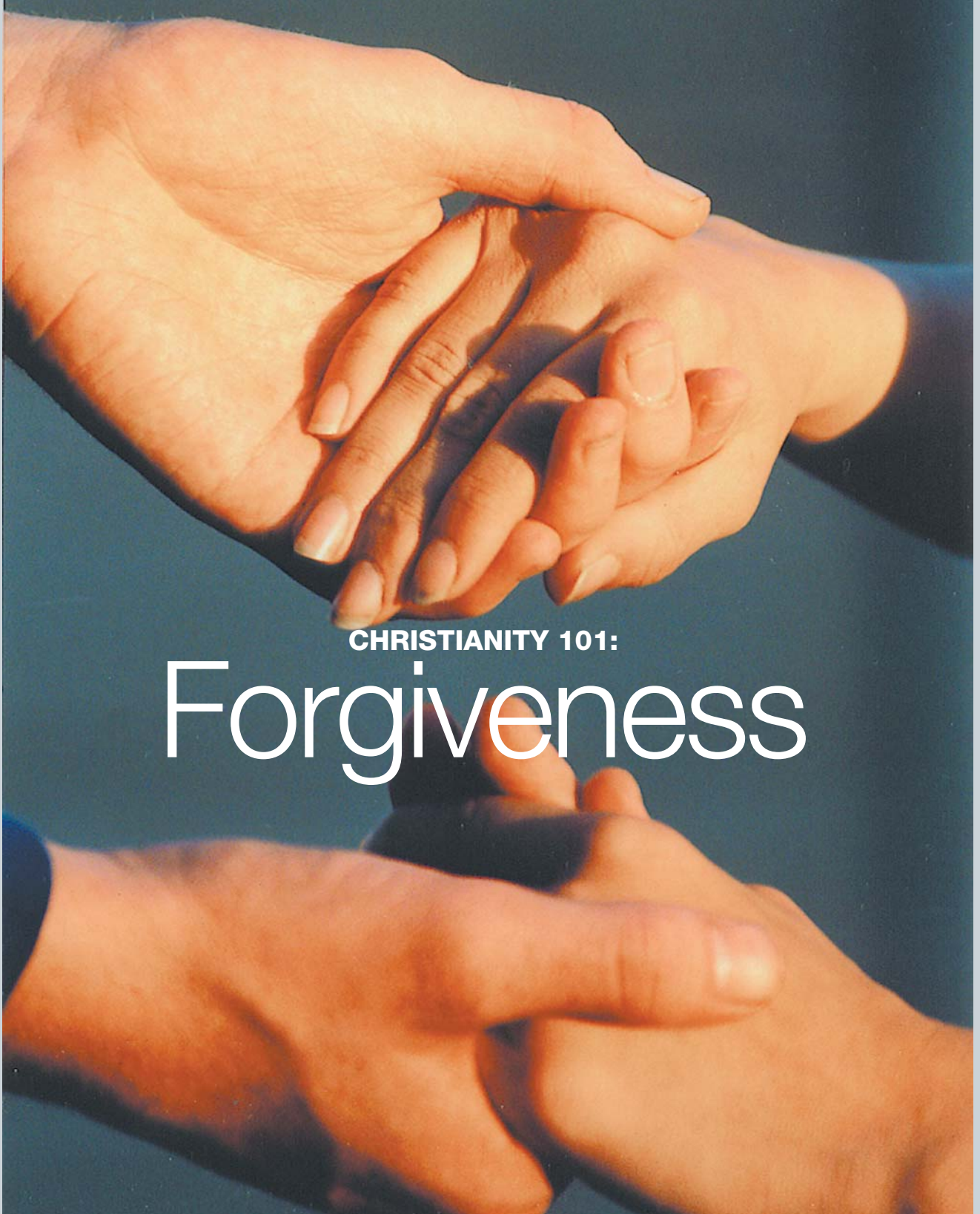


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September 2012 • Issue No. 9

CHRIST ALONE • GRACE ALONE • FAITH ALONE • SCRIPTURE ALONE



CHRISTIANITY 101:

Forgiveness

Milton Hook,
The Apostle's Prayer

Santo Calarco,
Grace and Typology

The
'What' Quiz

God's Amazing Grace in Romans

formerly, *Right With God Right Now*

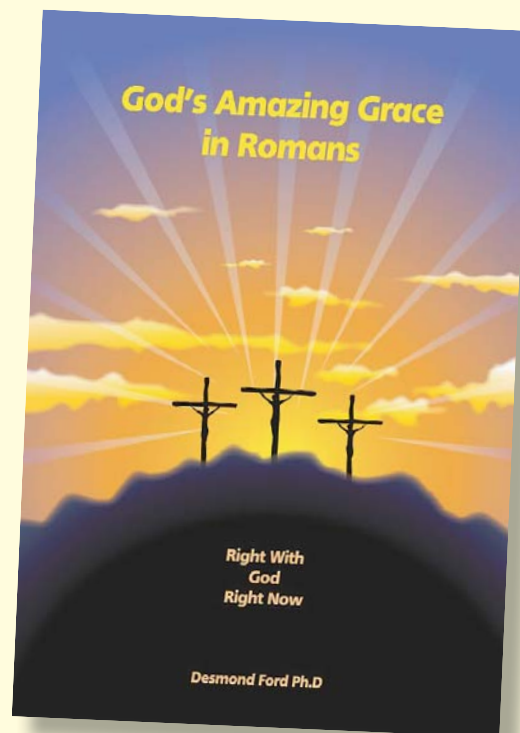
by **Desmond Ford**

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Editorial

TARANAKI MAORI decided not to sell land to Europeans in the middle 1800's. Robert Parris was very pleased, therefore, when he purchased a 600-acre block there from a Maori who didn't own it, but who needed the money to pay off a debt. When the purchasers occupied the land, the rightful Maori owners evicted them.

The government responded: (1) the land had been wrongfully taken; (2) the Maori had resisted; (3) they would punish the Maori for resisting and legalise the seizure by confiscation. Because the Maori resistance increased, 462,000 acres of their land were confiscated.

The prophet of Parihaka, Te Whiti o Rongomai, stood firm against this wholesale theft of native land. Being a man of Scripture he chose to resist the invaders peacefully. Te Whiti prophesied that there would be four phases in their passive resistance. The first phase was the day of *takahanga*, which was their 1869 announcement that they would willingly live with Europeans, but not under their authority.

The second phase of Te Whiti's prophecy was the day of *Akarama*, the transaction of Judas Iscariot. Te Whiti called for a meeting with the Prime Minister to produce a

treaty that would secure Maori rights while providing for *pakeha* interests. His representative, Rewi Maniopotu, treacherously sold out to the government, and was given a house and a pension out of the province. Other Maori also changed sides for the sake of bribes.

The people of Te Whiti's unfortified village, Parihaka, were a community of thriving, well-fed and healthy Maori. They cultivated several square miles of wheat, potatoes, taro, kumara, maize, melons and cabbage. Dr. P. J. O'Carroll, Taranaki's medical officer in 1871, reported that they had food in abundance, not a single case of syphilis or gonorrhoea, and that Parihaka was altogether the cleanest and best-kept village he had visited. But while the houses and meeting halls in Parihaka were as modern as any in New Zealand, Te Whiti himself lived in a humble home, and wore simple clothing.

Many attempts were made to entice Te Whiti to sell his land, but large offers of cash did not interest him. Baffled by Te Whiti's incorruptibility, those thwarted in their greed for his land now began to attack the prophet's character, labelling him a fanatic. The newspapers, aware of the value of sensationalism for generating sales, spread vicious and unfounded rumours about Te Whiti around the country.

In the third phase of his prophecy, Te Whiti predicted the *tuupaapaku*, or day of death. That came to pass when the government, in a reaction to these false rumours, mustered 2,500 troops from all

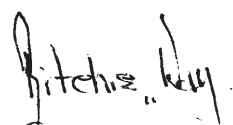
over New Zealand to put down the 'extreme fanaticism coming out of Parihaka.'

Early in the morning of 5 November 1881, these troops moved into Parihaka expecting a fierce gun battle. Instead, they came upon a wall of two hundred children chanting songs and spinning tops. Some of the older girls offered the troops loaves of bread. When the soldiers reached the marae (village square) they found the 2,500 residents of the village sitting there, waiting. These people were dragged out of Parihaka, all traces of the village and its crops were destroyed, and armed constabulary were stationed there to ensure that no one returned.

