

JULY 2014 / ISSUE #6

UNLIMITED

THE MAGAZINE

A LOST LAMB COMES HOME

It's been a long journey for Sara.
This is her powerful story... (page 2)



GNU **WORD
SPREADS
FAST.**
Good News Unlimited

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GNU RESOURCES ONLINE

A TOUR OF THE NEW GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED WEBSITE

We are very pleased to be able to bring you more and more resources more conveniently through our recently launched website at goodnewsunlimited.com. Here's a quick tour:

Questions Answered

In this section you will find short answers to the top 15 most frequently asked questions about Christianity and the Gospel.

There's also an 'Answers About...' section where all Good News Unlimited resources are available in a variety of topics. Please note that there are many resources yet to categorise so you can check the *Video Archive*, *Audio Archive*, *Articles* and *Good News Blog* pages of the **Resources** section for more resources.

We still have lots of older videos, articles and audio to add and categorise for your searching convenience, and brand new resources are added every week! So keep checking back or feel free to get in touch if you can't find answers to your questions.

Resources

As a media ministry, Good News Unlimited want to bring the good news to you through a variety of media so it is easy to understand and share the good news of Jesus.

Here you'll find an array of resources such as: Videos, Audio recordings, *Articles*, the *Good News Blog*, *Teaching Resources*, past editions of the *Unlimited Magazine*, the *Shop* and more.

If you can't join our fellowship in Milton on Saturdays at 2:15, you can watch the *Live Online Broadcast* from the website - wherever you are.

You can also sign up to receive *Daily Devotions* and the *Unlimited Magazine* here for free.

Again, we are adding more and more resources and shop items every week so check back or get in touch if you need help finding something. We are always happy to hear from you.

Global Community

Because we value community so much, here is a whole section for building community. Here, you can find and join a Gospel Fellowship near you and get the latest news from Good News Unlimited and our friends all over the world.

You can also share your Prayer Requests, Praise Reports, and your Stories of what the knowing the good news of Jesus Christ has done for you. Or be encouraged by reading the stories others have sent in.

If you already have a Gospel Fellowship (small group / life group / home church) and would like to affiliate with us so others can find and join your group, you can register your group here too.

About

Here you can find out all about Good News Unlimited and contact us. We love hearing from you so if you have any questions or feedback about our programs, website, magazine, or other please get in touch.

Donate / Partner

We can't spread the good news about Jesus without your support and it is thanks to you, our wonderful donors and partners in prayer, that we have been able to increase our efforts to bring the Gospel to the world.

▼ JEANNE-MARIE LAWSON

Website Support, Good News Unlimited

EDITORIAL

Alexander Maconochie, an ex Royal Navy man who saw active service in the Napoleonic Wars, was a deeply religious person noted for his generosity and compassion.

In 1840 Maconochie was appointed Commander of Norfolk Island, a penal settlement in the Pacific for the worst offenders in the British Empire. It was reported that the convicts there were afflicted with "harsh punishment verging on the inhumane." The worst of the worst were confined at night, often in double irons, to tiny underground cells that reeked of filth. Floggings were frequent, and executions not unheard of.

Maconochie, however, had two principles that he held foremost regarding the treatment of convicts: firstly, "As cruelty debases both the victim and society, punishment should not be vindictive but should aim at the reform of the convict to observe social restraints", and secondly, "A convict's imprisonment should consist of task, not time sentences, with release depending on the performance of a measurable amount of labour."

Under Maconochie's command convicts were awarded "marks" for good behaviour, or had "marks" deducted for bad behaviour. The purpose of the "marks" system was to make the prisoner the agent of his own reformation. For example, the prisoner who accumulated sufficient good "marks" was rewarded with a day off so he could care for his garden or animal breeding project, or go fishing.

Maconochie also established a library on the island, and a band/orchestra for the prisoners. The reform of these men was more important to him than their punishment.

In spite of the fact that of the 1,400 convicts who were discharged during Maconochie's term, with only a few re-offending, a government visitor to the island reported to the authorities that the prisoners were no longer being treated as they deserved. The consequence of this resulted in Maconochie being recalled to England in February 1844. Unjust as this recall was, it didn't stop Maconochie from working to reform English prisons.

"As cruelty debases both the victim and society, punishment should not be vindictive but should aim at the reform of the convict to observe social restraints"

Ritchie Way
Executive Editor



Reformers, like Maconochie, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Martin Luther King, all had difficult tasks because they dared to challenge the prevailing opinions of their time. They stood alone against the majority who felt threatened by any change to their world that would rob them of some of their power.

There are multitudes of people around the world who have not yet heard the good news of Jesus Christ. And there are still too many professed Christians who have not understood that they are saved only because of Christ and what he did for them. With so many who will need to hear and understand the good news, it has become vital that GNU establish a world-wide gospel network in which each of us can create, inspire, and empower others to spread the good news that we are saved by faith in Jesus and Jesus alone.

Eliezer Gonzalez, who could have had a 'reputable' career with a salary several times the size of what he is currently receiving, has accepted the call of God to lead GNU in this mission. We at GNU seek no reward here, but, with all of you who support GNU with your time, talents or treasure, we hope for our reward on the resurrection day. Many souls, from all over the world, will confess on that day, "We are here because of you."

GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED, LTD.

Good News Unlimited

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Tweed Heads South NSW 2486

Phone: **+61 (0) 7 5524 5040**
Executive Editor: **Pastor Ritchie Way**
Design & Layout: **Sidekick Bare Graphics**
Printer: **Dunham+Company**

The GNU catalogue is available online at
www.goodnewsunlimited.com

Desmond Ford can be seen live by going to
www.desford.org.au and clicking on Dr Des Ford Live.
You can watch or download recent broadcasts in HD also.

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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GNU is supported predominantly by donations from those who believe in its ministry. Gifts are tax deductible in Canada, New Zealand and the USA. Unsolicited manuscripts of interest to Christians of all denominations are welcome, but without guarantee of return. Under certain circumstances, payments may be made for manuscripts at the Editor's discretion. Please send typed manuscripts to the attention of the Executive Editor, Ritchie Way, by e-mail to admin@goodnewsunlimited.com or by post.

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Australia	BSB: 062 683 Account: 10009112
New Zealand	ASB Account: 12-3023-0378560-000
International	SWIFT code: CTBAU2S

A LOST LAMB COMES HOME



Sara's baptism was a celebration of her coming home to God and rejoicing in everything Jesus has done for her.

