

2002 Issue No. 2

# Good News Australia



**THE RICHES  
OF HIS GRACE**

Published by Good News Unlimited





## Villains and Victims

**L**eo Tolstoy tells a story of Maslova, a Russian peasant girl. She worked in the country for two society maids.

At age sixteen she was a beautiful young woman. At that time, a cousin of the two maids, Prince Nekhlyudov, came to stay. He couldn't keep his eyes off Maslova. She also was attracted to him. Seeing his opportunity, the prince came to her room late at night, and seduced her. Afterwards, he went away, abandoning her.

She was pregnant, and when the maids saw it, they evicted her. As for the prince, he got on with his life. He was of the Russian upper class. His was a privileged existence. He was chronically excessive in all his habits. His peers told him he was a good fellow, and he believed them.

He had standards and moral principles, of course. For example, sometimes he would see poor people being carted off to prison for not paying their debts, or for stealing. He would look at them and think to himself, that's what they get for not being honest, decent, and

law-abiding, like myself.

A day arrived, on which he was summoned to jury duty. He felt good about it, because, after all, he was a decent man; the type to be trusted to make good judgments.

After seating himself in the jury box, he saw the first person to be tried was a woman. She was raven-haired, and, from where he sat behind her, she seemed striking in her beauty. She was a prostitute. She had worked in a government brothel, so that was not her crime. What happened was, she had gone to a client; a respected gentleman. While she was with him in his hotel room he had a heart attack and died. She was accused of his murder.

When she came into court, the prince could not at first see her face. When she turned around however, he recognized her. It was Maslova. After he had wronged her and she was evicted, no one would take her in except a midwife. Her baby was born but soon died. Two choices lay before her. She could go into service again, and risk the same kind of treatment all over again. Or she could go to a government brothel, earn money and be well fed. This is what she did.

When the prince recognized her, he was filled with horror. He

understood that he could not separate himself from Maslova's plight. He had played a major part in bringing about her present distress. He sat face to face with a life that he had wrecked. Whatever her sins were, they bore his finger prints. He felt that he was being tried, and if the verdict went against her, he too would be condemned.

The wrongs done in the world and the good that fails to be done, occur in a relationship of terrible solidarity. Men and women are linked together in a dramatic relationship of mutual responsibility.

The political crises of the world, the aching loneliness of millions in crowded places; the degradation of the poor, the scourge of drugs, family breakdown, suicide among the young—no one can stand apart from these, and say, 'It has nothing to do with me.' We are all participants, as villains and victims, in the misery of the world.

This is why the grace of God is the only sufficient answer. Unless we can all seek refuge in an infinite kindness, we are ruined. Hear the good news: Where sin increased, grace increased all the more!

**R J ALLEN**

*Good News Australia* is published six times annually by Good News Unlimited Ltd., PO Box 6788 (Unit 2/54-60 Industry Dr.) Sth. Tweed Heads NSW 2486.

**Website:** [www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au](http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au)

**eMail:** [goodnews@coolgold.com.au](mailto:goodnews@coolgold.com.au)

**Phone:** (07) 55245040

**Facsimile:** (07) 55245900

**Executive Editor:** Pastor Ron Allen.

**Layout & Design:** Patricia Tedman.

**Printer:** Spartan Press Queens Park WA.

**Good News Unlimited** is an evangelical, non-denominational, nonprofit organization, with headquarters at South Tweed Heads, in New South Wales. GNU is dedicated to proclaiming the Everlasting Gospel. GNU is not a church, nor is it affiliated organically with any Christian denomination. Yet, because of its historical relationship with Seventh-day Adventism, has a unique opportunity to serve dislocated or seeking SDA's. Its ministry includes radio presentations, preaching appointments, public seminars and the dispersal of audio and video cassettes, also literature emphasizing the

atonement of Christ. A number of GNU Fellowship groups meet regularly within Australia. GNU is supported solely by donations from those who believe in its ministries. 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, payment may be made for manuscripts at the Editor's discretion. Please send typed manuscripts or 3½ disks (MAC or IBM) Word, Wordperfect or text-only format to: Executive Editor, R Allen, PO Box 6788 Sth Tweed Heads NSW 2486. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.

**eMail**

**For inclusion on GNU mailing list:**  
[goodnews@coolgold.com.au](mailto:goodnews@coolgold.com.au)

**Chairman:** W Sinclair

[spider55@optusnet.com.au](mailto:spider55@optusnet.com.au)

**Ron Allen:**

[ron@goodnewsunlimited.org](mailto:ron@goodnewsunlimited.org)

**GNU USA:**

[gnu@goodnewsunlimited.org](mailto:gnu@goodnewsunlimited.org)