While Te Whiti was in prison for his part in 'the rebellion' his wife fell ill and died. Even though his sentence had only a few days to run, the government refused to release him so he could attend her funeral.

The final stage of Te Whiti's prophecy, the day of *aranga*—reckoning or harvest—is still future.

On that day justice will be done.



RITCHIE WAY



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Mission Statement

Christians united in offering to all meaning and direction in their lives through a knowledge of God's reconciliation with humanity through his Son, Jesus Christ.



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The New Testament Elijah

OPEN YOUR Bible to the Contents page at the front. There you will see a list of the books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi—thirty-nine books written over a period of 1,100 years.

Below that you will see a list of the books of the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation—twenty-seven books written over a period of less than 100 years.

Between Malachi and Matthew—the interval known as the InterTestamental Period—there is a gap of 400 years. But, as we shall see, across this gap of four centuries the last book of the Old Testament was fastened securely to the first book of the New Testament, thus giving the complete Bible its unity.

The primary purpose of the Old Testament was to point forward to the God who would come and dwell with his people. He would walk among them, and not despise them (Lev. 26:11-12; John 1:14). He would be their Messiah—the anointed King of Israel.

God's people waited and waited for the Messiah to come. Four hundred years after Malachi had written his prophecy, the Lord revealed to Simeon, a very devout believer who was living in Jerusalem, that he would see the promised Messiah before he died. One day the Holy Spirit told Simeon to go to the temple courts because, on that very day, he would meet a couple there carrying the child who would become Israel's Messiah (Luke 2:25-30). That was wonderful for Simeon, but how could anyone else be sure that they would recognise the Messiah?

The answer to this question is given in the very last words of the Old Testament. God said there that he would send the

prophet Elijah *before* the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5-6). These words are the binding that joins the Old Testament to the New. Just as Elijah came to Israel before the judgements of God fell on the sacrifice that was offered on Carmel (1 Kings 18:38), so he would come to the world before the judgements of God fell on God's sacrifice offered on Calvary.

When Jesus came, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, many claimed he was the Messiah. The teachers of the law, however, claimed that he could not possibly be the Messiah because the prophet Malachi clearly stated that *Elijah would come first*. Their conclusion was that, because Elijah had not come, Jesus could not be the Messiah. When Jesus' disciples asked him about this, he told them that Elijah had already come in John the Baptist (Matt. 17:9-13; see also 11:11-14).

Before John the Baptist was conceived, the angel of the Lord appeared to his father, Zechariah, to talk with him about the son that would be born to him and his wife, Elizabeth. He said to Zechariah, 'Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make a people prepared for the Lord' (Luke 1:16-17). Like Elijah on Carmel, John the Baptist called for repentance and pointed the people to the One who would die as a sacrifice for their sins.

The conventional wisdom of that time, however, understood the Messiah to be the one who would cast the occupying army of Rome out of Israel and restore

independence to the Jewish nation. John's identification of Jesus as 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1:29) was, therefore, incredibly radical for that time. According to John, the coming Lord, instead of being a victor over Rome, would become Rome's victim; instead of sacrificing his enemies he would be sacrificed by his enemies.

Elijah Will Come Twice

Unforeseen by the Old Testament, 'the great and dreadful day of the Lord', foretold by the prophet Malachi, would have two phases, corresponding to the two comings of the Lord. At the first coming, God's wrath against the sins of repentant sinners was borne by Jesus. At the second coming, God's wrath against the sins of unrepentant sinners will be borne by the unrepentant themselves. Because they will choose to reject the sacrifice of Jesus as the atonement for their sins, they will atone for their sins by their own eternal death. They, as was the Lord Jesus, will 'be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power' (2 Thess. 1:9).

The First 'Day of the Lord'

Malachi, however, clearly prophesied that Elijah would turn up *in person* before the first 'great and dreadful day of the Lord comes'. And that is exactly what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. Elijah, accompanied by Moses, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus; they spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfilment at Jerusalem (Luke 9:28-31).¹

Jesus' departure, or death on the Cross,

took place when he gave up his life there for the sins of the world.

But why didn't God himself speak to Jesus about his sacrificial death? Why did he send Elijah and Moses? Moses, whom we assume was resurrected soon after he died (see Jude 9), was a type of those who will be raised to life at the Lord's coming. Elijah, who went to the Lord without seeing death (2 Kings 2:11), represents those who will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air at his return. No doubt Moses and Elijah encouraged Jesus to go ahead with the divine plan for the redemption of mankind because their destiny, and the destiny of the people they represent, depended on him making this sacrifice for them.

'The great and dreadful day of the Lord' (Mal. 4:5) pointed to the greatness and dreadfulness of Jesus' death on the Cross. Let us look first at the greatness of Jesus' death, after which we will consider its dreadfulness.

Jesus' death was 'great' because it was the death of the Creator-God. Every sacrifice offered in Israel pointed to Jesus, 'the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world' (Rev. 13:8), and this sacrifice was huge because there is no one greater than God himself.

Why was it essential for the second member of the Godhead himself to die for the sins of the world? It was essential because only the Creator is greater than his creation, and only his death would be sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole human race.

The Creator allowed the creatures he had created to nail him to a cross, so he could die the second death for them. That sacrifice was the mark of greatness, a greatness that will be celebrated through all eternity in prose, poetry, art, song, dance and music. Voices will sing forever, 'Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive **power** and **wealth** and **wisdom** and **strength** and **honour** and **glory** and **praise**' (Rev. 5:12).²

Jesus' death was not only 'great', it was also 'dreadful', that is, full of dread. For Jesus, the Creator of the vast Universe with all its glories and life forms, to accept total annihilation for our sins was the most dreadful decision he ever had to make. There was never a more dreadful decision before that time, and there will never be a more dreadful decision after it.

It had been planned from all eternity that the Lord would accept full and total responsibility for the possible failure of the free-will creatures he would create as the apex of life on Planet Earth. Knowing all things, he foresaw that Adam and Eve

and their offspring would fall into sin, which would result in their eternal death if he didn't die in their place. He accepted that responsibility, but when the crunch came in the Garden of Gethsemane he had to confirm his decision to go through with this plan. He realised that either sinners would die eternally, or he would die eternally in their place; there was no alternative. God intended to annihilate sin forever, and if he took our sin upon himself it was logical to assume that he would be annihilated with it. The future security of the whole Universe depended upon that one decision.



Throughout his ministry Jesus referred to his decision to go to the Cross as his 'hour', because it was the most important 'hour' in the Universe—the hour that would decide both his fate and ours.³ In that hour Jesus would have to choose whether he would die the second death so we could live eternally, or whether he would continue to live eternally, and we would die the second death for our own sins.

When that 'hour' finally arrived it was so traumatic and harrowing Jesus begged the Father that it might pass from him (Mark 14:35). The realisation of what it would cost him to die the second death in our place left him 'deeply distressed and troubled'. In agony of soul he said to Peter, James and John, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death' (Mark 14:33-34). 'Being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground' (Luke 22:44), so enervated was he by the decision he had to make that 'an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him'

(Luke 22:43), so he could endure his dreadful ordeal to the very end. Finally he submitted to the Father's will and chose to die as our substitute.

After making that decision Jesus was arrested, put through the mockery of several trials, scourged, and crucified with two insurgents. The darkness that came upon the nation typified the darkness that flooded the mind of the Saviour with the despair and emptiness of sinners, the hopelessness of the totally lost, and the total lack of peace which is the lot of the rejectors of God's grace. And, to top it all off, at this point of extreme anguish, when he needed the comfort of the Father's presence more than ever before, the Father turned his back on Jesus and walked away (Matt. 27:46). In our place Jesus died the dreadful death described in 2 Thessalonians 1:9. He was 'punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power'.

Jesus chose to drink the cup of our sins, so we would not have to (Matt. 26:42). On the Cross, he bore the wrath of God against our sin (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10). 'He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him' (Isa. 53:5).

'The great and dreadful day of the Lord', foretold by the prophet Malachi, found its first fulfilment in Jesus, the substitute for repentant sinners.

The Second 'Day of the Lord'

Those who rejected God's atoning sacrifice on Carmel were required to atone for their own sin (1 Kings 18:40). In the same way, those who reject Jesus' atoning sacrifice on Calvary will also be required to atone for their own sin. Either Jesus dies the second death for our sin, or we do.