Background - by Eliezer

I received a phone call last year to visit Sara. She had grown up in a church, been baptised in her early teens but had never understood or experienced the gospel. She had left the church in her teens. Now, many years later, she was in deep trouble.

When I visited Sara I found a person in great distress, who could not even look us in the eye and would not shake our hands. She knew she needed Jesus but didn't know how she could come home.

We spent a long time showing her the love of Jesus through the gospel and praying for her. At the end of that first meeting we saw Sara smiling for the first time, and as we left, she shook our hands. It's been a long journey for Sara. This is her powerful story...

Sara's Story, as She Told It on the Day of Her Baptism – 19 April (Easter Sunday) 2014

A year ago I collapsed in a nervous breakdown that nearly took my life away. I had lost my way from my Christian upbringing and life was a deep black hole. I was diagnosed with a psychosis and faced a future of sedative medication, hospitalisation in a psychiatric unit and constant probing by well-meaning doctors.

I didn't get to the point of psychosis by behaving myself: the pain, confusion and loneliness that I had suffered in childhood, was well covered with a promiscuous and carefree lifestyle. The immorality I threw myself into was wrong and I knew it. I kept saying "that was bad I won't do that again", but it served like any other addiction – it was a band aid, an escape from pain. Band-aids on big injuries don't help; they make them fester.

I knew I needed God: I couldn't help myself and I knew my medication wouldn't make me better. In desperation I called on

God and found Des Ford's sermons online. There I discovered the truth about sin and Jesus. I learned that Jesus was ALL I NEEDED. Des said: "Anyone can come to Jesus – it doesn't matter who you are or what you have been like. You can come just as you are – but he won't leave you just as you are." This was the Good News I needed: not just forgiveness but healing.

Jesus was there all along, but now I had found him and he had my heart – and my undivided attention. I took my pain and suffering to him; it led me to his suffering. My pain was lost when I saw him suffering. I am not saying that I don't feel any pain now, but when I take my pain to him and see the cross and believe in his broken heart for me, my pain dissolves and I am comforted in the power of his love.

It was not easy to face the ugly truth that is inside me, but Jesus said: "Blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in Me". The truth about me is very bad, and Jesus says it how it is. But the truth about Jesus is very good – better than anything. Gentleness and humility as I have never seen, love – relentless love, stability and unshakeable faithfulness, calm control, arms that never let go, ears that always listen, a heart that forgives, and is endlessly giving. Everything I have ever needed is in him.

Look to Jesus and see your Creator die, see your sin finished and Jesus rise with his love for you forever engraved on the palms of his hands. Seek him, pray – pray until he is yours. Now I am going home through Jesus my Lord.

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."

“Anyone can come to Jesus. It doesn't matter who you are or what you have been like. You can come just as you are – but he won't leave you just as you are.”
- Des Ford

ZEBEDEYO MOKAYA: MY STORY

My name is Zebedeo Mokaya. I am 52 years old and I was born in the remote area of Kisii in Kenya. I grew up in a poor family and became a Christian back in 1973 through the inspiration of my mother.

I first understood the gospel of Jesus Christ when I read the book of Romans. It helped me understand what Christ had done for me personally, and that all that he wanted me to do to be saved was to simply confess him as my Saviour.

I have worked as a lay evangelist for many years and I have seen God work miracles. Through the power of Christ, the deaf have been healed and witch doctors converted to Christianity and their evil ways and charms broken.

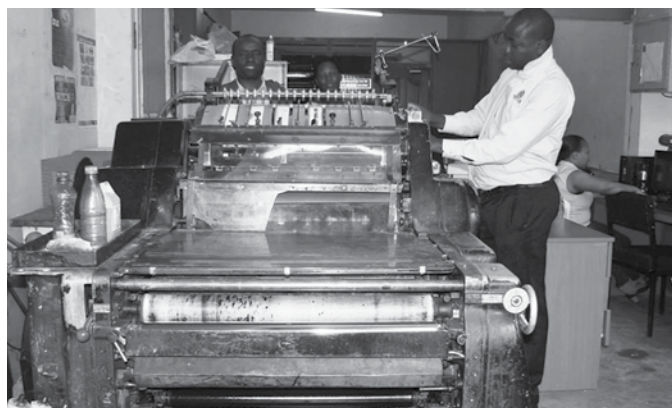
“ I have read Jesus Only in both English and Kiswahili languages. This is a wonderful book because it is so simple and straight to the point.

My Church

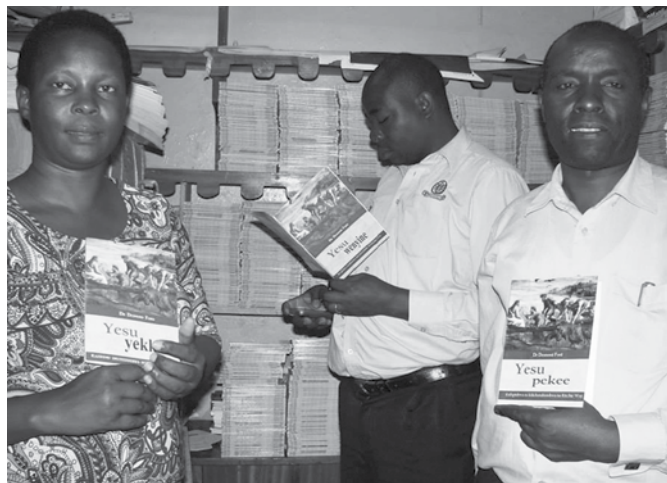
I am a senior elder of a Christian church where we study what Christ has done for us and what he wishes his people to do. Many people have come to know exactly what the gospel is and they have responded positively.

I wanted to get a printing press so people could get reading materials about our Lord. I sold the idea to some friends who assisted me and we bought one printing machine.

The first book I printed was a book of children's songs for church. I realized that my church had adult hymnbooks but nothing for the children. I received good feedback, and I was encouraged to continue in the printing business to help our people.



Zebedeo beside his cord machine



Zebedeo with With Anney, the Production Press Manager and the Machine Operator

Good News Unlimited

My pastor friend, Boaz Nyariki, told me about the work of GNU. I was so much touched and wished I might have a chance of working with GNU. Then he asked me if I could print some books for GNU but at a cheaper price than other quotes, and I accepted the offer. Pr Boaz gave me the email of Dr Eliezer, I connected with him and so we started the work. We have printed 18,000 books in Kiswahili, Kinwaryanda, Luganda, and English languages for the people of Africa.

