also opens the door to others doing this with other historical claims of Scripture—such as the Resurrection and virgin birth.

A GOSPEL ISSUE

Let me set this up with three major points.

First, Genesis 1:29–30 teaches that man and animals were originally vegetarian (before Adam's sin). How do we know this for sure? Humans weren't told they could eat meat until after the Flood in Genesis 9:3. This later verse makes it clear that mankind was originally vegetarian, but this changed after the Flood. Verse 30 of Genesis 1 (about animals' diet) is worded in the same way as verse 29 (man's diet), so it makes sense that originally the animals were vegetarian, too. Second, at the end of the Creation Week, God described everything

ONE CANNOT GET THE IDEA OF MILLIONS OF YEARS FROM THE BIBLE. THIS IDEA COMES FROM OUTSIDE OF SCRIPTURE.

He had made as "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

Third, Genesis 3 makes it clear that the animals (v. 14) and the ground (v. 17) were cursed. And verse 18 makes it clear that thorns came into existence after sin and the Curse: "Both thorns and thistles it [the ground] shall bring forth for you."

Now the idea that things have been around for millions of years came from the belief that the fossil record was laid down slowly over millions of years, long before man's existence. So when Christians accept millions of years, they must also accept that the fossil layers were laid down before Adam—before the first human sin.

Yet the fossil record contains fossil thorns—claimed by evolutionists to be hundreds of millions of years old. How could that be if thorns came after Adam's sin?

The fossil record also contains lots of examples of animals that ate other animals—bones in their stomachs, teeth marks on bones, and so on. But according to the Bible, animals were vegetarian before sin.

Also, the fossil record contains examples of diseases, such as brain tumors, cancer, and arthritis. But if these existed before man, then God called such diseases "very good."

Taking all this into consideration,

it seems obvious that bloodshed, death of animals and man, disease, suffering, and thorns came after sin. So the fossil record had to be laid down after sin, too. Noah's Flood would easily account for most fossils.

But what does this have to do with a gospel issue? The Bible calls death an "enemy" (1 Corinthians 15:26). When God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins (Genesis 3:21), a good case can be made that this was the first death—the death and bloodshed of an animal. Elsewhere in Scripture we learn that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22), and the life of the flesh is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). Because Adam sinned, a payment for sin was needed. Because sin's penalty was death, then death and bloodshed were needed to atone for sin. So Genesis 3:21 would describe the first blood sacrifice as a penalty for sin—looking forward to the one who would die "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10–14).

The Israelites sacrificed animals over and over again, as a ceremonial covering for sin. But Hebrews 10:4 tells us that the blood of bulls and goats can't take away our sin—we are not physically related to animals. We needed a perfect human sacrifice. So all this animal sacrifice was looking forward to the one called the Messiah (Jesus Christ).

Now if there was death and bloodshed of animals before sin, then this undermines the atonement. Also, if there were death, disease, bloodshed, and suffering before sin, then such would be God's fault—not our fault! Why would God require death as a sacrifice for sin if He were the one responsible for death and



bloodshed, having created the world with these bad things in place?

One of today's most-asked questions is how Christians can believe in a loving God with so much death and suffering in the world. The correct answer is that God's just Curse because of Adam's sin resulted in this death and suffering. We are to blame. God is not an unloving or incompetent Creator of a "very bad" world. He had a loving plan from eternity to rescue people from sin and its consequence of eternal separation from God in hell.

So to believe in millions of years is a gospel issue. This belief ultimately impugns the character of the Creator and Savior and undermines the foundation of the soul-saving gospel.

AN INDIRECT SALVATION ISSUE

Many Christians believe in millions of years and are truly born again. Their belief in millions of years doesn't affect their salvation. But what does it do? It affects how *other* people, such as their children or others they teach, view Scripture.

Their example can be a stumbling block to others. For instance, telling young people they can reinterpret Genesis to fit in millions of years sets a deadly example: they can start outside Scripture and add ideas into Scripture.

I suggest that such people can, over time, get the idea that the Bible is not God's infallible Word. This creates doubt in God's Word—and doubt often leads to

ONE OF TODAY'S MOST-ASKED QUESTIONS IS HOW CHRISTIANS CAN BELIEVE IN A LOVING GOD WITH SO MUCH DEATH AND SUFFERING IN THE WORLD.

unbelief. Eventually they can reject Scripture altogether. Since the gospel comes from a book they don't trust or believe is true, they can easily reject the gospel itself.

So, the age of the earth and universe is not a salvation issue per se—somebody can be saved even without believing what the Bible says on this issue. But it is a salvation issue indirectly. Christians who compromise on millions of years can encourage *others* toward unbelief concerning God's Word and the gospel. | 

■ Ken Ham is the founder and president of Answers in Genesis. He has edited and authored many books about the authority of God's Word and the impact of evolutionary thinking on our culture, including 'Already Compromised' and 'The Lie'. For more about AIG visit www.answersingenesis.org





I Love Rainbows

By Dave Firth

Genesis 9:12-17 says:

¹² And God said: “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: ¹³ I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴ It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; ¹⁵ and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ And God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

In 1978 a San Francisco artist first used the rainbow as a symbol for the gay community. Of course there has been lots of discussion about this over the years with people getting upset that such a precious, visual representation of God’s promise, was used for anything other than what it was intended.

The thing is, rainbows are rainbows. The Bible makes it clear that God put the ‘bow’ (or ‘qesheth’ in the Hebrew) in the sky after the flood as a sign of His covenant with Noah and future generations. This covenant is a permanent reminder that God has an eternal covenant with all of mankind. For ever. The end.

No one can steal that.

If a people group that have largely been rejected and misunderstood feel the need to adopt this amazing symbol, why would we be upset about that? God has clearly stated what a rainbow means. Shouldn’t it be a joy that we see it around a lot more these days?

Don’t get me wrong, I stand firm on the biblical definition of marriage and on the authority of scripture, but I don’t like it when we get fixated on campaigns and marches rather than on Jesus.

When Israel Folau was wrongly quoted as saying, “All gay people are going to Hell”, the reality was that he was talking about the inerrancy of scripture. We stand on God’s Word. The Bible talks about those who reject Christ. Those that choose a different way of living than surrendering their lives to Jesus.

The Pharisees were oozing pride and hypocrisy yet were revered as the ‘standard’ for holy living. That is terrible! To think that proud, self-righteous, hypocritical, malicious, deceitful men were the ‘holy’ men that society looked up to, is a travesty.

If a gay person wants a Bible, would you give it to them? If a gay person needs a meal, or a friend, or a smile, would you oblige?

When we look at Jesus’ life, we should be challenged when we see him acting differently to how we would in a similar situation. Are we operating out of ‘self’ or are we fully surrendered to His life?

I’m pretty sure Jesus never compromised on what is sin (even to the woman caught in adultery he said, “go and sin no more”), but the overwhelming thing we see is his love for people - especially the people that most ‘religious’ people turned their backs on.

There are hundreds of thousands of people all over this world that have experienced Christ in another person. They’ve seen love, kindness, compassion, generosity - without compromise!

I know some pretty conservative Christians that have led many people to the Lord without compromising on their beliefs or their understanding of what is and what isn’t sin.

Remember, Psalm 24:1 tells us, ‘The Earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.’ - that includes your time, your money, your home and, yes, even the rainbow. We can’t take back what belongs to God. |A

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The DOWNSIDE of Democracy

By Ron Matsen



Throughout the history of man there have been two basic forms of public government: 1. Rule by the elite (monarchy, aristocracy, and oligarchy) and 2. Rule by the people (democracy).

The three basic forms of democracy are:

1. **Direct democracy** where the general public vote on every issue of law and governance,
2. **Representative democracy** where representatives are elected by the public and in turn vote on every issue of law and governance, and
3. **Presidential democracy** where an individual is elected by the public and in turn establishes every law and issues of governance.

THE DOCTRINE OF DEMOCRACY

At the heart of the idea of democracy is the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty simply means that the majority of the voting public knows what is best for everyone else. But, as the saying goes, "Democracy

is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to eat for lunch." In other words, democracy is great as long as you share the same sentiment as the majority.

THE DREAM OF DEMOCRACY

Upon exiting the United States of America Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was approached by a group of citizens asking what sort of government the delegates had created. His answer was, "A republic, if you can keep it." A republic simply means a form of government in which the country's affairs are considered a public matter. Therefore, the framers of the American system of federal government were elevating the role of public participation by implementing a representative form of democracy with checks and balances.

The founding fathers of this fledgling form of federal administration knew that allowing the general public to direct the creation of the laws that would govern them was a risky business. Therefore, they provided a set of foundational principles known as the Constitution that gave a framework for public lawmaking with the hope that this new experimental process would ultimately be governed by people who were themselves governed by Biblical absolutes. In reality, the process of democracy is only played out on the surface of society while the brute forces of dirty politics form the undercurrent that ultimately make laws and provide governance.

THE DECEPTION OF DEMOCRACY

Today it is very popular for various



groups to vehemently express their views in an attempt to gain public acceptance and eventually be presented as the majority view. In some cases, a majority in volume constitutes a majority of opinion as the screams of the minority drown out their opposition.

We see that the expression of the "popular will" can create a cacophony of discordant voices, leaving many baffled about the true meaning of majority rule. In far too many places around the world today, the expression of the "popular will" is nothing more than the unleashing of personal passions that have little, if any, concern for the good of the whole society. It can even create and promote genocidal policies toward those without a voice in the democratic process. The sad end of unrestrained democracy is anarchy, where rival factions

splinter the fabric of society in order to gain their own selfish means. Ultimately, the democratic process turns into nothing but a horrible form of tyranny that is initiated and enforced by the majority.

THE MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

In order for democracy to work you must have a minimum of three key ingredients:

1. A willingness to do what is right;
2. A resignation to the final outcome of the democratic process; and
3. An access to unbiased knowledge of the related facts and circumstances.

Sadly, today we live in a world filled with toxic news agencies who serve up their opinion as a replacement for information.

Rather than informing the public, they seem totally focused on shaping public opinion.

Therefore, the modern public is caught in a quagmire of fake news, doctored photos/videos, and conspiracy mania. In this world of information overload, sound bites replace sound logic and screaming slogans replace, open dialogue and meaningful debate. In the midst of all this confusion, people seem to be quite happy to make resolute decisions based on nothing more than a cartoon character representation of some very complicated issues.

THE DARWINIAN EFFECT ON DEMOCRACY

Recently there has emerged a third form of social government: Rule by the individual. Evolving from the parent thought of "popular

will,” it is built on the foundational principles of personal sovereignty and personal truth. Although it spreads fastest in the fertile soil of the anarchist movement, it is finding root within mainstream society, as well.

In this hostile world of violently competing agendas, common courtesy is trampled under the feet of contending opponents. This is where the creed of “survival of the fittest” is the guiding motivation that enables social Darwinism. Therefore, this type of democracy paves a slippery slope for society to plunge ever downward. The Bible tells us that ultimately democracy (self-determination) is the agent of societal and personal destruction.¹

THE DISASTER OF DEMOCRACY

On a placard outside of Auschwitz, George Santayana’s famous quote is a powerful reminder that “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” The Biblical narrative of the nation of Israel is a great place to start when it comes to gaining both a historic perspective and prophetic insight for the times in which we live.

The nation of Israel was founded on a new type of public government that was based on the Law of God. This allowed each person to rule their own life according to one divine standard. The unifying fact was not the people, but the laws God had given them to follow. The Book of Joshua closes with this final exhortation, “Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods

which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”² The chapter then closes by stating, “And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.”³

Without the guiding hands of these godly leaders, the nation of Israel soon drifted away and became like the nations around them. “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:”⁴ Basically Israel ignored the God that had rescued them from bondage in Egypt and became servants themselves of the gods of the Canaanites.

