

April 2012, Issue No. 4

Good News Unlimited

The Gospel
Jesus is the Truth
About Judgement

Depression
Finding The
Road Again

Why Are You Crying?

Published by *Good News Unlimited*
www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au

EDITORIAL

John, in his Gospel, wrote: "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given by Moses [one blessing]; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ [another blessing]" (1:16-17). Law is not contrary to grace, and neither is grace contrary to law. While it is possible to have law without grace, it is not possible to have grace without law. Grace forgives, because the Law condemns.

When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the Ten Commandments inscribed on stone, and saw the Israelites worshipping the Egyptian god, Hathor, he threw the stone tablets down so they smashed to pieces (Exod. 32:19). The people had

broken God's commandments. And just as God's law lay shattered because of their sin, so Jesus, the righteousness of God, was broken because of our sins.

Have you ever heard of any other god who sacrificed himself for his people? Have you ever heard of any other god who faced such humiliation at the hands of the people he created? Every time I think deeply about what Jesus did for us on the Cross it brings tears to my eyes. I cannot plumb the depths of such love, such forgiveness, without being emotionally stirred.

The heart of the gospel is forgiveness. Jesus' last words to his disciples were:

"Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in my name to all nations ..." (Luke 24:46). When we see the Son of Man lifted up on the Cross we are automatically drawn to him. Like the repentant felon crucified with Jesus, we turn our backs on our past and reach out for this Saviour.

When Jesus comes into our hearts with his infinite forgiveness we

cannot contain it. Like a well of water springing up to eternal life it flows from us to quench the thirst of those who are parched with guilt. Christians who refuse to forgive those who have hurt them, do so because they haven't received Christ's forgiveness themselves, and so have none to give. Either that or they live out the greatest of all lies, that Jesus did not die for the person they despise. In either case their destiny will be the same as the destiny they wish upon their enemy (Matt. 6:14-15).

At the end of every year in New Zealand, a person is chosen as the New Zealander of the Year. In 2011 that person was Emma Woods.

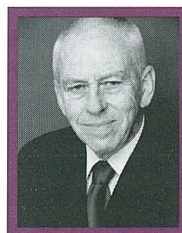
She was chosen ahead of Chris Liddel, a businessman in charge of GM's US\$23 billion initial public offer—the largest in history. She was chosen ahead of Ryan Nelson, a sportsman, who led the All Whites soccer team in their undefeated World Cup campaign. She was chosen ahead of John Key, the New Zealand Prime Minister, who revived the National Party and led it to the top of the polls. And she was chosen ahead of James Wallace, whose New Zealand art collection of \$50 million was put on public display.

Why? What great thing had this woman done to surpass these notable New Zealanders?

When a young man at the wheel of an out-of-control illegally modified car slid onto the footpath and killed her son, Nayan, four, in front of her, she took the time to get to know the eighteen-year-old. She accepted that he had made a foolish mistake; told him not to let it ruin his life; and through tears of grief she urged the judge not to send him to prison. Because of her spirit of forgiveness New Zealanders elected her New Zealander of the Year.

God grant us that same spirit.

Ritchie Way



—Ritchie Way

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

Phone:.....(07) 55245040
Facsimile:.....(07) 55245900
Executive Editor:Pastor Ritchie Way
Layout & Design:Patricia Tedman
Proof Reader:Lionel Hartley
Printer:.....Eagle Print E. Victoria Park WA.
Good News Unlimited is an evangelical, nondenominational, nonprofit organisation, 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. Its ministry includes radio presentations, preaching appointments, public seminars and the dispersal of audio and video cassettes, CD's and DVD's also literature emphasizing the atonement of Christ.

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, CD Rom or 3 1/2" disks (MAC or IBM) Word, Wordperfect or text-only format to: Executive Editor, R Way, 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.

GNU CONTACT PERSONNEL

Elénne Ford(07) 32361690
Rob Harris(02) 66283501
Milton Hook(02) 84112113
Bruce Johansen(03) 53811330
William Sinclair(08) 94585469
Bruce Starr(02) 98721016
Ritchie Way00116494822543

Magazine: ritchiew@kiwilink.co.nz

Chairman: spider55@live.com.au

GNU USA: gnu@goodnewsunlimited.org

Secretary/Treasurer:

dennis@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

GNU Exec. Editor:0011 649 4822543

Fax:0015 649 4822544

GNU Printer:(08) 93615690

Fax:(08) 94703478

GNU USA:.....0011 1 5308239690

GNU Treasurer:.....0413128080

GNU Website design:

rharris6@aanet.com.au

GNU ADMINISTRATION AUSTRALIA:
admin@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

Accounts/orders: Carolyn

Books & Tapes:.....(07) 55245040
admin@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

Mission Statement

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



Jesus often spoke of his final sacrifice on the Cross as ‘my hour’ or ‘my time’. That time would be the climax and culmination of his ministry on Earth (John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 17:1).

“WHY ARE YOU CRYING?”



Part 1

Ritchie Way

the servants to dip some out and take it to the host. When he tasted it the host couldn’t understand why the best wine had been kept until last. It was usually served first, and later, when the guests were full, they’d bring out the cheaper wine.

This miracle was an acted parable of Jesus’ last ‘hour’. The marriage between God and his people was doomed, because the old wine of Judaism was run-

The Bible pictures the Lord as the bridegroom, and his people as the bride (see Matt. 22:1-2; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7). It is significant, therefore, that shortly after his baptism and the start of his ministry Jesus set off to a family wedding in Cana, up in the highlands of Galilee.

Weddings in Israel were celebrated with a wedding meal, just as they are today, except the celebrations in Israel would often continue for seven evenings. A key to the success of the celebration was the hospitality of the host family, but on this occasion there was a problem with the wine supply. This was about to become a cause of major embarrassment for the host family and the wedding couple.

On arrival at the venue Jesus’ mother told him that they had almost run out of wine. Jesus’ response to his mother was, “Why are you involving me? My hour has not yet come.”