**GNA Exec. Editor:** ph: (07) 55245040

fax: (07) 55245900

**GNA Printer:** ph./fax: (08) 93610867

**GNU USA:** 0011 1 5308239690

**GNU New Zealand:** ph: (09) 8270070

**GNU Treasurer:** ph: 0413 128080

**Book & Tapes:** ph: (07) 55245040

### GNU BOARD

**John Beumer** .....(02) 65535561

**Roger Jones** .....(07) 55245040

**Pat Jones** .....(07) 55245040

**Bruce Johansen** .....(03) 53811330

**Rolf Kempf** .....(02) 49831132

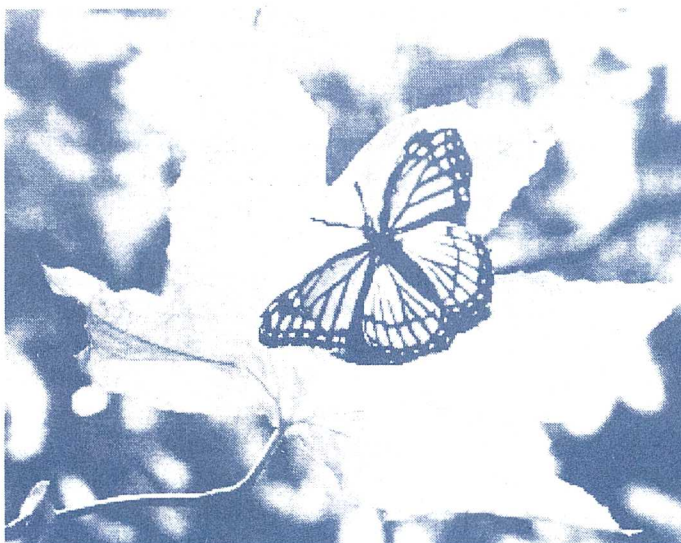
**Aenid Pettingill** .....(07) 55233479

**David Sandercock** .....(02) 66878328

**Bill Sinclair (Chairman)** .....(08) 93610867

**Bruce Tulloch** .....(07) 55355329





# CHOSEN BY GRACE

(1)

Ron Allen

**T**he Bible tells of the saving acts of God in the history of the world. Those acts are always tinged with grace. Grace; the word occurs many times throughout Scripture. In modern versions, it is frequently translated 'kindness'. Kindness in a particular setting. It is the favor shown by someone in a position of strength to another person, who is powerless.

Christians easily think of grace in connection with Jesus Christ. They have taken their cue from the first Christians who were delighted and amazed to learn so much about God's grace from Jesus. This was in contrast to their previous religious life which was shaped largely by their conceptions of law.

Though early Christians expressed their awareness of something new and exciting in Jesus—in terms of Law versus Grace—it should be understood that the New Testament appreciation of Grace is very much shaped by Old Testament thought. The apostle Paul's great statements about the grace of God in Christ, grow out of insights that had long been the heritage of Jewish people. This is certainly the case where Paul discusses grace in terms of God's having 'chosen' those whom he would have serve him.

For an example, take the first chapter of his

letter to the Ephesians, where Paul begins with a familiar form of introduction: 'Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God . . .' (Ephesians 1:1).

Here is a man who believes that his life situation; his vocation, is not something that has happened as a result of his own dedication and resolve. The cause and explanation for Paul's Christian witness is to be found in God.

Paul was forever telling how God had taken over his life at a time when he was active against God. The initiative had come from the Divine side. God had chosen Paul; transforming an enemy into a friend.

An apostle of Jesus Christ, 'by the will of God.' This is one of the meanings of grace. God acts unilaterally. His kindness is not drawn out of him by the sorry state of those who will be its beneficiaries.

When I began to court Carmen (now my wife), it was a ritual of manoeuvres. We were both on a college campus at the time. What a game of cat and mouse! Every time I walked out of my dorm to cross the open

spaces to any other building, my head was full of strange ideas and questionings. 'Where is she? How do I look? Am I striding purposefully? Is my masculinity sufficiently obvious? Should I take this route, or another? Will she see me? Will I impress, or will

Paul was forever telling how God had taken over his life at a time when he was active against God.



she think I am ridiculous? What do I care, anyhow?!' And so on.

All human relationships are transactional to some degree. We constantly monitor each other's responses, seeking for signals which are encouraging, or otherwise. This is our way. But in grace, God is not responding to 'vibes' that he is getting from us. He is acting in an unencumbered fashion. Grace means that God is free from us in a way that we are never entirely free from each other.

There is something kingly about God's style in grace. 'For he chose us in him, before the creation of the world . . . to the praise of his glorious grace' (Ephesians 1:4-6). When I was in my early school years, the teacher would take all the boys to the playing field, for sports. There, he would nominate two boys as captains. Then he would say: 'You two boys pick your team from the rest.' The newly appointed captains could scarcely manage their pride. Being captain and having so much power went straight to their heads. So while the rest of the group would jump up and down clamouring and gesturing, calling out, 'pick me, pick me,' the captains would take their time, relishing their unalloyed liberty to lay claim to, or dispose of, their classmates at their very own whim.

It made no difference at all when some boys begged to be chosen, and still no difference if some tried not to be chosen. The captains were sovereign.

Scripture is well stocked with language to indicate that the origins of faith, hope and love, are in God and not in those who have faith—or who do hope and love.

God's grace is like this. His grace implies his independence. God is not beholden to anyone. He has no favors to return; no debts to pay. Theologians have called this aspect of God's grace 'election,' or 'distinguishing grace.' It is everywhere to be found in the Old Testament and echoed here by Paul. Grace involves God's autonomy in choosing servants for himself.

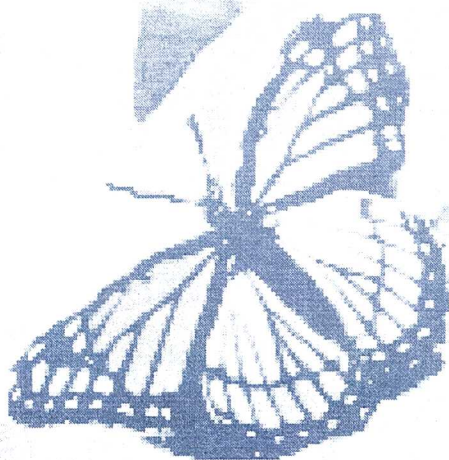
The Lord has chosen you out of all the peoples of the earth, to be his people . . . the Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were

more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest' (Deuteronomy 7:6-7).