As you review the Book of Judges you are constantly struck with the images of people who are so bent on following after their own desires that they repeatedly find themselves ensnared by their appetites, and subsequently enslaved by their enemies. By chapter 17 we are told, “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”⁵ Thus, for the remainder of the Books of Judges you read of the increasing depravity of a nation that has no room for the correction or counsel of God. Here, I believe, we have a perfect picture of the disaster of democracy.

A MODERN PROPHETIC PARALLEL

We now live in an age when

universally it can be said, without fear of contradiction, that there “arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD (The God of the Bible)” and “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Therefore, we now see the distress, disease, demise and destruction of modern society that was promised by God for Israel IF they were not faithful to follow His commandments.⁶

But let’s be fair, rebellion against God is an endemic problem that has existed throughout the history of mankind. Before the first global judgment by God, the description of the world at that time sounds a lot like it could have been written about today. “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”⁷

Jesus gave us an important end-times prophetic insight when He said, “And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.”⁸ Jesus goes on to say, “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”⁹ Clearly Jesus was predicting a predominantly corrupt world that would be hostile to the Gospel. Sounds like today doesn’t it?

THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE CHURCH

If we track back to the seminal



moment of the nation of Israel and their subsequent descent into their destructive behavior, we can see an important preceding influence. “And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.”¹⁰ These early elders of Israel were a constant source of instruction and correction which served to guide the people into the ways of God’s will.

Simply put, the heart of man’s problem is in the heart of man. If man’s heart is turned toward God then righteousness reigns, but if man’s heart turns away from God then the wages of sin are paid in full.¹¹ To counterbalance a world gone mad, Jesus told His disciples that, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has 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.”¹² Jesus went on to say, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill

cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”¹³ The prevention of putrefaction is purification. Darkness cannot survive where light exists. Providing these influences should be the primary function of the Church today.

The first-century followers of Jesus faced a predominantly hedonistic society which was not too dissimilar to what we see today. Confronted by many different pagan cultures, Greek philosophies, political corruption, and Roman excess, the early church was focused on its prime objective which was to “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”¹⁴ The early church did not form an army, promote a political party, or in any way dilute their efforts to fully carry out their great commission. If you

want to see change in the world around you, start with Good News that goes straight to the heart.

AN APOSTOLIC EPILOG

At the end of the apostle Paul’s life he was in prison where he was surrounded with the reality of his own impending death. Injustice, social chaos, and political corruption were everywhere. Yet in the midst of these terrible times he penned his last letter to Timothy in which he states, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”¹⁵ **IA**

- 1 Proverbs 14:12
- 2 Joshua 24:14-15
- 3 Joshua 24:31
- 4 Judges 2:10-11
- 5 Judges 17:6
- 6 Leviticus 26
- 7 Genesis 6:11-13
- 8 Luke 17:26
- 9 Luke 18:7-8
- 10 Joshua 24:31
- 11 Romans 6:23
- 12 Matthew 5:13
- 13 Matthew 5:14-16
- 14 Mark 16:15
- 15 2 Timothy 4:1-5

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A Body or a Business?

By Nathan Johnson

A couple of days ago I came across this stirring story from a Bible teacher ...

Christianity started in Palestine as a fellowship; it moved to Greece and became a philosophy; it moved to Italy and became an institution; it moved to Europe and became a culture; it came to America and became an enterprise. Some of the students were only 18 or 19 years old ... and I wanted them to understand and appreciate the import of the last line, so I clarified it by adding, "An enterprise. That's a business." After a few moments Martha, the youngest student in the class, raised her hand. I could not imagine what her question might be. I thought the little vignette was self-explanatory, and that I had performed it brilliantly. Nevertheless, I acknowledged Martha's raised hand, "Yes, Martha." She asked such a simple question, "A business? But isn't it supposed to be a body?" I could not envision where this line of questioning was going, and the only response I could think of was, "Yes." She continued, "But when a body becomes a business, isn't that a prostitute?"

When I read that last line, I gasped.

What a true statement.

Not only was the first sentence a great simplification of Church history, the quote itself reveals a big problem in the Church today.



Leonard Ravenhill put it this way, "In the New Testament Church it says they were all amazed—and now in our churches everybody wants to be amused."

We have become all wrapped up in anything and everything but Jesus—yet He and He alone should be the center and preeminence of our lives (see Colossians 1:18).

Jesus, in His rebuke to the Church in Ephesus declared, "Nevertheless, I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Revelation 2:4).

AW Tozer wrote this along the same lines—"The evidence is all around us that it is difficult to break the tyranny of the world.

Once the world gets a hold on us, it refuses to let go. And it is not hard to see this in, for example, the impulse for entertainment and fun. We certainly live in a fun generation. Unless we can have fun, and unless that thing is going to entertain us, we will wander off to something that will. I am not surprised that this is out in the world, but I am greatly disappointed that it has come into the Church" (from *Experiencing the Presence of God*, page 205).

May we not become distracted. May our lives and churches be about "Body life" and may be found to be a pure and spotless Bride of Christ.

I'm cheering you on unto that end! | 



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GOD IN WORK

Chain Reaction: Dealing with Problems in the Workplace

By Paul Curtas

In his first Epistle, the Apostle Peter gives us some of God's practical wisdom on how to live and operate in conditions caused by chain reactions (1 Peter 3:8-11). Because our natural instinct tends toward self-preservation and retaliation, apart from God's grace, we're inclined toward entering a chain reaction. It is natural for us to respond to someone's harsh words with our own harsh words or to make accusations about those who are accusing us. This kind of pattern creates chain reactions among coworkers and supervisors that only multiply and intensify the problem. God's instructions begin by telling us to break the chain reaction in our response. How?

First, we are told to refrain from speaking evil and using deceit. Talking about people's faults and wrongs they have done can ignite into a wildfire that quickly spreads rumors about them. Your calling as a Christian is not to speak about or pass on the evil or mistakes of others. Yes, there is a correct way

and time to address it and deal with them, but more often than not, we find it easier to become a link in a chain reaction. But also mentioned here is a warning about using deceit. Deceit is when we say one thing but really mean something else, or when we lead a person to believe something that is not true or partially true.

Deceitfulness often reproduces rumors, as people pass on distorted facts. The more gossip spreads, the more confused people become. On the other hand, the truth will always bring clarity and simplifies a matter. Next we are told to turn from evil and do good. Our responsibility here is more than "not doing what others do." Because evil leaves a negative void in circumstances, we need to fill it, when we can, with goodness. Peter tells us (1 Peter 3:8-9) that we were called to bring a blessing into difficulties. When God blessed us initially, He did so even though we did not deserve it. I believe our realization of this

will not be fully appreciated and enjoyed until we learn to extend this kind of blessing and kindness to those who are difficult toward us.

Lastly, we are told to seek peace and pursue it. This assumes there are situations that lack peace, and we accept the need to pursue it. It is not making peace at any cost, but it demonstrates that we desire to be part of the solution, not magnifying the problem. We can do this by offering some options toward a solution of a problem, not just complaining about it. It means we take the initiative, as much as it depends on us, to be at peace with our coworkers and the company (Romans 12:17-18). Why not start your own chain reaction? I've witnessed on a number of occasions where a person's right responses began a positive chain reaction that affected the people around them and brought their faith in the Lord to light. | 



■ Paul M. Curtas is the General Director of FCAP. He is also an author and international speaker. Visit his website for more details - www.godinwork.com

DOWN TO EARTH WISDOM FROM PROVERBS

DO MEN NEED FRIENDS?

By Charles Price

As I start to write this, I am at a conference which is offering an elective called #MenNeedFriends#. It is an attempt to help face a vacuum in many men – developing real and deep friendship. Women seem to have a much greater capacity for friendship. They make more friends, more quickly and more deeply. My wife can meet someone casually and at the end of a conversation know about her marital status, whether her parents are still alive or not, how many children she has, what ages they are, what their personalities are and what the person she has just met is facing. I can meet someone I have known for years and when I come home she asks me how his children are and I don't know, what his wife is doing and I have no idea, and didn't his father just die, and I say, I don't know, he didn't mention it!!

Men don't expect to bare their souls or to share their deepest feelings and fears. According to Psychology Today (May 2018) brain scans indicate men experience distress when they talk about personal feelings and emotions. They would rather stick to current or topical events than engage in intimate discussion.

Solomon in the book of Proverbs tells us friendship provides security in times of trouble: 'A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity' (Proverbs.17.17). He also wrote: 'Two are better than one because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to

help him up! ... Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves' (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). The alternative to friendship is loneliness. Loneliness has become an epidemic in our society now. Last year the government of the United Kingdom appointed a 'Minister of Loneliness'. Around fourteen percent of the British population say they, "often or

always feel lonely". Evidence shows that extended feelings of loneliness can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic inflammation and even dementia. In other words, it is a health hazard. New Zealand's General Social Survey in 2018 showed that it's young people aged 15 to 24 who report feeling most isolated. There are many elderly people who have little social contact with others because of their circumstances, which makes life very hard for them. When people think nobody is interested in them they start thinking, 'What is the point of me?' From the beginning it was 'not good for man to be alone'. Deep relationships are not a luxury but a necessity to wholesome healthy living.

CS Lewis in his book, 'The Four Loves' talks about Eros (romantic and sexual love); Affection (such as parental love for child); Charity (kindness to all) and Friendship. This last one he writes is the most neglected: "It is something quite marginal; not a main course in life's banquet; a diversion; something that fills up the chinks in one's time". Then he says, 'Few value it because few experience it'. Why do so few experience it? I ask myself that question too. I am basically an introvert. I can be out in the public domain but need to escape to solitude and am at peace with my own company. Friendship is not easy for introverts because getting to know someone takes energy. Introverts may not need a wide circle of friends but we do need one or two close friends.

Some of us are scared of deep friendship because it requires honesty and vulnerability which takes a long time coming and is painful. It is the avoidance of pain



that can hold us back, like Paul Simon in his song "I am a Rock":

I have no need of friendship,
friendship causes pain.
... Hiding in my room, safe within
my womb.
I touch no one and no one
touches me.
I am a rock, I am an island.
And a rock feels no pain;
And an island never cries.

This is why Solomon writes, 'The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out' (Proverbs 20:5). Plunging into the deep waters of our heart is difficult because we are complex and feel safer on the surface. We don't let others in because we don't go in ourselves! We have our noble aspirations mixed up with our temptations and failures. We are happy to share the former but keep the latter to ourselves. Like a snail, we live under a protective shell. We may set up accountability partnerships to police our behaviors and keep us in check, while at the same time not connecting with our real self deep inside. We want to manage the fruit without going to the root.

Companions and colleagues are undoubtedly good for us but Solomon writes, 'A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother'. (Proverbs 18:24). Beyond companions, we need the friend who sticks closer than a brother. This is the elusive factor for many of us. However, we may be getting better. We have a new 21st century word that we have only just come up with: 'bromance'. A bromance is a close relationship between men that has a high level of commitment and emotional rapport and is platonic, non-sexual.

One of the best examples of a 'bromance' in the Bible is the friendship of Solomon's father David with Jonathan, the son of King Saul. After David had killed Goliath, Jonathan decided to get to know him and 'Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself' (1 Samuel 18:1). If it was initiated by Jonathan it soon became reciprocal and strong, and when Jonathan was killed as a young man, David says over his friend's death, 'I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was



wonderful, more wonderful than that of women' (2 Samuel 1:26). It was not complicated by sexual connotations but had a strong camaraderie and kinship that went deep into both of their hearts.

We cannot substitute this real, flesh and blood friendship with social media. It is one of the big deceptions of our day that being more 'connected' meets this need in our hearts. Why is it in New Zealand that the largest group of lonely people are aged 15-24? Is it because they are most active in social media? We do not portray ourselves honestly. We carefully edit our self-disclosure, messages and pictures to what we want to portray and people to believe about us. I heard a young woman say how her baby cried most of the time, but if it gave her a beautiful smile she would take a picture and put it on facebook and show this happy contented baby as the norm. True and deep friendship does not edit itself. It is honest. It is dependable. It is loyal. It is protective.