Jesus often spoke of his final sacrifice on the Cross as ‘my hour’ or ‘my time’. That time would be the climax and culmination of his ministry on Earth (John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 17:1).

His mother, however, totally preoccupied with the needs of the guests, ignored him and said to the servants, “Do what he tells you.”

Jesus asked them to fill six large stone water jars with water. These six water jars, which were used by the people for ceremonial washing, held about six hundred litres of water. When they were filled, Jesus asked

ning out. The only thing that could save the marriage between God and his people was the divine provision of the new wine, the blood of Jesus shed for many for the forgiveness of sin. This superior wine, which is more than sufficient (over six hundred litres), was ‘kept unto last’. It is thus that the marriage between God and his people would be saved by the blood of the new covenant.

THE HOUR HAS COME!

Let’s leapfrog over Jesus’ three years of ministry to his final ‘hour’. After Jesus had eaten his last Passover meal with his disciples, and instituted the Lord’s Supper, he looked toward heaven and prayed, “Father, *the time has come*” (John 17:1). The very time for which Jesus had come to Earth had arrived.

Jesus came to Earth to pay the penalty for our sins by dying in our place. Before going to the Cross he was given a final opportunity to either accept or turn down his assignment. Together with his disciples, he went to the Garden of Gethsemane where he could make that final choice in a quiet place where he would not be disturbed.

Jesus well knew that the cost of accepting his assignment was huge. In order to save the world he would have to give his life, not *loan* his life, he would have to *give* it—totally. Because the wages of sin is eternal death, he would be required to die an eternal death in order to redeem us.

There in the Garden, the Father presented Jesus with the toxic cup of our sins and invited him to drink every last drop. So traumatic was the choice—there has never been, nor ever will be a greater choice—that Jesus sweat blood and collapsed to the ground in a state of total enervation. He well knew that if he didn't die for us we would all be lost eternally. On the other hand, if he did die for us it would mean that he, as our sinbearer, would be totally annihilated. That choice would cost him everything. Desperately hoping there might be some alternative Jesus pleaded, "Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me" (Matt. 26:39).

Unfortunately there was no good news for him,



because if the Father took the cup from him the world would be lost. And, for God, that would be a failure. But God never fails.

Finally, Jesus prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

With those words Jesus chose to drink the cup of our sins and pay the horrible price. That choice would cost him his whole future, but it would guarantee us our whole future.

OUR VISIT TO GETHSEMANE

In the year 2000, Rosemary and I visited the Garden of Gethsemane on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. When I first visited that Garden, several years earlier, it was possible to walk through the olive trees, but too many people were taking 'souvenirs' home, so to protect the olive trees a high wrought-iron fence was built around them. In the far corner of the gar-

den was a large rock, which was believed to be the rock that Jesus leaned on when he made his decision to go to the Cross for us.

On the day we visited the Garden a party of young Chinese couples was there, gathered around the rock. Their pastor was leading them in prayer. Many of them had tears streaming down their faces, tears of gratitude for what Jesus had done for them. I didn't want to disturb them by trying to squeeze past so waited until they had finished praying. I couldn't understand a word of the pastor's prayer, but we both spoke the language of heaven. As I drew level with him I reached out and gave him a hug, and in return he hugged me tight and wouldn't let go. Because we have the same heavenly Father, we are brothers and sisters in the very truest sense. We had never met before, but we were totally one in Jesus, who, in this place made the decision to die for us.

One day we will meet again. It may not be this side of the second coming of Jesus, but we will meet, and we will recall that precious occasion and the unique event of Jesus' decision to die for us, which made us one and brought us to that spot at the same time.

JESUS' ARREST

Shortly after Jesus had confirmed his decision to die for us, the Temple guard, led by Judas, entered the olive grove to arrest him. Jesus stepped out of the shadows and asked who they were looking for. They replied, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus answered, "I am [he]."

The words that Jesus used were *ego eimi*. They literally mean, I AM, which is the name of Jehovah. At this name the Temple guard staggered back and fell to the ground (John 18:6). Through this manifestation of his power Jesus revealed to them that he was totally in charge of the situation, and that the only way they could take him would be with his permission.

The Jewish leaders wanted Jesus executed because the people were forsaking them to follow the Nazarene. When Pilate resisted their conniving they threatened to report his misdeeds to Rome unless he gave the command to have Jesus executed. So both the Jewish leaders and Pilate crucified Jesus to save themselves.

How often are we guilty of doing the same thing? How often we deny Jesus in order to save ourselves. How often we deny Jesus in order to get a job or to save our job. If that is what we are doing we are no better than the chief priests or Pilate.

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

Jesus was taken out of the city and nailed to a cross between two insurrectionists who had commit-

ted murder in a recent uprising (Mark 15:7). One pled with Jesus to save both himself and them. This man wanted to continue life in this world. But Jesus couldn't save both himself and others, because if he saved himself he couldn't save others. The only way to save others was to sacrifice himself.

The other insurrectionist had had enough of this world. He asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. That request took a lot of faith, because he was asking a crucified man who was dying, to save a place for him in his kingdom. But Jesus had revealed, through his trial and crucifixion, that he was no ordinary mortal, and that was enough for him.

What was Jesus' reply to this man? "I tell you the truth, today you shall be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Jesus opened the door to Paradise for repentant sinners the moment he died—which was that very day. That sinner, who put his faith in Jesus, became a citizen of Paradise that day.

Three hours after Jesus had been nailed up on that cross the sun was hidden by an unnatural darkness which came over the whole land—a darkness that lasted for three hours (Mark 15:33). This darkness mirrored the darkness of hell that assaulted the Son of God, cutting him off from everything positive. Hope was replaced by despair; peace by terror; and comfort by rejection.

In anguish Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34).

Being 'shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power' was the price of sin, the price that Jesus had agreed to pay. There is no life apart from God, so when God leaves a person their end is 'everlasting destruction' (2 Thes. 1:9). That was the death that Jesus was dying for us.