'It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for my holy name's sake' (Ezekiel 36:22).

Scripture is well stocked with language to indicate that the origins of faith, hope and love, are in God and not in those who

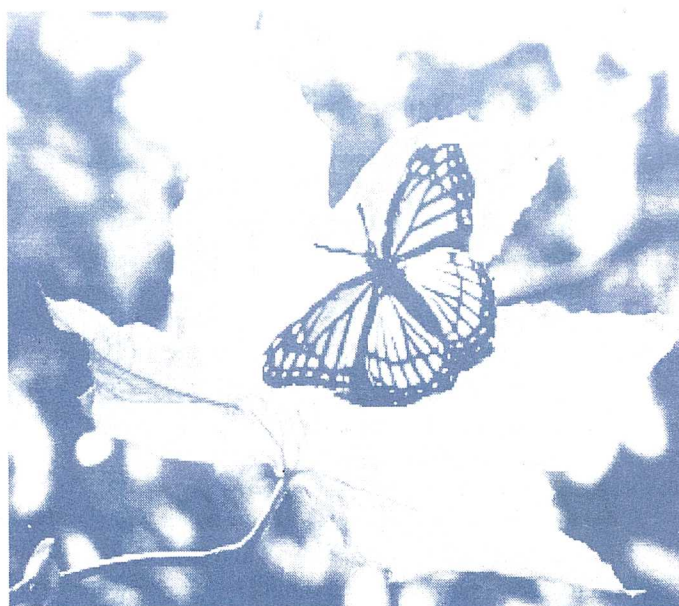
have faith—or who hope and love. Faith, hope and love, are not gifts we bring to God, but his gifts to us. Human beings are not free moral agents to the same degree as God is. If God had not chosen Saul the Terrorist, he would never have become Paul the Christian. Election means that if God in kindness did not initiate relations with human life, men and women would not be free to believe in him and love him—nor would they want to. 'God's kindness leads you to repentance' (Romans 2:4). ♦



**There is something kingly about God's style in grace. 'For he chose us in him, before the creation of the world . . . to the praise of his glorious grace' (Ephesians 1:4-6).**



# CHOSEN BY GRACE (2)



**F**or he chose us in him, before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons, through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

So far removed from being coaxed out of him, is God's kindness, that Paul can think of God having been kind to us even before we existed. Imagine a time, before time. A time when God was there all by himself, when there were no worlds, no earth, no life-sustaining atmosphere; no people. Before our ancestors were here. Then, when the only self-consciousness there was, was God. When there was no one else for God to see, relate to, or be influenced by, then, God chose us. Long before we came on the scene, God showed his grace toward us. He set his love on us in advance, by choosing us in connection with someone else. In his mind, he put us together with Christ. He adopted us.

In the Roman empire, fathers were very powerful. A father had all power over his children. He could sell his child as a slave if he wished. He could scourge his child, put him in prison, or have him executed. In this environment, adoption was a seri-

ous step. A strict ritual in which the adopting father would purchase the child from his current one. Then the adopting father was obliged by law to sell the child back to his erstwhile father. After that, the adopting parent had to signal again his intention to adopt by buying the child a second time. But yet again, he was required to sell back to the antecedent father.

Only when the child had been bought for the third time, did the first father have no leave to buy his offspring back again. The new owner then had to appear in court, and plead his case to keep the child. When the court had finally agreed, the adoption process was complete. The child lost all rights in his previous family, he inherited all the rights of his new one. By choosing him and adopting him, the new father had virtually made of the child, a new person.

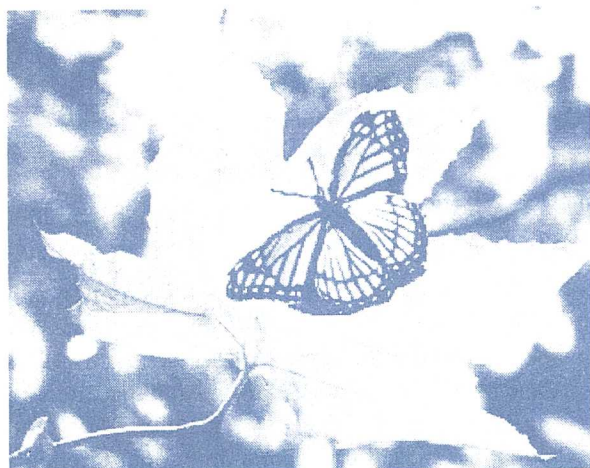
When God chose us in the Son of his love, before the world was made, he thereby made us his very own. All the rights and privileges pertaining to the Son, became ours. This action took place in God's mind, in the eternity of the past, to the praise of his glorious grace. Christianity is a religion of grace; a religion based on God's kindness. ♦

**Ron Allen**



# CHOSEN BY GRACE

## (3) *A Parable of Electing Grace*



Ron Allen

**O**n the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths. No one looked on you with pity or had compassion enough to do any of these things for you. Rather, you were thrown out into the open field, for on the day you were born you were despised. Then I passed by and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood, I said to you, 'Live!' Later I passed by and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you, and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath, and entered into a covenant with you, declares the sovereign Lord, and you became mine (Ezekiel 16: 4-8).