But before this great day of recompense breaks upon the world the Lord God will send Elijah, accompanied by Moses, to prepare the redeemed for the great trial they will face (Rev. 11:3-6). When they have finished their testimony (Rev. 11:7), when the gospel has been proclaimed to the whole world (Matt. 24:14), then the 'abomination that causes desolation' shall appear (Matt. 24:15) to deceive those who are perishing (2 Thess. 2:8-12).

This is the time when God's people are admonished to flee (Matt. 24:15-22) for it will be a universal time of distress such as the world has not previously witnessed. There will be no compassion in the breasts of those who have rejected the Holy Spirit. Just as the prophets of Baal who climbed

Continued page 6

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the sides to Carmel to defeat Elijah, so the lost shall set out to destroy the redeemed on Mt. Zion.

The prophet Joel writes about this 'great and dreadful day of the Lord'—the time when he will restore the fortunes of his people and punish those who afflicted them (Joel 2:31; 3:1-3). He writes:

Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side. Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow—so great is their wickedness!

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

(Joel 3:12-16)

What has 'the Valley of Jehoshaphat' got to do with 'the great and dreadful

day of the Lord', when he will enter into judgement against unbelievers?

Back in the days of King Jehoshaphat a coalition of three nations, the Moabites, the Ammonites, and Meunites from Mt. Seir came to attack and lay waste Jerusalem (2 Chron. 20). When King Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah fasted and prayed about this impending attack, the prophet Jahaziel arose and declared to them, 'This is what the LORD says to you:

"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. ... You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you" (vv.15-17).

While the faithful watched, a violent disagreement broke out among the invading troops. Two partners in the coalition attacked and destroyed the third, after which they attacked and destroyed each other.

According to Joel and Ezekiel that scenario will be repeated in the final judgement. Ezekiel declares, 'Every man's sword will be against his brother' (38:21). The unrepentant will judge and condemn

those in their midst who have treated them unjustly. Their anger over missing out on the glories of eternal life will not be appeased, and they will blame and attack all who have contributed to their loss—especially those who falsely claimed to be God's representatives. Like the coalition in the Valley of Jehoshaphat they will eliminate themselves.⁴ Thus the sanctuary will not only be cleansed, it will also be justified and made right. ❄

ENDNOTES

1. The word 'departure' is a euphemism for death (see 2 Peter 1:15).
2. There are seven things that Jesus is worthy to receive (Rev. 5:12), because seven is the number that signifies the re-establishment of the covenant relationship between God and man.
3. 'My hour' (John 2:4), 'his hour' (John 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1), and 'the hour' (John 4:21, 23; 5:28; 12:23, 27; 16:2, 25, 32) all refer to Christ's death on the Cross.
4. God is spoken of as the destroyer of the wicked, but only inasmuch as he is the Final Cause. Just as God sent his army—the Romans—to destroy the city of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Matt. 22:1-7), so others administer his rewards and punishments. Also, the essence of Revelation 17 is that apostate religion will be punished by the civil authorities that she deceived into assisting her with her war on Jesus and his followers. God is a creator, not a destroyer. Sin is its own judge and executioner.

Daniel 9:24-27

is a *crux interpretum* [difficult passage], with as many problems as there are cells in a honeycomb.

Charles Spurgeon was fond of saying about difficult Bible passages, 'The harder the shell, the sweeter the kernel', and that is true of this passage.

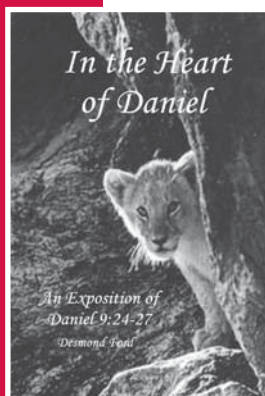
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Dr Ford considers interpretations advocated by dispensationalists and groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as the traditional view of the last two millenniums.

The book's main emphases are upon 'Messiah the Prince' and his 'atonement for iniquity' as applicable to both inaugurated (the Cross) and consummated (the Second Coming) eschatology.



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Jesus Is the Truth About Heaven

RITCHIE WAY

Christ is the very foundation and essence of every belief, for no matter how many promises God has made [eternal life, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Second Coming of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, our final Judgment, a new heavens and a new earth, etc.], they are “Yes” in Christ’ (2 Cor. 1:20).

This month we shall consider how Christ is the foundation and essence of heaven.

THE KINGDOM over which Jesus rules is called ‘the kingdom of God’ or, for those who preferred to avoid using God’s holy name, ‘the kingdom of heaven’ (cf. Luke 8:10; Matt. 13:11), or just ‘heaven’.

The ‘kingdom of heaven’ over which Jesus reigned consisted of the whole universe, except for Planet Earth, which seceded from Christ’s Universal Empire with the defection of Adam to Satan. Satan ruled this world, virtually unopposed until Jesus came to Earth, 2,000 years ago, to plant the flag of his kingdom here once again.

Jesus, however, knew that the only way he could get citizens for his kingdom here on earth would be if he redeemed them from Satan’s kingdom by dying for their sins. So he willingly went to the Cross in order to die in our place. On the Cross, his infinite life was offered as a substitute for our finite lives.

When Adam turned his back on God he was cast out of Paradise and the door was locked behind him to prevent his return (Gen. 3:23-24). But that same door back to God was opened for us when Jesus died on the Cross for our sins (Matt. 27:50-51). All who give their allegiance to Jesus are able to return to Paradise the moment they put their faith in him (Heb. 10:19-22). Jesus says to them, as he said to the insurrectionist who expressed his faith in Jesus, ‘I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in Paradise’ (Luke 23:42-43).



The very moment we put our faith in Jesus we cross over from death to life (John 5:24-25) and become citizens of heaven. That’s why the Bible says: ‘Our citizenship is in heaven...’ (Phil. 3:20). Paradise is our home. We are currently citizens of the New Jerusalem, for the Bible says of all who follow Jesus, ‘You have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly... You have come to God...’ (Heb. 12:22-23).

This awesome relocation from Satan’s to Jesus’ kingdom, from death to life, from this evil world to heaven, takes place in the spiritual realm. The kingdom of heaven in our age is a spiritual kingdom.

Some of the Pharisees asked Jesus, “When will the kingdom of God come?” Jesus answered, “God’s kingdom is coming, but not in a way that you will be able to see with your eyes. People will not say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or, ‘There it is!’ because God’s kingdom is among you” (Luke 17:20-21).

This concealed spiritual kingdom will become a revealed, literal kingdom when Jesus returns.

Heaven is accessed by death

It is not our death that gets us into heaven; that translocation is accomplished only by Jesus’ death. Plato’s teaching, that the soul goes to heaven when the body dies, is anti-gospel; it teaches that it is what happens to us that gets us into heaven, rather than what happened to Jesus.

Our soul has repose in heaven the moment we accept the death of Jesus as the atonement for our sins. It’s not the death of our body that opens the door for the soul to leave this world for heaven above, but our acceptance of the substitutionary death of Jesus that ushers us into the presence of God at that very moment.

We become citizens of heaven, not at the death of the body, but at the crucifixion of our old nature.

Like the repentant felon who was crucified with Jesus, we can enter heaven the very moment we put our faith in the Saviour. And those who become citizens of the spiritual kingdom of heaven will find themselves in the literal kingdom of heaven when Jesus comes. The angels will gather them from the four quarters of the Earth and take them to Jesus (Matt. 24:30-31). And from that time they shall be with the Lord forever.



Christianity 101 Part 8:

Forgiveness

RITCHIE WAY

THERE is no gift God can give us that is greater than his gift of free and full forgiveness. This is his greatest gift because it cost him his life (John 3:16). To reject this gift, therefore, is to reject God himself.

To refuse to pass on the gift of God's forgiveness is to uphold the greatest of all lies, that God's grace is not sufficient to cover the sins of my enemy (Matt. 18:21-35; Col. 3:13).

Contrary to what many people believe, our God is not a God who wants to take revenge on us because of our sins. The Bible tells us, 'God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world' (John 3:17). When a woman, caught in the act of adultery, was brought to Jesus to see what he would say about her life-style, he said to her, 'I don't condemn you. Go and leave your life of sin' (John 8:11).

God does not condemn us because he has already condemned his Son for our sins. He is able to forgive us fully because Jesus has already paid for all our sins by dying for them on the Cross. God offers us the free gift of his forgiveness, through Jesus, but he will never force that gift upon us. He respects our freedom of choice too much to do that.

While we are free to choose the gift of forgiveness, we are not free to choose the consequences of rejecting it. Sin always leads to death—either Jesus' or ours.