At the ninth hour, which was 3.00pm, the time of afternoon prayer at the temple, Jesus cried out, "Tetelestai!" and died. In regard to a debt "Tetelestai!" means, 'Paid in full' (John 19:30). Do you have a debt to pay to God? Jesus paid it in full.

In regard to a prison sentence "Tetelestai!" means, 'It is finished!' Have you been incarcerated in a prison-house of sin? Jesus has set you free from that sentence.

In regard to a task "Tetelestai!" means, 'It is completed!' (John 19:28). Do you still believe there is something more you need to do to have salvation? Worry about that no longer, because Jesus proclaimed, "I have fulfilled this requirement for you" (see Rom. 5:19).

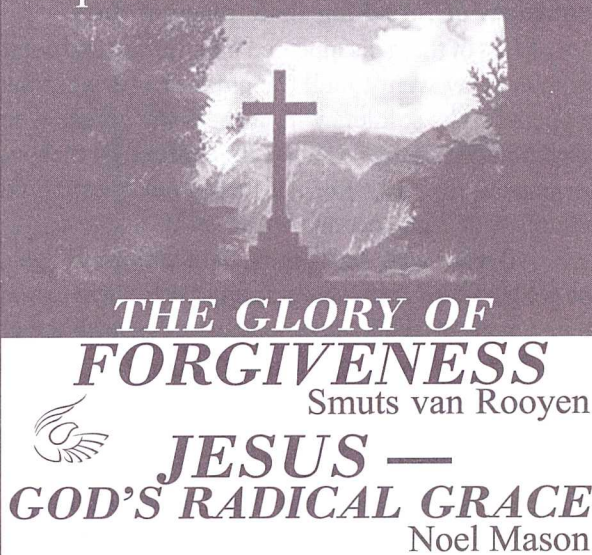
When it became evident that Jesus had died, Joseph of Arimathea, accompanied by Nicodemus, received permission from Pilate to take him down from the cross and give him a decent burial. The

Roman officer in charge of the crucifixion, knowing that some crucified persons had escaped in the past through subterfuge, took a spear and drove it up beneath Jesus' ribs, through his diaphragm into his heart. As it pierced the pericardium it released a mass of clear fluid and blood. This crucified Man was well-and-truly dead.

Near the site of the crucifixion Joseph had a garden with a new tomb in it that he had excavated for himself (Matt. 27:60; John 19:41). They took Jesus' body there, where they wrapped it in strips of linen packed with the spices that Nicodemus had purchased earlier. Having done that, they rolled the great stone across the entrance just as the sun was dipping below the horizon. They then returned home and "rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment" (Luke 23:56).

The next day the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate and asked for some soldiers to guard the tomb. They remembered that Jesus had predicted that he would rise from the dead on the third day. They themselves had no faith in Jesus' prediction, but they feared the disciples might steal Jesus' body to make it look as though he had risen from the tomb. If that happened it would prolong the life of this Nazarene sect. When Pilate gave them permission, they secured the tomb with a seal and set a guard (Matt. 27:62-66). ❀

A special DVD



The wonderful message of salvation for all, accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ on that rugged cross over two thousand years ago, is presented by Smuts and Noel on this DVD. After viewing these very powerful presentations they will leave you contemplating for days how gracious and forgiving our heavenly Father, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, are.

\$15.00 PP&H included #8GF0001

Early on Sunday morning “there was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men” (Matt. 28:2-4).

“WHY ARE YOU CRYING?”



Part 2

Ritchie Way

escape from the fortress in Jerusalem (Acts 12:18-19). The priests consoled the soldiers who had been stationed at the entrance to Jesus’ tomb with the promise, that if Pilate heard about the escape of Jesus they would buy him off.

While all this was going on some women came to the tomb in the early morning

light to complete the anointing of Jesus body. On arrival they were surprised to see that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away, leaving the tomb open. They went inside to find an angel sitting there.

He said, “You’re looking for Jesus but you won’t find him here because he has risen. See the place where they laid him. Go and tell his disciples, and Peter, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will meet him there.”

The women, however, were too terrified and bewildered to tell anyone anything and fled from the tomb (Mark 16:1-8).

A little later Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and also found it empty. She ran to tell Peter and John, who dropped everything and took off for the tomb to see for themselves. John outran Peter but was reluctant to enter the tomb. Not so Peter who went straight in. They could see, lying there on the stone slab, the blood-stained strips of linen that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had wrapped around the body of Jesus. That mystified them, because if someone had stolen the body, why would they first unwind the linen strips and leave them behind.

Eventually the two men left the tomb and returned home, but the grief-stricken Mary Magdalene stayed behind weeping. She bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels there dressed in white. They

Immobilised by terror the guards lay deathly still, not daring to move until the risen Jesus and the angel disappeared. They then clambered to their feet and fled the scene, knowing full well the consequences of forsaking their place of duty.

Most of them disappeared into the city and country, but a few went to tell the chief priests what had happened. The soldiers who went to the priests were so obviously and unanimously traumatised by their experience at the tomb the priests did not question the reliability of their account.

After hearing their report the chief priests gave the soldiers some refreshments and asked them to wait in an anteroom while they had a meeting with the elders. When they returned to the soldiers they offered them a proposal and a significant bribe. The soldiers were to tell the people that the disciples came and stole Jesus’ body while they were sleeping. It did not seem to occur to the soldiers that they wouldn’t have any idea who stole Jesus’ body if they were sleeping. Besides, it is expecting too much to believe that they could have slept through the noise and vibrations of the huge boulder being rolled aside from the entrance of the tomb.

One thing that did worry the soldiers, however, was that if Pilate found out about the disappearance of Jesus’ body they would be put to death for failing in their duty to keep him contained. Just a few years later Herod executed four soldiers for letting Peter

were seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and one at the foot (John 20:12).