How do we develop friendship? It has been said that there are four different levels of conversation that access the living room of someone's heart and invite them into ours.

1. Sharing platitudes (Nice day isn't it?)
2. Sharing facts (I am going to visit my brother)
3. Sharing feelings (I am feeling nervous)
4. Sharing a secret (We had a big fight a month ago and I haven't seen him since)

Most of us don't get beyond level 2 and therefore don't connect. When we get to the 'secret' part we start to access the heart. In close friendship, 'the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel' (Proverbs 27:9). That is possible when we open ourselves up and invite someone else in. 'As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another' (Proverbs 27:17).

A true friend is not someone who ignores or minimizes or tries to

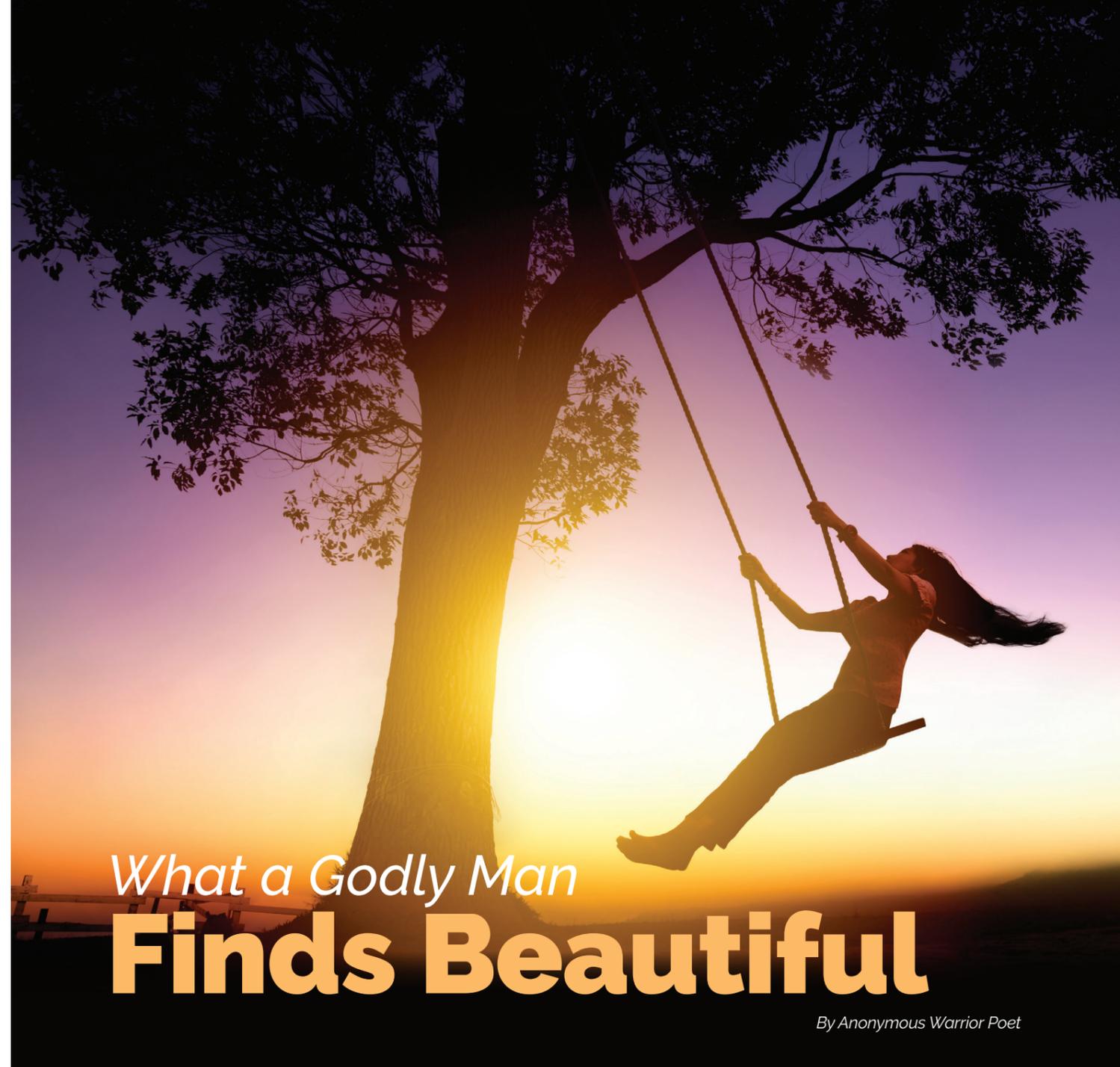
solve our problems but someone who listens long and hard. Who helps us find the root of the issue way beyond the fruit which is what most of us waste our time and energy picking, and who encourages us to figure out the next step and cheers us on when we take it. The 'I don't know what to say' attitude is a barrier to authentic friendship. It assumes we are trying to 'fix' each other but we help each other most by listening. I am a novice at most of this. Solomon found it hard work too, 'Many a man claims to have unfaithful love, but a faithful man who can find?' (Proverbs 20:6)

Vulnerability and honesty are painful, but the pain can be trusted. 'Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses' (Proverbs 27:6). 'Better is open rebuke than hidden love' (Proverbs 27:5). Wounds caused by truthfulness can be what Solomon calls, 'life-giving'. 'He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise' (Proverbs 15:31).

A great statement of friendship is found in one of the wisdom books of the Apocrypha: 'A faithful friend is a strong defense; And he that has found him has found a treasure. There is nothing that can be taken in exchange for a faithful friend; And his excellency is beyond price. A faithful friend is a medicine of life; And they that fear the Lord shall find him. He that fears the Lord directs his friendship aright' (Ecclesiasticus 6:14-17). My wife Hilary says, 'If you want to have a good friend, learn how to be a good friend'. |A



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What a Godly Man Finds Beautiful

By Anonymous Warrior Poet

AN INTRODUCTION FROM LESLIE LUDY:

A number of years ago, our Christian publishing company arranged for Eric and me to be guests on a "Christian" radio show to promote one of our books on purity. But as soon as I got on the phone, I knew something wasn't right. The two radio hosts were not Christians at all – in fact, they completely ridiculed Christian honor and purity. They made me

the brunt of their crude, perverted jokes. After about sixty seconds, we hung up on them – promptly placing a call to our publisher to tell them they needed to do a better job of finding appropriate outlets for promoting a Christian book on purity!

Even though I talked with those men for less than a minute, I was reminded how far our culture has fallen when it comes to esteeming

purity and feminine mystery. Once upon a time men admired women of discretion, modesty, character, and purity. But today, those qualities are ridiculed and despised. In fact, the more opposite a woman is from those things, the more desirable our society says she is. In today's world, it's easy to become confused about what truly makes a woman attractive to a man, and take our cues from culture instead

will choose an entirely different path. I have spoken with many Christ-centered single men in recent years who have shared with me the attributes they find most beautiful in a single, godly woman.

For this article, I asked one such man to share some of the things that he finds most beautiful in a godly woman. It's a refreshingly different perspective from what you'll hear on the radio or see in the checkout stands at the grocery store! If you are single and God's purpose for you is marriage, someday it will be these qualities — not the sensual secrets of Hollywood — that will draw a godly man's heart to you!

Remember: It's important that you don't try to develop all these qualities overnight, or in your own strength. And even more importantly, your motive shouldn't be winning a godly guy's heart. Rather, as you build your life around Jesus Christ, He will gently begin to work these qualities within your life and cultivate His beauty within you. As these things are developed in your life, let it be first and foremost for His glory, not for your own gain. As you yield to His refining work in your soul, you will glow with a loveliness that the sensuality of our culture and the allure of Hollywood can never replicate.

of from the Word of God.

But to a truly godly, Christ-centered man, the brash, bold, sensual version of femininity is the opposite of beautiful. Godly men are attracted to completely different qualities — qualities that exude from a Christ-centered life. While magazines and movies encourage us to flaunt and flirt in order to gain male approval, godly men are longing for women who

growing in intimacy with Jesus through the Truth of Scripture.

A Woman Who Points Eyes to Jesus

It is beautiful to encounter a godly woman who continually encourages me — by how she lives and what she says — to love Jesus more.

A Woman Who Lets the Man Lead

I have seen too many marriages where the wife usurps her husband and tries to take the lead. And whether she nags, nitpicks, or belittles, she doesn't allow her husband to be a man. While men are not more important than women, God has built men to face difficulty and hardship and to lead. It is beautiful to see a woman who genuinely supports and encourages a man in his role as a godly leader.

A Woman Who is Always Learning

One of the principles I live by is that I have not arrived; I traverse along an endless frontier (as Eric Ludy would say). In every area of my life (e.g. godliness, masculinity, being a future husband and father, holiness, my intellect, practical skills, etc.), I want to learn, grow, become more proficient, and mature as the years go by. Similarly, I am blessed when I see a woman who isn't content with where she is at, but endeavors to continually press along the endless frontier God has set before her.

A Woman Who Suffers Well

I recently talked with a friend who called a girl's father to ask permission to pursue a relationship with her. When I asked what attribute attracted him to this young lady, my friend responded, "She handles suffering well." Over



the last several years, this young woman has had to deal with a lot of physical pain, and my friend has only seen her love for and dependence upon Christ increase. Never once has she complained or been anxious. It caused me to realize that I too would love to find a woman who can face trial, difficulty, and suffering with joy and a godly disposition.

A Woman Who Laughs

Though Eeyore is often a favorite character from the famous tales of Winnie the Pooh, his personality is less than desirable in a spouse. Rather than self-focused melancholy, I find it beautiful when a woman knows how to laugh, smile, and endure difficult moments with a joyful expectancy in the faithfulness of God.

A Woman Who Lives on Purpose

One desire I have for marriage is that my wife and I would be surrendered vessels for God to

spill His life, love, truth, and Gospel through to meet the needs of the world around us. Yet I've seen too many young ladies who have no purpose in life. They are content to sit idle and allow life to slip by, hoping for the day a man will sweep them off their feet and carry them off into the sunset — almost as if their existence doesn't begin until that moment. But singleness can be a tremendous opportunity to be used by God, to be industrious, creative, and poured out. Throughout Christian history, countless single women served the poor, taught children, shared the Gospel, became missionaries, or wrote letters to encourage others in ministry. As a single man, it is captivating to see a godly woman not concerned with a future marriage but living with purpose and being used as an instrument of the Gospel and God's love to the world around her.

A Woman Who Encourages

The role God has called me to in

life is not easy — it's paved with hardship, difficulty, trials, long days, and sleepless nights — it's a bold mission and not for the fainthearted. I've found that ministry and missions are often thankless jobs and there have been many days I wished I had a wife whom I could talk to, share my struggles and hardships with, and receive a word of encouragement from.

A Woman Who Gives Joyfully

I believe marriage is designed to be built upon a foundation of servanthood. Neither husband nor wife should live for themselves. They should seek to serve, minister, bless, and wash each other's feet, desiring to give instead of striving to get. It is beautiful to see a woman who joyfully serves instead of selfishly takes.

A Woman With a Heroine's Heart

Amy Carmichael, Catherine Booth, Gladys Aylward, and Corrie ten Boom all had one thing in common: a heroic and courageous willingness to stand for, fight for, and rescue the weak, the destitute, and needy of this world. They were willing to go into dark places and be light — putting their lives on the line when necessary to see the Kingdom of God come to earth. I pray my future wife has the desire to be built into such a woman of God.