To receive God's forgiveness you need to follow these four steps:

1. **Admit that you have sinned;**
2. **Acknowledge that Jesus died for your sins;**
3. **Repent of your sins;**
4. **Accept God's forgiveness for your sins.**

Repentance means to turn away from your sins, to give them up. You cannot be a child of God unless you repent and give up your sins. Forgiveness is granted only to those who repent (Acts 2:38), for without repentance your confession is hollow. One of the most joyous reports that can be given about you in heaven is that you have repented and turned from your sin (Luke 15:7).



Confession means that you will go to those you have hurt and openly admit that you were wrong, without making any excuses for your behaviour, or in any way blaming them (James 5:16). Your confession of the negative things you have done brings peace to your heart, because when you admit that you did wrong, you uphold Jesus and his standard of righteousness.

Your confession should be as wide as your sin, and no wider. In other words, confess only to the people who have been hurt by your sin, not to the people who have not been hurt. Do not seek your own peace at the expense of other people's peace by hurting them with your confession.

How to Know if You Have Been Forgiven

There is a simple test to know whether God has forgiven you or not: If the Lord's free gift of forgiveness has come into your life, you will reveal it in the way you treat others who sin against you. If you find it in your heart to forgive them, then God's forgiveness has come into your life and is flowing through you to others.

You can only give what you have received. If you can't forgive someone for what they have done to you, then the problem is in your own heart; this channel of God's forgiveness is blocked. Remove the blockage, and God's forgiveness that will flow to others through you will cleanse your own heart also. 'If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins' (Matt. 6:14-15).

The attitude with which we forgive others will also be reflected in the way God forgives us. Jesus taught us to pray, 'Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors' (Matt. 6:12). The word 'as' in that verse is a key word. If we forgive freely, we will be forgiven freely. If we forgive grudgingly, we will be forgiven grudgingly.

The Bible says, 'Forgive as the Lord forgave you' (Col. 3:13). When we ask Jesus to forgive us he never replies, 'I will forgive, but I'll never forget'. He willingly and freely forgives us from the heart, without reservation. You should also forgive 'from the heart', without reservation (Matt. 18:35). So 'be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you' (Eph. 4:32).

The Lord declares, 'I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more' (Jer. 31:34). He not only forgives, he also forgets. As people washed clean by the blood of Jesus, can we do less than this?

Remember that forgiveness is not a feeling; it is an act of the will. So don't be governed by your feelings in this matter. Do what is right, and your feelings will come right. In other words, your feelings should not determine your actions; rather, your actions should determine your feelings. Forgive first, and then the good feelings will follow. Start by making an official pronouncement of forgiveness to yourself. Say the person's name out loud before God. E.g., 'God, I forgive _____ for _____.'

Release them and set them free. If you don't, you will only handcuff them to yourself for the rest of your life. Then either go and see the person, or write them a letter or card, expressing your full and unreserved forgiveness.

When Jesus forgave us, he gave us the gift of his life. When you forgive someone who has hurt you, you will also give to him or her the gift of life. Your forgiveness will be a token that you harbour no ill feeling toward them—that your forgiveness is full and free, and that you have chosen to put the past behind you and resume relationships as if the painful event had never happened.

Always be generous in your forgiveness, because God has been generous in forgiving you.



The Apostle's Prayer

Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

(Luke 11:4, NIV)

DO WE really forgive everyone who sins against us? Doesn't the phrase smack of boasting? Did Jesus instruct his disciples to lay claim to such a high level of moral conduct?

It is always helpful to try to understand Scripture in the context of the times and culture in which it was written.

Jesus was teaching a small following of Jews how to pray. The verbs he used are in the present tense. A literal translation would be 'as we are forgiving everyone who is owing us debts'. In what sense was that true of Jewish people? The answer is only in the context of the Jewish habit of cancelling all debts in the Jubilee Year. That included the release of individuals who had become slaves to work off their debts.

A paraphrase of the passage could therefore read, 'as we are, during the Jubilee Year, in the habit of forgiving everyone who is indebted to us'.

The significance of that type of forgiveness would not be lost on the Jews.

Forgiveness in the Jubilee Year was absolute. Debts were annulled totally and utterly. That is the quality of forgiveness that Jesus encouraged his apostles to ask of God because that is the only brand of forgiveness that God offers. It is absolute. There is no coming back to a record of sin, no weight of the debt thrust upon our minds. It is a forgiveness that brings absolute freedom from the debt incurred by sin.

Furthermore, the phrase is preceded by the words, 'Forgive us our sins'. Here, the tense of the verb suggests the supplicant is asking God for a completed action with ongoing results. That is, the plea is for a forgiveness that is not only complete but that its completeness lasts and lasts. It brings freedom from erosive guilt in the soul. It brings peace with God and a calm assurance of salvation.

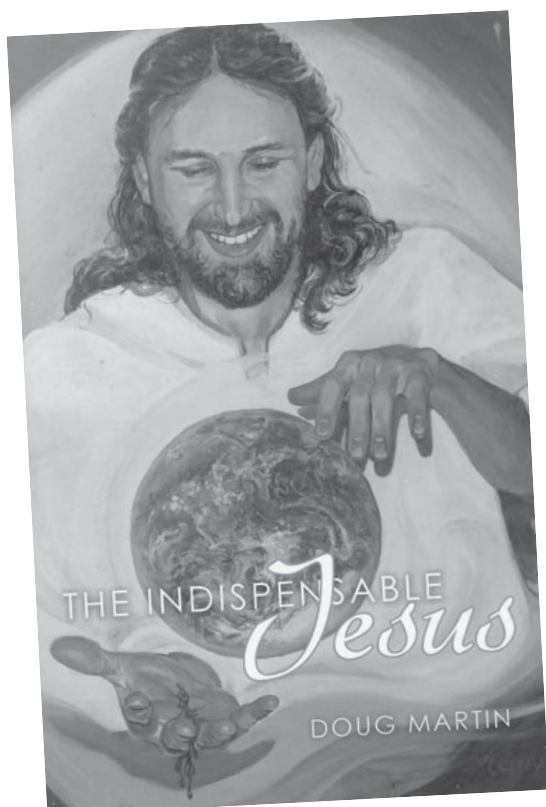
The sense of this prayerful passage is therefore, 'Forgive our sins completely and forever, in the same manner as we are in the habit of completely forgiving every-



Dr. MILTON HOOK

one their debts in the Jubilee Year'.

Of course, as Westerners we need to adapt the prayer because we do not follow the custom of the Jubilee Year. Surely it is sufficient for us to simply ask for total forgiveness. God's forgiveness is not denied us. Our Father knows how to give the best gifts to those who ask in faith. ❄



The Indispensable Jesus

by Pastor Doug Martin

In his book, **The Indispensable Jesus**, Doug Martin reveals a lifetime of love and devotion to Jesus Christ. Drawing on decades of rich experience teaching and preaching and personal study, he upholds Jesus as the central theme on which all that matters hangs. Although containing many theological insights, **The Indispensable Jesus** is written in non-technical language with practical life applications. This book is an attractive and thorough guide to why Jesus is so important, and such good news for every person.

Gary Krause BA Teaching & Editorial Studies
(Director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the
Adventist World Headquarters.

This book is available from the GNU Office in Tweed Heads South. For price plus postage and packaging, ring Carolyn Wagemaker +61 (0)7 5524 5040.

Grace AND Typology



SANTO CALARCO

THE NEW TESTAMENT tells us that Adam was a type of Jesus, that baptism is an antitype of the Flood, that Sarah and Hagar were symbolic of the two covenants, and that the two-apartment Old Testament sanctuary was symbolic for the New Covenant way of approaching God (read the NKJV of Romans 5:14; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Galatians 4:21-24; and Hebrews 9:9).

Hebrews 9:23-24 goes on to say that the whole sacrificial system is seen as a type of Christ's new covenant priesthood—where specifics of the first covenant are called 'the *patterns* of things in the heavens' and '*figures* of the true' (vv. 23-24). What does the New Testament mean when it says that these Old Testament stories were types, symbols, figures and patterns of salvation, and how important is it to understand this?

What exactly is typology?

Typology is a special kind of symbolism. A symbol is something that represents something else. For example when we say that the slain lamb was a type of Jesus we are saying that in Old Testament times it was in some way an important

symbolic preview of Jesus, that there were significant but not identical parallels between the two (1 Pet. 1:19; cf. 1 Cor. 5:7).

Let's begin with a radical verse about grace from the apostle Paul, and then we will link this with New Testament typology.