The position of the angels was very significant. Like the two angels on the Ark of the Covenant, they flanked the throne of the Lord. And in between was the blood of the covenant, the price he paid for his kingdom (Rev. 5:9-10).

There were three other things there that would have been significant to any thinking Jew. The first is that the tomb, like the Garden of Eden and Most Holy Place in the sanctuary, had a door that no man could pass through and live. Anybody who tried to break the Roman seal in order to open the door would have done so at the cost of his life. The second was, that no one other than our High Priest Jesus, had entered this place with his blood. The third was, that the blood of atonement—the blood that makes us one with God—was only sprinkled between the two angels on the Day of Atonement, the Jewish festival of *Yom Kippur* (Lev. 16:15-16). But this tomb was open, and the High Priest had left it.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

The only person allowed into the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary was the High Priest. And the only time he was allowed in there was on the Day of Atonement while conducting the ceremony in which all the sins of God's people were atoned for (Lev. 16:34). The blood of the sacrifice that he took in made atonement for the sins of God's people, that is, it blotted out our sins so we could be at-one with God again.

Man had been separated from God at Eden. Because of his rebellion he was put out of the Edenic sanctuary and the door was shut behind him. Any attempt to get back through that door would cost him his life (Gen. 3:23-24).

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest went through that door into God's presence, to offer the blood of the sacrifice as an atonement for the sins of all God's people. In case the Lord did not accept the atoning blood, and slew the High Priest, a rope was tied to one of his ankles so he could be pulled out of the Most Holy Place. While the High Priest was in there the people outside prayed fervently for him. When he came out there was great rejoicing because that was a sign that his mission had been successful and God had atoned for all their sins.

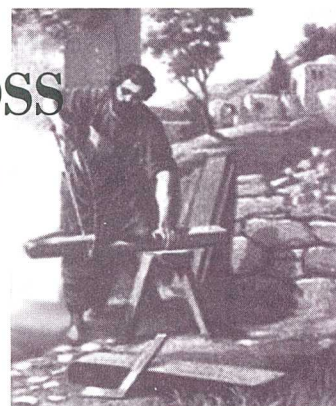
When Jesus died on the Cross he was the true atoning sacrifice for our sins. His blood was taken into the Most Holy Place where no other had been (John 19:41). Would God accept his sacrifice? Would his blood make atonement for our sins? Would God accept his sacrifice and let him leave alive? Would he throw open the door to the tomb and come forth, proclaiming, "*What*

I have opened, no man can close," thus revealing that death no longer had the power to keep us from God? (see Heb. 10:19-22).

As Mary stooped and stared through her tears into the darkness of the tomb, a voice behind her asked, "*Why are you crying?*" She turned and straightened up to look into the light of Jesus' face. His resurrection meant that the Father had accepted his atoning blood and our sins were forgiven. His sacrifice had transformed the door of death into the door of life, a door that is now open to all who accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Now that should wipe away our tears too. ❀

THE CROSS MAKERS

Jeanne
Lohmann



*I can hear the carpenters at work,
the sound of saws and hammers and nails;
I can hear their laughter, and the jesting of
the soldiers.*

*Far away around the world
are many hillsides ready
for crosses.*

*The long years have moved slowly,
and we have forgotten nothing
since Friday.*

*All of us know our business,
and there is profit to be had
and power.*

*The green hillsides are plentiful
and there are many skilled workers
needing jobs.*

*There should be work for a long time yet.
The world is overrun with dreamers.' ❀*

Good News Unlimited
P O Box 6788

South Tweed Heads NSW 2486

Phone: (07) 5524 5040

Fax: (07) 5524 5900

Email: admin@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

Web: www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au

'Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength
He would not make his judgement blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own
And power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone.'

— (From *In Memoriam* by Alfred Tennyson)



FINDING THE ROAD AGAIN

Smuts van Rooyen

There are people in life who have been cursed with such a peculiar scrupulousness, such a honed honesty, that they seem doomed to spend their lives engaged in a titanic struggle with doubt. For them, an answer is never enough, only *the* answer will do. They are, to coin a word, utterly 'ungullible'.

HONESTY, EVEN ABOUT DOUBTS

Such a man came to Jesus one day. He was desperate. His boy was dying. Somewhere he had heard that Jesus could heal the child, but he did not really believe that Jesus was able to. Yet more than anything else in the world he wanted the boy well again. And so, fighting his mind, he went to Christ.

Can you imagine the journey there? His friends walk with him and fill his ears with strong admonitions. "Say nothing of your unbelief. This is your only chance. It's for the lad. Don't reveal too much about your own convictions and remember that a little pretending can go a long way."

Then he is face to face with Jesus who confirms his worst fear by saying, "If you can believe, all things are possible."

Oh no! What now? Can he just this once affirm what his mind denies? But he will not. He exercises his terrible honesty and cries out, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

MIRACLES FOR DOUBTERS

The response of Jesus to such intellectual anguish is profoundly moving. All discussion stops. Jesus is satisfied. The child is promptly healed. And what

does this demonstrate? It proves that double-mindedness does not shut us out of God's concern. It shows that God does not demand that we give up our intellectual honesty as the price for his love.

Nevertheless, we would miss half the story if we did not see that two people were healed that day—the boy *and* his father. Unbelief, doubt, is an extremely painful condition. Mix insecurity, guilt and confusion together and you have the essence of doubt. Jesus did not leave him there.

What can we do to help us in our struggle for faith? How can we believe again? How can we control our doubting? A good place to begin is at the point of God's grace. Don't write yourself off simply because you are doubting. God has not. Jesus was consistently patient with people like you. He accepted your kind. Thomas, John the Baptist, Philip and Nicodemus, who were all 'knights of doubting castle', received sensitive treatment at his hands. These all discovered the astounding truth, that where doubt abounds, grace abounds much more. Honest questions have never disqualified anyone from God's favour.