I have read Jesus Only in both English and Kiswahili languages. This is a wonderful book because it is so simple and straight to the point. I recommend that if possible we print more English books because urban dwellers here in Kenya prefer English to Kiswahili.

My experience printing Jesus Only has strengthened my trust and faith in other Christians across the international divide. I wish to express my gratitude in entrusting me with the printing job. So far this is the biggest printing job I have ever done, and I am looking forward to working together with GNU as God may open the way.

I wish that this book gets to everyone in Africa, because it explains Jesus and the gospel in such a wonderful and simple way. Please let us print more English, French and Kiswahili versions to circulate throughout the entire continent. I also wish to request GNU to use radio and television through satellite broadcasts so that we can reach so many people around our region and the entire African continent easily.

▼ ZWBEDEYO MOKAYA

Kiisi, Kenya

YOU HAVE THREE MESSAGES

How would you react if a heavenly angel came to visit you in person? Are you aware of the fact that the book of Revelation says three angels, each with a life-saving message, have been sent to you (14:6–13)?

The First Angel

The message the first angel brings to you is the “eternal gospel” (Rev. 14:6). This gospel is called an eternal gospel, because it applies from Adam’s time right down through history to the last person on earth. This gospel proclaims that salvation is in Jesus, always and only. “Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). In other words, you are not saved by your beliefs, your suffering, your good works or your church. You are saved by Jesus and only by Jesus.

So what specific message does this angel with the eternal gospel have for you? “He says, ‘Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens and the earth, the sea and the springs of water.’” In other words, the creator of the whole world should be honoured because “the hour of his judgment has come.”



You are not saved by your beliefs, your suffering, your good works, or your church. You are saved by Jesus and only by Jesus.

Note that the angel does not say, “The hour of his judgement will come”; he says “The hour of his judgement has come.” In other words, this judgement is not an event reserved for the future; it is now! It is already under way!

“Hold on a moment,” you say. “I thought you said this first angel came with the gospel. Where is the gospel in God’s judgement?”

The heart of the gospel is that the crucified Jesus was judged in your place so that you could be free of condemnation in the judgement (John 3:18; Rom. 8:1). It was because God’s

judgement against your sins fell on Jesus, that you do not need to stand in the judgement that determines your destiny. On the Cross Jesus exchanged his destiny for yours. That was Jesus’ judgement.

“But,” you protest, “that judgement was in the past, whereas the judgement announced by the first angel is in the present.”

Correct! The person being judged right now is you. “The time has come for [God] to judge everyone” (Rev. 14:7 CEV). You are being judged by your response to what Jesus did for you by becoming your substitute. That’s the message of the first angel.

Like the two criminals who were crucified with Jesus, your future will be decided by your response to the Cross of Christ. If, like the criminal who rejected the crucified Messiah, you choose this world over Christ, you will be lost. Your decision, like his, will determine your destiny. That will be your judgement. That will be the verdict you bring down on yourself. However, if like the other criminal you accept the crucified Messiah because you can see no future in this world, you will be saved; you will be promised a home in Paradise (Luke 23:43). That will be your destiny.

The Second Angel

The second angel warns you against drinking the ‘adulterated’ (polluted) wine of apostate Christianity (Rev. 14:8).

You have two choices: you either drink the wine that represents the atoning blood of Jesus which was “poured out for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:27), or you drink the maddening wine of Babylon’s adulteries (Rev. 17:1–2).

The prostitute, “Babylon”, represents the original church that left her true husband, Jesus, to become one with the world. Her wine has, consequently, been polluted by public opinion; her faith is determined by the world rather than by Jesus.

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Worldly religion glorifies man, not God; it turns its back on Christ and declares that man is his own saviour. People, therefore, according to worldly religion, are saved by what they do and the religious rituals that they believe in and practice, not by what Christ has done.

Beware of any religion that teaches you are saved by what you do. The gospel teaches you are saved by what Christ has done for you, not by what you do for Christ.

Good works are the fruit of your faith, not the root. (See Eph. 2:8–10.) The root of your faith is what Jesus did for you on the Cross. Because Jesus' sacrifice alone is the eternal gospel, Jesus was able to save the repentant thief who was crucified with him. If that criminal had to rely on good works to get him into Paradise, he would have had no hope at all of being saved. The same applies to you.

The Third Angel

The third angel says, in effect, "If you reject the message of the first angel, preferring rather to drink the polluted wine of Babylon, then you will have to pay the full price for your own sins, which is the very worst thing that could ever happen to anyone. But why should you pay for your sins when Jesus has already paid the full price for you?" (Rev. 14:9–11)

If you cling to the false way of worship in either your thinking (mark on forehead) or doing (mark on hand), you are destined for the second death (Rev. 20:14–15). You will die the death that Jesus died for you on the Cross. If Jesus doesn't atone for your sins, you will atone for your own.

This points you back to the message of the first angel, the angel with the gospel that reveals what you need to do in order to secure your future in Christ's kingdom.

▼ **RITCHIE WAY**

Good News Unlimited

“

Beware of any religion that teaches you are saved by what you do. The gospel teaches you are saved by what Christ has done for you, not by what you do for Christ.



WHY DOES GOOD NEWS ASK FOR MONEY?

AN INTERVIEW WITH ELIEZER GONZALEZ, CEO



Good News Unlimited has always been grateful for the generosity of its supporters in helping to maintain its gospel ministry. You will have noticed that recently, GNU has been proactively raising funds for a number of projects, all dedicated to expanding GNU's ministry. Some people have asked about these fund-raising activities, and we thought the questions were so important that we put them to Eliezer.

So.... Why Does Good News Unlimited ask for money?

"Asking" is a Biblical principle. "Ask and you shall receive" (Matt 7:7). Jesus taught that the problem is not with "asking," the problem is with what we ask for. We are to seek first for the kingdom of God and for his righteousness, and not for material things. Our material needs will be supplied to us by God's grace when we ask for the right things first (Matt 6:33).

We should not forget that in this whole passage, in which Jesus tells us to store our treasure in heaven (v.20), Jesus is not talking about airy-fairy spiritual things that do not relate to how we live; he is talking specifically about how we handle the funds entrusted to us.

Asking is never about "us" but rather the support of the work of ministry which is reaping a harvest for the gospel. When we invest in the kingdom of God, this is an investment that goes to our eternal account (Phil 4:17).

If we are to ask Jesus for His blessings upon the work of the gospel, then why should we not ask his followers? For are not the followers of Christ his representatives on earth, his hands and his feet, the stewards of his talents?