He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. 1:9-10)

These verses are power-packed!

They tell us many things about grace. They describe the what, who, when, where and how of grace.

The 'what' of grace is salvation. But then Paul begins to stretch our thinking. He tells us that this grace is found in Jesus—the 'who' of grace. He goes on to say that the 'when' of grace, which resulted in salvation, took place 'before the beginning of time', and that this manifested later in time through the appearing of Jesus.

In these verses Paul is contrasting what existed in the spiritual realm in Christ before time, with what appeared in the physical realm within time with the appearance of Christ.

What does Paul mean when he says that this grace that resulted in salvation was given to us in *Christ Jesus* before time began? The key to understanding this verse is in the phrase 'in Christ Jesus'. Paul says something similar in Ephesians.

He chose us *in him* before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ. (Eph. 1:4-5)

Again in this passage the key to understanding what he means is found in the phrase 'in Christ'. It is *only* as we are positioned 'in Christ' that we were chosen, saved and predestined as sons before time began. So understanding what Paul means by 'in Christ' holds the key to what he is trying to tell us.

What Paul means by 'in Christ' can be explained through a practical biblical illustration given in Hebrews chapter 7. In this chapter the writer speaks about Abraham, and his descendant Levi who existed many years after him. And Hebrews tells us that, when Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, his great grandson Levi tithed as well since 'he was still in the loins of his father' Abraham. Levi in a real sense was 'in Abraham'. And so what Abraham did, so, too, did Levi, because he was 'in him'. In a similar but very real way we too were 'in Christ' before the world began.

Paul speaks similarly when he says that

the whole of humanity was 'in Adam' at Creation—in his loins so to speak—and so what happened to Adam was deemed as happening to the whole of mankind. The whole of humanity was 'in Adam' at the Fall.

*'For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as **in Adam** all die, so **in Christ** all will be made alive.'*
(1 Cor. 15:21-22)

Just as Levi was in Abraham, and just as the world was in Adam; so, too, the whole of humanity was in Christ on the Cross and therefore predestined as sons before the world began. This is the essence of the New Testament teaching on grace.

It is significant that when Paul discusses this he uses the word 'type'. He speaks of 'the transgression of Adam, who is a *type* of Him who was to come' (Rom. 5:12, 14, NKJV). Adam was a type of Jesus, which is why Jesus is called 'the Last Adam' (1 Cor. 15:45). To not understand the typological parallels between Jesus and Adam is to miss out on some of the depth of Paul's meaning on grace and salvation!

Let's explore some of these typological parallels. Originally Adam was bestowed with authority over the Earth, an authority that he sold out to Satan. We know from Luke 4:5-6 that Satan's claim to be in authority over the whole world went unchallenged by Jesus. In fact Jesus acknowledged his rulership over humanity (John 12:31).

What is significant is that before Jesus began his public ministry he first had to meet the devil and pass over the same ground that Adam did in Eden. But in the same three areas where Adam failed, Jesus was victorious!

In Eden Satan appealed to appetite, visual appeal and pride. He repeated these same temptations with Jesus in the desert (compare Genesis 3:6 with Matthew 4:1-10). In yielding to Satan's



temptations in the garden, Adam gave up his authority over the Earth. In resisting Satan's temptations in the wilderness Jesus regained the authority that Adam had surrendered to Satan. As the Last Adam, Jesus passed over the failed ground of his predecessor but with success and regained the authority that first Adam lost.

It is only as we understand biblical typology that we can better understand what Jesus meant to the early church. And this typology goes further than the idea that Jesus regained the authority originally given to Adam.

The contrasts in Romans 5 are as follows:

- Sin entered the world through the first Adam; righteousness entered the world through the last Adam.
- Condemnation entered the world through the first Adam; justification entered the world through the last Adam.
- Death entered the world through the first Adam; eternal life entered the

world through the last Adam.

- The disobedience of the first Adam made all sinners; the obedience of the last Adam made many righteous.

We can see from this exhaustive treatment on salvation that the Adam-Christ typology forms the very foundation and fabric of this most important subject. To not understand typology is to miss out on much of the richness on Paul's understanding on sin, righteousness, condemnation, justification and grace.

Why does Paul emphasise the typological parallels between Jesus and Adam? The New Testament makes the parallels between Adam and Jesus because it wants us to see that an exchange of histories has taken place.

Jesus passes over Adam's failed history, absorbs its consequences and then replaces it with his victorious history. The result of Adam's sin was nakedness, thorns, sweat and death (Gen. 3:10-11, 18-19; 2:17). On the Cross Jesus took upon himself these very curses. In Gethsemane, Jesus sweated drops of blood (Luke 22:44).

On the Cross, Jesus was stripped naked, had a crown of thorns thrust into his brow and finally died for all. Adam took from a tree, sinned and died; Jesus died on a tree, took away sin and abolished death (1 Pet. 2:24).

The New Testament writers want us to see what Jesus meant to them, and how, to a significant extent, they understood him in terms of typology.

The following jingle about the two Testaments in our Bible sums up all that has been said above:

**The New is in the Old contained,
The Old is in the New explained.**





A MAN and his dog were walking along a road. The man was enjoying the scenery when it suddenly occurred to him that he was dead. He remembered dying, and that his faithful dog had been dead for many years.

He wondered where the road was leading them. After a while, they came to a high, white stone wall along one side of the road. It looked like fine marble. Up ahead he could see a tall arch that glowed in the sunlight. When he got to the arch, there, in its centre was a magnificent gate made from mother-of-pearl. On one side of the gate was a man in white sitting at a desk.

The traveller called out, 'Excuse me, where are we?'

'This is heaven, sir,' the man in white answered.

'Wow! Would you happen to have some water? We have developed quite a thirst on our walk,' the traveller said.

'Of course, sir! Come right in, and I'll have some iced water brought right up.'

The man in white signalled and the gate began to open, revealing a broad street of gold beyond.

'Can my friend,' he asked, gesturing toward his dog, 'come in, too?'

'I'm sorry, sir, but we don't accept pets.'

The traveller paused, remembering all the years this dog had remained loyal to him, and then turned back to the road



and continued on the way he had been going.

After another long walk, he came to a plain dirt road that led through a farm gate that looked as if it had never been closed. Strangely, there was no fence. As he approached the gate, he saw a man inside, leaning against a tree reading a book.

'Excuse me!' he called to the reader. 'Do you have any water? We have travelled far.'

'Yes, sure, there's a pump over there.' The man pointed to a place among the trees. 'Come on in and help yourself.'

'How about my friend here?' the traveller pointed to his dog.

'There should be a bowl by the pump; he is welcome to share.'

The traveller and his dog went through the gate and, sure enough, there among the trees was an old-fashioned hand pump with a bowl beside it. The traveller took a long drink then filled the bowl for his dog. When they were full, he and the dog walked back toward the man who was standing by the tree waiting for them.

'What do you call this place?' the traveller asked.

'This is Heaven,' was the answer.

'Well, that's confusing,' the traveller said. 'The man down the road said that place was Heaven, too.'

'Oh, you mean the place with the pearly gates and gold street?'

'Yes, that's the place!'

'Nope, that's hell.'

'Doesn't it make you mad for them to use your name like that?'

'No. We're just happy that they screen out the folks who'd leave their best friends behind in exchange for material things.'

The notice on the gate to God's presence says: 'Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take of the free gift of the water of life.'

Come and bring your friends. They are all welcome. No one is turned away.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN



Testimonial for Doug Martin's *The Indispensable Jesus*

FROM HIS previous sermons I knew I had received an excellent book, but this one far exceeded expectations.

I have a terminal disease (asbestos related) and I was thrown into organ failure. The doctor told me that I would not come through the night.

In the hospital bed, as I read the book, it was as though the words lifted from the page and went deep into my heart and mind. I experienced a deeper understanding of my saving relationship

with Jesus, as though He were holding my hand tight.

Each chapter showed the unfailing love of Jesus to me; each chapter made the gospel a glowing light.

Next morning I came through the surgery a new person—saved! I have already persuaded several to buy this book.
the late Bob Murray (B.A. Theology)

This book points to Jesus' personal qualities and qualifications, which make

Him indispensable. He was genuine and unique, truly God and truly man.

In this study, many descriptive titles are lifted from Scripture and discussed in detail with the practical purpose in mind of meeting human needs.

The author shares stories of intelligent, honest people who were influenced by the evidence to place their faith in Jesus.

Price: \$22.95

Doug Martin The Indispensable Jesus (soft cover) 318 pp.