HONEST DOUBT

After accepting your acceptance in spite of your unbelief, you might want to evaluate the nature of your doubt. Doubt comes in two varieties. There is the constructive sort and the destructive sort. Or to put it another way, there is an honest and a dishonest brand. The good honest stuff is characterised by an unwavering commitment to evidence. This doubt sim-

ply refuses to sweep any facts under the rug. All the facts simply must be faced. Such doubt has been the frustrating possession of virtually every great man who has influenced the course of history. Galileo doubted that the earth was flat. John Woolman disbelieved an Old Testament argument favouring slavery. The Wright brothers rejected the flightlessness of man. Martin Luther agonised over the corruption and teaching of his Church. Thank God a thousand times that they doubted.

For many of us as well the process of doubt is God's way of saving us from the error of our traditions. We sometimes strive for the *status quo* with the intensity of horses struggling to re-enter their burning barn. Then only one thing helps. God must take the bridle of doubt with its iron bit and inflict such pain that our urge for a fatal stability is overcome. By such constructive doubt we are redirected to life.

DISHONEST DOUBT

Destructive doubt is a totally different matter. Such doubt is characterised by the fact that it is dishonest. For example, moral difficulty often masquerades as doubt. Donald Harbuck, to whom I am indebted for this insight, says: "A person, having failed to square his life with the moral demand, finds himself rejecting the creed of Christianity, not because it is unsound, but as a means of justifying his own dereliction. The mechanisms of personality sublimates this process to the point that an individual may be unconscious of what gave birth to his doubts ... when doubt only serves to camouflage the shabbiness of conduct, it needs to be recognised as such" (*The Dynamics of Belief*, p. 73)

Life's tragedies may also masquerade as doubt. A seismic injustice rocks your equilibrium or a sudden death wrings your psyche. Suddenly you are in doubt. When this happens it is imperative that you evaluate your experiences before you begin to abandon your ideas. Doubt your doubts. Has the evidence changed?

Doubt is also destructive when it becomes a mechanism we deliberately use to keep ourselves from arriving at a conclusion. The rich young lawyer knew that he could not keep Jesus away with a stone or with a stick. But he could do so with a question mark. And so he tempted Jesus with his questions. When he saw Christ reaching for his soul, he would rub theology like soap over himself so that he could slip from the Saviour's grasp. It is possible to keep an answer we fear at bay forever by a plethora of questions.

STUDY THE EVIDENCE

So, as we were saying, investigate the nature of your doubt. True doubt will lead you through the door of conscience to freedom. False doubt will lead you

through the door of rebellion to the illusion of freedom.

When you have determined that your doubt is the honest variety springing from the facts, you will have only one option for resolving the matter left to you. You must explore, discuss, search, question and read on both sides of the issue. When John the Baptist doubted Jesus, Jesus gave him evidence to help him. He reminded John of the contents of a section of Isaiah. If you doubt the existence of God, don't just sit there and fret. Buy some books. Read, discuss, pray. You will find that some of the world's greatest minds have been orthodox Christians who faced your issues squarely and with the same agony of soul.

But what if you find strong evidence on both sides of the issue? Then you can do one of two things:

a) throw up your hands in confusion; or,

b) make a decision on the *weight* of evidence.

There is no such thing as one hundred percent proof. Draw a conclusion on the basis of what is most right. Force yourself to make an informed decision. Totally black or white answers are only for children. The real world is far more complex. Dare to be the adult you are.

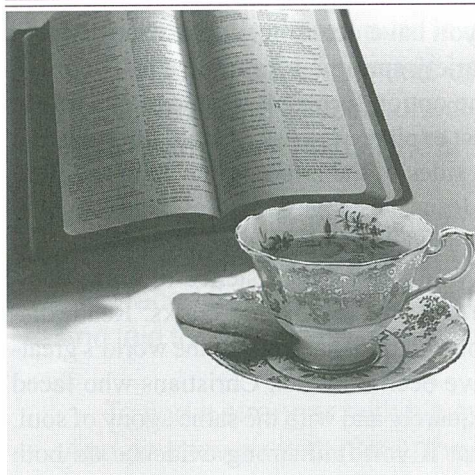
HOLD ON

But perhaps the most important thing to say in dealing with doubt is, *live by what you do believe and not by what you question*. Unbelief is not a home; no one can live in it. What you accept, no matter how small, is a hundred times more important than what you reject. A life cannot be built on negations. Caught in an Alaskan winter a man can stay alive with a fire the size of a cup. Nurture the flame and try to ignore the frozen night. Stay alive.

If you cannot accept God as a person but only as a Power, then hold on to the Power. If you reject Christ as divine but affirm a remarkable humanity, then cling to that. Start with the affirmations you can make.

There is no beauty or sanity in a life that hears only the scratch on the record and not the music. Chronic cynicism is a devastating disease. Refuse to simply cry, "Lord I don't believe." For the benefit of your own mind shout the whole truth, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

And when you have done these things and some doubt yet remains, then accept the reality of life. The reality that sin, sickness, death and doubt will not be totally abolished until Jesus comes. Then determine that as you wait for that day you will not permit the urge to believe to extinguish the urge to doubt. Also determine not to allow the urge to doubt to extinguish the urge to believe. Possess your soul in patience, for in the presence of your struggling faith Jesus is your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption and *your wisdom* (1 Cor. 1:30). ❀



Good News Unlimited WINTER WARM-UP

◆ Bible Study

◆ Music

◆ Interpersonal ministry

◆ Informal setting

Featuring:

Dr. Milton Hook

(Author of *Desmond Ford: Reformist Theologian & Gospel Revivalist*)

With

Pastor Ron Allen

July 21, 2012

Ballina Island Motor Inn

phone 02 6686 8866

One-and-a-half kilometres south of
the town centre, Ballina NSW

Program:

10.00am *Devotional* - **Pr. Ron Allen** **10.45am** Morning Tea. Informal Fellowship

11.15am **Milton Hook:** *The Most Primitive Christianity.*

LUNCH

(Note: Food cannot be brought into the hotel, make arrangements to eat lunch off-site)

2.00pm **Milton Hook:** *A Different Look at the Four Beasts.*

3.00pm Afternoon Tea. Informal fellowship **4.00pm** **Finish**

*Register now for GNU Winter Warm-Up by sending \$5.00 per person to:
Good News Unlimited PO Box 6788 South Tweed Heads NSW 2486.*

SUCCEEDING THROUGH SELF-DISCIPLINE

Pastor Ian

High achievers usually have one obvious thing in common: personal discipline. Successful people are willing to do things that average people are unwilling to do.

