

UNLIMITED

THE MAGAZINE

HOW JESUS FOUND ME EVEN AFTER THE HORROR OF RWANDA PRISCILLA'S STORY

"She was hurt greatly, but your message has conquered her heart for Christ." (page 2)



Romans: The Spiritual Masterpiece 04

How To Experience a Great Miracle 07

Is The Prosperity Gospel Good News? Part 1 08

Don't Blame God 10

The Simple Truth about Integrity 11

Can We Trust The Bible? 14

**NEW
BOOK**

Trimillennialism: Revelation 20 and the Final Judgement

RITCHIE WAY

Two quite different interpretations of Revelation 20 emerged early in the history of the Christian Church. Around AD 120 Papius taught that there would be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ would be established on this earth (ANF 1.154). On the other hand, Victorinus of Pettau, who was martyred by emperor Diocletian about 303, wrote, 'Those years during which Satan is bound are during the first coming of Christ—even to the end of the age. They are called a thousand years...' (ANF 7.358). So, in the theological language of today, Papius was a premillennialist, and Victorinus an amillennialist.

Amillennialism teaches that the millennium is the period between the first and second advents, whereas premillennialism teaches that the millennium is the period after the second advent. These two interpretations of the millennium are the only two that have had general and enduring acceptance in the Christian Church. The proponents of each view have generally regarded their particular interpretation of the millennium as the only correct one.

This ground-breaking book, *Trimillennialism: Revelation 20 and the Final Judgement*, claims that these two views are complimentary rather than conflicting: Amillennialism, portrays the fulfilment of the prophecy of the 1000 years, while premillennialism portrays its consummation. If this is true,

however, in what way was this prophecy inaugurated because it is not possible to have a fulfilment and a consummation without an inauguration?

The thesis of *Trimillennialism: Revelation 20 and the Final Judgement* is that the prophecy of Revelation 20 had its **inauguration** in the ministry of Jesus; that it is now being **fulfilled** by the Holy Spirit in this present age; and that it will be **consummated** by the Father in the age to come.

There is very little gospel in most interpretations of the millennium but this book is an exception because its most significant contribution to our understanding of the millennium is not just its tripartite nature, but that the very essence of the one thousand years of Revelation 20 is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For many readers, *Trimillennialism: Revelation 20 and the Final Judgement* will also provide new insights on the nature of Christ, his death, his kingdom, man before and after the Fall, the new birth, God's final judgement, and the destiny of the unrepentant.

Trimillennialism: Revelation 20 and the Final Judgement has been written in plain English in order to make it readable for as many people as possible. The use of theological jargon, therefore, has been avoided. Where this has not been possible, definitions have been provided in the footnotes.

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EDITORIAL

What is the purpose of Good News Unlimited? What does GNU exist for? GNU has a message for the world but what is the essential core of that message?

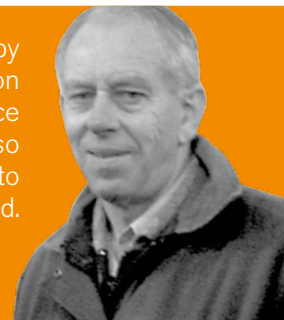
The group of people who began GNU used to believe they were saved by belonging to a particular church or denomination, as millions of Christians still do. This is known as salvation by denomination. GNU began back in the 1980s when these people discovered that they were not saved by faithfully attending church, or by their creed, or by following some religious ritual or practice. Instead, they were saved by Jesus, who died for them on the Cross. The experience of this knowledge was so liberating they wanted to share it with the world. They believed that God has his people in many different churches. They were not "anti" any denomination; they were simply "pro" Christ.

So what is GNU's core message? It is: "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). When Peter confessed his faith in Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus said, "Upon this rock (man's confession of Jesus) I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Only those who, like Peter, accept Jesus as their Messiah, constitute Christ's church or assembly. This is known as salvation by Christ alone. He alone is the way to the Father (John 14:6).

Jesus promised Paradise to the repentant felon who was crucified beside him, even though that man had done nothing to earn his salvation. He was saved solely because he put his trust in Jesus. He could not claim salvation on the basis of his faithful membership in a religious organisation; he could not present a catalogue of good works as the reason why the door to heaven should be opened to him; and he could not assert his belief in a set of doctrines as a passport to God's eternal realm. All he could do was put his trust in Jesus, and that was enough to give him a warm welcome into Paradise. Jesus, through his sacrifice on the Cross, had paid the full cost for his citizenship.

Instead, they were saved by Jesus, who died for them on the Cross. The experience of this knowledge was so liberating they wanted to share it with the world.

Ritchie Way
Executive Editor



As Jesus was on his last journey to Gethsemane, he told his disciples the final parable of his ministry: the parable of the vine (John 15:1-8). In this parable Jesus said he was the vine and his disciples were the branches. Jesus emphasised that they would have life only as long as they were connected to him. If they were cut off from him, they – and their relationship with God – would wither and die.

Life – eternal life – is possessed only by those who are one with Christ. There is no life apart from him. "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12).

If God's Spirit is giving you a desire to have Jesus in your life, just ask him to come in. He always fulfils this request.

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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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PRISCI

HOW JESUS FOUND ME EVEN AFTER THE HORROR OF RWANDA

Priscilla was moved by gratitude to God as she listened to the pre-baptism message beside the sea.

Note from Eliezer – Priscilla was baptised at Ostend, Belgium on Wednesday, 16 July 2014 at the end of the Gospel Revival Week run by Good News Unlimited in Belgium, Brussels. Her story was translated by Pr David Kayumba from a recording of her audio testimony shared at the gospel fellowship which she started in her home on the very day of her baptism.