Know Your Board Members and Other GNU Staff

In this series Good News Unlimited will introduce to our readers the members of the Good News Unlimited Board and ancillary staff.

Q. Your name please.

A. Ritchie Way.

Q. I understand that you are a Kiwi.

A. That's right. I live in Auckland, New Zealand.

Q. How many children do you have?

A. Ruth (deceased), Roseanne.

Q. Tell me about Ruth.

A. Ruth was a lecturer in Early Childhood at Macquarie University in Sydney before she and her good friend, Maree Quinlivan, were tragically killed in a traffic accident on the Illawarra Highway 13 years ago.

Q. And Roseanne?

A. Roseanne also works in Early Childhood. She is the Centre-Services Manager for Kindercare Learning Centres in New Zealand. She is married to Stan who works for Telecom, and they have two children, Nathan and Melanie, both at College. They live just three kilometres from us, which is wonderful. We attend the same church, where Roseanne and Stan are worship leaders.

Q. What is your ministry with GNU?

A. I am the Executive Editor for the magazines and also a GNU Board Member.

Q. What do you like about Good News Unlimited?

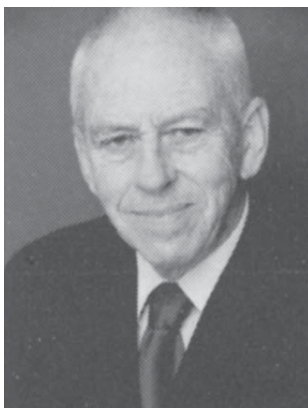
A. I love the freedom to explore new understandings of God's Word, the freedom we have to grow in Jesus, and our focus on the gospel that makes us one with the Lord and all fellow believers.

Q. What are your aspirations for Good News Unlimited?

A. To get more good news literature translated into languages where there is a hunger for the pure and simple gospel of the Lord Jesus.

Q. What book, apart from the Bible, would you enjoy spending time with? And why?

A. If I could nudge the boundary of the word 'book' a little, I would choose a volume of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. I have an insatiable appetite for knowledge about God's world.



Q. What is your favourite passage from the Bible?

A. My favourite passage depends on the circumstances in which I am at the time. However, one that I keep turning back to is John 1:1-18.

Q. Name two people (dead or alive) you would like to invite for dinner? And why?

A. I would like to invite Socrates, but I fear he would be asking all the questions, so I'll choose King David and Luke the physician. I have so many questions about life and events in their times.

Apart from getting to know both men better, I would have some specific questions for them.

For example, how much of the land was clothed with forest in David's time? And how long was the Ark of the Covenant in Philistine hands? There seems to be some inconsistencies in the chronology of this event. And why did Luke stay behind in Philippi when Paul moved on (Acts 17) and did not rejoin the apostle until he came back through Philippi on his next visit about four years later (Acts 20)?

Q. We have heard that your health hasn't been too good lately. Are you willing to share the problem with us?

A. I have always had problems with my lungs due to a malfunctioning gene in my liver that results in alpha 1 antitrypsin deficiency. Over a period of time this deficiency, like smoking, causes emphysema. But I keep as fit as my lungs will allow, and thank God for the health I have, knowing that there is nothing wrong with me that a good resurrection couldn't fix. ✱

'What' Quiz

1. What book of the New Testament has no conclusion?
2. What book of the New Testament was a short letter written to a personal friend?
3. What book of the Old Testament is about the leaders who ruled Israel before there were any king?
4. What book of the Old Testament was a living parable of Israel going into captivity because of its refusal to take the gospel to the Gentiles, but then being given another chance?
5. What book of the New Testament was written to Christians living in the capital of the empire?
6. What two books of the Old Testament make no direct reference at all to God?
7. What two books of the Bible are named after women?
8. What two books of the Bible were written by a non-Jew?
9. What eight churches did Paul write letters to?
10. What churches in the New Testament received two apostolic letters each?
11. What other names were the following apostles known by: Simon, Judas (not Iscariot), Thomas, Matthew.
12. What town became Jesus' hometown after his baptism?

Answers:

1. Acts
2. Philimon
3. Judges
4. Jonah
5. Romans
6. Esther, Song of Solomon.
7. Ruth, Esther
8. Luke, Acts
9. Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Laodicea, Philippians, Corinthians.
10. Corinth (1 Cor 1:1-2; 2 Cor 1:1); Thessalonica (1 Thes 1:1); Ephesus (Eph 1:1; Rev 2:1-7); Laodicea (Col 4:16; Rev 3:14-22)
11. Simon = Peter (Luke 6:14); Judas = Thaddaeus (son of James, Luke 6:16); Thomas = The Twin (Didymus, John 11:16); Matthew = Levi (compare Matthew 9:9 with Mark 2:14).
12. Capernaum (Matt 4:13; 9:1; Mark 2:1).



The King's Banquet

RITCHIE WAY

HAVE YOU ever seen the movie, 'Shine'? The star of the movie is David Helfgott (played by Geoffrey Rush). David, who lived in Melbourne, Australia, was a pianist brought up by a dictatorial, overbearing father who wanted to achieve through his son, David, what he was not able to achieve in his own life.

David eventually ran away to England to study at the Royal Academy of Music. His teacher, Cyril Smith, worked him remorselessly. By 1970, the pressure began to tell and Helfgott's mental state began to unravel. He spent the next 12 years in and out of mental institutions.

He may well have lived the rest of his life that way had he not, one very wet night, slipped into Ricardo's, a restaurant in Perth that featured modern jazz, opera, blues, and classical music. The regular musician wasn't available, so Helfgott, with his bottle-bottom spectacles was given a chance to prove himself at the piano. The patrons tinkered at the keys with two fingers, then set them all back into their seats as he exploded into Rimsky Korsakov's 'Flight of the Bumble Bee'.

After the film 'Shine' came out, David Helfgott travelled the world giving concerts to packed houses. The critics weren't kind to him. 'Mr. Helfgott is a dreadful pianist,' said David Dubal, head of the Julliard School's piano faculty. 'All my students are unhappy about this guy. While they are killing themselves to get one recital, 3,000 people are going to see this guy fall apart on the stage.'

Dennis Dutton, a Christchurch music academic, described the Helfgott concert as 'an overpriced third-rate show.... This was incoherent playing. It was Beethoven on Prozac'.

But, in spite of the critics, the demand for tickets was extraordinary. The house was booked out just three hours after the box office opened in Los Angeles.

And the Helfgott recording of Rachmaninoff's 'Third Piano Concerto', which featured in the movie, 'Shine', topped the classical music charts in the USA, Australia and England.

At the conclusion of Helfgott's inaugural US concert, people came down the centre aisle to the stage of Boston's historic Symphonic Hall, stretching out their hands to shake his.

What did the critics fail to see?

What did the critics fail to see, that the crowds went to see?

The critics saw a third-rate musician. The crowds saw a man who had overcome tremendous difficulties to make good.

The critics judged with their heads. The crowds judged with their hearts.

The most important thing in the world is not perfection. The most important thing is a person who conquers in spite of tremendous obstacles.

The people we laud are the David Helfgotts, the Susan Boyles, and the Emmanuel Kellys. We laud them because we see a little of ourselves in them. Each of us has a handicap of some sort. Each of us feels inadequate for our mission. And each of us would like to rise above these handicaps and inadequacies to conquer our world. Though we reach out for perfection we continually fall short of it.

Mephibosheth

There's a story in the Bible about a five-year-old boy whose father, Prince Jonathan, was killed in a battle with the Philistines. When the dreadful news of the Israelite

defeat arrived from the battlefield his nurse picked him up and fled in a panic but dropped him, breaking both his ankles, making the boy permanently lame (2 Sam. 4:4).

After David became king of Israel he sought for some way to honour the name of his best friend, Jonathan. He discovered that Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, was still alive, so commanded that he be brought to him. Mephibosheth arrived, uncertain of his future. Because his grandfather, Saul, had tried several times to kill David, there was a fear that David would retaliate by taking Mephibosheth's life.

Instead, David gave Mephibosheth all the lands that belonged to his grandfather, Saul; appointed thirty-six people to farm the land for him and invited Mephibosheth to eat at his table every day.

Mephibosheth could hardly believe his ears. This crippled man had a place especially reserved for him at the king's table so he could dine with royalty. This was David's gift to him—the cripple!