After having the privilege of living in three countries, I've observed that successful people express self-discipline in six common ways—irrespective of culture:

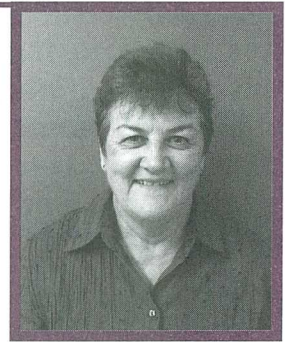
Successful people master their moods. They live by their commitments, not their emotions. Most of what gets done in the world is accomplished by people who do the right thing, even when they don't feel like it! "*A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken down walls*" (Prov. 25:28, LB).

Successful people watch their words. They put their minds in gear before opening their mouths. "*He who guards his lips guards his life*" (Prov. 13:3).

Successful people restrain their reactions. How much can you take before you lose your cool? "*If you are sensible you will control your temper. When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to*

Know Your Good News Unlimited Board Members, Staff and Volunteers

In this series we introduce to our readers members of the *Good News Unlimited* Board, staff and volunteers.



Q. *What is your name?*

A. Carolyn Wagemaker

Q. *Where do you live?*

A. Banora Point NSW.

Q. *How many children do you have?*

A. Two.

Q. *What do they do and where do they live?*

A. Glen (draughtsman) Terranora NSW and Simone (home duties—previously a medical specialist receptionist)

Q. *What is your ministry with GNU?*

A. Administration. I try to be as friendly and helpful as I can.

Q. *What do you like about Good News Unlimited?*

A. Having had no Adventist background, initially I was not sure what to expect when joining the organisation over thirteen years ago. I was interested to see that GNU ministered to those who needed the contact when they were not necessarily in a church family environment.

Q. *What are your aspirations for Good News Unlimited?*

A. That GNU can continue supporting everyone in any way that it can, and also, to continue helping the spread of the gospel message through its many contacts.

Q. *What, apart from the Bible, is your favourite book, and why?*

A. Recently I read Hannah Whitall Smith's book, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* and really enjoyed it. I don't get to read as often as I would like, but have enjoyed a number of books.

Q. *What is your favourite passage from the Bible?*

A. "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13 has been a favourite of mine since I was a teenager, as I was quite shy and this helped me gain confidence and was comforting during those years

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

A. I have often thought that it would have been very interesting to have been at Martha and Mary's home when Jesus visited.

ignore it" (Prov. 19:11, GN).

Successful people stick to their schedule. If you don't determine how you will spend your time you can be sure that others will decide for you! *"Live life with a due sense of responsibility ... make the best use of your time"* (Eph. 5:15-16, Php.)

Successful people manage their money. They learn to live on less than what they make and they invest the difference. The value of a budget is that it tells your money where you want it to go rather than wondering where it went! *"The wise man saves for the future, but the foolish man spends whatever he gets"* (Prov. 21:20, LB).

Successful people maintain their health. That way they can accomplish more and enjoy their achievements. *"Each of you should control his own body, keeping it pure and treating it with respect"* (1 Thess. 4:4).

Where do you need to develop self-control? The disciplines you establish today will determine your success tomorrow. But it takes more than just willpower for *lasting* self-control. It takes a power greater than yourself. Think about this promise from the Bible this week: *"God does not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love and self-control"* (2 Tim. 1:7).

The more I accept God's control over my life, the more self control he gives me!



CHRISTIANITY 101

THE GOSPEL

The word ‘gospel’ means good news. Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 9:35), that is, the good news about his kingdom; his disciples preached the gospel of the kingdom (Luke 9:6); and the early Church preached the gospel of the kingdom (Acts 8:12; Romans 1:15). Jesus told us that when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached to the whole world, then the end will come (Matt. 24:14), after which he will return to Earth for his people.

What is this gospel of the kingdom? The gospel teaches that because Jesus paid the full and total price for all your sins—past, present and future—you have an eternal home in God’s kingdom if you put your full trust in him. And as long as you remain loyal to Jesus, there is nothing more to pay.

There are two ways you receive this good news. The first is through your mind when you receive an understanding of what Jesus did for you on the Cross; the second is through your heart when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and invite him into your life. You are not saved because you know the gospel; you are only saved when Jesus, with his salvation, is welcomed into your heart.

You receive eternal life by receiving Jesus (not just knowledge about Jesus). “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). Notice the tense in this verse. It does not say, “God *will* give us eternal life.” It says, “God *has* given us eternal life.” It goes on to say, “This life is in his Son.”

Now death cannot exist where Jesus lives, so if Jesus lives in you, you have crossed over from eternal death to eternal life (John 5:24). Condemnation cannot exist where Jesus lives; by accepting Jesus, you cross over from being condemned to having your sins fully forgiven (John 5:24; Romans 8:1). Anxiety about your relationship with God cannot exist where Jesus lives; by accepting Jesus, you cross over from anxiety to peace (John 16:33; Philippians 4:6-7). Rejection cannot exist where Jesus lives, by accepting Jesus you cross over from being rejected to being accepted (John 6:37). Despair cannot exist where Jesus lives; by accepting Jesus you cross over from despair to joy (John 15:9-11). All this is good news.