All my life, I attended my traditional church with my family and did all religious rituals without understanding. I did not question anything until my entire family - parents, husband, brothers and sisters were wiped out in the Rwandan Genocide. I have been angry with God since that time. My own bitter life experience gives me every reason to hate God and some people!

The fact that my people perished the way they did, shook my simple religious life. I became bold in questioning anyone who told me anything about God. You see, in my family, we did all religious rituals honestly. We even had saints to talk to. But these did not shield my family and myself from what happened!

I met several people who tried to bring me back to God, but I got more bitter and hated them for this. Many times I thought

about going back to God and this meant either returning to the religion I grew in or going to other faiths. But my heart wanted to appease my departed parents. I became more and more confused. I had bad company of friends who did not fear God. And we used to laugh at those who get saved of their many sins. We saw ourselves as better people! Every time I wanted to take a stand to follow Jesus, I would be held back by the bitterness in me and the peer pressure.

I started meeting people who lost every relative in the Rwanda Genocide. These people seemed more positive than myself, who at least had some relatives. I began to realise that the more I forgot about God the more I forgot myself, and this is painful!

Three years ago, I got very sick, so no one knew I would survive. One night of the three months hospitalisation, I heard a male voice saying, "Don't worry, you will survive". In my little strength, I said a few things to God in gratitude. Surely I did survive. God intervened in my sickness while I hated him and ridiculed him. From that time I decided to try to develop a relationship with God. I warned my friends that I would not listen to anyone discouraging me on my quest to find Jesus.

I hated my past pride and hatred I had for God. I have been wanting to make a headway, but I have not been finding a way. Thanks to God the right time came last week. I had an opportunity to listen to Pr. Eliezer from Good News Unlimited

I began to realise that the more I forgot about God the more I forgot myself, and this is painful!

PRISCILLA'S STORY

at the Gospel seminar in Brussels. He spoke to me in a language I never heard before and it turned me around in a way I cannot explain. All my friends are surprised and others are angry at me.

I had an important question whose answer I have been seeking for a long time. It reflected the burden I have walked with: whether all sins are equal and about forgiveness. I got a great answer that raised me up from hopelessness and placed me on a strange place I have never stood before. I nearly cried because of an exceeding joy that came into my heart. I was this lost sheep and Jesus found me. Now I know, no one can teach me how to forgive, only Jesus who forgave me. This was the burden that had prevented me from surrendering to Christ. I did not know how to forgive, all I knew was hatred for my many enemies.

Pr. Eliezer spent a lot of time on this question and I felt a great load falling off me. He made a call for baptism and I was ready to do it for my Lord who had been seeking after me. I stood alone at the invitation to get baptised. I thanked God that I was standing alone, because I perfectly fitted the lost sheep parable. There I was alone and being found. I found complete rest in knowing that my name is now written in heaven.

When David asked me if I was ready to get baptised, I told him, "I am ready now". The following day we drove 89 km to the sea

and Pr. Eliezer baptised me. God used Pr. Eliezer to bring me to see Jesus in the light I had never seen him before. I desire to love Jesus more and more and I pray for strength to keep in faith. This day, I will always remember. And by the way, I have been struggling with three issues here, but all three were solved that same day!

Pr. Eliezer told me the story of my forgiveness in Christ. I was running away from the only person who loves me this much. I found that the blood of Jesus is the basis for me to forgive others. I was forgiven so much! Now I stand rejoicing in the Church of an Empty Tomb.

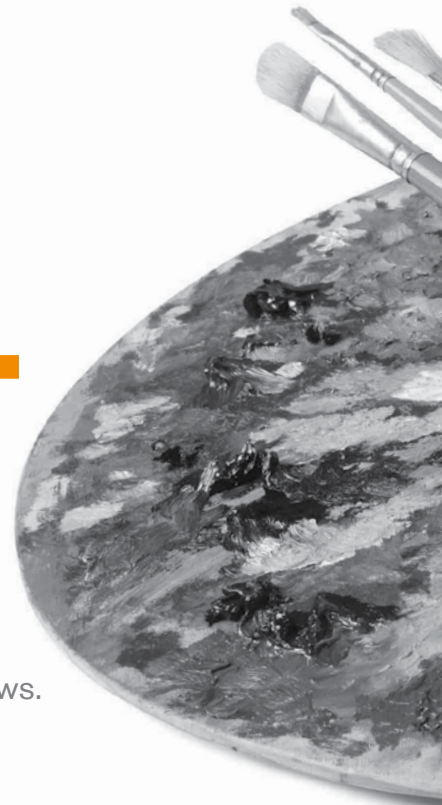
I was humbled when I was given a privilege to stand up in our home fellowship to give the gift [JESUS ONLY] from Good News Unlimited to my invited friends. What an experience!

Note from Pr David – I have translated Priscilla's testimony as she gave it except for her many tears and those of the people present. It is very hard to say what her many tears said. She was hurt greatly, but your message has conquered her heart for Christ. She told us at the end of the meeting: "I have no doubt – Good News Unlimited was sent for me".

Rejoicing with Priscilla after her baptism. From L to R – Dr Eliezer Gonzalez, Pr David Kayumba, Priscilla, Ellen Kayumba, and Priscilla's invited friend.



ROMANS: THE SPIRITUAL MASTERPIECE



Many testify that Romans is a spiritual masterpiece. It prevents bad religion and promotes true religion. Romans encourages conversion, revival, true motivation, and faith. It identifies the only two religions in the world: The false religion of Good Views and the true religion of Good News.

Frederick Godet, the French theologian, called Romans, "The cathedral of the Christian faith." It is, indeed. It's the most important document ever written.