The history of God's relationship with Israel is summarised in this moving parable. Infanticide was common in the ancient world, and here Israel's condition when God first involved himself with them, is pictured as that of an abandoned child. The child has been cast aside from the moment it left the womb. No attempt has been made to clean it and swaddle it. Those who might have been expected to care for it, do not. This babe is born into a world of indifference. The only emotion it has ever felt is rejection. In the heat of the day, flies will be attracted to the blood and birth fluids. The night will bring freezing temperatures. There is no hope. The babe is as good as dead.

Severed from every possible means of comfort and support; friendless, and doomed, the child waits to die, but God appears, and commands the infant to live. Later in the story, the metaphor changes. The babe has now become a beautiful maid. God passes by a second time, and Boaz-like, betroths her to himself. 'You became mine,' he says.

Grace is very powerful. Without it, human beings would never be able to enjoy a relationship with God. Grace has creative power. It brings life out of death. Men and women have no way, of themselves, of creating spiritual life. They cannot any more discover God and force him to reveal himself to them, than could an abandoned new-born child.

He who set his kindness upon us in eternity; choosing us and putting us together with Christ, is also very kind to us in time. We do not come to him, he comes to us, and when we are without strength; even when we are dead in weaknesses and guilt; while we are yet sinners, he draws us to himself with cords of love. He adopts us and puts us in his family. He betroths us to himself. He enters into covenant with us. We become his.

If this is what God's grace is like, it means that we ought not think of Christianity from the perspective of our will; our determination and our choice. Rather, from the point of view of God's choice, his will and purpose. Our whole life, including our spirituality, comes from God and is in his hands. It is ours to receive and to trust. ♦

We do not come to him, he comes to us, and when we are without strength; even when we are dead in weaknesses and guilt; while we are yet sinners, he draws us to himself with cords of love.



# When Grace Is No Longer Grace

Ron Allen



**W**hen I was nine years old, I asked my Dad to teach me to milk. He used to milk two cows every morning to keep our family supplied. After I learned to milk the job became mine. I wished I had never learned! Rain or shine, the cows had to be milked. I was not a good milkman.

One wet morning, when the cows were in a particularly bad mood, I returned to the house with not much milk in my bucket. I knew that I would be the subject of questioning and complaint from the rest of the family. They liked their milk for breakfast and they were not slow to express their dissatisfaction when they didn't get it. What to do?



At the rear of the house was a rainwater tank. It came into view as I was passing. Without faltering, I held the bucket beneath the tap, turned the water on, and proceeded into the kitchen with my now respectable load of fresh milk.

The next morning, when we were eating our cereal, my sister looked hard at her plate, then at me, and called out: 'This *water* has got *milk* in it!' I was sprung. I had to cop it sweet.

In Romans 11:5-6, Paul speaks of a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works. If it were, grace would no longer be grace. In Romans, 'works' is shorthand for human effort of any kind, with a view to securing and maintaining the soul in safe relation to God. Works stand for a

spirituality that focuses on the human response to God in all its myriad guises and forms. In Paul's thinking, activity and effort of this kind is contrary to grace. It can never be mixed with grace or placed by it, as a supplement. So to do, would be to cause grace to be emptied of its defining character. The milk would stop being milk, and become water instead. Grace would take on the nature of its supplement, and would there-

fore no longer be grace.

On this issue, Paul is uncompromising. He will not yield an inch. The gospel must be all of grace, or there is no grace; there is no gospel. The dominating characteristic of the Christian religion is God's powerful kindness.

Note the reasoning in the following passage. 'I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing: (Galatians 2:21). These are the words of a man describing what it means for him to be a Christian. He sees himself as having somehow been included in Christ's death. Now, he lives out of an entirely new standpoint. He can describe it this way: 'I no longer live, Christ lives in me' (v20).

The centerpiece of Paul's new life is Christ, who died for him. That is now the all-consuming theme of his existence. To have any spiritual point of reference other than Christ crucified, would be to set aside (nullify, or frustrate) grace. For many Jews—certainly for the Galatians—the Law was seen as the appropriate focus for the religious life. But Paul will have none of it. If a relationship with God could be secured by seeking to order personal life according to the Law's requirements, Christ died for nothing. There would be no need for grace.

One more example of Paul's teaching about the sovereign role of grace in Christian experience. 'But he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses . . . for when I am weak, then I am strong' (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Scholars speculate about the true nature of Paul's thorn in the flesh. Some say it was a painful soreness of the eyes. Some say that it was a bodily ailment that was disgusting to look at

(Continued page 11)





## Kidz Korner

### A City Called Mournful

Anthea Nicholls

**T**here was once a city called Mournful, and it really was! It had been under siege for longer than any of the people who lived there could remember. When you have lived forty, twenty, and even ten years under siege conditions you just don't expect to ever know anything different.



Everybody wore a pair of handcuffs and had a heavy metal ball chained to his left ankle. It made it terribly hard to ever do anything really fun or spontaneous. It was a downright nuisance even when you were just doing the ordinary things you had to do everyday. But all things considered, the people put a pretty good

face on it all. It is amazing how well you learn to cope with handicaps you've had for a long, long time. Some folks probably would have felt lost without them!

Now the people didn't pretend the problem wasn't there, they knew they were under siege. They knew they were captives, that the handcuffs and chains were not natural, and every day before they went out to work or to school, they read a little bit of a very old letter they had received from their exiled King—well, he had written it to their grandfathers from way, way back, actually.

Everyone owned a copy of this letter and they were always printing more, in new and different brochures, booklets, bound volumes and so on. Really, it was a fantastic letter, full of promises that as soon as he could, he, the King, would come and set them free. As they put down the letter each morning they would look at their handcuffs and sigh, telling themselves once again that he might come *today*.