A Woman Who Radiates Christ

I've talked with several young men throughout the years about godly femininity, and one conclusion we've come to is that godliness is attractive. A woman whose sole focus is Christ — who will love Jesus far more than she'll ever love me, who loves children and has a desire to be a godly wife and mother, who desires to serve and



be used by her King, and who uses clothing to point to Christ rather than her own body — is beautiful and attractive. Godly men are not attracted to females who live or think like the world, who use clothing to showcase their bodies, and who flaunt, flirt, and attempt to gain a guy's attention. Godly men are attracted to a woman who is ladylike, virtuous, humble, who dresses with modest purity, who lives according to God's Word and counter to the culture, and who reflects the radiance of Christ in her daily living.

A Proverbs 31 Woman

Proverbs 31 gives insight into other attributes a godly man desires in his future wife: virtuous, trustworthy, guarding of her tongue (doesn't gossip), full of wisdom, industrious, fearless, generous, lives with excellence, fears God, cares for the poor and needy, is honorable, joyful, diligent, and a woman of prayer — all of

these qualities are beautiful and desirable to a godly man.

You'll notice that physical appearance didn't make the list. While I'd love for my future spouse to be beautiful, I'm more interested in the consistency of her character and heart than an appearance that will fade and change with time.

In truth, it's a bit difficult in a short article to describe all I desire my future wife to be, but let me give you a suggestion for further reflection and study. I'm an avid Ludy admirer, and even as a guy, I have read nearly all of Leslie Ludy's books. When *Set Apart Femininity* came out, I quickly grabbed a copy and spent the next several days devouring its content. I was captivated by Leslie's description of a godly woman. As I finished the book, I closed its cover and whispered, "There she is ... I just read a description of what I want my

future wife to be." If you are looking for an expanded explanation of what a godly man wants in a woman, I highly encourage you to read Leslie Ludy's *Set Apart Femininity* and study Proverbs 31!

Please don't take this list, run off, and try to become all these things in your own strength — hoping to fashion yourself into a godly man's dream. A man of God is not interested in a self-produced woman but in a God-built lady. It is only as you build your life around Jesus Christ that He will grow and produce these characteristics in you. Trees don't strive and struggle to produce fruit; rather, fruit is the natural result of being a healthy tree. So too, these "fruits" will be brought forth and become evident in your life only as you abide and live surrendered to Jesus Christ. Pursue Him and trust that He will build these things within you. | 



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NEPHILIM: Mischievous Angels or Sethites?

By Chuck Missler

Great discussions have raged over the years about these strange beings that are first mentioned in Genesis chapter six. Giants, half-breeds, legends or simply a 'line' of Adam's descendants.

In this article, Chuck Missler, as always, tackles this topic drawing from the Biblical record to present a powerful, but challenging and thought provoking piece!

TEXTUAL CONTROVERSY:

Why did God send the judgment of the Flood in the days of Noah? Far more than simply a historical issue, the unique events leading to the Flood are a prerequisite to understanding the prophetic implications of our Lord's predictions regarding His Second Coming.¹

The strange events recorded in Genesis 6 were understood by the ancient rabbinical sources, as well as the Septuagint translators, as referring to fallen angels procreating weird hybrid offspring with human women-known as the "Nephilim." So it was also understood by the early church fathers. These bizarre events are also echoed in the legends and myths of every ancient culture upon the earth: the ancient Greeks, the Egyptians, the Hindus, the South Sea Islanders, the American Indians, and virtually all the others.

However, many students of the Bible have been taught that this passage in Genesis 6 actually

refers to a failure to keep the "faithful" lines of Seth *separate* from the "worldly" line of Cain. The idea has been advanced that after Cain killed Abel, the line of Seth remained separate and faithful, but the line of Cain turned ungodly and rebellious. The "Sons of God" are deemed to refer to leadership in the line of Seth; the "daughters of men" is deemed restricted to the line of Cain. The resulting marriages ostensibly blurred an inferred separation between them. (Why the resulting offspring are called the "*Nephilim*" remains without any clear explanation.)

Since Jesus prophesied, "As the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be,"² it becomes essential to understand what these days included.

ORIGIN OF THE SETHITE VIEW

It was in the 5th century a.d. that the "angel" interpretation of Genesis 6 was increasingly viewed as an embarrassment when attacked by critics. (Furthermore,

the worship of angels had begun within the church. Also, celibacy had also become an institution of the church. The "angel" view of Genesis 6 was feared as impacting these views.)

Celsus and Julian the Apostate used the traditional "angel" belief to attack Christianity. Julius Africanus resorted to the Sethite interpretation as a more comfortable ground. Cyril of Alexandria also repudiated the orthodox "angel" position with the "line of Seth" interpretation. Augustine also embraced the Sethite theory and thus it prevailed into the Middle Ages. It is still widely taught today among many churches who find the literal "angel" view a bit disturbing. There are many outstanding Bible teachers who still defend this view.

PROBLEMS WITH THE SETHITE VIEW

Beyond obscuring a full understanding of the events in the early chapters of Genesis, this

view also clouds any opportunity to apprehend the *prophetic* implications of the Scriptural allusions to the “Days of Noah.”³ Some of the many problems with the “Sethite View” include the following:

1. The Text Itself

Substantial liberties must be taken with the literal text to propose the “Sethite” view. (In data analysis, it is often said that “if you torture the data severely enough it will confess to anything.”)

The term translated “the Sons of God” is, in the Hebrew, *B'nai HaElohim*, “Sons of Elohim,” which is a term *consistently* used in the Old Testament for *angels*,⁴ and it is *never* used of believers in the Old Testament. It was so understood by the ancient rabbinical sources, by the Septuagint translators in the 3rd century before Christ, and by the early church fathers. Attempts to apply this term to “godly leadership” is without Scriptural foundation.⁵

The “Sons of Seth and daughters of Cain” interpretation strains and obscures the intended grammatical antithesis between the Sons of God and the *daughters of Adam*. Attempting to impute any other view to the text flies in the face of the earlier centuries of understanding of the Hebrew text among both rabbinical and early church scholarship. The lexicographical antithesis clearly intends to establish a contrast between the “angels” and the women of the Earth.

If the text was intended to contrast the “sons of Seth and the daughters of Cain,” why didn’t it say so? Seth was not God, and Cain was not Adam. (Why not the “sons of Cain” and the “daughters of Seth?” There is no basis for

restricting the text to either subset of Adam’s descendants. Further, there exists no mention of *daughters of Elohim*.)

And how does the “Sethite” interpretation contribute to the ostensible cause for the Flood, which is the primary thrust of the text? The entire view is contrived on a series of assumptions without Scriptural support.

The Biblical term “Sons of Elohim” (that is, of the Creator Himself), is confined to the direct creation by the divine hand and not to those born to those of their own order.⁶ In Luke’s genealogy of Jesus, only Adam is called a “son of God.”⁷ The entire Biblical drama deals with the tragedy that humankind is a fallen race, with Adam’s initial immortality forfeited. Christ uniquely gives them that receive Him the power to become the sons of God.⁸ Being born again of the Spirit of God, as an entirely new creation,⁹ at their resurrection they alone will be clothed with a building of God¹⁰ and in every respect equal to the angels.¹¹ The very term *‘oiketerion’*, alluding to the heavenly body with which the believer longs to be clothed, is the precise term used for the heavenly bodies from which the fallen angels had disrobed.¹² The attempt to apply the term “Sons of Elohim” in a broader sense has no textual basis and obscures the precision of its denotative usage. This proves to be an assumption which is antagonistic to the uniform Biblical usage of the term.

2. The Daughters of Cain

The “Daughters of Adam” also does not denote a restriction to the descendants of Cain, but rather the whole human race is clearly intended. These daughters were the daughters born to the men with which this very sentence opens:

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. Genesis 6:1,2

It is clear from the text that these daughters were not limited a particular family or subset, but were, indeed, from (all) the Benoth Adam, “the daughters of Adam.” There is no apparent exclusion of the daughters of Seth. Or were they so without charms in contrast with the daughters of Cain? All of Adam’s female descendants seem to have been involved. (And what about the “sons of Adam?” Where do they, using this contrived dichotomy, fit in?)

Furthermore, the line of Cain was not necessarily known for its ungodliness. From a study of the naming of Cain’s children, many of which included the name of God,¹³ it is not clear that they were all necessarily unfaithful.

3. The Inferred Lines of Separation

The concept of separate “lines” itself is suspect and contrary to Scripture.¹⁴ National and racial distinctions were plainly the result of the subsequent intervention of God in Genesis 11, five chapters later. There is no intimation that the lines of Seth and Cain kept themselves separate nor were even instructed to. The injunction to remain separate was given much later.¹⁵ Genesis 6:12 confirms that all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth.

4. The Inferred Godliness of Seth

There is no evidence, stated or implied, that the line of Seth was godly. Only one person was translated from the judgment to come (Enoch) and only eight were

given the protection of the ark. No one beyond Noah’s immediate family was accounted worthy to be saved. In fact, the text implies that these were distinct from all others. (There is no evidence that the wives of Noah’s sons were from the line of Seth.) Even so, Gaebelien observes, “The designation ‘Sons of God’ is never applied in the Old Testament to believers,” whose sonship is “distinctly a New Testament revelation.”¹⁶

The “Sons of Elohim” saw the daughters of men that they were fair and took them wives of all that they chose. It appears that the women had little say in the matter. The domineering implication hardly suggests a godly approach to the union. Even the mention that they saw that they were attractive seems out of place if only normal biology was involved. (And were the daughters of Seth so unattractive?)

It should also be pointed out that the son of Seth himself was Enosh, and there is textual evidence that, rather than a reputation for piety, he seems to have initiated the profaning of the name of God.¹⁷

If the lines of Seth were so faithful, why did they perish in the flood?

5. The Unnatural Offspring

The most fatal flaw in the specious “Sethite” view is the emergence of the Nephilim as a result of the unions. (Bending the translation to “giants” does not resolve the difficulties.) It is the offspring of these peculiar unions in Genesis 6:4 which seems to be cited as a primary cause for the Flood.

Procreation by parents of differing religious views do not produce unnatural offspring. Believers marrying unbelievers may produce “monsters,” but hardly superhuman, or unnatural, children!

It was this unnatural procreation and the resulting abnormal creatures that were designated as a principal reason for the judgment of the Flood.

The very absence of any such adulteration of the human genealogy in Noah’s case is also documented in Genesis 6:9: Noah’s family tree was distinctively unblemished. The term used, *tamiym*, is used for *physical* blemishes.¹⁸

Why were the offspring uniquely designated “mighty” and “men of renown?” This description characterizing the children is not accounted for if the fathers were merely men, even if godly.

A further difficulty seems to be that the offspring were only *men*; no “women of renown” are mentioned. (Was there a chromosome deficiency among the Sethites? Were there *only* “Y” chromosomes available in this line?)¹⁹

6. New Testament Confirmations

“In the mouths of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.”²⁰ In Biblical matters, it is essential to always compare Scripture with Scripture. The New Testament confirmations in Jude and 2 Peter are impossible to ignore.²¹

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 2 Peter 2:4-5

Peter’s comments even establishes the time of the fall of these angels to the days of the Flood of Noah.

Even Peter’s vocabulary is provocative. Peter uses the term Tartarus, here translated “hell.” This is the only place that this Greek term appears in the Bible. Tartarus is a Greek term for “dark abode of woe”; “the pit of darkness in the unseen world.” As used in Homer’s Iliad, it is “...as far beneath hades as the earth is below heaven.”²² In Greek mythology, some of the demigods, Chronos and the rebel Titans, were said to have rebelled against their father, Uranus, and after a prolonged contest they were defeated by Zeus and were condemned into Tartarus.

The Epistle of Jude²³ also alludes to the strange episodes when these “alien” creatures intruded themselves into the human reproductive process:

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Jude 6,7

The allusions to “going after strange flesh,” keeping “not their first estate,” having “left their own habitation,” and “giving themselves over to fornication,” seem to clearly fit the alien intrusions of Genesis 6. (The term for ‘habitation’ refers to their heavenly bodies from which they had disrobed.²⁴)

These allusions from the New Testament would seem to be fatal to the “Sethite” alternative in interpreting Genesis 6. If the intercourse between the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men” were merely marriage between

Sethites and Cainites, it seems impossible to explain these passages, and the reason why some fallen angels are imprisoned and others are free to roam the heavenlies.