Romans is the only book in the Bible that systematically tells us of the plan of salvation. The only book. If you don't understand Romans, you really don't understand the Bible.

Romans was written by the chief theologian of Scripture, the apostle Paul. Jesus made the atonement, but Paul explained it. The atonement couldn't be explained until after it was made.

Romans is Paul's last will and testament, summing up the essence of what he knew by experience. When you read Paul, you're not just reading doctrinal material, you're reading Paul's lifeblood. You're reading his life experience. Romans is testamentary. It's Paul's last will and testament.



If you don't understand Romans, you really don't understand the Bible.

Romans Prevents Bad Religion

Romans is prophylactic. We use the word "prophylactic" to talk about preventive things, about preventing problems in medicine. We use it here to mean preventing problems in religion.

I repeat, most religion is bad religion. But if we understand Romans, we'll get religion straight.

Tyndale called Romans, "The light and way into the whole Scriptures." Luther said Romans is, "The chief part of the New Testament and the purest gospel." Calvin said, "Every Christian should feed upon it every day as the daily bread for his soul." Coleridge said Romans is, "The most profound piece of literature in existence," thereby agreeing with Frederick Godet.

F. F. Bruce said, "Beware when you begin to study Romans. Anything can happen."

Augustine's Conversion

Monica was a great Christian lady who lived in Carthage, North Africa. She had a tempestuous son, Augustine.

Augustine lived a very loose, licentious life, and Monica was worried about him. He announced he was taking off for the big city of Rome. (He could live it up and sin better there.) Monica worried.

But in Rome, Augustine's experience paved the way for his conversion. One day he was in a garden in Milan when he heard a child chanting and calling. The only phrase that registered with Augustine was the Latin expression, "Take and read."

He had with him a manuscript of the New Testament. His interest was aroused. He took it and read. The first words he saw were: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14 KJV).

Our world is different because of Augustine. And Augustine became different because of Romans.

Romans and Revivals

Since the days of Christ, these men we have mentioned have changed the world. Paul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley were great men who were transformed by Romans. F.F. Bruce was right when he said, "Be careful when you read Romans. Anything can happen." All the great revivals in the Christian world have been triggered by this book.

Romans was responsible for the revival in this country under Jonathan Edwards. For the revival under Wesley in England. And that of George Whitefield in this country and England. And Luther in Germany. All great and true Christian revivals are begun by this book.

Tread carefully when you study it. Anything can happen.



However, law cannot muzzle desire. Law is helpless and hopeless to restrain us from evil. The only motive in the world that will keep me from sin is the knowledge that God is mine and I am his.

No commandment will keep me from sin. No law will keep me from sin. No creed can do it. Not even fear of my brethren can do it-and that's a very potent fear, because we want to be accepted.

The only motive that can keep me straight is the knowledge that God is mine and I am his. That's the essence.



The only motive that can keep me straight is the knowledge that God is mine and I am his.

Law and Motivation

Romans tells us the truth about God. It tells us the truth about religion. It tells us the truth about how to live. These things we must know.

But Romans will also motivate us. You see, we're all conscious of law. You don't have to have someone read the Ten Commandments. Everybody has convictions of right and wrong, whether in church or out of church.

Faith - Not Sectarianism

Romans is a book about faith, hope, love, and the cross. It says nothing about sectarian shibboleths.

You won't find any fierce debate here about the nature of the Lord's Supper. Romans takes baptism by immersion for granted, but it doesn't try to polemicize on the matter. When it talks about the keeping of days, it makes it quite clear that the question of days is not nearly as important as faith in Jesus Christ.

Continued on page 6

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.

LEAVE A
legacy
THAT
IMPACTS
PEOPLE
FOR
YEARS
TO COME

Faith-the Key Word of Romans

That's the key word of Romans - **faith**. You find it 64 times throughout the book. You find it in the very first chapter, verse five, 'The obedience of faith.' And it's the last word of the book before the doxology, the same phrase - "the obedience of faith."

Life would be very different if Paul had written it the other way - "the faith of obedience." That would be dreadful. But he wrote, at the beginning and the end, "the obedience of faith." It's as if he's saying, "Only that which is done because of your faith in Jesus Christ is acceptable to God. Nothing else. Everything else done before faith in Christ is simply a sin. It falls short because it doesn't have that which stamps it as authentic - faith in Christ."

The only obedience God will accept is that which grows out of faith in Jesus Christ. It's wonderful that Romans should finish with that word - "faith." Faith is the very last word in the very last chapter just before the closing doxology (Romans 16:26 RSV, NRSV).

A Circular Letter

Many ancient manuscripts of Romans don't have chapter 16 - because it's a list of names. Probably what happened early on was that an edition of Romans without chapter 16 was circulated among the churches. The chapter that had the names of the Christians in Rome who Paul knew was left off, because it was only of local interest.

Still it's a chapter with many beautiful little statements. Paul greets Priscilla and Aquila, who risked their lives for him (15:3-4). Paul speaks tenderly of Rufus and his mother, "who has been a mother to me," says Paul (15:13).

A circular letter among the churches would be the only Bible some early Christians had. They recognized that Romans contained the sum and substance of Christianity.

They had oral traditions about Jesus, and these were circulated widely. But Romans was the only **written** Bible some people had.

That's why so many manuscripts of Romans bring it to a conclusion without chapter 16, because it went to all the churches.

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Life would be very different if Paul had written it the other way - "the faith of obedience." That would be dreadful.

Only Two Religions

Romans is a book about true religion, majoring in the majors. It's a book that tells the truth in such a way as to warn us against its opposite.

There are only two religions in the world. The Bible refers to them symbolically as the religion of Jerusalem and the religion of Babylon. These are mentioned in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, and they're mentioned in the last book, Revelation. They're mentioned in a middle book, Daniel, also.