Ritchie Way

THE KEY

Here’s the key to your salvation: The righteousness which gets you into heaven is not your own but God’s (2 Corinthians 5:21). He offers it to you as a free gift. You are not saved because you live a good life; you are saved solely as a free gift of God’s grace. “It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). In other words, you are not saved by what you do for Jesus, but by what Jesus has done for you.

It is what Jesus did on the Cross two thousand years ago that saves you, not the changes which the Lord is making in your life. What we do is not the *means* of our salvation, it is the *evidence* of our salvation. So if you fall into sin, don’t feel that you have lost your place in God’s kingdom. As long as you continue to hold on to Jesus, and repent of your sins, you have eternal life.

Jesus promised a place in God’s kingdom to one of the insurgents who was crucified with him. That man wasn’t saved because of his good works. He didn’t have any. He was saved because he repented of his sins and committed himself to Jesus (Luke 23:39-43), which the other insurgent did not do. His salvation depended entirely on Jesus and not on anything he did. And your salvation, likewise, depends on nothing you can do, only on Jesus.

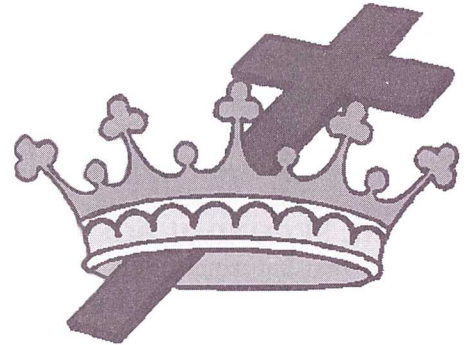
There is only one name that can save you, and it’s not your own. “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Mary’s child was given the name, “Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus is the One who saves us, not ourselves.

If you want to walk on the narrow path of holiness in the Holy Spirit, you must first pass through the narrow gate of salvation in Jesus (Matthew 7:13-14). Once through that gate you are on the King’s land, so, whether you die before you take another step—as did the criminal on the cross—or whether you complete the full journey—as did the apostle John—you have arrived. You are safe in God’s kingdom, and you are a citizen of it (Philippians 3:20). You have eternal life now.



Because Jesus is the creator of the universe (Heb. 1:1-2; John 1:1-3) there can be no truth about anything in our world greater than that provided and revealed by him. He himself said, "I am the truth" (John 14:6). It is for this reason that every teaching in the Christian Church must be measured by the life and teachings of Jesus in order to receive God's stamp of approval. It is wise to measure our beliefs by this divine standard, because we are told that any teaching that does not measure up to the truth as it is in Jesus, 'will be pulled up by the roots' (Matt. 15:13)

JESUS IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JUDGEMENT



Ritchie Way

THE FIRST JUDGEMENT

Jesus is the Judge/King

The New Testament reveals that Jesus, through his sacrifice on the Cross, became King of Heaven and Earth (Matt. 28:18; John 17:2; Php. 2:9-10). The author of Hebrews, quoting Psalm 45, says of 'the Son', "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever" (Heb. 1:8).

In Bible times the King was also the Supreme Court Judge (1 Kgs. 7:7; Psalms 122:5; Isa. 33:22). The Hebrew word, *shaphat*, can mean either 'to rule' or 'to judge.' The King's throne was a judgement throne (see Matt. 25:31-33). Proverbs 20:8 says, "A king sits on his throne to judge." This means that if Jesus is now reigning, then he is also judging (John 5:22; Acts 10:42).

Now if Jesus is the Judge, who, or what, is he judging? According to John 5:27-29, he is deciding who will rise in the first resurrection to live eternally, and who will rise in the second resurrection to be condemned (see Dan. 12:2). He says in John 5:24, "Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me *has* eternal life and will not be condemned; he *has* crossed over from death to life." This means that Jesus brings down his verdict on each of us when we decide either for or against him. And this is the verdict: "Whoever believes in the Son *has* eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him" (John 3:36).

Promise:

The promise of Judgement is given in Daniel 7:9-14. This judgement will award the kingdom to the saints of the Most High (v. 18), and will take away and destroy the power of the Antichrist (v. 26). That's God's promise.

This judgement will be inaugurated at the Cross,

and will have a fulfilment following the first advent, and a consummation following the second advent.

Inauguration:

Jesus on the Cross, as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1-2), is the Judge/King upon his throne. Because he endured God's judgement against our sins he has the right to judge as guiltless those who surrender their sins to him, and as guilty those who cling to their sins.

On one side of his Cross are those who accept his atoning death. They are saved to live eternally in Paradise (Luke 23:38-43). On the other side are those who reject his atoning death. They are condemned to pay for their own sins. Like the two felons crucified with Jesus, the saved and the lost are divided by their acceptance or rejection of the crucified King.

Fulfilment:

"He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"" (Luke 46-47). The gospel that is being preached to every nation today proclaims Jesus as the Saviour of the world. Those who accept his death as a substitution for their own, are saved; those who reject it are lost.

When are they saved or lost? Jesus brings down his verdict on each one at the moment of their acceptance or rejection of him. Notice the tenses in this next verse: "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).

Whether aware of it or not, the whole world is now lining up behind either the repentant felon who was crucified with Christ, or behind the unrepentant felon on the other cross.

Consummation:

At the consummation of all things—when Jesus returns—that which is now concealed will then be revealed. Those who have received the gift of life will be raised up in the first resurrection and enter into their inheritance—the kingdom prepared for them (Matt. 25:34).

The lost, on the other hand, after their resurrection, will be sent off to eternal punishment (Matt. 25:46). Because they rejected the sacrifice that Jesus made for them, they will be required to pay the penalty for their own sins. Having rejected eternal life there is no alternative for them but eternal death (2 Thes. 1:9).

THE SECOND JUDGEMENT

The first Judgement takes place *before* the Second Coming, because it decides who will rise in the first resurrection at the return of Jesus. Those who are raised to life when Jesus comes back have already been chosen from among all the multitudes of Earth to live forever with the Lord (Matt. 24:30-31). They have been chosen because of their faith in Jesus.