And one *today*, he actually came! His army was

even more splendid than any of them could have imagined. The army marched through the streets throwing golden coins into the cheering crowds, with the King riding on a majestic stallion.

The enemy headquarters were quickly conquered and the King re-instated. A special commissioner was given the job of cutting all the chains from the people. He set up his workshop with the equipment he needed, in the Town Hall at the top of the hill.

Well, the people hardly knew themselves. They couldn't believe that the King was finally here. As the new mornings came and went, many of them picked up the old letter (out of habit, or in an effort to tell themselves that it was all true) and re-read the promises—words they knew by heart:

*'Your handcuffs I will cut,  
your heavy chains undo forever.'*

They read the words and their hearts skipped a beat at the thought. When they went off to work, the handcuffs didn't seem quite so annoying and the chains didn't seem half so heavy for a whole morning.

Well yes, the chains made the walk home at the end of a hard day even more tiresome and wearying, and it was such a long trip up to the Town Hall to see the commissioner, just too far tonight . . . tomorrow will do, and anyway, when you've lived with something all your life, one more night isn't going to make much difference—at least, that's what they told themselves as they dragged themselves home.

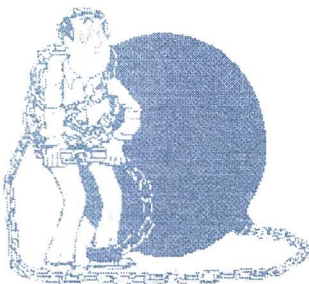
Well, time passed. Many people went to see the commissioner. Many didn't. There came a time when some people began to suggest reasons why they *shouldn't* let the commissioner cut their chains. They

said that it would be unnatural, and many other things. Eventually, some even began to doubt that there was a commissioner in the Town Hall.

The rest of the story about these people is very long.

For some of them it hasn't reached its end, at least, not the part where they go to the commissioner. It is very sad, some of them may never go.

As for the people who did go, well, I shall leave the rest of the story to your imagination. You may be sure it changed their lives in a way even their best hopes and loveliest dreams hadn't prepared them for. ♦







# Twenty Good Years



## CHANGING TIMES

### At Good News Unlimited.

**T**hose who have been readers of this journal since its inception, will know that for twenty years, Dr. Desmond Ford was president of GNU, also its chief evangelist and regular contributor to these pages. For two decades, Desmond Ford was used by God to the blessing of many. Thousands were taught the gospel, and just as many will testify that they found beauty, joy and excitement, in a religious experience they had never known before.

Though Dr. Ford is healthier than most, he is nevertheless mortal, like the rest of us. In August 2000, he made a decision to quit his itinerant lifestyle and retire to a restricted set of responsibilities in his native Australia. Though he still accepts some invitations to speak, he now lives life at a more measured pace.

#### Ron Allen at GNU

To help fill the void at GNU, after Ford's departure, Ron Allen went to the US from GNU Australia. Ron joined Pastor Roy Gee, who had been Des' helper for many years. Ron is now president of Good News Unlimited and editor of GNU magazine.

#### New Situations and Surprise Events.

Any Christian ministry, headed by a charismatic leader, will experience some loss of momentum when that leader retires. This did happen to GNU. That, combined with a new economic environment that came into vogue from late 2000, as well as the shock of September 11 2001, placed GNU under significant financial strain. To meet this challenge, the Board of GNU voted to trim pastoral staff down from two to just one. To facilitate this move Pastor Roy Gee has retired, effective from January one of this year.

#### Auburn Gospel Fellowship.

Roy's preaching has been a blessing to many; not least to those who regularly attend the fellowship at GNU, Auburn, California, where Roy has been the Pastor for so long.

In order to enable Roy to continue his ministry, the fellowship at GNU corporate headquarters has voted to become a corporate entity, distinct from Good News Unlimited—self-funding, and self-administered. This means that Roy will now be paid by the fellowship that he pastors, which will now be known by the name of Auburn Gospel Fellowship.

Auburn Gospel Fellowship will continue to meet in the GNU building, as it has done. Roy will still be heard on GNU audio tapes, and at GNU Bible Schools.

The new structural arrangements affecting GNU and Auburn Gospel Fellowship, not only result in keeping Roy Gee where he can still contribute, they also mean big savings for GNU, which is the important impetus behind these moves.

#### GNU, The Future, and You.

We are aware that most of those who use GNU products, and who are GNU readers and supporters, are not affected by these new arrangements, with respect to GNU itself, and, also Auburn Gospel Fellowship. We do, however, wish to assure you, that all the good things that you have come to appreciate from GNU will continue to flow to you. GNU magazine, Tape of the Month, thrice yearly Bible Schools at Auburn as well as regional ones.

If you like to get your information on-line, be aware that the GNU web site USA features each magazine at <<http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org>>

The web-site is getting better. There is a daily devotional new each day; A new letter from the pastor each month, and an 'Ask the Pastor' section, where you can dialogue with Pastor Allen.