Our David

We, too, have a David who sits on the throne. He calls for the broken, the inadequate, the hurting and the empty to be brought to him. He invites the triers who desire to be flawless, but never quite achieve it, and the common people who desire to be more perfect, but never will be in this life. He says to them, 'Today, I restore to you your eternal inheritance, and from this day forward you shall eat at my table. You shall be as a child of the King. This is my gift to you.'

So come to the King's table all you who fall short. Let us eat.

The Bread is broken, the Wine is poured, and the dinner is served. ✱

THE TIME IS AT HAND

by Desmond Ford

For nearly 2,000 years, the book of Revelation has been viewed as the most difficult book in the Bible.

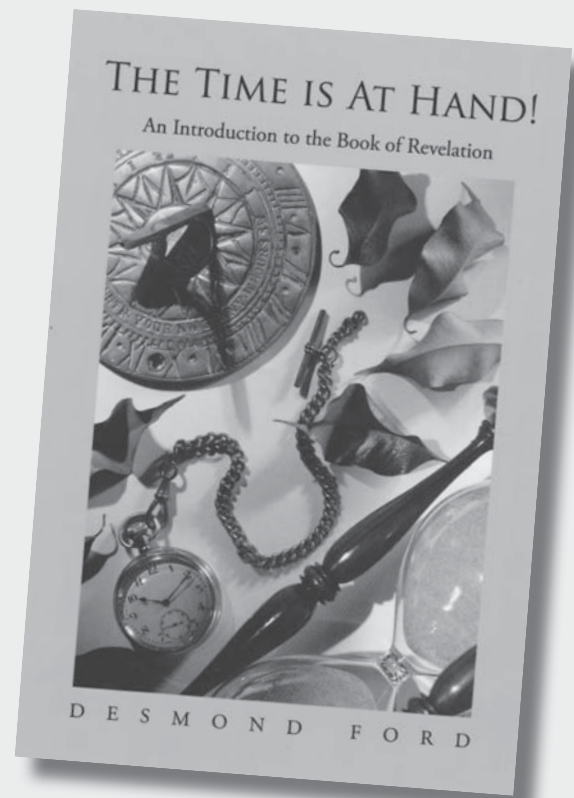
The hundreds of commentaries in the Library of Congress testify that there is no unanimity about the meaning of the symbols of Revelation. And yet this is the only book in the Bible where a special blessing is pronounced on its readers.

It's a book from Jesus Christ about himself, his gospel, the future, and what will happen to the saints at the end of time.

Desmond Ford's, *The Time Is at Hand*, an introduction to the Book of Revelation, is the fruit of decades of study plus research at the University of Manchester under Professor F. F. Bruce. Ford offers a much-neglected key—this sacred book can only be unlocked by understanding the preceding 65 books of the Bible and, in particular, the life, teachings, and death of Jesus.

The main message of Revelation is that the church is to repeat the experience of its Lord. After its final proclamation of the gospel, it will be condemned to martyrdom.

And this climactic sin of the world will precipitate the return of Christ in glory.



Note also that *God's Amazing Grace in Romans (Right With God Right Now)* by Desmond Ford is up and live as an e-book on Kindle.

The Kindle price on www.amazon.com, \$US6.99 US, includes international wireless delivery via Amazon Whispernet.

Access God's Amazing Grace in Romans at: www.amazon.com/dp/B008OV9EUE

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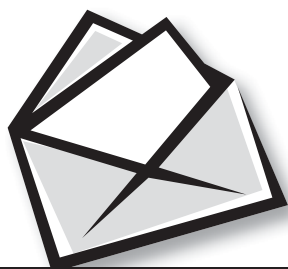
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- *The Coming Worldwide Calvary*
- *In the Heart of Daniel*
- *God's Odds*
- *Eating Right for Type 2 Diabetes*
- *Jesus Only*



Letters from Readers

GNU is a meeting of minds from a wide range of church affiliations and therefore opinions expressed in our articles may differ from that of our readers. Recognising that opinions can differ and we all have much to learn and unlearn, we encourage our readers to participate in this forum.



LOOK UNTO JESUS

Hello Ritchie,

God's blessing to you. Thank you for the May 2012 issue of the GNU magazine. The Des Ford article from his book reminded me that it was Des who brought the gospel to me as a young legalist at a Bible camp in WA in about 1970.

I appreciated your answer to L.D's letter, 'Assurance of Salvation', as it brought to mind a saying of a young friend of mine: 'When I look to myself I can see no way that I could be saved, but when I look to Jesus I can see no way that I could be lost'. I have hung on to this saying for many years, and I find my assurance of salvation improves as I look to Him more and more.

Your friend in Christ

E.T.

was sufficient to atone for the sins of every individual in the vast universe, should they all fall as did Adam.

We can be certain that no other world fell into sin before ours, because if it had Jesus would have died for them. And if he died for them, his death there would have been sufficient for us on Earth also, in which case he would not have needed to die again. The Bible describes his death as being 'once for all' (Heb. 9:26). He only needed to die 'once', because his death atoned for the sins of all people for all time. He is the atoning sacrifice for 'the sins of the **whole** world' (1 John 2:2).

Ritchie

believes him who sent me has eternal life and will be justified'

So when Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death', he intended us to understand the opposite was also true: 'I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will live forever'.

With this understanding we can see that Jesus was referring to the second rather than the first death.

Hope that helps,
Ritchie



OTHER FALLS?

Dear Editor

Given that there are at least 300 billion galaxies in the universe, and that each galaxy has billions of suns, most of which have planets revolving around them, it is highly likely that Earth is not the only place in the universe where there are intelligent beings. This being the case, how do we know that the 'people' on one of these planets have not also fallen into sin? How can we be sure that the Fall in Earth's Garden of Eden doesn't have a counterpart elsewhere in the vast universe?

F.G.

Reply from Ritchie

Dear F.

The answer to your question is this: Our redeemer, the Lord Jesus, is the creator of the whole universe (John 1:1-2; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). Inasmuch as the life of the Creator is greater than the whole of his creation, so Jesus' death



NEVER DIE

Dear Editor

I have a question that I have been pondering about for a long time, but have not been able to resolve. It is this: In John 8:51 Jesus says, 'I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death'. How can I explain that verse to others, let alone to myself?

F.G.

Reply from Ritchie

Dear F.

Jesus is here using a figure of speech collectively known as *litotes*. *Litotes* expresses something in the negative instead of the positive. For example, we say, 'It is a matter of no small importance', when we mean, 'It is a matter of some considerable importance'. That is a *litotes*. Another example from Jesus is found in John 5:24 where Jesus says, 'Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned'. The other way of understanding this is to see that Jesus also meant, 'Whoever hears my word and



WHY THE WAIT?

Dear Editor

Why did God wait so long after Adam's fall to redeem the world?

Why didn't Jesus come within a couple of generations of Adam to die as man's substitute? Think of the suffering that the world has been through over the many generations since Adam. It's hard to understand why there has been such a long delay.

I've not had anyone answer this question to my satisfaction yet.

L.W.

Reply from Ritchie

Dear L.

I think you will acknowledge that time is not a factor with God. With him 'a thousand years is but a day'. What is important is that the sin problem be solved properly, once for all time. If it isn't solved properly it could raise its ugly head again in the future.

There are three lights that must be turned on before the end will come. The first light is sin itself. The Bible says, 'The wages of sin is death' (Rom. 6:23). Sin not only resulted in death for Adam, but for all his offspring as well. And sin not only results in death for human beings but death for nations

and cultures, and eventually death for Planet Earth itself. When sin is fully ripe (Rev. 14: 17-20), the first light will come on and the harvest will be reaped. Only when sin becomes its own judge and executioner will the end come, because only then will the rest of the universe behold the full outcome of sin.

The second light, which contrasts with the nature of sin, is the nature of God. Sin revealed a facet of the nature of God in a way that nothing else could. The worse things got, the better God looked. God made himself nothing and took on the nature of man, humbling himself to die on a Roman cross for the sins of the world (Php. 2:5-11). God sacrificed himself for everyone. He died our death that we might live his life. This gospel message is going to the whole world, and when it has penetrated the last dark corner, the end will come (Matt. 14:14).

The third light is the number of the host of the redeemed. Before Jacob's tribe could inherit Canaan, it had to grow into a nation in Egypt, else they would have been too few to care for the Promised Land. In the same way, the meek must be numerous enough to inherit and care for the Earth (Matt. 5:5). When that happens the Lord will be ready to announce the end.

In God's providence these lights, along with others not mentioned here, will all turn on at the same time, bringing the present evil age to an end.

Ritchie



TWO TOMBS?