As Christ's body here on earth, Christians everywhere are all called to play their part in the work of the gospel, according

to how the Spirit of God may move upon each heart. This can be in many ways – supporting the ministry of Good News Unlimited is just one of these.

God expects those whom he has charged to do the work of the gospel to let the body know what the needs and the opportunities of the gospel are. It is both an honour and a divine responsibility to do this in the name of Jesus; there is no shame in this, only eternal glory for Christ and his kingdom.

But Des never used to ask for money? Why do you need to?

Although I have known Des only in the last 12 months, and I haven't had the blessing of knowing him for many years as many of you have, I can personally vouch for his complete humility and his dependence on God. It is true that Des Ford very rarely, if ever, asked for money in decades past.



It comes from a deep sense of divine calling to take the beautiful gospel that you know and love to a dying world.

One key difference between then and now is that at one time Good News Unlimited had a supporter base of approximately 30,000 people. When I joined Good News Unlimited in mid-last year, the supporter base was around 2,000 people. Today, Good News Unlimited is tackling the challenge of renewal head-on – prayerfully, and in faith.

It is a mark of God's blessing upon Des and the ministry of GNU that the ministry has survived and continued to share

VS UNLIMITED



the beautiful gospel of Jesus for so long. However in recent years, there have been times when the board of GNU was one decision away from closing down the ministry – due to lack of funds.

The board of Good News Unlimited is working with all of its energy to expand the supporter base into new demographics. We face the significant challenge of honouring and continuing to nourish those of you who have been faithful supporters of the ministry of GNU for so long, while finding a whole new generation of new supporters. Please pray for us; it is a huge challenge. Will you help us in this?

Today, the reach and scope of the ministry of Good News Unlimited is greater than it has ever been before in terms of the nature of its activities and the number of countries in which we are operating. This is only because of the direct leading of God in our ministry in the last 12 months.

We don't tell you of the needs and opportunities of the work of the gospel around the world out of pride. We tell you because of a deep sense of divine calling to take the beautiful gospel that you know and love to a dying world. We accept the leading of God with empty hands and humble hearts.

Why should a ministry such as Good News Unlimited, born in adversity for the glory of the gospel, hide its light under a bushel? Why should this ministry limp along as though it had no glad tidings to tell the world? Why should Good News Unlimited content itself with sending those who already love the gospel a magazine every month and a seminar every now and then? We believe that God has called us to do much, much more than that.

It's not business as usual for GNU compared with 12 months ago. We deal regularly with 17 gospel ministries around the

world that are relying on us for help with print and multimedia resources for sharing the gospel. Every day we hear from pastors and Christians around the world about how they are being blessed by the ministry of Good News Unlimited and how souls are hearing and accepting the beautiful gospel we share. We share many of these stories with you.



Why should a ministry such as Good News Unlimited, born in adversity for the glory of the gospel, hide its light under a bushel?

We really do believe in our God-given mission to share the gospel – would you have it otherwise? And because of that, we also believe that we must use effective practices for fundraising for Christian ministries. We believe that we must humbly do God's work, and stay in touch regularly with the body of Christ on earth so that believers may know of the gospel opportunities and victories. We believe that if we do this, then that is how the Lord will provide the resources, according to his will, for the gospel work of GNU. And we believe that there are hundreds of thousands of Christians around the world who will agree with us.

Should we give to Good News Unlimited every time there is an appeal?

Not at all! Some people will simply be blessed by the gospel messages that they will receive through us, and they will never be able to support Good News Unlimited financially. Perhaps they will be able to pray for us.

Continued on page 8

Our letters and the accompanying donations slips are just there for those whose hearts move them to support GNU at that particular time. They are just one way of connecting lovers of the gospel with the work of the gospel. They provide a simple means by which Christians can take action as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

Good News Unlimited does not expect its supporters to give in response to every appeal. We do not believe that everybody can or even should! We certainly do not believe that we are the only Christian ministry worthy of support!

We should always remember that our first responsibility as stewards of the Lord's riches is to look after our personal needs, and the needs of our families. Only then should we prayerfully consider supporting Good News Unlimited.

Please don't feel bad in any way if you are unable to support Good News Unlimited financially at any time. Your prayers and your kind words about our ministry to others are just as important than your money.

Does sending our letters to Good News Unlimited's supporters cost money?

The reality is that building a community always costs something. Community in Christ is the means by which we are able to bless you and you are able to bless us.

We are not just accountable to you for how we invest the Lord's riches. We are accountable to the King of the Universe. As a not-for-profit corporation, Good News Unlimited functions much as any other corporation in a financial sense. It cannot just have expenses; it must also have income. There is a cost to generating income; that is part of investing in the kingdom of God.

Just as in the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25, we are called to invest in kingdom work, so that there may be increase. The principles of the kingdom of God are the same for everyone.

Each one of us on the board of Good News Unlimited lives a humble life. None of us drive luxury cars or live in mansions. We are waiting for our riches in heaven. And until we reach the kingdom of glory, we will serve, like you, in the kingdom of grace.

We are always seeking ways to reduce expenses. As you know we contemplated ceasing the printing of the magazine given the cost involved. However, we have been able to find a way to produce the magazine, our newsletters and letters to our supporters very economically and your support has enabled us to continue to communicate with you in this way. We believe it is important to keep you informed of the progress in taking the gospel to the world while at the same time providing you with content to nourish and strengthen your walk of faith.

Will Good News Unlimited cease to exist when Des Ford passes away?

If Good News Unlimited had not done something different, this would have been true. But Des has told me that he wants his legacy to be all about the gospel. And the gospel is not good news unless it's shared.

So just creating the "Desmond Ford Memorial Collection" in some musty library is not good enough; it dishonours Des and it dishonours the gospel.

One of the many challenges that GNU faces is to prepare for the day when Des Ford will sleep with the righteous. All of us pray that that day may be a long, long time away. However we realize that many people are supporters of GNU specifically because of Des – and so they should be! Des is loved around the world – as a masterful exegete of Scripture and as a fearless proclaimer of gospel truth. However, Des would be the first to say that he would want your support for GNU in the name of Christ, and not of Des.

I am not Des. The day that I claim to come anywhere near his gifts or Christian character would be the day that I was certified by a psychiatrist as being legally insane!

Our aim is that the ministry of GNU will not be a ministry about Des or about me or about any other person, but that the ministry will be about the message. The cross lifted high; Christ alone. This is what Des wants; much more importantly, this is what the Lord wants. That is how GNU will not just survive, but thrive.