One religion is the religion of good views. That's **not** the Christian religion, though many Christians practice it. The other is the religion of good news.

There's a big difference between good views and good news.

“

The false religion looks at human activities, human achievements; but true religion looks at the cross.

Good News, Good Views

The false religion of good views centers on humanity. The true religion of good news centers on God. The false religion looks at human activities, human achievements; but true religion looks at the cross.

False religion makes Christ first of all our Example. That's a miserable teaching. It would depress any of us who are honest. You cannot compare yourself with Christ without feeling very far gone.

True religion looks upon him as a Substitute. "Jesus was my substitute on Calvary, and he's my substitute in the last great day." None of us can get through the judgment without that Substitute.

Bobby Burns said, "My life isn't what it should be." He said, "It's not even what it could be." He spoke for all of us. Our life isn't what it should be. Our life isn't what it could be, or what we would have it be.

But we have a Substitute in the judgment. That's Christ.

▼ DR DESMOND FORD

Founder, Good News Unlimited





That miracle transforms people from being focused on helping themselves, to being focused on helping others. That miracle reveals to others what God is like.

HOW TO EXPERIENCE A GREAT MIRACLE

What, in your thinking, was the greatest of all miracles, a miracle that could never be trumped? Was it the parting of the Red Sea, or the raising of Lazarus perhaps? For me the greatest of all miracles took place when God became a man and died in our place. This miracle showed us what God was really like.

Before the time of Jesus no human would ever have had the temerity to assert that the Lord God Almighty would humble himself in such a manner, simply because gods didn't serve people; people served the gods. Gods didn't sacrifice themselves for their subjects; their subjects offered sacrifices to their gods. Yet the second Person of the Godhead exchanged his crown of life for a crown of thorns, and his throne of glory for a blood-soaked throne of wood. Here is what the Bible says about this incredible event:

Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit. But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born as a man and became like a servant. And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross (Php. 2:6–8, NCV).

All the offspring of the Lord Jesus are, like him, a union of the human and the divine; they have the Spirit of Christ living in

them (Rom. 8:9–10). The Lord lives within every one of the redeemed – without exception. If the immortal God lives within you, you are immortal (1 John 5:11–12), and if the righteous God lives within you, you are righteous (Rom. 8:10).

When God takes up residence in your empty temple (1 Cor. 6:19) your life suddenly has purpose, and is filled with a love, joy and hope that wasn't there before. And, because Jesus is within you, you will be a true servant like him, willing to sacrifice yourself for the sake of others.

To have Christ within you is the greatest miracle being witnessed on earth today. That miracle transforms people from being focused on helping themselves, to being focused on helping others. That miracle reveals to others what God is like.

If you really want God to come into your life and make you a blessing in the world, a sincere prayer inviting him in is all that is necessary. It is a prayer he delights to answer.

Well, what are you waiting for?

▼ RITCHIE WAY
Editor, *Good News Unlimited*



IS THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL GOOD NEWS?

PART 1: DID JESUS DIE TO GIVE YOU A BIGGER CAR?

Why Do So Many Preachers Like this Gospel?

Why have a series on the 'prosperity gospel'? This series is needed because in my recent travels I have discovered that in many parts of the world (e.g. Africa and India) the only gospel that people know is the 'prosperity gospel'. This is a gospel that says that if you are a true follower of Jesus, then God will bless you with all kinds of material blessings, like a bigger bank account, a bigger house, a better car and abundant health. If you give enough money to a particular preacher or religious organisation, then you can access these blessings. That's why so many preachers like this type of gospel; they are often the ones who end up with the bigger cars.



The message of Jesus was "Follow me". For this reason, the life of Jesus Christ becomes a model for what true believers of the gospel can expect.

People are made to feel guilty, because they are told that if they aren't experiencing a full menu of material blessings, it is because they are still sinners and not true believers. They need to do more to be saved, including, often, giving more money. The tragedy is that this false gospel is not only preached in wealthy parts of the world; it is especially attractive and prevalent in parts of the world where people literally have nothing, and

preachers and churches become wealthy at their expense.

Will You Follow Jesus?

To be a Christian means to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because Christians believe in the message of Jesus Christ, and they have accepted Him as their Lord, to be a Christian also means to follow Jesus Christ. The message of Jesus was "Follow me" (Matt 19:21, Mark 1:17; 2:14; 10:21; Luke 5:27; Luke 9:59; etc.) For this reason, the life of Jesus Christ becomes a model for what true believers of the gospel can expect.

According to the prosperity gospel, you would have expected Jesus in Judaea to be a wealthy man, living in a stylish mansion, with his very own chauffeured chariot. You would have expected Jesus to have many friends, to be immensely popular and to have reached the heights of worldly achievement. You would have expected Jesus to lack nothing.

If you follow Jesus, then you know that is not true. Jesus was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; he was "despised and rejected by men" (Isa 53:3). The Lord of the gospel is he who famously described his homelessness by saying, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). He didn't even own a coin with which to pay his taxes (Matt 17:24–27). When Jesus died, he died the death of the lowest of criminals, crucified naked, abandoned by his friends, and scorned by his national and religious leaders.

In Part 1 of this series, I want to look at the Biblical models for those who believe the gospel. In Part 2, I want to consider who the true god is of the 'prosperity gospel'. Finally, in Part 3, I want to look at how to receive the blessings of the gospel.

Do You Deserve Better Than Jesus?

If you think you deserve better, then consider the words of Jesus, who taught us that his followers will not be treated better than he was by the world,

If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you (John 15:18–20).

When Jesus talked about what it cost to follow him, the gospel of John records that,

From that time many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more (John 6:66).