7. Post-Flood Implications

The strange offspring also continued after the flood: "There were Nephilim on the earth in those days, and also after that..."²⁵ The "Sethite" view fails to meaningfully address the prevailing conditions "also after that." It offers no insight into the presence of the subsequent "giants" in the land of Canaan.

One of the disturbing aspects of the Old Testament record was God's instructions, upon entering the land of Canaan, to wipe out every man, woman, and child of certain tribes inhabiting the land. This is difficult to justify without the insight of a "gene pool problem" from the remaining Nephilim, Rephaim, et al., which seems to illuminate the difficulty.

8. Prophetic Implications

Another reason that an understanding of Genesis 6 is so essential is that it also is a prerequisite to understanding (and anticipating) Satan's devices²⁶ and, in particular, the specific delusions to come upon the whole earth as a major feature of end-time prophecy.²⁷

IN SUMMARY

If one takes an integrated view of the Scripture, then everything in it should "tie together." It is the author's view that the "Angel View," however disturbing, is the clear, direct presentation of the Biblical text, corroborated by multiple

New Testament references and was so understood by both early Jewish and Christian scholarship; the "Sethite View" is a contrivance of convenience from a network of unjustified assumptions antagonistic to the remainder of the Biblical record.

It should also be pointed out that most conservative Bible scholars accept the "angel" view.²⁸ Among those supporting the "angel" view are: G. H. Pember, M. R. DeHaan, C. H. McIntosh, F. Delitzsch, A. C. Gaebelien, A. W. Pink, Donald Grey Barnhouse, Henry Morris, Merrill F. Unger, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Hal Lindsey, and Chuck Smith, being among the best known.

For those who take the Bible seriously, the arguments supporting the "Angel View" appear compelling. For those who indulge in a willingness to take liberties with the straightforward presentation of the text, no defense can prove final. (And greater dangers than the implications attending these issues await them!) | 

1. Matthew 24:37.
2. Matthew 24:37.
3. Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:26, as well as Old Testament allusions such as Daniel 2:43, et al.
4. Cf. Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7 (where they are in existence before the creation of the earth). Jesus also implies the same term in Luke 20:36.
5. A footnote in an edition of the famed Scofield Bible, in suggesting that "sons of Elohim" does not always denote angelic beings, points to one ostensible exception (Isaiah 43:6) but the term in question is not there used! God simply refers to Israel as "my sons" and "my daughters." Indeed, all of Adam's race are termed God's "offspring" in Acts 17:28 (although Paul is here quoting a Greek poet).
6. The sons of Elohim are even contrasted with the sons of Adam in Psalm 82:1, 6 and warned that if they go on with the evil identified in verse 2, they would die like Adam (man). When our Lord quoted this

verse (John 10:34) He made no mention of what order of beings God addressed in this Psalm but that the Word of God was inviolate whether the beings in question were angels or men.

7. Luke 3:38.
8. John 1:11, 12.
9. 2 Corinthians 5:17.
10. 2 Corinthians 5:1-4.
11. Luke 20:36.
12. This term appears only twice in the Bible: 2 Corinthians 5:2 and Jude 1:6.
13. Genesis 4:18.
14. Genesis 11:6.
15. This instruction was given to the descendants of Isaac and Jacob. Even the presumed descendants of Ishmael cannot demonstrate their linkage since no separation was maintained.
16. A.C. Gaebelien, *The Annotated Bible* (Penteteuch), p. 29.
17. Gen 4:26 is widely regarded as a mistranslation: "Then began men to profane the name of the Lord." So agrees the venerated Targum of Onkelos; the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel; also the esteemed rabbinical sources such as Kimchi, Rashi, et al. Also, Jerome. Also, the famed Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah*, 1168 a.d.
18. Exodus 12:5, 29; Leviticus 1:3, 10; 3:1, 6; 4:3, 23; 5:15, 18, 25; 22:19, 21; 23:12; Numbers 6:14; et al. Over 60 references, usually referring to the freedom from physical blemishes of offerings.
19. Each human gamete has 23 pairs of chromosomes: the male has both "Y" (shorter) and "X" (longer) chromosomes; the female, only "X" chromosomes. The sex of a fertilized egg is determined by the sperm fertilizing the egg: "X+Y" for a male child; "X+X" for a female. Thus, the male supplies the sex-determining chromosome.
20. Deut. 19:15; Matthew 18:16; 26:60; 2 Corinthians 13:1; et al.
21. Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2:4-5.
22. Homer, *Iliad*, viii 16.
23. Jude is commonly recognized as one of the Lord's brothers. (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal 1:9; Jude 1:1)
24. The only other use in the New Testament is 2 Corinthians 5:2, alluding to the heavenly body which the believer longs to be clothed.
25. Genesis 6:4.
26. 2 Corinthians 2:11.
27. Luke 21:26; 2 Thess 2:9, 11; et al.
28. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Vol V, p.2835-2836.



■ Chuck Missler was an author, Bible teacher, engineer, and former businessman. He was also the founder of the Koinonia Institute. Chuck Missler sadly passed away in May 2018.



The Impossible Task

By Eric Ludy

I have three boys. And I have a vision to see each of them grow up to be mighty men of God. But I have a problem. I am insufficient for the task.

When my oldest son, Hudson, turned 12 I turned pale. When his voice started trolling those bass notes, I started trolling my soul's pockets to see if the stuff required was actually in there to train this boy in how to become something beyond the version of manhood in his generation — beyond the version in my generation. And for

that matter, beyond the version of the previous three generations. I didn't find it in my pockets. I found myself staring in the face of a haunting dilemma. And that was: my own fatherhood moxie was unable to meet the training demands before me. The task of fatherhood is too great for

an everyday man, the mountain too high, the stakes too great, the skill required too much, and the perfection demanded too impossible. But a father is built for problem solving. We are designed to fix things. We love to be given impossible challenges. Hand us

a Rubik's Cube, for instance, and a week later you'll see us emerge from our man cave with a satisfied smirk on our face — problem solved.

However, this boy-training conundrum was different than a Rubik's Cube. I couldn't seem to solve it in my own strength.

- How do I train my son to perfectly reveal the mighty manliness of Jesus Christ?
- How do I train my son to act, speak, and live as would Jesus Christ?
- How do I train my son to suffer joyfully as Jesus suffered?
- How do I train my son to receive revilement and false accusation as Jesus received it?
- How do I train my son to endure pain with a song and to die heroically with love and forgiveness as Jesus did?

My vision for manhood is grand. But it is simply the grand vision that flows out of our Heavenly Father's burdened heart.

So, as I've held this fatherly Rubik's Cube in hand and stared at it over the past years of life, glancing from this impossible puzzle to my sons and then back again at the impossible puzzle, I've had many chin-scratching moments. Though sweaty palms have been my close friend throughout this process, I have indeed stumbled across the solution. I've solved the puzzle. And, as strange as this might seem, the solution was discovered in recognizing my powerlessness to solve it.

A FATHER'S POWER TO GET-'ER-DONE

Fatherhood is an athletic event of the most epic nature. Let's

MY VISION FOR MANHOOD IS GRAND. BUT IT IS SIMPLY THE GRAND VISION THAT FLOWS OUT OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER'S BURDENED HEART.

call it the Epic Fatherhood Challenge (EFC for short). This EFC demands extreme core strength, surprising agility, and super-human endurance. The EFC calls for a man to not just live with power, perfection, and painstaking principle, but to lay down his life day-in and day-out so that others may find life, even if it be at his expense.

In other words, if you want to succeed in this particular athletic event, you must be something pretty special.

Let's be honest, none of us can truly measure up to this challenge and pass this test.

Many of us as men attempt to lower the bar to a level we can all achieve. We try and make the EFC a thing we can do. But the secret to epic fatherhood is not found inside of us as fathers. It's found outside of us. The secret to epic fatherhood is a thing that Jesus does.

Notice that I didn't say that epic fatherhood is a thing Jesus did. It IS something Jesus did, but it also something that Jesus does.

When Jesus arrived on this earth roughly 2,000 years ago, He came to do the Father's work. (See John 5:36.) He came to reveal epic fatherhood. (See John 14:9.) He was about His Father's business. (See Luke 2:49.) He did what the perfect Father would do if He were living inside a human body.

The Fatherhood Bar is a bar that

cannot and should not be lowered because of our insufficiency. It is a sacred standard, though it be an impossible one. But, though it be impossible for a man to pull off, it is NOT impossible for God to pull off. (See Matthew 19:26.)

Jesus was the perfect reflection of the Perfect Father. He was and still is.

He is the One sent to save. He did save us and still does save us, even now. (See Hebrews 7:25.)

Jesus inside us. This is the secret to epic fatherhood.

Jesus empowering us as fathers to actually do it. This is what causes an ordinary father to win the gold medal in the EFC.

If we grit our fatherly teeth and attempt, in our own human strength, to imitate the perfect Fatherhood of God, we are setting the stage for epic failure and not epic fatherhood.

But if we humble ourselves, acknowledge our need, and invite Him to come in — take the helm and live His extraordinary Life in and through us — then it is no longer us attempting to imitate Him. It's Him imitating Himself inside us. And He is very good at being God.

When Hudson turned 12 (and I turned pale), I also turned something else. I turned the EFC Rubik's Cube over to God.

"God, I know You didn't give me this



grand vision only to leave it up to me to perform. Lord, I entrust this fathering task to You, and I ask that You help me do this thing." Eric Ludy is an every-day-salt-of-the-earth sort of father. And this statement is not some form of false modesty. There is really nothing extra-special about the particular type of clay I'm made of. It's still just clay.

But in entrusting my manhood, my marriage, and my fathering to God, something very special has taken place inside this clay. I have power to do this impossible stuff, but it's not my own power. This power is not native to me; it's from outside of me.

Nathan Johnson, my right-hand man here at Ellerslie and a wonderful Bible teacher, loves to refer to himself as a cracked pot. And then he looks at his audience,

and says, "And don't laugh. You are one, too."

I love that expression! We, as Christians, are cracked pots. (See Psalm 31:12.) At first it sounds like a tragedy because in ancient Israel a cracked pot was a very bad thing. But, in the Kingdom of Heaven, a cracked pot is a surprisingly wonderful thing.

So, what's a cracked pot? It's clay that has humbled itself; acknowledged that in and of itself it can't carry out the task. It is clay surrendered to God saying, "I'm cracked, but I want to be a vessel for Your Kingly service." God loves to use cracked pots. Why? Because they are the ideal locations into which His wisdom, truth, love, and joy can be poured. And whereas a crack in a pot would typically be deemed a great disadvantage to the purpose of a

pot, God leverages this crack with redemptive brilliance. For the fact that you and I are cracked means that whatever He pours into us seeps out . . . everywhere.

A cracked clay pot. That is what I want this fatherhood blog to be. That is what my Honorable Manhood training is. It's simply this cracked clay pot, known as Eric Ludy, leaking out that which God has and is pouring into me.

I have a grand vision for what my boys can be. I have a grand vision for what your boys can be. God has poured this epic inspiration into me. And, if you are interested, I'd love to let it drain out onto your life in order to inspire you.

The essence of true masculinity is currently hanging in the balance. Let's fight this battle together! My sword is drawn! | 

■ Eric Ludy - pastor, author and the president of Ellerslie Mission Society. www.Ericludy.com



TIME TO WAKE UP!

By Dave Firth

Josh Coombridge - 'The Voice of Rural New Zealand' - speaks to us about his walk with the Lord, and his passions for Chainsaws, Rugby and Hunting!