The signs of the Lord's hand over the ministry of GNU have been clearly evident in the last 12 months. My own calling in the gospel, and specifically to GNU is clear.

For these reasons, the board and I affirm in faith that the enemy will not obliterate Des' legacy. The ministry of GNU will survive the day that Des falls asleep in the Lord. More than that, Good News Unlimited will seek to play its part in fulfilling the commandment of Christ in finishing the work of taking the gospel to the entire world. If you have given Des comfort and joy in the past, then I invite you to continue to do that by supporting the ministry of Good News Unlimited until the Lord comes again.

► **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

“
And the
gospel is
not good news
unless it's shared.”



*Eliezer and Duncan at the
Christian Media - Australia conference*



GNU MEETS THE CHRISTIAN MEDIA IN AUSTRALIA

Last week, representatives from Good News Unlimited met with key leaders of almost every significant Christian broadcasting media organisation. How was this possible? Because Good News Unlimited attended the Christian Media – Australia annual conference on the Gold Coast. The people attending were me (Managing Director), Duncan Wood (Production Manager), and Elenne Ford (Director).

During the conference, we shared samples of our media work with Christian media organisations, and explored different ways in which we might be able to work together.

Thank you to all those of you who were praying for us during this time. We believe that through the providence of God, we will reap a rich harvest for the work of the gospel as a result of these few days. More news as it develops...

This year Australia, next year the world – for the glory of Christ our King!

▼ ELIEZER GONZALEZ

Managing Director, Good News Unlimited

Attending the 2014 Christian Media Conference, certainly has shown me that we are on the right path in making GNU a **Media Ministry**.

Conversations with other ministry managers, as well as hearing the Key Note speakers at the conference instilled a confidence in our choices at GNU to pursue our plan to become a serious Media and Resource creation ministry.

A common theme I heard while at the conference is that there is a large need for Australian Christian content to be produced, which can be tailor made to suit the various Media outlets.

God's leading is evident, and GNU has the capability of fulfilling this need for Australian Christian media content. He has provided us with all the skills needed in our Supporters and Board Members. I am excited for the future of Good News Unlimited!

▼ DUNCAN WOOD

Production Manager, Good News Unlimited

A MESSAGE FROM ELENNE FORD

Des' daughter and a board member of Good News Unlimited.

We appreciate so much the way that you have prayed for us, volunteered, and given us your financial support. In these ways you have expressed your faith in Christ and shared it with others.

In addition to this, some friends also choose to include Good News Unlimited in their will in the form of a bequest. Doing so ensures that some of the wealth they leave behind contributes directly to the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ with a dying world through the ministry and mission of Good News Unlimited – creating a legacy that affects lives far into the future.

My father and Gill have left a bequest to Good News Unlimited for the preaching of the gospel. In fact, after bequests to the family, most of their estate will be given to Good News Unlimited. I am also making provision for Good News Unlimited in my will, and I know that other board members are doing the same.

If you would like more information explaining how to include Good News Unlimited in your will, please contact Eliezer at GNU on 0413 473 043.





The shortest and the perhaps the most poignant verse in the Bible is found in John 11:35: “Jesus wept.” Jesus wept because His friend Lazarus had died.

Not much is said about Lazarus either before or after the events surrounding his death. But we know that whenever Jesus passed through Bethany, he stayed at the home of Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Even when he was visiting Jerusalem, at times he would make the trip in the evenings back to Bethany to stay with his friend. Jesus felt comfortable in Lazarus' home; he felt safe. Without doubt, Lazarus was one of Jesus' best friends.

I recently lost my father. I know that I will lose my mother soon. Grieving is something we will all go through, and so as in all things, I look to follow Jesus. How did Jesus grieve?

1. To Grieve is Human

The fact that Jesus wept is important for me. It tells me that my Lord in his humanity, also grieved.



Every person grieves.
Even Jesus grieved.

Yes, we can make all sorts of theological statements about why Jesus grieved – that he wept for Jerusalem, that he wept for the people who were crying and wailing at Lazarus' tomb, that he wept for their unbelief, and so on. But sometimes, the more we theologise, the more we distance Jesus from us. None of

those are the principal reasons why Jesus wept. Jesus wept because of the sadness and bitterness of death. Jesus wept because his friend Lazarus was dead. Jesus grieved for him because he loved him.

When you are grieving, remember that what you are feeling is normal. Every person grieves. Even Jesus grieved.

2. Express Your Love

In weeping, Jesus allowed his love for Lazarus to express itself naturally. In grieving you will go through different stages, even perhaps including even denial, anger, guilt, and depression. Anger and guilt may especially come to the fore in cases of a loss by suicide.

In the story of Jesus coming to Lazarus' tomb, you can see Jesus expressing his love as he goes through various stages of the grieving process. He speaks differently to Martha than to Mary. And then, as he surveys the whole sad scene, he is “deeply moved” (11:33).

Although it may not be entirely possible when you are right in the moment, it is significant to recognize that the grieving process, in each of its stages, is an expression of your love for the one you have lost. And when you need to weep, let it just happen. Because like Jesus, you love also.

3. Take Your Time

Jesus was a busy person. This was the start of his last week on earth; he had a lot to do! From another perspective, Jesus knew that he would act decisively to raise Lazarus that very hour!

HOW TO GRIEVE THE JESUS

Even in spite of all this, Jesus took time to grieve for the loss of his friend. Grief is not about the future; it is about the present. Don't feel guilty because you are taking your time in getting back to normal, or in getting back to work.

When you read this story in John 11, it seems clear that Jesus took his time. It wasn't just one tear that glistened in his eye, and which he quickly wiped away. He wept so much that the people who were there remarked, "See how he loved him!" (John 11:36.) In this story, there is a real sense of the passage of time. Take your time; Jesus did.

4. Do You Believe?

Jesus said to His grieving friend Martha,

Jesus said to his grieving friend Martha, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die. 26 Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26, CEB)

This is how Jesus comforted his friends who were grieving. This is how Jesus comforts you.

Your belief in Jesus as the resurrection and the life may not find its fullest manifestation in your moment of greatest sorrow. That's only natural. The reality is that when sorrow overwhelmed him, Jesus also wept.

But your belief in Jesus, even if obscured for a time by coverings of sorrow, is one that eventually you will be able to express fully, and never more than on that amazing day in which you will see your loved ones rise to embrace you once again.