Dear Editor

There are two supposed tombs of Jesus at Jerusalem, one under a building in the old city, and the other outside the walls. I have been to both and have to say that the Garden of Gethsemane outside the walls is much more appealing. That, however, doesn't make it the place where Joseph of Arimathea had his garden tomb. Do you have any information that identifies the correct tomb in which Jesus lay?

P.S.

Reply from Ritchie

Dear P.

I, too, have been to both places. The Holy Sepulchre of Jesus, which is now inside the city, was once outside the city. After Jesus' day, when the city

walls were extended, they enclosed this tomb. Emperor Hadrian, who expelled all the Jews from Jerusalem, built a temple to Aphrodite over Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. Later this temple was demolished and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was constructed over it. So that the builders could fit the tomb inside the Church, the bank of rock in which the tomb was built was mined away, leaving just the shell of the tomb behind.

Unfortunately, the character of this tomb—like the character of the place where Jesus was supposedly born—has been totally inverted by the hands of men who have glorified these holy places with their silver, gold and devotion, rather than glorifying the Lord Jesus who gave significance to those places. It was my impression that very few genuine Christians are edified by a visit to the Holy Sepulchre.

The Garden Tomb, however, which is also close to the site where Jesus was crucified, is much more typical of the kind of tomb in which Jesus was buried. It, also, was near the city and in a garden. It has all the characteristics of Joseph's tomb, and when it was discovered it was empty. Also, the presence of God is much stronger in the setting of the Garden Tomb than it is in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where the various religious groups that control that area can't seem to work together harmoniously.

Actually, there is no indisputable evidence that either site is the correct one. But it doesn't really matter, because we worship a risen Saviour.

Ritchie



BOOK OF ENOCH

Dear Pastor Ritchie

While reading the fourteenth verse of Jude's short epistle I came across the following quote from the Apocryphal book of Enoch: 'See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him'.

I am confused by this quote because I have been taught that the Apocrypha was not inspired by the Holy Spirit, and contains much that is wrong. Yet here, Jude, the Lord's brother, is quoting it as a truth that should be believed. If the book of Enoch is God's truth, why isn't it a part of the Bible?

With kind regards
W.S.

Reply from Ritchie

Dear W.

Adolf Hitler was a vegetarian some of the time, and did not smoke or drink, but, as you well know, that did not make him a godly example in everything else he did.

Similarly, the book of Enoch contained a single truth that Jude wished to emphasise, but that doesn't mean that everything else in the book was kosher. As Dr. Ford has stated, even a stopped clock tells the correct time twice a day.

Abundant blessings
Ritchie

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2012

Seminars remaining!

MELBOURNE SEMINAR

15 September 2012, from 10:00am to 4:00pm

Venue:

Carey Baptist Grammar School, Kew Campus
349 Barkers Road, Kew, VIC 3101

Speakers:

Dr Des Ford: *The Greatest Day in the Year - Yom Kippur in Both Testaments.*

Elénne Ford: *Why We Needed Yom Kippur.*



BALLINA SEMINAR

3 November 2012, from 10:00am to 4:00pm

Venue:

Ballina Island Motor Inn,
Pacific Highway, Ballina NSW 2478

Speakers:

Pastor Ron Allen: *Stern of Face and Unrelenting of Heart—Lessons from Stephen versus the Sanhedrin.*

Dr Milton Hook: *The Genre of Genesis 1 to 11 and Some Word Pictures of Salvation.*

PEACHESTER SEMINARS

Fellowship meetings are held at Mango Hill Farm

159 Commissioners Flat Road, Peachester QLD 4519, on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month from 2:30pm - 4:30pm, led by **Dr Desmond Ford.**

TWEED MEETINGS

Fellowship meetings are also held at 9:30am (NSW time) at the GNU office at 2/54-60 Industry Drive, Tweed Heads South, NSW 2486 on selected Saturdays, led by **Pastor Ron Allen.**

Dates for the remainder of 2012 are as follows:

15 September

6 and 20 October

17 November

1 and 15 December



Deep Desire

Douglas Martin

*It is not in tailored dress or faultless speech
Or lofty spires that pierce the sky
We find a satisfying life.
External things ne'er satisfy the deep
desires within.
For stirrings akin to thirst lie hidden in our
breast.*

*Did not Jesus say at Jacob's well, and
made it plain
That everyone who drinks this water will
be thirsty again,
But whoever drinks the water I give him
will never thirst?
Yes, that is what he said at first,
Then added, to silence inner strife,
'Indeed the water I give him shall be in him
A spring of water welling up to eternal life.'*

*Gone the longings of emptiness that
cause distress,
For His peace alone satisfies the human
breast.
Deep desires are satisfied—the fires of
passion,
Ever stirring and blurring our spiritual
vision
Are quenched, and we find satisfaction
In knowing Him and sins forgiven—
A new reality, a touch of heaven.*

*The thirst which motivated our search has
found
A new attraction, and with it a heart
satisfaction.
Gone the sin that robs our peace.
Its release meant we never thirst again,
For vain and empty were the things of
sight—
An inner vision leads us into light and we
look not
At what is seen, but unseen, things of
eternal worth.
And with the Spirit comes new birth,
And deep within our souls are satisfied.*

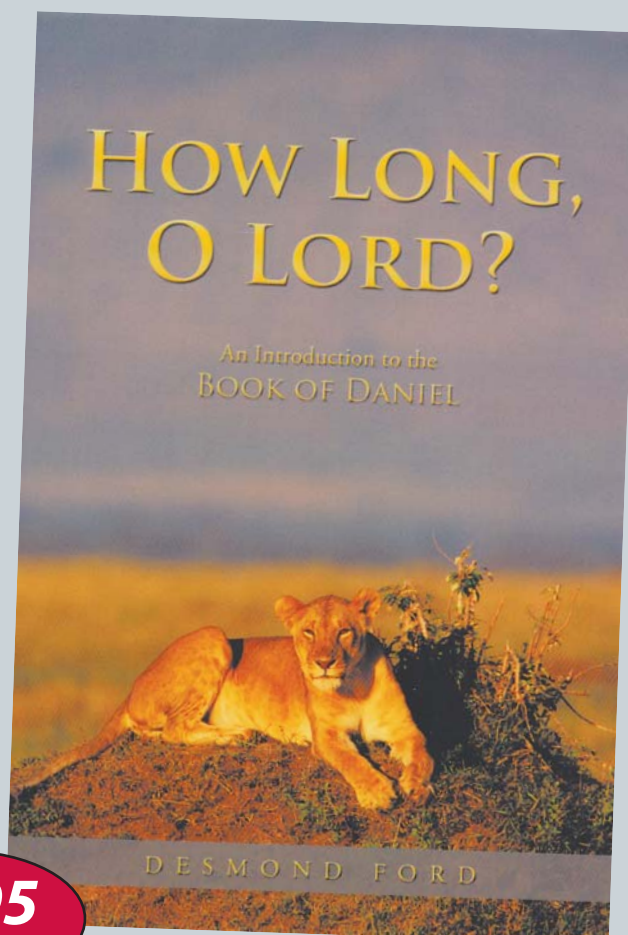
FROM THE PROPHECIES of Daniel flower all New Testament teachings about the future. Christ's final words about coming events (Matt. 24-25; Luke 21 and Mark 13) build on Daniel's predictions about 'the abomination of desolation,' 'a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations,' the 'Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven,' 'the end coming like a flood,' and the destruction of the temple and the end of the world. Our Lord's warning about nations in distress and perplexity (Luke 21:25) has its seed in the first great Apocalypse written by the captive seer in Babylon.

No other book of the Old Testament had such tremendous influence on the New Testament and the early Christian church. Scholars acknowledge that 'apocalyptic was the mother of Christian theology'.

Ours is an age desperately seeking a theodicy—a vindication of God's goodness and justice in the face of evil and the wisdom and benevolence of his ways.

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Note that a number of Des Ford's latest books are already on Kindle, published by iUniverse at:
www.iuniverse.com

The following are available as e-books on
www.amazon.com for prices ranging in price US\$3.99 to US\$9.99:

The Coming Worldwide Calvary
In the Heart of Daniel
God's Odds
Eating Right for Type 2 Diabetes
Jesus Only

Note also that **God's Amazing Grace in Romans** (Right With God Right Now) by Desmond Ford is up and live as an e-book on Kindle.

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The heart of the gospel is forgiveness. Jesus' last words to his disciples were: 'Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in my name to all nations ...'

— (Luke 24:46).