When I first met Josh Coombridge at a Promise Keepers event in Wellington, I had no idea who he was. I wandered over to chat to Tom who was manning the Rhema Sausage Sizzle and he introduced me to Josh. I said hello and Josh replied, "Do you listen to the show?" to which I replied, "What show?". Probably not the best start to our relationship but it didn't get in the way of a great conversation...

So, how and why did you first get into radio?

I was acting in 'My Fair Lady' and the CEO of Rhema at the time invited me to do some volunteer work for Life FM. I decided then that if I could work in radio for free then I could definitely do it for a career! Plus I like talking....

But why Christian Radio?

I get to have my dream job and have it be a ministry and impact lives for good through the songs

and chats. That is pretty special. I feel very privileged.

Has working in a Christian environment helped your relationship with God?

Yes. Because we are "Christian" rather than a particular denomination, I get to hang out with Baptists, Pentecostals, Methodists - the whole mix! That helps you a lot, I think, being around people who don't think exactly as you do, but still have the faith in common.

What is the best thing about working on the radio?

Singing silly songs. I love singing, but I'm not that great at it. I know people laugh at me - I laugh at myself! It's a pretty special job when you can sing, 'I've had the time of my life' from Dirty Dancing and then 10 minutes later be singing a worship song that's in the playlist. It's what I think heaven will be like!

It was just you and Bjorn on the breakfast show for a while so is it weird having a girl around now?

No, I'm very used to being surrounded by women....Only joking. Yeah it is a bit strange, especially when you spend so much time with that person. Leanna is awesome though and we get along really well.

You're a bit of a goofball on air and off, but is there a serious side to you?

Honestly being serious is one thing that I really struggle with. I find that humour is a great way to break the power of heavy topics to bring you down. Sometimes I need to realise that some situations are inappropriate for jokes, and listen to my friends or wife, or whoever is trying to confide in me. Being in broadcasting has definitely helped with this - as it becomes important to know when to treat a topic with sensitivity.

Does your wife think you're funny?

Yes, but she knows she is the funnier one out of the two of us.

Influencing young people across NZ is a huge responsibility. What makes you think you are up to it?

Honestly, I believe that in my own strength I couldn't do it. But I do feel that God has called me to it, and in the tougher times, like having to pray for someone on air, or report on a tragedy like the Christchurch shootings, I believe the Holy Spirit gives me the confidence to do what is needed.



SOMETIMES I NEED TO REALISE THAT SOME SITUATIONS ARE INAPPROPRIATE FOR JOKES, AND LISTEN TO MY FRIENDS OR WIFE, OR WHOEVER IS TRYING TO CONFIDE IN ME.

You're kind of a leader in the Christian youth sphere, so how do you ensure you are walking well with the Lord?

I married the pastor's daughter so I know if I screw up I'm in big trouble - ha ha. Working in a Christian workplace gives you great perspectives from people from many different denominations. Also, surprisingly, playing rugby and surrounding myself with people who aren't believers has really helped solidify my faith, as I have to be able to answer questions that you don't expect and that sort of thing.

I met Bjorn last year at PK but didn't even think about interviewing him. Why do you think you have the X-factor but he doesn't? (sorry Bjorn!)

Man, I'd love to tell you all about that, ha ha. But sarcasm doesn't convey too well in print does it?

Seriously BJ has more X-factor than anyone else I know. He can create a story out of nothing and have you in stitches! He has taught me a lot. I really love his 3 stories!

Are you and Bjorn really mates or is it all an act for ratings?

I hear about radio hosts who don't get along and I don't know how they do it. I really am a bad liar, so it couldn't work any other way with me. We're great mates, and we were friends first, co-hosts second, which I think helps!

A few months ago you met Brian Head-Welch (ex lead singer for satanic band Korn). Is he really a nice guy or were you a bit scared?

Nah, I wasn't scared. He was super friendly! I mean, yeah, face tattoos are a bit scary at first but once he started smiling I knew I was in safe hands.

What kind of music do you like and listen to? (please Lord, let it be Britney Spears or Justice Beaver)

My favourite Christian singer would be David Crowder - he has a great beard!

And my favourite secular singer would be Robbie Williams. I can sing all the words to 'Angels' (the rugby team loves it).

Ah yes, I heard you were a bit of a rugby nut. What do you think the All Blacks chances are for the World Cup?

I wouldn't say I'm a nut... I am a 3rd string front row for the Silverdale under 85 kilo grade so I'm no expert. But yeah, the ABs are best in the world! We will win.

Are you available if they call you up?

Happy to serve my country in that capacity!



WORKING IN A CHRISTIAN WORKPLACE GIVES YOU GREAT PERSPECTIVES FROM PEOPLE FROM MANY DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS.

my faith and keeps my head in the game. If you need a passage to start off with, try Romans 12 verse 9 onwards. It's my favourite.

I don't want to get you in trouble, but if there was one job that would attract you to leave your current job, what would it be?

I love the outdoors and recently my dad lent me his chainsaw. Chainsawing is one of the most satisfying things in the world. As the voice of rural New Zealand, I'd have to be an arborist - in the forest chopping trees! Maybe we could have an Authentic magazine photoshoot out there?

Erm...maybe 'smiles awkwardly'

Have you got to travel much or do they not let you out of the country?

They do let me out on occasion! I have to say, if my wife didn't force me to leave NZ I would honestly never leave. I love New Zealand and I think we have the very best of everything. However, we did do a bit of an OE with 3 weeks in Vietnam and Cambodia. It was amazing! I'm a bit of a hungus (love food) and the food in that part of the world is AMAZING and also

very cheap - like \$3 for a main! So good!

If you could hang out with anyone on a desert island for a week, who would you pick?

My Dad. We'd just go fishing and talk about...fishing. It would be amazing!

As this is a men's magazine, are there any men that have greatly influenced you and your faith?

Yeah, there are a few actually! My Dad taught me to always make time to talk to people no matter who they are. My father-in-law has shown me the value of being truly generous with both gifts and time. My boss, Luke, is super approachable and has taught me not to take things too seriously in life. And I've got some great older, Christian mates from Raetihi, who I don't see heaps, but ring up if I ever need any advice - they tell it like it is!

So, who has had the biggest impact on your personal relationship with Jesus?

Richard.

Richard is my friend who went to America to be an actor. He kind of found God again while there though and when he came back to see us and his family, he pulled me out of my darkest hour and got me back on track. Without him I wouldn't be on the radio, or in this magazine! Thanks Rich!

And finally, do you have a favourite Christian Men's Magazine?

You're reading it!

Nice.

Please pray for Josh, Bjorn and Leanna as they speak into the lives of tens of thousands of Kiwi Christians each morning! | 



WALKING WITH JESUS

By Stephen Whitwell

Matthew 4:19 Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." NKJV.

Walking with Jesus is all that really matters in life. If nothing else, we need to know how to walk with Jesus today and forever.

Whatever we do in life; whatever our work, ministry, career, position, whatever club we're in, wherever we go, whoever we live with, we need to know how to walk with Jesus – that's what life, the Christian life, is all about.

- Enoch was known as a man who walked with God Genesis 5:24. NKJV.
- Noah was known as a man who walked with God Genesis 6:9. NKJV.

THE THREE CALLS OF JESUS

i. Come unto Me.

Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28. NKJV.

ii. Follow Me.

Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19. NKJV.

iii. Go, and Make Disciples.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations. Matthew 28:18-19. NKJV. Go into all the world and preach the gospel. Mark 16:15-17. NKJV.

Seven times Jesus says **Follow Me**, while only two times do we read **Go**, in **Matthew** and **Mark**. Going is important. Going with the Good News is crucial! However, what is more important? It could be said that *following* is most important.

You can never go with authority until you have first followed in discipleship. – Stephen Whitwell.

How true that is. And we all need to be reminded of this.

1. "Follow Me."

It's Jesus we are following! Our saviour, redeemer, our justifier, forgiver, the lover of our soul, He who created the world, and holds it together with His word, the incarnate One, born to die, yet died that we might live!

The Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the bright morning Star, Messiah, the Living One, Jehovah! This is the One we follow, and worship, and serve, and speak about!

We don't follow some faith, some doctrine, some theology, we follow the living Jesus. (Although all of these are important parts of our Christian walk). We follow Him because after all He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! (John 14:6).

2. "I will".

God is God of the I will. He is not God of the I want to, I think I can, I should, I could, I must, I might. I will, means I will! He is God of the "I will". A promise from God is dependable! A promise from God always has an "I will" in it somewhere!

- *Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you. Psalm 50:15. NKJV.*
- *Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10. NKJV.*
- *For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.' Isaiah 41:13. NKJV.*
- *Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know. Jeremiah 33:3. NKJV.*

- *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. John 16:7. NKJV.*

God's promises stand; forever. God's promises are dependable. God's promises can be trusted. When God says I will ... we do well to say the same! I will trust You. I will wait, I will believe, I will stay, I will go. Whatever He is calling us to do, when He says I will ... (and then His promise), we can also agree with that and say I will do it, I will obey.

3. "Make you".

When we walk with Him, He makes us into something. In the process of obediently following Him, walking through life with Him, change happens.

He is the master potter, with loving, steady, skilled hands. He and only He has the power to change us from the sin stained nature we were born into and live out of, into a righteous God glorifying Christ-like character. He can do it.

He sees something in us, a God inspired potential, a blueprint for life, a destiny, a LIFE! He sees what we are and what we can become, under His program!

Something will happen when we follow Jesus - *We will be changed.*

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being TRANSFORMED into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18. NKJV. Transformed – NKJV. Changed – RSV.

Transformed/Changed: - Greek 3339. *metamorphoo*, *met-am-or-fo-o*; from Grk 3326 and

WE DIE TO THE OLD NATURE, PUT TO DEATH OLD HABITS,
AND GET RESURRECTED IN NEW LIFE. ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT
GIVES US THE ABILITY TO DIE TO OUR-SELF.



Grk3445; to transform (lit. or fig. "metamorphose");-change, transfigure, transform.

Metamorphosis: - Word used by scientists to describe the change of a caterpillar to a butterfly. This change process takes time and energy. It is a complete change. It literally changes from one being, into another. It changes from one characteristic into another. Christians are going through a Metamorphosis. Changing from a sinful lower nature into a Christ-like higher nature. A complete change. We are changing from one being, into another. From one characteristic into another. Some of us just need a miracle, the God factor to step in.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8. NKJV.

Power: - Greek1411. *dunamis*, (doo'-nam-is); from Grk1410; force (lit. or fig.); spec.

miraculous power, ability.

There's two similar words that are related to the word *dunamis*; **Dynamo:** - which means electric power. But you have to keep pedalling, you need a constant input of another form of energy.

Dynamite: - which means explosive power. There's a big bang, and it's spectacular, but it leaves a big mess. Growing up on a farm, from time to time I would be out with my father. There was occasionally a big **bang!** It echoed around the whole valley where we lived. What was it? My father explained it was the neighbours, two farms down the road, blowing tree stumps or post holes with explosives! Yes gelignite. **Dunamis:** - which means miraculous power. It's just a miracle! Supernatural. There is no need of input from an outside source of energy, and there's no mess to clean up afterwards. **Witnesses:** - Greek3144. *martus*, (mar'-toos); a witness, a martyr, record.

Get filled and Baptised in the Holy Spirit and you will have the power, to die! Christ's life He now has, came by way of crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. Our life comes the same way. We die to the old nature, put to death old habits, and get resurrected in new life. Only the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to die to our-self.

Some of us just need a miracle, the God factor to step in. Walk with Jesus and He will give you power to live, power to be who you're meant to be, and do what you're meant to do.

"You shall BE" Being always comes before doing.

God wants the worker before the work, the musician before the music, even the worshipper before the worship, the Pastor before the Pastoring, the Leader before the leading.

Walk with Jesus and He will give you that morph power to live, power to be who you're meant to be, power to change and do what you're meant to do, and power to change and be involved in Mission.