And then the evangelist records one of the saddest things that Jesus ever said,

Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (v.67).

Oh yes! It costs to follow Jesus. In fact, it may well be said that poverty and rejection in this world are often one of the marks of a true believer in Jesus Christ.

Do You Deserve Better than Jesus' Followers?

This was certainly true for John the Baptist. He was the first gospel preacher, the one who stood on the banks of the Jordan River and cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:19). Was he not a true believer? He died decapitated in the most horrible dungeon. Jesus, who could so easily have saved his cousin John, testified that,

among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he (Luke 7:28).

This was also true for the apostle Paul, the one who considered all of his material advantages as loss and as dung for the excellency of knowing Christ (Phil 3:8). So what kind of life did Paul lead after he accepted the gospel? Hear him for yourself,

in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in

perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness (2 Cor 11:23–27).

Jesus knew nothing of the 'prosperity gospel'. John the Baptist knew nothing of the 'prosperity gospel'. The apostle Paul knew nothing of the 'prosperity gospel'. Every single New Testament disciple of Jesus Christ died a martyr for the gospel: no earthly prosperity there. So why should you listen to a word of this falsehood?

What is the Test of True Discipleship?

Yes, God may certainly choose to bless you with material blessings. And if he does, you may be sure that he has done so for only one reason: so that with whatever he has given you, you may provide for the work of Jesus Christ on earth. However, material possessions and physical blessings (even of healing) are never the test of true discipleship.

Here is the true test of discipleship, from the words of the Lord himself. A believer in the 'prosperity gospel' came to Jesus:

Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me" (Mark 10:21).

Is Calvary Enough for You?

For too many Christians, forgiveness of sin is not enough, the fruit of the Spirit is not enough (Gal 5:22–23), and the presence of Jesus in their lives is not enough (Matt 28:20). Even eternal life is not enough (John 3:16). For too many Christians, Calvary was not enough. They want more from God.

These people want a gospel that Jesus never preached, an earthly life that Jesus never promised, and material blessings that Jesus and his followers never had.

Jesus didn't die to give you a bigger car. He died to give you eternity.

So what about you? Why do you follow Jesus?

ELIEZER GONZALEZ

Senior Pastor,
Good News Unlimited



God may certainly choose to bless you with material blessings. And if he does, you may be sure that he has done so for only one reason: so that with whatever he has given you, you may provide for the work of Jesus Christ on earth.



DON'T BLAME GOD

It's become the fashion amongst some writers of anti-Christian material to blame God for all the trouble in the world. They put God on trial – and find him guilty. Judging the omniscient God seems to me to be either very brave or very foolish.

An 18 year old girl was diagnosed with a deadly melanoma. Her mother, a committed Christian, announced that God would bring glory to his name by healing her daughter in answer to prayer. She did not consult God to see if that was what he wanted, but made the decision for him. She did not seek medical treatment, believing “the greater the challenge, the greater the miracle when God steps in.” But this time God chose not to step in. The daughter died, and her mother, humiliated, turned her back on the Lord.

“Whenever we blame God, we are exalting ourselves above him, claiming that we are right and he is wrong.

Charles Darwin gave up plans to enter the Anglican ministry when his favourite daughter, Annie, died. He felt God was punishing him, so turned his back on the Lord. As a result this man, who could have been a great blessing to mankind, led the world down a dead-end road.

Whenever we blame God, we are exalting ourselves above him, claiming that we are right and he is wrong. But who among us is capable of making such a judgment? The following story, told by Bob Gass, reveals the power of letting God guide:

Roger Simms was hitchhiking when he was picked up by Mr. Hanover. As they drove, Roger felt God urging him to share his faith. He overcame his fear and asked the man if he would like to receive Christ. Mr. Hanover stopped,

bowed his head and, weeping, accepted Christ. ‘This is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me,’ he said. Shortly afterwards, he dropped Roger at his house and drove on to Chicago.

Years later, while preparing for a business trip to Chicago, Roger found Mr. Hanover’s business card and decided to look him up. He asked the receptionist at Hanover Enterprises if he could see Mr. Hanover. “No,” she replied, “but his wife is here”.

“You knew my husband?” the woman asked. Roger told her about the car journey and her husband’s decision for Christ.

“When was that?” she asked.

“May 7th, five years ago, the day I was discharged from the army.”

She wept, telling Roger: “Right after he let you out of his car, he was killed in a head-on collision. I had prayed for my husband’s salvation for years, believing God would save him. I thought God had not answered my prayer, and I stopped living for Him.”

That day she recommitted her life to Christ.

How wrong we can be when we judge and blame God!

In conclusion, I give you a beatitude that is not in the Bible, though it could well be. Keep it handy for life’s tough times: “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God in all their circumstances.”

▼ **RITCHIE WAY**
Editor, Good News Unlimited



THE SIMPLE



TRUTH ABOUT



INTEGRITY



What would our world be like if everyone on the planet had integrity? There would be no military, no judicial system, no police department, no jail cells and no need to lock our front doors. Life on planet earth would improve dramatically as everyone could be trusted to tell the truth and deliver on his or her promises. Children would not lie to their parents, advertisers would tell us the full story on their products, and politicians would not tell us only what we want to hear to get elected. Many of the world's problems would be solved if everyone were honest and trustworthy.

The reality is that human beings have a natural propensity to lie, cheat and steal for their own selfish desires. But Christians are held to a higher standard, because we worship the God of truth. Jesus said that he was the way and "the truth" as opposed to the devil, whom he called the "father of lies". As representatives of Christ we are called to a life of integrity. Having integrity means that we can be trusted to be honest and moral people in a world full of darkness and deception.