And what if you cannot be certain if the loved one you have lost died in faith? Leave it in the hands of the loving Saviour. I am utterly convinced that we have not yet fully understood the enormity of the power, the grace, and the merciful judgment of our Lord.

The Final Word

The story is told that when the great gospel preacher Dwight L. Moody was a young man, he was asked to deliver a funeral sermon. He decided to draw some inspiration from the funeral sermons delivered by Christ, and so he went searching in the gospels.

To his astonishment, he found that Christ never preached a funeral sermon. Instead, the opposite was true in the gospels: Christ broke up every funeral he attended, and he did it by raising the dead to life.

Jesus will have the final word. It will be his cry like a trumpet when he comes again, that will echo his mighty cry upon the cross: "It is finished." It will be his cry of joy that calls the dead from their tombs. It will be his cry that will forever end all grieving.

And you and I, and all those whom we love and who are today asleep in Jesus, will hear it.

NOTE: I am not a qualified counselor. If you need help in dealing with grief, please see a Christian counselor.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

Managing Director, Good News Unlimited

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIPS MANUAL

Part 3 of 3

7. What happens at a Gospel Fellowship?

i) Eating together

Christian life and growth is fundamentally about community, and community is enriched by eating together. Some of the greatest “gospel” moments in the life of Jesus occurred while he shared a meal with his disciples or with others. So it is important that you eat together as a central activity of your Fellowship. And when you do that, you should do what the early Christian church did: remember why you are a community in Christ by sharing the bread and the wine together that represent the Lord’s sacrifice for each of us, and remembering it with a prayer. The very essence of the gospel is portrayed in the bread and the wine; it is central to our life and mission.

Your meal should be simple, and done in such a way that it is not burdensome for you, and does not detract from the study of the Word of God. Invite each person to bring enough for themselves and a little extra to share.

After the meal, have each person help clean up, or, alternatively, to take their own dishes and cutlery home to wash. Never leave a mess for your host to clean up!

ii) Sharing the gospel together

Your only book should be the Bible, focusing especially on the New Testament, and specifically on the Gospels. The New Testament church would gather together to re-tell and share the stories about Jesus with each other and their friends. That was what church did back then, and this is what church should do today. As you read the stories in the Gospels, as you discuss them and reveal how they apply to your own lives, you are truly sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Here are some guidelines about how to do this. Again, remember that different cultures and circumstances could mean that these guidelines will be applied differently.

Point out that there is to be no judging of others and their words, that no questions are silly, and that no answer given by a member of the group is to be condemned for being wrong.

You need to make it as easy as possible for new people to participate. For this reason, there is also to be no religious or



church jargon or theological talk in your meetings. We want to let the Word of God speak to our hearts for itself. This can be especially difficult for some thoroughly “churched” people to understand. You need to be able to read Scripture in your Fellowship and see what it is telling you, without any theological gymnastics or jargon at all. New people invited to your fellowship are unlikely to come back if there is a vocal person using church jargon to present complicated doctrinal ideas instead of what is clearly found in the Bible passage you are reading.

It is good to read through the Gospels, because the Gospels tell the stories about Jesus. The Gospel of Mark is the simplest and is structured around simple stories, so it is an ideal Gospel to begin with. Start at the beginning and read the first story. The next time you meet, read the second story, and so on. When you have finished the Gospel of Mark, you can go on to another Gospel. The Gospel of John would be ideal. Don’t be tempted to go on to complicated books like Hebrews! Remember the kind of people your Fellowship is for and what its purpose is.

Before your meeting begins ask someone privately if they would be willing to pray for the group. This way you will not embarrass anyone by asking him or her unexpectedly. Keep the prayer simple, with its main focus being upon thanking Jesus for being there with you to guide you.

If possible, make sure all have Bibles in front of them in a translation that is plain and simple to understand. This is so that they can follow the reading.



It is good to read through the Gospels, because the Gospels tell the stories about Jesus.

Having a Bible for each person is not always possible, but it is ideal. And remember never to ask people questions that require them to search through the Bible for answers.

Ideally someone should volunteer or be chosen to read a passage from one of the Gospels. Be careful to make sure that they like reading, and that they are able to read well! Avoid the mistake of reading through the text by going “around the circle”, since there are some people who would be very uncomfortable about this. They won’t tell you that, but if they are embarrassed you may not see them again!

This should be followed by a group discussion of the passage. Be careful about who leads this discussion. Often, the person who knows the most is chosen to lead the discussion, but make sure that this is the right person! What can often happen is that it stops being a discussion and becomes a sermon, and this destroys the effectiveness of the Fellowship. The discussion leader, instead of drawing from what is in his or her head, should be letting the Bible speak for itself.

The discussion leader should not be the person who answers the questions: he or she should be the person who invites others to answer the questions. He or she is to be the facilitator, not the teacher.

Anyone, therefore, should be able to lead the discussion, even someone who has only joined your Fellowship for the second time. Even new people can ask questions.

It is very important to keep the discussion focused on:

- 1) Jesus** What does this story tell us about Jesus?
What kind of person is Jesus?
- 2) Salvation** What does this story tell us about salvation?
What are we saved from?
- 3) Us** What does this story tell us about ourselves?
What changes do we need to make?

Use simple questions like:

- What do you think this passage is about?
- What thoughts came to mind as you read this passage?
- What is there about Jesus that most impresses you in this passage?
- Who do you relate to the most in this passage, and why?
- What can you learn about the gospel from this passage?
- What can you take away and apply in your life this week?

Let the Holy Spirit lead your discussion. The leader of the discussion should remember that they are not there to share their great wisdom or theological perspectives, but rather to let everyone in the group see “Jesus only” from the passage that has been read. In fact, it is often better that the discussion be led by someone who is not a great “theological” or “religious” mind.



It is not a bad thing to let the group determine the direction of the discussion; in fact that can be very valuable. However, a skilful leader will know how to keep the discussion focused on the three points listed above.

Learn from Jesus and ask “open” rather than “closed” questions (e.g. Matt. 12:48; Luke 10:36).

Closed questions require little thought and can usually be answered with a “Yes” or “No”.

Open questions, on the other hand usually begin with the words: “Why...?” “What...?” “How...?” or “Where...?” For example, “Why do we pray?” “What is the best time to pray?” “How important is it that I kneel and shut my eyes when I pray?” And “Where is the best place for me to pray?”