4. "Fishers of men".

God is concerned about the souls of men and women.

I believe, we find fulfilment in life when we find our place in connection to the work of Evangelisation. Not necessarily Evangelism. Not all are gifted evangelists. We can and should be able to tell our story of faith; that is something we can all do, no matter what our gifts and calling are, and God has anointed us a grace to do just that.

Evangelisation and evangelism are different. As we'll see in a moment.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen. Matt 28:19-20. NKJV.

Think about this; it takes dozens of ground crew to keep one plane in the air. The guy who services the compressor that blows up the plane's tyres, is not just servicing some dirty old greasy compressor, he is *keeping a plane in the air*. The guy who orders a nut that goes in the engine, is not just ordering some insignificant little nut, he is *keeping a plane in the air*. The pilot who flies that plane is also *keeping a plane in the air*.

Evangelism: - Is the pilot actually flying the plane, it's front-line stuff. It is the preaching of the Gospel, it is front line ministry, engaging with those who do not yet believe.

Evangelisation: - Is the bigger picture, keeping the pilot equipped, resourced, it is keeping the plane in the air. This is resourcing the evangelists, keeping all they need available, so that they can do their evangelism job. Both evangelism and evangelisation are crucial to the spread of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

- Without evangelisation (supporting, resourcing, releasing) the work of evangelism becomes ineffective and cannot proceed.
- Without evangelism, the work of evangelisation is of no use. Resources are wasted, and needy people do not hear the Good News.

It's true; the Gospel is free (evangelism, presenting the Gospel), but its transportation (evangelisation, supporting, helping resourcing) costs money. We can make a difference! Someone did for us!

To illustrate this, for many years Wendy (my wife) and I helped support a couple in Chile. Just a little finance each month. They travelled hundreds of kilometres, training pastors and leaders, bringing a new dimension of the Holy Spirit and encouragement and life.

One little bit of money therefore touched hundreds of Chileans every week with the Gospel. Our missionary friends taught the pastors, who, in turn in their local language preached, evangelised and spread the Gospel. We weren't the evangelists on the front line, but the work continued and prospered because of our and others' support in the vision of evangelisation of Chile.

So, it is important to know what we are called and gifted to do. Either front line evangelism, or behind the scenes evangelisation.

Which are you? Where is your niche? What are you passionate about?

Jesus said He will make us fishers of men.

Questions:

- Are we following Jesus?
- Are we trusting His promises, His I will's?
- Are we allowing Him to change us from the inside out?

- Are we using what we have, our new changed nature, our gifts, and skills in the work of extending the Kingdom, Evangelisation?

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Matthew 4:23. NKJV.

Jesus never preached a Gospel of Salvation. He preached and taught the Gospel of the Kingdom; which includes Salvation. The message that reformed Western cultures and built nations on solidly Christian values, was not the Gospel of Salvation, but the Gospel of the Kingdom – including Salvation!

Salvation is just the start! The entry point! The beginning. But wait, there's more! Don't settle for just a birth; babies don't stay babies!

Kingdom living transforms our living, which (should) transform those around us. The best way to transform society? Live the Kingdom way, live a transformed life, being salt and light, making society a better place. Be involved in either evangelism or evangelisation.

When we live in Connection with Jesus and others, then we Grow, in influence to Reach others with the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. |

Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19. NKJV.



■ Stephen Whitwell has been a pastor for 33 years. He writes a monthly e-letter, Brief Word, which circulates worldwide. He has a passion for helping people discover who they are, and for writing and speaking about life! He can be contacted at www.goodwords.nz.



5 Attacks on the Souls of Men

By Kris Dolberry

On December 8, 1941, a joint session of Congress convened in Washington D.C. The President of the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, stood before them and declared that the United States of America had been ‘suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.’

Seventy-six years later military tacticians say that event he’s referring to was the greatest example of the power of the element of surprise in the history of military combat. It was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. With little to no warning, at around 8 a.m., 353 Japanese aircraft along with their naval forces launched an attack that lasted only 110 minutes yet killed nearly 2,500 Americans and wounded over 1,100 more.

MANHOOD UNDER ATTACK Christianity is not a playground. It is a battleground. The Bible is explicitly clear that we have an enemy that is out to destroy us and take from us everything we hold dear. If we are not prepared for his attacks, men, the result will be a massacre!

In talking to pastors and leaders of men’s ministry all over the country, here are what I believe to be five

of the primary attacks on the souls of men:

1. PRIDE

Pride is one of the primary ways the enemy takes down a man because it is the sin that is below every sin. In Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis said, “Unchastity, anger, drunkenness, are merely fleabites in comparison... Pride leads to every other vice.” Pride is when you are focused on “me” in the center

AUTHENTIC | MEN & FAMILY

of your life. When you think about you and your pleasure and your happiness more than anything else.

Pride pushes other people around you away. It diminishes your capacity to love them. When you are full of you, there is no room for anyone else. So, the result is that everyone around you feels devalued.

2. IDENTITY

This plays out in many ways in the lives of men. I grew up in Alabama. In that state, college football is crazy. I’ll be honest, it borders on idolatry in my own heart. I have seen many a man feel superior or worthless simply because of how their college football team of choice performs on any given Saturday. I bet you know someone who feels like less of a man because his buddy kills a bigger deer, lifts more weight, makes more money or has a more successful career.

The Bible is very clear that Christian men are to seat their identity completely in their sonship to God. However, if the enemy can convince us to find our identity in something other than this, we will be in a constant cycle of frustration and insecurity. Think about it, if you look into the eyes of others to find your sense of identity, what happens when someone disagrees with you or doesn’t approve of an action? You feel inadequate and insecure.

But, when we fully recognize that our primary identity is as a son of the King, we recognize that through Christ we are already fully approved of and have no need to look to anyone else for it.

3. PASSIVITY

Passivity is an abdication of your responsibility as a man to work to enable others to flourish and usher God’s Kingdom into your home, church and community. This was the sin of the garden. Sure, Eve was first to eat the fruit. But having been tasked to lead his wife spiritually, Adam stood passively by and let the enemy pick her off. Now this sin beats in the heart of every man. God gave me the grace a few years ago to realize that for most of my marriage, though I was physically present, I was often not emotionally available for my wife. Pursue her heart, men! Lead her in the Word. When is the last time you said to your wife, “Let’s just pause and pray about this”? If you can’t recall a date, that’s a good indication that you’re being passive.

We often do the same thing with our kids. Are you more concerned with your hobbies than with training your children to run hard after the heart of Jesus? Be aware men, if you are passive, the enemy will devour your wife, your kids and the people you love the most.

4. ISOLATION

1 Peter 5 calls the enemy a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Which animal does a lion pick off? Not the weakest. The one that is most isolated. Isolation is the reality for everyone in whom the enemy has sunk his teeth deeply into. Think about David. When he was at his best, he was connected to his friend Jonathan or his mighty men. But, the moment when David fell the hardest was a moment when he was isolated. The moral of the story: If you want to fall

into sin, a surefire way is to isolate yourself. You are not strong enough to endure by yourself and neither am I. We were not designed to operate that way. We were created out of community (the Trinity) and for community! Men, we must have a band of brothers with whom we are willing to be courageously vulnerable.

5. LUST

Every man on the planet, regardless of socioeconomic class, social status or fitness level, struggles with this issue. Barna Research tells us that 64 percent of men look at porn at least once per month. This is a devastating reality. Biopsychologists tell us that upon sexual arousal, synapses fire in the brain communicating to the body to release chemicals that create feelings of closeness and intimacy. It’s easy to see God’s handiwork in this science. He has designed sex to bond spouses together in a very special way. But, sexual gratification of any kind outside of the marriage relationship will actually short circuit that reality that God has designed. This is why Paul says to the Corinthians, “Flee sexual immorality.” In other words, don’t treat it casually. Run away as hard and fast as you possibly can!

After the Pearl Harbor attack, Japanese Admiral Yamamoto said, “I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve.” I hope that this article does that for you. D.L. Moody said, “The world has yet to see what God will do with one man fully consecrated to him. By God’s grace, I will be that man.” Will you?

▶

■ Kris Dolberry is a pastor, Bible teacher, writer, and trainer of leaders. Having served in pastoral leadership for 18 years, Kris now leads Ministry to Men at LifeWay Christian Resources. He also serves as Executive Editor of Stand Firm: A Devotional for Men.



'All One in Christ Jesus' – the Keswick Story

By Dave Firth

Marty Richards is a busy man!

As well as being a full-time farmer, husband to Jules and father to 8 kids, he teaches Sunday school and Bible in Schools, is involved with YWAM in Matamata and also is the Chairman for the Keswick Summer Convention held every year in Rotorua.

Keswick is an amazing ministry built on a wonderful message with its history and origins in the UK. I caught up with Marty to find out more.

IN THE BEGINNING...

It all began in 1875 with a 'convention', held by Canon Thomas Harford-Battersby, and his friend Robert Wilson on the vicarage lawn of St. John's Church in Keswick, in England's Lake District. Over three hundred people attended, and within a few years, Christians from all over the world were making an annual pilgrimage to the little Lake District town, to

hear the best Bible teachers that were available.

After attending a conference in Oxford, Harford-Battersby commented: 'Christ was revealed to me so powerfully and sweetly as the present Saviour in his all sufficiency.' And later he added 'I found he was all I wanted: I shall never forget it... How it humbled me and what peace it brought.'

It was to share this teaching more widely that the Convention was founded.

Since then, for almost 150 years, the 'Keswick Convention' has brought Christians together from across denominations under the banner: 'All one in Christ Jesus' (Gal 3:28).

Many have seen their lives transformed as they sat under God's Word, and they have gone

out to love and live for Christ across the UK and the world.

The event has developed over the years and is known for many things – a commitment to mission, seeing Christians from different denominations working together, a continued emphasis on the exposition of scripture that is applied to people's lives, year round teaching and training opportunities and many Keswick Fellowship events around the country and indeed the world.

The early Conventions met with a number of setbacks, in particular criticism from those who were suspicious of the teaching on the higher life, but numbers attending grew steadily and many mini-Keswick conventions were held elsewhere (the language of 'higher life' was later abandoned). A second week of convention was started at Keswick in 1969. A third week began in 2001, which reflects the considerable success of week 2 in attracting families and younger people. The total number of individuals attending Keswick, over the three weeks, has reached 12,000.

The Convention has long been noted for its involvement with mission. Chairmen of the Keswick Council, many missionary societies and indeed colleges owe their roots to the Keswick Convention. Missionary meetings started in 1888, and both Hudson Taylor of China and Amy Carmichael have strong connections with Keswick's commitment to mission.

The benefits of the Keswick Convention are not limited to

the town of Keswick itself. Today, there are many annual meetings, some of them very large indeed, that either still use the 'Keswick' label or owe their existence to the Convention, not only in the UK but also around the world, including in Japan, Australia, Jamaica, North America, India and here in New Zealand.

NEW ZEALAND

The ministry in New Zealand began in Rotorua in 1927 and in 1962 Keswick moved to its current site at Holdens Bay. In the early days there were no facilities to speak of. Families who attended Summer Camp (then called Convention) roughed it in tents, and cooked communal meals outdoors.

Over the years, through much voluntary labour and the donation of materials and money, the facilities gradually developed.

Marty's grandfather, Keith Hunt, was instrumental in the development of the site and the ministry. He was a carpenter and loved using his skills to serve the Lord.

In the late 90's hospitality consultant and businessman, Terry Hammond joined the team as CEO, bringing a wealth of ability and experience to help the ministry grow.

These days, Keswick Christian Camp employs 6 full time staff and operates as a highly successful camp and convention centre all year round, catering to schools, churches and special interest groups.



Recently the trust has been able to buy some adjacent land to develop the site further with modern accommodation and other facilities to support the camp and its mission.