Integrity is about committing ourselves to doing the right thing, but even more, it is about admitting when we are wrong. While some people have more integrity than others, not one of us can claim a record of moral perfection. In fact, the apostle John wrote the following words in 1 John 1:8 (KJV): "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Since not one of us has a perfect record of honesty and integrity, we are only deceiving ourselves if we claim otherwise.

There is hope for those who are willing to confess their sins before God who forgives those who acknowledge their moral failures and who turn to Jesus for the strength to heal. John

also writes: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Integrity not only calls us to be honest with others, it calls us to be honest with ourselves and with God, who alone can give us the strength to do the right things.



Integrity not only calls us to be honest with others, it calls us to be honest with ourselves and with God, who alone can give us the strength to do the right things.

God forgives our sins when we are honest and confess, but sin is deadly and can lead to great harm when it is cherished. There is no excuse for sins of rebellion against the God who has commanded us not to lie, steal, or cheat our fellow human beings. Christians are called to the highest standards of love and truthfulness and God will bless those who are obedient to his commands.

Henry Wotton writes the following verse in a poem called "The Character of a Happy Life":

How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

▼ **STEPHEN BEAGLES**

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIPS MANUAL

Bonus Segment

Practical Advice

i) Children

In the New Testament churches, whole households (families) gathered together. We don't know what special provisions were made for children. The reality today is that unless you have lots of children or no children in your Fellowship, it can be difficult to address the needs of different age groups.

Children should be valued and incorporated into your Fellowship, but it is difficult for one activity to appeal to all age groups. Children can be involved in the various activities, and they can be spoken about, and prayed over.

If you have someone who is skilled at running activities for children, that person may take the children apart for some of the time and work with them during the meeting.

ii) Music

We all love music. Music is a very important part of our social and cultural experience. In some parts of the world you cannot meet together to talk about Jesus without having music, and in other parts of the world it is fine to have no music, especially in small groups.

We all love our own music, which may differ from the musical culture of others in the group. For this reason you have to be careful about whether you will use music at your meetings, and if you do, how you will use music. The truth is that in some cultures, music will be the number one reason why people choose either to come back again, or never return.

Whether for cultural or economic reasons, music is hardly mentioned at all in connection with the New Testament churches.

What does this mean for your Fellowship? By all means have music if that is what your Fellowship wants to do, but bear in mind the points made above. Make sure that everyone can participate; this means that everyone has printed words for the songs. Make sure that the music does not detract in any way from the Bible discussion and from prayer. Above all, you must keep the Word of God central!



And you must not feel that you cannot have a Gospel Fellowship if you do not have music. The reality is that many Fellowships have found that music is not essential at all!

iii) Good News Unlimited Presentations

Good News Unlimited broadcasts a weekly gospel presentation live, as well as having many archived video presentations available through our website. These are a wonderful resource for the sharing of the gospel worldwide. So please feel free to use these in your Fellowship, although you should be aware that listening to a "sermon" doesn't of itself build community. The practice of having weekly "sermons" is a relatively late tradition within Christianity. Remember the four essential elements of Gospel Fellowships: the teachings of the apostles, sharing meals, prayer, and building community.

Bearing these elements in mind, our weekly broadcast, whether viewed live from our website in someone's home, or (because you are in a different time zone) watched later on, is also a perfectly acceptable way to have your own Gospel Fellowship. Just invite your family or neighbours to come and join you in your living room!



Remember the four essential elements of Gospel Fellowships: the teachings of the apostles, sharing meals, prayer, and building community.

iv) **Divide, divide, divide!**

Remember that the ultimate aim is not to grow your Fellowship, but to create new Fellowships. This is about small groups, not large groups. If you ever reach the point when your Fellowship has a discussion about whether to divide or not, that is the time to divide. If you decide not to, you can almost guarantee that your Fellowship will stagnate, and most likely die.

v) **What next?**

Please stay in touch with us at Good News Unlimited so that we can rejoice together with you by sharing each other's stories of what the risen Lord is doing in our lives and for his church!

If you have more questions about how to start or run your own Good News Fellowship, please contact us, and we will answer them as soon as possible. And we might even include your questions and their answers in future versions of this manual, so that Fellowships around the world can use your experiences to help them share the gospel and grow the kingdom of Jesus Christ. May the kingdom and the glory be His forever!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

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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



CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE?

I recently heard an interview with Bryan Bruce, writer of a Cold Case book on Jesus. Bruce claimed that the Gospel stories were three generations old before they were committed to writing, and by that time they had been added to and exaggerated with many fictitious miracles. "And yes, Jesus was a very clever person, but he was certainly not divine, and he definitely never rose from the dead," claimed Bruce.

In support of his theory he referred to the Gospel story about the arrest of Jesus. Each of the Gospels, he says, has a different report of what happened when Jesus was captured in the Garden of Gethsemane. For example:

Mark said, 'One of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.'

Luke mentions that it was his 'right ear' that was cut off, and that Jesus healed him.

John, the last to write a Gospel, names the servant whose ear was cut off as Malchus.

Bryan Bruce claims this is a good example of how the gospel stories got added to over time. It's very strange, smirked Bruce, that Mark, the first person to tell this story, didn't know the servant's name, but John, who wrote a generation later, did know the name; and Luke was the only writer to mention the right ear and the fact that Jesus healed him.

Recently, I served on a jury for a court case involving a young man almost killed in an altercation. In the Jury Room we drew a sketch of the scene on the whiteboard, adding the details provided by three witnesses. Each witness gave us details not provided by either of the other two. It would be mischievous to claim that because their testimonies differed, they were inventing history. While no one witness gave all the facts, together they provided a complete picture.

So it is with the stories of the Gospels.