Try to include everyone in the discussion. Don't assume that folk will have any knowledge of Christianity or of the Bible story. I once led a discussion in a group that often referred to Judas, only to have one of the people there say to me afterwards, “I found all that very interesting, but who is Judas?” At all times, remember that the purpose of your Fellowship is to share the gospel with those who have never heard it.

iii) Praying together

You should pray together immediately after the Bible discussion, while the impact of the Word of God is still strong in people's hearts. Let everyone feel free to pray. The leader can offer the first and last prayer.

As you pray, praise the Lord for the sacrifice Jesus made for you, and pray for each other. Don't be bound by tradition and ritual. There are no formulas in prayer. A person's prayer can be an expression of thanks that lasts just 2 seconds, or it can last 30 seconds or more.

You should teach your Fellowship that group prayer is a conversation with God, and not a ritual. So short “bursts” of prayer from various participants in the Fellowship are ideal. And remember, as surprising as it may seem, that closing your eyes is just a non-Biblical tradition! Of course, in some cultures this might be essential, so you must balance this with the need to pray in the way that is appropriate in your culture.

Before ending the prayer, the leader can ask everyone if they have finished, and then the leader can offer the last prayer for everyone. You will be surprised at how long your Fellowship will pray for if you just let people pray. And you will also be surprised at how powerful it is to talk to the risen Lord Jesus!



There are no formulas in prayer. You should teach your Fellowship that group prayer is a conversation with God, and not a ritual.



iv) Building Community together

At some stage during your Fellowship, plan a social activity. A Gospel Fellowship is a community, and a community loves spending time together and doing things together – and not just reading the Bible and praying!

So what do the members of your Fellowship love doing together socially? And more importantly, what would they love to do that they could invite their friends to? Remember the good news of the gospel is not just about you; it is about those who have not heard it. So plan activities where you can have a fun time together with your non-Christian or non-religious friends.

If you are older in age, then that will determine the type of socials that you will enjoy most. If you are a group of young families, you will have some things in common with other young families that will determine how you socialise. If you meet in a prison, there will be limitations on how you socialise, but find out what is permitted and make the most of each opportunity.

The idea is that you make friends first, and then you introduce them to the gospel. Your Fellowship, therefore, must provide occasions for you to make friends, or to introduce your friends to your Fellowship. In your socials, others will see the difference between your community and the world. They will discover that your community is a fun and trustworthy group to be associated with.

Jesus made friends with people first, and then he shared his kingdom with them. So good-time social activities are an important element of your Fellowship.

We also have versions of this manual available for African and Indian cultures. You can find downloadable PDF versions of this manual on our website here: www.goodnewsunlimited.com/resources/gospel-fellowship-manuals

LETTERS *from our 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.



The attraction of Buddhism

Dear Editor,

Buddhism attracts me because it is a peaceful religion, and because the ultimate goal of all Buddhists is to be totally absorbed into the divine consciousness. In my thinking there cannot be a better way to live or a better place for one to end up.

Christianity, by contrast, is anything but a peaceful religion. Take for example, the Inquisition, the Crusades, and the battles between Christians in Ireland.

And as most Christians will end up in hell, it seems to me that Nirvana is a far better option. Don't you agree?

O. C.

Dear O.

While Buddhism is a religion of peace, as is the faith that walks in the footsteps of the Prince of Peace, Jesus, there are many in both religions who hold their faith superficially and not in their hearts. Burmese Buddhist monks, for example, have been indicted for their attacks on and murders of Muslims in their country. One monk, Wirathu, is even known as the Burmese bin Laden.

The destinies of Christianity and Buddhism, however, are quite opposite. Nirvana, for the Buddhist is the extinction or blowing out of the flame of life, while Heaven for the Christian is the ultimate lighting up of the life. The supreme goal of Buddhism is the extinction of desire and individual consciousness, whereas the supreme goal of Christianity is the culmination of desire and individual consciousness. The objective of Buddhism is total emptiness, whereas the objective of Christianity is total fullness.

Buddhism is focused on achieving total absorption into the divine consciousness where there is no pain, no grief, no death, no seeing, no hearing, no feeling, no tasting, no smelling, no knowing – no thing or nothing. It involves the annihilation of the good as well as the evil.

Christianity, on the other hand, celebrates our deliverance from the old order of sin, mourning

and death, into the positive new order of perfect righteousness, perfect health and perfect relationships.

I have to say that, for me, Christianity offers us a far better option than Buddhism. The contrast between the two is like the contrast between light and darkness.



What Judgement?

Hi Ritchie,

Just a quick question: What Judgement was Jesus referring to when he said, in John 9:39, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind"?

J. R.

Dear J.

In the context of the story that precedes this statement – the story about the man Jesus healed who was born blind – there are two types of people: one who couldn't see but who wanted to, and those who could see but choose not to. Jesus judges both on the basis of their desires. One group refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, in spite of his compassionate miracle; the other accepted Jesus as the Messiah because of his compassionate miracle.

Jesus' judgement, which separated those who chose to be spiritually blind from the one who hungered for spiritual vision, is a judgement that determines destinies – a judgement that is still in session at the present time. Every one of us is being evaluated by this judgement to see whether or not we align ourselves with Jesus.

Continued on page 16



Analysis or Not?

Dear Ritchie,

Having received and read GNU for approximately 15 years or more years I wish to make the following observation.

One religious approach or tradition appears to favour detailed academic analysis.

Frequently issues of minute significance to a heartfelt believer are questioned and debated at great length. Forgive me if I overstate it (I do so deliberately to make the point) but God's word is treated as a scientific treatise that must be analysed, dissected and questioned.

The straight-forward and simple words of Jesus such as, "Unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of God", seem to suggest an approach in strong contradiction to the analytical dissecting approach that frequently forms the basis of your letters section.

I'm wondering if those of you forming the GNU group have, retained something of the tradition of your former churches.

Yours, J. C.

Dear J.

Thank you for your good letter.

In God's ark there are giraffes as well as lambs, and both feed at different levels. Consequently there are Bible books such as the Gospels and Acts, and others like the books of Hebrews and Revelation.

For many seekers and new Christians the messages of Jesus that stir the heart are more than sufficient. On the other hand, the analytical approach is also necessary for others who earnestly desire the deep things of the word of God. Maintaining a balance between the two in our magazine is the hard part.



The Carcass and the Vultures

Dear Pastor Ritchie,

I have heard so many interpretations of Matthew 24:28, the statement in which Jesus said, "Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather" that I'm confused. Are you able to interpret these words in a way that will turn the lights on for me? I certainly hope so.

M. K.

Dear M.