#### Good News Unlimited needs you!

If you have found help, good Bible teaching, joy, assurance and inspiration for living, from GNU gospel resources, we invite you to support us regularly with your means. Your ongoing participation in this ministry could bring life, hope, liberty, and Christian certainty to someone. May you be guided by the Spirit of Christ when you consider your level of involvement in Good News Unlimited. ♦





**Excerpts from John  
Bunyan's book,  
written from prison.**

# *GRACE ABOUNDING*

***Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* is the story of Bunyan's religious experience. He tells of his rebellion against God, his struggles with guilt, and his breakthrough into assurance through the grace of God.**

**T**here was nothing that I longed for more than to find out once and for all if there was any hope for me or not.

Then these words came rolling into my mind: 'Will the Lord cast me off forever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Does his promise fail forever more? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his tender mercies?' (Psalm 77:7-9) All the while these questions were running through my mind, I felt that the very fact that they were questions, indicated that he surely had not cast me off forever, but would be favorable ...

... then as I was again at prayer, and trembling under fear that no word of God could help me, the words came upon me, 'My grace is sufficient,' and I felt hopeful. And yet, just about two weeks before, I had been reading this very verse and at that time, I thought that it was of no help or comfort to me at all. In fact, I threw down the book with impatience, for I thought it was not large enough for me. But again it seemed as if this verse had arms of grace so wide that it could not only enclose me, but many more besides ...

... this Scripture also helped me: 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' (John 6:37). Oh, the comfort that I had through this word. Satan tried hard to pull this promise away from me, saying that Christ did not mean me, that he spoke of sinners that had not done the same thing as I had. But I would answer him, 'Satan, there is no exception in these words. "Him that comes" means *any* him.' As I look back on this experience, I remember that Satan never



once put this further question to me: 'But do you come aright?' And I think the reason was, that he was afraid I would be reminded that to come aright was to come as I was, a vile and ungodly sinner, and to cast myself at the feet of Mercy. If ever Satan and I strove about anything in the Bible, it was over this word from the gospel of John. And, God be praised, I overcame him, and got sweetness from the verse ...

... one day, as I was passing into the field, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul: 'Thy righteousness is in heaven.' And I thought I could see Jesus Christ at God's right hand. Yes, there indeed was my righteousness, so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say about me, that I did not have righteousness, for it was standing there before him.

I also saw that it was not my good feelings that made my righteousness better, and that my bad feelings did not make my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, 'The same yesterday, today, and forever' (Hebrews 13:8) ...

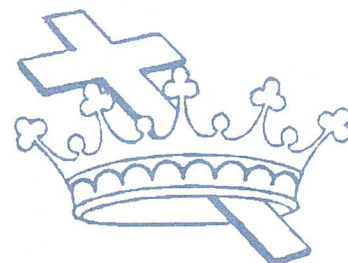
... I gloried to see his exaltation, and the wonders of his benefits which he bestowed so readily. I

saw that all those graces of God, that belonged to me, but which I showed so little, were like those few coins that rich men used to carry in their purses while their gold was in their trunks at home. I saw that my gold was in my trunk at home—in Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all my righteousness, all my sanctification, and all my redemption.

Moreover, the Lord also led me into the mystery of union with the Son of God. I saw that I was joined to him, that I was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. And if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now I could see myself in heaven and earth at the same time—in heaven by my Christ, my head, my righteousness and my life; and on earth, by my own body.

I saw that we fulfilled the law by him, died by him, rose from the dead by him, got the victory over sin, death, the devil and hell by him. When he died, we died, and so it was also with his resurrection ... ♦

(John Bunyan: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. pp 72-81)



(From Page 7)

## When Grace Is No Longer Grace

(Galatian 4:12-14). Whatever it was, it was disastrous. The image that he uses to picture it, is that of a man trying to get on with his life; meet his responsibilities, while being helplessly impaled on a wooden stake.

Understandably, he wanted God to remove this curse from him. He besought God repeatedly and the answer given him was: 'My grace is sufficient for you.' God was telling Paul, 'My action and work in the world, will most easily be known, not through your talents, expertise, or skills, but in the least impressive aspects of your personality. In fact, your handicap, your disability, will be the foil through which the might of my great kindness will be known.'

The weaker the man, the more conspicuous God's power. From a natural and reasonable human standpoint, Paul's problem was a hindrance to his ministry. But from Grace's point of view, it only made him more effective.

The difference between a religion borne of the gospel and all other religions, is that the gospel has grace. The secret of Christianity's power lies here. Grace is about the working of God in his infinite kindness. Paganism is about human striving, human excellence, human virtue, human genius. The secret of a rewarding and fruitful spirituality is expressed in the paradox, 'when I am weak, then I am strong.' The secret of a failed and useless spirituality can be stated in the reverse paradox: When I am strong, then I am weak. In all things religious—and therefore in all things secular—GRACE is sufficient. What makes for a satisfying religious life, is a prevailing concentration on the work of God, rather than a damaging obsession with the work we do for him. ♦

*'Let me no more, my comfort draw,  
From my frail hold on thee.  
In this alone rejoice with awe,  
Thy mighty grasp of me.'*





## C H Spurgeon

**W**hat an abyss is the grace of God! Who can measure its breadth? Who can fathom its depth? Like all the rest of the Divine attributes, it is infinite. ... right well remember this, or you may fall into the error by fixing your minds so much upon the faith which is the channel of salvation, as to forget the grace which is the fountain and source, even of faith itself.

Faith is the work of God's grace in us. No man can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. 'No man cometh unto me,' saith Jesus, 'except the father which hath sent me draw him.' So that faith, which is coming to Christ, is the result of Divine drawing. Grace is the first and last moving cause of salvation. And faith, essential as it is, is only an important part of the machinery which grace employs. We are saved 'through faith,' but salvation is 'by grace.'