Peter, who dictated his Gospel to Mark, was probably embarrassed that he was the one who chopped the servant's ear off, so omitted his name.

Luke, who was a physician, noted that it was the servant's right ear that had been cut off, and that Jesus had healed him.

John probably knew the servant and his name, because he had a previous relationship with the high priest's household, (John 18:16).

Consider what the critics would have said had the four Gospel stories been identical: they would have accused the writers of working together to deceive their readers. But because the stories have differences, the writers are accused of adding their own fictitious touches.

Anyone who is looking for reasons to doubt the Bible will find plenty. For those who sincerely desire the truth about salvation, the Bible gives all the evidence needed. Make it a habit to read a portion of the Bible every day because it is a conduit for God's message to you in your particular situation.

▼ **RITCHIE WAY**

Editor, Good News Unlimited



Each witness gave us details not provided by either of the other two. It would be mischievous to claim that because their testimonies differed, they were inventing history.

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.



Joshua – a disappointment?

Ritchie,

I've been reading the story of Moses again and came across the part where he assures the people that after his death, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him" (Deut. 18:15).

The Israelites to whom Moses spoke assumed Joshua was that prophet, but I noticed that the book of Deuteronomy closes with these words:

Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt.... For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel (Deut. 34:9–12).

It seems to me that while Joshua, as Moses' successor, did a great work, he did not measure up to the specifications of the prophecy, and that a note of disappointment is detected in the words of verses 10–12. What think you?

C.S.

Dear C.

I think you might be right. Based on Moses' prophecy, God would raise up a prophet like himself (Moses), but Joshua didn't fulfil every specification because, as you point out, he wasn't a man of miracles as Moses was.

Sacred history teaches us, however, that the fulfilment of God's promises always exceeds the expectations generated by the original words. We find that is the case in David's prophecy about his son, in which he declared that his kingdom would last forever (1 Chron. 22:7–10). It didn't.

The faithful in Israel, however, never gave up hope that this promise would one day be realised. In Jesus they

found the promised "son of David" (Matt. 9:27), and in Jesus they found the promised Moses-like "prophet" (John 6:14; 7:40).

Solomon built a temple of stone, but Jesus is building a temple of living stones. Solomon's kingdom didn't last forever, but Jesus' kingdom will.

Joshua took the faithful into Canaan, but the New Testament Joshua (Jesus) is taking his people into a heavenly Canaan. And Jesus' miracles were greater than Moses'.

God's promises are always faithfully fulfilled, even though they may not be fulfilled as quickly as some would like.



The Law Leads us to Christ

Dear Ritchie,

What is your take on Galatians 3:24–25 where it says: "The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law"?

P. F.

Dear P.

The term 'law' applied to the whole Mosaic law, not just to the Ten Commandments. A glance through the concordance under 'law' will confirm this. The Passover service, for example, was designed to lead us to "Christ, our Passover Lamb" (1 Cor. 5:7), whose sacrifice set us free from bondage in Satan's kingdom to become children of the kingdom of God. But now that Christ has come, our faith should be in him, not in the Passover.

The Day of Atonement, likewise, pointed to the sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the Cross—a sacrifice that took away all our sin.

Continued on page 16

Similarly, the Ten Commandments pointed to the perfect character of Jesus, which he has credited to our accounts. While it is impossible for us to achieve righteousness by obeying the law, we receive that righteousness as a free gift when we put our faith in Jesus (2 Cor. 5:21).

All this means that our centre of attention now is Jesus, not the law.



Big Thanks

Hello Dr Eliezer,

I am so delighted to be remembered here across the ocean in Uganda, Africa. I always give a smile and a bright face every time the Good News Unlimited magazine knocks at the door of my registry office. I'm so proud and happy for the great work you are doing all across the globe including your sacrifice for Uganda and Africa. I have been a keen student of Dr Ford since my seminary days. This explains my joy that I can now see Dr Ford on the screen, other than through his great book on Daniel.

I take pleasure too, in thanking Pastor David for his endeavours in looking for us in the four corners of Uganda to bring us the unlimited good news through Dr Ford's book, Jesus Only. Thanks to God and thanks to you all.

*We shall surely meet one day.
God bless, and God bless Good News Unlimited.*

H. T.
Karamoja, Uganda

Dear H.

On behalf of Dr Eliezer I want to thank you sincerely for your encouraging letter. We are pleased that you are pleased. We encourage you to share the gospel with your friends, family and work mates. Every person you bring to Jesus will be your treasure in heaven. So may you have riches beyond measure.

Grace and peace to you
Ritchie.



Was Jesus' Cross a cross?

Dear Ritchie,

I understand that the Greek word stauros, which is translated as 'cross' in the New Testament, is not a description of the device on which Jesus was crucified (as is the English word 'cross') but refers back to the torture stake used by the

Persians. Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, for example, translates stauros as 'stake'.

I would like to know this: was Jesus executed on a torture stake, as some Christians believe, or was he crucified on a cross, as commonly portrayed?

P. C.

Dear P.

The word stauros was first used by the Assyrians and the Persians to refer to a long, pointed stake on which people were executed. The guilty person wasn't nailed to this stake but was impaled on it, either through his bottom or up under his ribs into his chest cavity, and then lifted up high where he could be seen by passers-by. This is how Haman the Agagite wanted to execute and display his enemy, Mordecai the Jew (Est. 5:14).

The word translated "gallows" in Esther 5:14 is literally the word 'tree'. A suitable tree was chosen and it was 'prepared' by having its branches cut off and its top sharpened into a spear-like point. Jesus and the two criminals were not, however, executed by being impaled. Had they been impaled, death would have been very rapid. As it was, they survived many hours.