This statement is quoted twice: once by Matthew and once by Luke. It is quoted in the context of Jesus'

prophecy about the Endtimes, a prophecy that had its initial fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem, and which will have its ultimate fulfilment in events associated with Jesus' Second Coming and the end of this world.

Luke, who applies this prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 17:37; 21:5-28), implies that the dead body that would attract the Roman vultures would be the city of Jerusalem. Jesus would come in judgement against this city (Matt. 22:1-7), just as he came in judgement against Sodom.

With regard to Jesus' return in the clouds of heaven he warned, "If anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather" (Matt. 24:26-28 RSV). The carcass at this time would be the antichrist, and his moral putrefaction would attract the 'vultures' that feed on his corruption.

It appears that Jesus' enigmatic words were not meant to be limited to a single fulfilment; rather they would apply both to the coming destruction of Jerusalem, and, much later, to the end of the world.



The Coming Wrath

Hi Ritchie,

What was John the Baptist talking about when he referred to "the coming wrath" that the Pharisees and Sadducees should flee from (Matt. 3:7)?

E. J.

Hi E.

In Scripture God's wrath is manifested both in the present and the future. Isaiah, for example, declared that God had summoned the Babylonian army with "the weapons of his wrath – to destroy the whole country" of Israel, because of its apostasy and wickedness (Isa. 13:1-5). Those who did not repent, in response to Isaiah's message, would not only face this wrath that would result in the first death, but would rise in the second resurrection to face the wrath that would result in the second death.

Similarly, John the Baptist's warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees to flee from the coming wrath, pointed to both the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the armies of Rome in AD70 (see Matt. 22:7), and the wrath to be revealed in the final judgement.

HOW TO LIVE

In a Topsy Turvy World

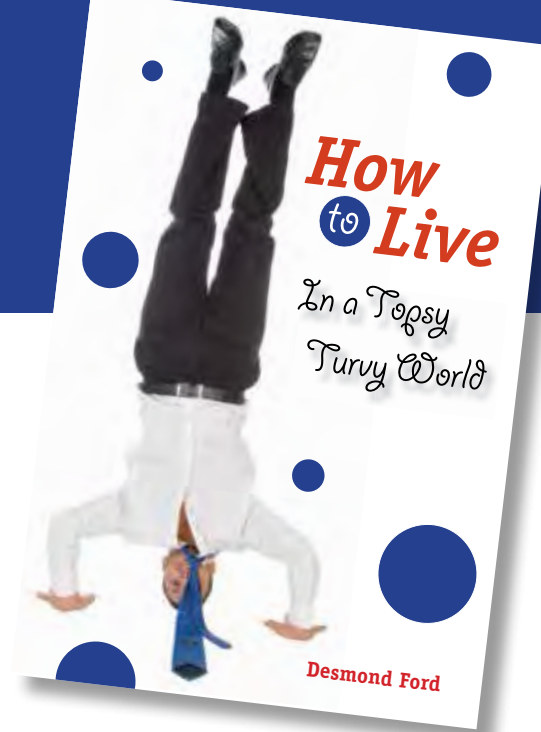
by **Desmond Ford**

The security and confident happiness of childhood is for most people thrown into disarray by the experiences of the later years.

We find the world is not what we expected. Instead it is as though we have been thrown into a whirlpool with a thousand threatening vortices.

Why is our world like this? Are there some keys to understanding it, and to negotiating its dangers? How should we live?

This volume traces the historical reasons for our world's ideological and existential chaos. It demonstrates that the cosmic bleeding giant, of which we are a part can only be survived by those who know and live the Christian gospel. The nature of that gospel is described so clearly that none need miss the blessings purchased by Christ for each one of us.



Available online from:

amazon.com

If you would like to receive email notification of upcoming events, new books, DVDs and general news, please email us at: admin@goodnewsunlimited.com

GNU WORD SPREADS FAST.
Good News Unlimited

AUSTRALIAN FELLOWSHIPS

POTTSVILLE FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship meetings led by Pastor Ron Allen are held at 9:30 a.m. on the following Saturdays in 2014.

March 8, 22 | April 12, 26 | May 10, 24 | June 14, 28 | July 12, 26

Venue: Reef Room
Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre
12 Elizabeth Street Pottsville Beach, NSW 2489

Contact: Ron Allen
Email: carron.741@gmail.com

GOOD NEWS FELLOWSHIP - Milton, Brisbane

GNU meetings are held every Saturday from 2:15pm to 4:00pm, at the auditorium behind the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland (RGSQ) building at 237 Milton Road, Brisbane.

People are invited to come earlier and bring their lunch, beginning at 12:30pm.

After lunch, our pastor, Eliezer Gonzalez, holds a Bible discussion and prayer, beginning at 1:15pm.

Our main presentation commences at 2:15pm.

**LOOK OUT FOR
THE NEXT ISSUE
OF THE GOOD
NEWS UNLIMITED
MAGAZINE!**

INTO ALL THE WORLD



Eliezer Gonzalez
Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

WHEN THE WATERS MOVE...

MIRACLES HAPPEN!

It's a funny thing about water. It's useless unless it moves (unless that is, you're ice-skating!). Fish die in still waters. But when water moves amazing things happen. You can have fun swimming in it, you can drink it and quench your thirst, and when it rains it soaks the ground to make crops grow.

When the water moved in the Red Sea, it meant liberation for the people. When you were baptized the water moved for you too!

In Jerusalem there was this pool at Bethesda, and when an angel stirred up the water, miracles happened. The waters moved as if they almost anticipated the day that Jesus would come to visit. And he did! Read about it in John 5.

You see, water in the Bible can represent "peoples, multitudes, nations and languages" (Rev 17:15).

Everywhere around the world today the waters are moving. People around the world are moving as the gospel is preached, as the word of salvation goes out, in anticipation for the day when we will stand face to face with Jesus. And as the waters are moving, miracles are happening!

You can see some of them for yourself in this issue of Unlimited magazine. Right now, Pr David Kayumba is on his gospel mission

to Africa, and I can hardly wait to hear his news when he returns!

You see the miracles happen when the waters move. It is the angels of God who make us move to announce the good news of Jesus Christ. It is the Spirit of God who moves upon the face of the waters and causes them to move (see Genesis 1:1).

And so I want to thank God for you – you whom God's spirit has cause to move – who support the ongoing gospel outreach of Good News Unlimited with your prayers, your means, and your sweat and tears. And I thank God for all those people whom he is causing to move around the world in readiness for the enormous harvest to come – the great gospel harvest.

Because when the waters move, miracles happen!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