... never make a Christ out of your faith, nor think of it as if it were an independent source of your salvation. Our life is found in 'looking unto Jesus,' not in looking to our own faith. By

faith all things become possible to us, yet the power is not in the faith, but in the God upon whom faith relies. Grace is the locomotive engine, and faith is the chain by which the carriage of the soul is attached to the great motive power. The righteousness of faith is not the moral excellence of faith, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which faith grasps, and appropriates. The peace within the soul is not derived from the contemplation of our own faith; it comes to us from him who is our peace, the hem of whose garment faith touches, and virtue comes out of him, into the soul.

See then, dear friend, that the weakness of your faith will not destroy you. A trembling hand may receive a golden gift. The Lord's salvation can come to us though we have only faith as a grain of mustard seed. The power lies in the grace of God, and not in our faith. Great messages can be sent along slender wires and the peace-giving witness of the Holy Spirit, can reach the heart by means of a thread-like faith, which seems almost unable to sustain its own weight. Think more of *Him* to whom you look, than of the look itself. You must look away, even from your own looking, and see nothing but Jesus, and the grace of God revealed in him. ♦



# THE TREASURE HOUSE OF GRACE

**‘Through whom we have gained access by faith, into this grace in which we now stand.’ (Romans 5:2).**

## **Amazing Access.**

‘Gained access;’ it is as though we have come into a great treasure room, ‘in which we now stand.’ You don’t sit down, you stand there. You stand, because, from now on it’s going to be a walk with God. A walk is a continually interrupted falling. You are living by faith. You can’t breathe once, and that’s forever. Every small boy is glad you don’t have just one birthday party, where you eat and that’s it forever. You get to do it repeatedly. You have to trust repeatedly. One step after another, every step a step of faith.

We walk; we stand, because we have already gained access to God’s grace in Christ. We are in a great treasure room. Clive, the Eighteenth Century British general, was taken into the Indian Rajah’s treasure room, the Rajah said to Clive, ‘You see all these rubies, diamonds, and sapphires? Help yourself.’ Clive didn’t want to seem ungrateful, so he took a few. When he got back to England, he was summoned before a law-court. ‘You stole some of the property of His Maj-

## **Desmond Ford**

esty, King George III, when you were in India on government service.’

Clive explained the situation, and told how he was invited to take what he wanted. ‘I’m amazed at my own moderation,’ he exclaimed.

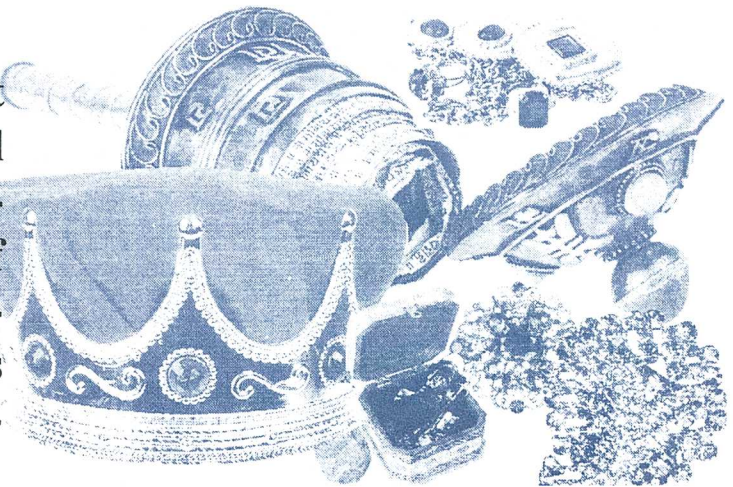
## **Amazing Moderation.**

The angels are amazed at our moderation. We all have one hundred percent of the merits of Christ put to our account—that’s our access to God. But with the access, comes accessories. The rule of the treasure house of grace is, ‘According to your faith will it be done to you’ (Matthew 9:29 NIV). With our access to God comes accessories, such as joy and fruitfulness.

We should be amazed at our own moderation. We could all do so much more than we are doing. God accepts us in Christ, as though we are doing it all. But here we are in this treasure house, and God would have us remember his rule: ‘According to your faith will it be done to you.’ ♦

(D. Ford. *Right With God Right Now*. pp. 71 and 72.)

**The angels are amazed at our moderation. We all have one hundred percent of the merits of Christ put to our account—that’s our access to God. But with the access, comes accessories.**





# The Blessing Of Having Nothing

Johan Schep

## **The Blessing Of Having No Ministry.**

'Yet when I preach the gospel I cannot boast ...' (1 Corinthians 9:16).

God does not need us in his work, but he wants us and has chosen us in his purposes, so that the glory goes only to him. When the ministry is his, we need never worry about staying in the business, for we do not keep him in business, he keeps us in business. 'For we are God's workmanship ...' (Ephesians 2:10).

## **The Blessing Of Having No Possessions.**

'For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it' (1 Timothy 6:7).

When we have nothing, we have nothing to protect. No worry about our riches rotting or our gold rusting. God promises to give us all we need, not all that we want (Matthew 6:19-33).

## **The Blessing Of Having No Power.**

Jesus could do nothing apart from his Father's indwelling. We can do nothing apart from Christ. The blessedness of powerlessness is that we are in a proper position to draw on

the unlimited resources of Christ. God's greatest saints are his best receivers.

## **The Blessing Of Having No Ego.**

'If anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.' (Galatians 6:3).

This blessing frees us from the unjust criticisms of others. Self-righteousness is a trap. We must be content with Jesus Christ; not with our progress in Christ.

## **The Blessing Of Having No Righteousness Of My Own.**

'The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?' (Jeremiah 17:9).