At the time of Jesus, the Romans were using a modified form of stauros, which had a crossbar either in the shape of a lower case 't', or an upper case 'T', and their victims were nailed to it, not impaled. The Romans still called it a stauros, in much the same way that we still call light and power poles 'lamp-posts', even though such poles no longer hold incandescent lamps.

How do we know a stauros in Jesus' day consisted of two pieces of timber that formed a cross? Firstly, two hundred years before the first depiction of Jesus on a cross having both a vertical and horizontal beam, a person on a t-shaped cross was depicted in the Greek language by a staurogram which consists of the letters tau and rho being placed on top of each other.

Secondly, there is pictorial evidence for Jesus being executed on a t-shaped cross. In Herculaneum, a city that was buried in ash when Vesuvius erupted in AD 79, there is a Christian house whose inner wall has a painting of a t-shaped cross. In front of it sits a prayer stool. Also, an early graffito mocking Christianity was scratched into the plaster on a wall near the Palatine Hill in Rome. This graffito depicts Jesus as a man with a donkey's head, whose outstretched hands are fastened to a t-shaped cross. Another man is depicted as worshipping him. The Greek script underneath says, "Alexamenos worships his God."

Conversely, as there are no depictions of Jesus on a torture stake from this period, the weight of evidence points to the stauros in Jesus' time being a tall post with a crossbar.

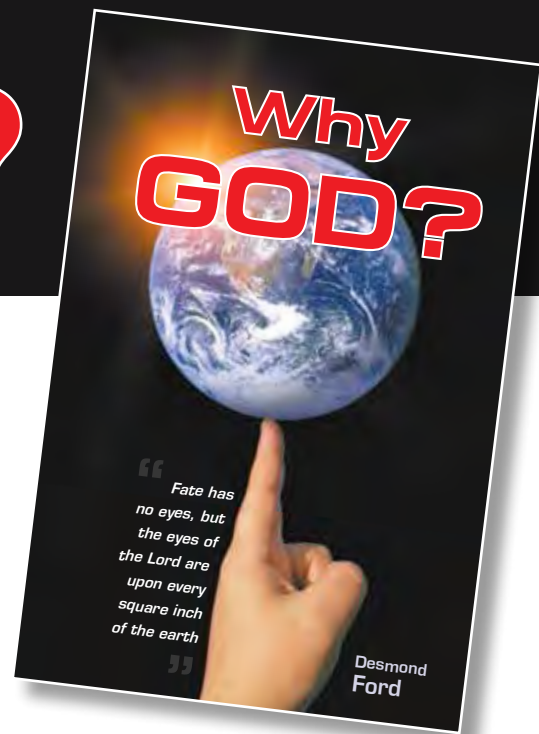
WHY GOD?

by Desmond Ford

Fate has no eyes, but the eyes of the Lord are upon every square inch of the earth

MORTIMER ADLER, the genius behind Britannica's Great Books of the Western World, said that the most important question ever asked is Does God Exist? He declared that this towered above all other questions because it has more impact on all other issues of life. A moment's thought validates Adler's claims. Where there is no God, there is no man (only a meaningless clot of coincidental molecules), no meaning, no values, no forgiveness of sins, no hope, and no immortality.

This book sums up the current logical and scientific evidence for God's existence, and then illustrates the fact of divine sovereignty as demonstrated in well-known lives. The experiences of John Newton, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, Charles Spurgeon, Gladys Aylward, Adoniram Judson and Martin Luther are chronicled with emphasis on events that statistically are beyond chance. Every reader will here find encouragement and hope to successfully meet the challenges of everyday life.



Available online from:

[amazon.com](https://www.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

OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY

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.

FELLOWSHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

So far, 22 fellowships in 12 countries have affiliated with GNU to help people find a gospel fellowship near them. All meeting details can be found on our website.

STORIES

Some truly inspirational, encouraging and heart-warming stories have been shared by those in our global community. Go to *Global Community - Stories - Read Stories* on our website goodnewsunlimited.com to read some. We'd also love to hear your story so please share!

**IF YOU
THOUGHT
THE GOSPEL HAS
RUN OUT OF STEAM,
JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU
READ ROSE'S STORY IN
OUR NEXT ISSUE!**

INTO ALL THE WORLD



Eliezer Gonzalez
Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

MH17 - WHY AM I STILL HERE?

I had just finished presenting the Good News Unlimited Gospel Seminar in Brussels, with the last meeting being on Tuesday, 15 July. It could very easily have been me on flight MH17 that was shot down over Eastern Ukraine on 17 July 2014. I was booked to be on flight MH17 from Amsterdam to Singapore, and the most logical transport connection would have had me on that flight on that day.

But I lingered a little, and although I did travel back to Australia via Kuala Lumpur on flight MH17, it was on the flight two days after the one that perished. Surely the hand of the Lord was in this!

I would never presume to think that God loves me more than the 298 people who lost their lives. I would never presume to think that God had a plan for my life but not for theirs. But surely I will praise the Lord!

But it is true that all of us who trust in Jesus have been spared. We have all been totally and perfectly saved through what Christ has done at Calvary. Your life has been preserved in the most dramatic way possible. So whoever you are, if you believe this, you represent the gospel of Christ. Live it, breathe it, speak it, share it. Use every opportunity to spread the word fast so that all may believe and none may perish!

Because my life has been preserved by God, I have been able to come back and bring you news of the amazing doorways of opportunity that God is opening up for us through the media. I have just been to the countries where I have seen the need.

If you could help us to potentially reach a million people with the good news of Jesus Christ, would you do it? Look out for more information in our November Appeal.

And thanks to your encouragement... you know, I might even be willing to consider jumping back on a plane again!

Grace and Peace in Jesus,

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**
Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