Summer Convention was the rationale for Keswick Christian Camp coming into existence and continues to be where Keswick's heart is. This year Charles Price and Reuben Munn are the main Bible teachers. | A

You can find more information on Keswick Christian Camp at the main website – keswick.org.nz

Or for details about the Summer Convention go to – keswicksummerconvention.co.nz



■ Dave Firth is a husband, father, bible teacher and communicator. He loves the Lord and has a passion for His Word. For more info visit www.davefirth.org



A Human Vehicle of the Divine Life

By Major W Ian Thomas

“Faithful is he that calls you, who also will do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

The One who calls you to a life of righteousness is the One who by our consent lives that life of righteousness through you! The One who calls you to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, is the One who by your consent, goes into all the world and preaches the Gospel to every creature through you!

This is the divine genius that saves a man from the futility of self-effort. It relieves the Christian of the burden of trying to pull himself up by his own bootstraps! If it were not for this divine provision, the call to Christ would be a source of utter frustration, presenting the sorry spectacle of a sincere idealist, constantly thwarted by his own inadequacy.

If you will but trust Christ, not only for the death He died in order to redeem you, but also for the life that He lives and waits to live through you, the very next step you take will be a step taken in the very energy and power of God Himself. You will have begun to live a life which is essentially supernatural, yet still clothed with the common humanity of your physical body, and still worked out both in the big and the little things that inevitably make up the lot of a man who, though his heart may



be with Christ in heaven, still has his two feet firmly planted on the earth.

You will have become totally dependent upon the life of Christ within you, and never before will you have been so independent, so emancipated from the pressure of your circumstances, so released at last from that self-distrust which has made you at one moment an arrogant, loud-mouth braggart, and the next moment the victim of your own self-pity and, either way, always in bondage to the fear of other men's opinions.

You will be free from the tyranny of a defeated enemy within. You will be more than conqueror, for even death itself is conquered by His life. Christ through death destroyed “him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Hebrews 2:14). This indeed is victory!

You will be restored to your true humanity to be the human vehicle of the divine life. |A

Excerpt From: *The Saving Life of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. ©1961.



■ Major W Ian Thomas is the founder of Torchbearers International (Capernwray Bible Schools), the author of several books on the exchanged life and was a prolific speaker and itinerant Bible teacher. He went to be with the Lord in 2007. For more information about Torchbearers visit www.torchbearers.org

Christian Dad Jokes!

We all love a good dad joke - however these are not good dad jokes. They are pretty terrible. But we hope you enjoy using them (because we know you will!)

Q. What do they call pastors in Germany ?

A. German Shepherds.

Q. Who was the greatest investor in the Bible?

A. Noah: He was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A. Samson. He brought the house down.

Q: Why do they say ‘Amen’ at the end of a prayer instead of ‘Awomen’?

A: The same reason they sing Hymns instead of Hers!

Q. How does Moses make his coffee?

A. Hebrews it.

Q. How do we know Peter was a rich fisherman?

A. By his net income.

Q. Who was the fastest runner in the Bible?

A. Adam, because he was first in the human race.

Q. Which Bible Character is a locksmith?

A. Zaccheus.

Q: What do you call an Amish guy with his hand in a horse's mouth?

A: A mechanic.

Q. When is medicine first mentioned in the Bible?

A. When God gave Moses two tablets.

Q. How do we know Moses wore a wig?

A. Because sometimes he was with Aaron and sometimes he wasn't.

Q. What's a dentist's favorite hymn?

A. Crown him with many crowns.

Q. Which biblical character swore on his birthday?

A. Job, because he cursed the day he was born.

Q. How do groups of angels greet each other?

A. Halo, Halo, Halo!

MOVIE REVIEWS



MOSLEY

Some world-class creativity is taking place right under our very noses!

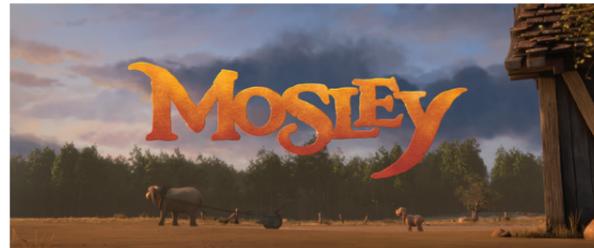
From Thursday 10th of October, New Zealanders will have the opportunity to marvel at the latest creation to come fresh from Huhu Animation Studios when it is screened at cinemas throughout New Zealand.

Executive producer, Trevor Yaxley has worked tirelessly to form a first-ever New Zealand / China animated co-production that is sure to be a real treat for ages 8 to 80+ who will be given a chance to see why heavyweights from around the world have been so excited to work on the 3D animated feature film "Mosley".

"Mosley" is an adventure centred around an intelligent but unfortunate four-legged 'Thoriphant' who is living a life of servitude on an isolated farm with a harsh master. In an attempt to seek answers and also for his family to live in freedom, Mosley must embark on an epic journey filled with peril, mystery and surprising twists.

It is a beautifully crafted tale of victory through realising the potential within us, discovering who we are meant to be and standing up for what we believe in. And of course, with the likes of Rhys Darby voicing the character 'Deaver', you can bet that there will be some good ol' Kiwi humour in the mix. Other voice talents in the film are none other than Temuera Morrison, Lucy Lawless and John Rhys-Davies.

The calibre of creatives working on this film is truly extraordinary – including its writer and director Kirby Atkins (Weta Digital animator contributing to "The BFG", "The Smurfs", "Alvin and the Chipmunks" and "VeggieTales"), editor Kathy Toon (having worked on "Finding Dory", "Toy Story 4", "Rio", "Horton Hears a Who" and Academy Award nominated short film "Borrowed Time"), executive producer Tony Bancroft (director of Disney's "Mulan" and an animator on "Mary Poppins Returns", "The Lion King", "Aladdin" and "Beauty and the Beast"), and animation director



Manuel Aparicio (Dreamworks and Disney animator known for his work on "Moana", "Kung Fu Panda", "Shrek", "Madagascar" and "Zootopia").

This multi-million-dollar film had the local Huhu Studios booming with close to 100 people at the height of its production. Kirby Atkin's 15-year labour of love is finally coming to completion and everyone involved can be proud of the effort and hours that have gone into seeing this dream come to life.

Local artist Markus Kristensen, the "Mosley" production designer and cinematographer, says "This has been the biggest, most complicated and most creatively satisfying project to work on. We've really had to pull together to achieve something that was way beyond anything we've ever done before."

Since "Footrot Flats" in 1986, this is the first groundbreaking Kiwi animated movie. Admitting he may have shed a tear or two while watching a scene from the film, Rhys Darby is excited that New Zealand is finally producing another stand-out animated film. "I found the story quite emotive and it's so exciting to be part of a really cool Kiwi animation."

If our funny-man Rhys is anything to go by, then you just know this movie is going to be a goodie so make sure you don't miss out on seeing "Mosley" and supporting our local talent.

AUTHENTIC | MOVIES

OVERCOMER

If I asked you who you are, what comes to mind? A basketball coach? A cross-country runner? A diabetic patient? Or perhaps a child of God?

When a local manufacturing plant closes, nearly 6,000 people lose their jobs and move away. In a matter of months, John Harrison loses half the members of his championship-caliber basketball team, and he begins to ponder this very question: Who am I?

Strip away his roles as a basketball coach, a father and a husband—all things that John considers core parts of his identity—and what's left? It isn't until John literally stumbles across Thomas, a blind man dying from diabetes, that he starts to realize just how far down the list he places God. "Your identity will be whatever you tie your heart to," Thomas wisely tells him after their serendipitous meeting in a hospital.

In addition to doling out spiritual guidance, Thomas begins giving him training tips, too, after John gets reassigned to coach the cross-country team. (Thomas, it turns out, was a cross-country champion himself in his day). Except that it's not a team at all, it's just one girl—and she's *asthmatic*.



he's barely able to complete a training run himself). For Hannah, running is the only thing she's ever been really good at.

They're an odd pair, without a doubt. But John (with the help of his loyal wife, Amy) begins to realize the impact he can have in his coaching relationship with Hannah. And despite her asthma and tough background, Hannah's times begin to come down. With Thomas' help, John begins to coach Hannah in earnest in her quest for a state cross-country championship.

And along the way, they both wind up discovering who they are in Christ.

"Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:5, ESV).

John, Hannah and Thomas are truly overcomers in the Kendrick brothers' latest dramatic effort. They face physical, spiritual, relational and emotional barriers preventing them from accomplishing their goals and moving toward spiritual maturity. But as *Overcomer* weaves their stories together, they (and we) are reminded that "the Creator gets to define His creation."

Hannah eventually tells her coach: "I am created by God. He designed me, so I'm not a mistake. His son died for me just so I could be forgiven. He has a future for me because He loves me. So I don't wonder anymore, Coach Harrison. I am a child of God."

And that's the core message of *Overcomer*: Our identity isn't based on our jobs or roles, our talents or passions, no matter how important those things might seem. Instead, who we are at the deepest level flows from our relationship with our Savior, whose love and grace shape our true identity as His children.

For the full review visit www.pluggedin.com



THE LION KING

Simba has a lot to learn. And Mufasa, his roaring royal pop and the Pride Lands' Lion King, is eager to teach him.

Mufasa takes time to help Simba explore the vast African valley that is their kingdom, a land that stretches for as far as the eye can see. He explains important subjects, including things about the balance of large and small, good and evil. Mufasa lays out a tapestry of an ever-renewing existence, birth and death, a circle of life.

Simba hears his father's words. Some of them he takes to heart. But often, he's more concerned with the fun stuff of life: romping in tall grass, chasing small birds, rollicking with best bud Nala.

Unfortunately, choosing a steady diet of silly fun over wisdom can sometimes land a young cub in trouble, even if he is the crown prince. It can lead him into threatening shadows and make deadly foes take notice. When a prince doesn't heed his father's words he might also find himself misled by those who want to manipulate him.

Simba's power-hungry and sly-eyed Uncle Scar, for instance, would like nothing better than to quietly deceive a witless cub into being bait in a trap. What kind of trap? It's a snare made up of sheer cliffs, a narrow gorge, nipping hyenas and stampeding antelope. A trap that might even kill a king, and in turn give power to the king's wily brother.

And even though that hateful uncle masterminds the whole terrible thing, he's engineered his plot so cunningly that he can turn to his princely, foolish nephew and exclaim, "Simba, what have you done?!" And, of course, a young purblind cub might be instantly certain that he indeed is the one to blame—running away to hide from the guilt and shame of his deeds.

Yes, Simba has a lot to learn if he's going to reclaim the Pride Lands' throne from his usurping uncle, Scar. Then again, after Simba bumps into a carefree warthog and meerkat duo, he's not sure he really wants to become the Lion King after all.

Though never bloody, there are several sharp-toothed, claws-out battles in the story mix. And when between very real-looking snarling animals, those fights and growling, bared-tooth threats, can feel incredibly—and surprisingly—intense.



Several toilet-humor gags show up, most of them focused on warthog Pumbaa's air-befouling tendencies. Toilet humor of another stripe shows up in the form of a dung beetle rolling a large ball of excrement.

There are always going to be some fans left frowning when you make a new version of a classic movie. You may even be dimpling your brow right now over the idea of a "live action" Lion King. That said, let me start by assuring you that this pic's photorealistic CGI animation and sweeping soundtrack are astonishingly impressive.

All in all, this prideland morality tale packs the exact same emotional wallop and fable-like lessons of the beloved original. But some sensitive younger viewers may not be prepared for the full impact of this version.

As Simba grows up, he discovers his life purpose and realizes how important good choices really are. Similarly, we can help our children seek their purpose from God first, directing their focus toward eternity.

Movie Reviews compiled from PluggedIn.com

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AUTHENTIC

MEN'S MAGAZINE

Our purpose is to proclaim the Authentic Christian Life - the real, genuine life - where Christ is alive in us!

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