If there is anything Spiritual about us, it has its origin in the Holy Spirit and not in ourselves. The Word of God speaks of the fruit of the Spirit—not the fruit of the saint.

I have discovered that blessings in the Christian life, come

through brokenness (Psalm 51:7). Not in laughter and fullness, but in emptiness and tears, I have learned that the Lord Jesus is everything. ♦

*(Johan Schep is a Field Representative for Capernwray. He has spent many years of evangelism in Israel.)*





A *'must have'*  
for Your Library,  
these two books by  
**Josh McDowell**

With the purchase of these two books,  
receive Free *Unraveling Some Ideas*,  
a small booklet with the following  
chapters: **Free!**

*Is the Church a Hole in the Head?*

(Smuts van Rooyen)

*Release* (Calvin W Edwards)

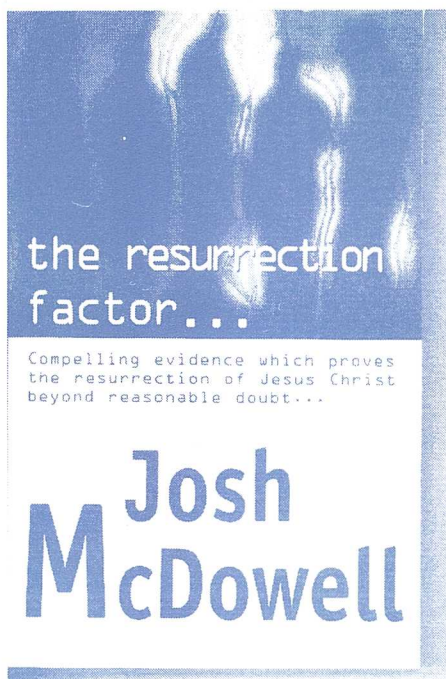
*A Faith for Hard Times* (Noel Mason)

*Yes You Must!* (Desmond Ford)

**Unraveling  
Some Ideas**

O/No.  
1RF0001 **\$6.95**  
221 pp plus PP&H

## The Resurrection Factor . . .



If Jesus Christ didn't rise from the dead, the Christian faith is worthless! Can the resurrection be proved beyond reasonable doubt?

Over thirteen years Josh McDowell has extensively researched the historical evidence concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

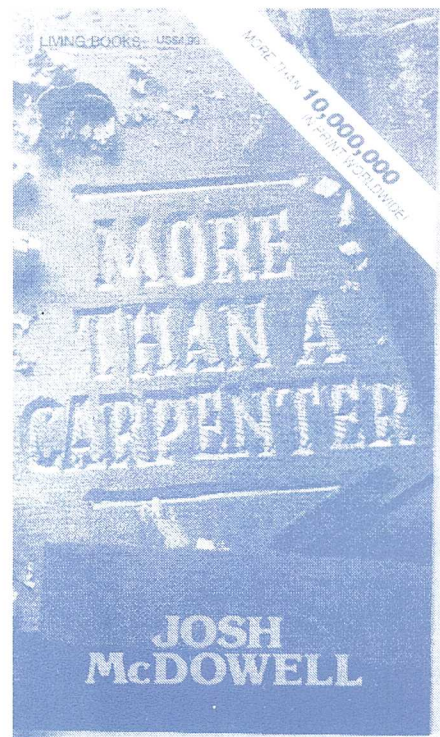
Read with an open mind, this book can bring new conviction, fresh purpose and extraordinary joy to your life.

## More Than A Carpenter

Josh McDowell thought all Christians must be 'out of their minds.' He put them down, he argued against their faith.

In *More than A Carpenter* Josh McDowell focuses upon the person who changed his life—Jesus Christ. It is a hard-headed book for people who are skeptical about Jesus' deity, his resurrection and his claims on their lives.

**\$6.95** (plus PP&H) 128pp  
O/No. 1MT0001





# Good News Australia

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP63221900015  
May be opened for inspection.

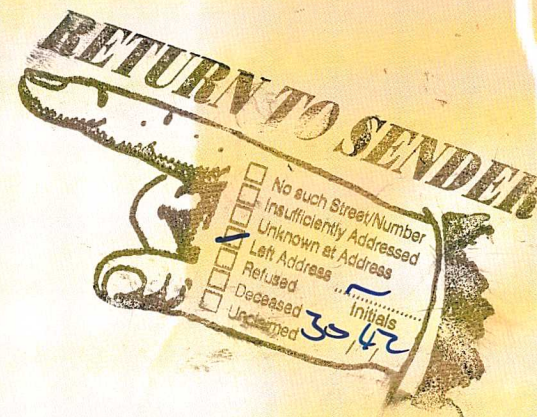
## THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE . . .

To ensure regular copies of *Good News Australia* please advise of any change of address. Return old label and your new address details to:  
Good News Unlimited  
PO Box 6788  
SOUTH TWEED HEADS NSW 2486

Paul was forever telling how God had taken over his life at a time when he was active against God. The initiative had come from the Divine side. God had chosen Paul; transforming an enemy into a friend. An apostle of Jesus Christ, 'by the will of God.' This is one of the meanings of grace. God acts unilaterally. His kindness is not drawn out of him by the sorry state of those who will be its beneficiaries.

Surface  
Mail

Postage  
Paid  
Australia



Subscription is free on request. As a guide for those who wish to assist this ministry, each magazine costs at least \$25 per annum, postage included. Gift subscriptions are invited, either free or financed.

*GOOD NEWS AUSTRALIA* is printed by Good News Unlimited, a non profit Christian resource organisation.