The first Judgement decides our destinies—whether we will spend eternity living with the Lord, or be cut off from his presence and life. On the other hand, the second Judgement decides the rewards of those who will either live or die forever. The repentant insurrectionist who was crucified with Jesus will rise in the first resurrection together with the apostle Paul. They will both have the same destiny—eternal life in Paradise, but their rewards will be totally different. The twenty year-old who hated Christ, will be raised in the second resurrection with Adolf Hitler (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15). They will both have the same destiny—eternal death, but their ‘rewards’ will be totally different (Luke 12:47-48).

The first judgement is about our response to Jesus’ free gift of grace, the second is about our response to the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Believers who use their talents to store up treasure on Earth instead of in heaven, will be saved but will have no reward in the kingdom (1 Cor. 3:10-15). Jesus said that when he returns he will reward everyone *according to what they have done* (Matt. 16:27; Rev. 22:12).

We know that Christians will be judged in the Last Judgement because the apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth: “We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10). And to the believers in Rome he said, “Each one of us will give an account of himself to God” (Rom 14:12). Try to imagine giving an account of your life to the One before whom all secrets are laid bare? (Heb 4:13).

The Bible says, “The servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving of punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded ...” (Luke 12:47-48).

WHO SHALL JUDGE GOD’S PEOPLE?

While Jesus is the supreme Judge, he will have many to help him. These assistant judges, like him, will sit on thrones to rule and judge. Jesus said to the twelve apostles: “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:28).

Jesus assures us that those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb will reign with him (Rev 3:21). Now, according to the Bible, the one who reigns is also the one who judges. Reigning with Christ, therefore, makes us judges with Christ (Rev 2:26-27; 1 Cor 6:2-3; Matt 19:28). Together with Christ the saints will determine everyone’s reward or punishment (including their own) (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10; Matt 25:14-30). On that day our rewards, which must not be confused with our destiny, will depend not on what Christ has done for us, but upon what the Spirit of Christ has done in us. This judgement of God’s people will be a post-Advent, rather than a pre-Advent judgement.

God’s people will also judge the lost, both men and angels: “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? ... do you not know that we will judge angels” (1 Cor 6:2-3). Jesus said, “To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations” (Rev 2:26-27), that is, authority to both rule and judge them. John the Revelator said, “I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge” (Rev 20:4).

HOW SHALL WE BE JUDGED?

If we have been merciful, we shall be judged with mercy (Matt 5:7); if we have been harsh in our judgements, we shall be judged harshly (Matt 18:33). Jesus said, “In the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Matt 7:2). James admonishes us to “Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgement without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful” (Jms 2:12-13).

WHAT WILL OUR REWARDS BE?

The parable of the talents reveals that we shall be rewarded according to the use we make of the re-

sources that have been given to us. A two-litre person won't be expected to produce the same as a ten-litre person, but a ten-litre person will. The person who returns to the Lord only what he received from him, may just as well have left his talent with the Lord in the first place. Because he has lived as a non-entity he will be treated as such. On the other hand, those who have multiplied their resources, will be rewarded amply by the Lord (Matt 25:14-30). So, "whatever you do, work

at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward" (Col 3:23-24).

The Lord promises to reward those who have sacrificed for him, far above their expectation: "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matt 19:29). ❀

Health Snippets

DEPRESSION



Depression is an illness that is associated with lower levels of zinc, folate, omega 3 essential fatty acid and vitamin B12 in the sufferer. While obtaining the right balance of zinc, folate, omega 3 and Vitamin B12 in your diet may not alone cure your depression, recovery will be impeded where these levels remain low.

Zinc: Some natural sources of zinc are toasted wheatgerm (sprinkle on your food), sesame seeds or tahini, roasted pumpkin seeds, and roasted peanuts. Dark chocolate is also a source of zinc.

Folate: Some natural sources of folate are spinach, peas, broccoli, cabbage, avocados, kidney beans, and fortified cereals.

Omega 3: Omega 3 is obtained from linseeds, canola oil, soybeans, walnuts, salmon and tuna, or mercury-tested fish oil capsules. (There is compelling evidence of low levels of depression among populations who eat a lot of fish). However, if you are taking other medication check with your doctor before taking fish oil capsules.

Vitamin B12: Vitamin B12 is obtained from meat, eggs, milk, cheese, marmite or vegemite.

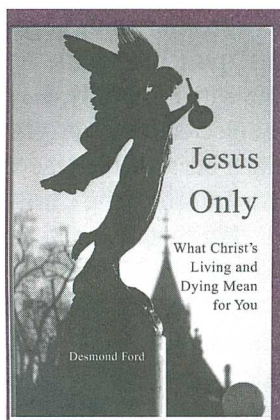


I felt like my body had gotten totally out of shape. So I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors.

I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

Special Project 2012

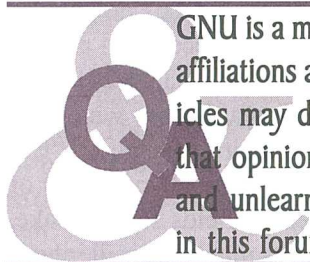
Desmond Ford's book *Jesus Only* printed in Ukrainian, Romanian, Russian and Spanish



An abridgement of the book *Jesus Only* by Dr Desmond Ford is at present being translated into Ukrainian, Romanian and Russian. We need your support financially for this project as the printing costs are an unknown. These translations will be printed overseas where the printing costs are lower. We have the money on hand for the translation costs, but we need the continuing support of our readers to get the first editions printed in each language. **The more money we receive for this gospel outreach, the more books we will be able to print.**

The book is now being translated into Spanish as well. A Pastor's wife from a Spanish Church in Australia has already begun translating *Jesus Only* into Spanish. Spanish is her first language and she is fluent in English, having lived in Australia for over twenty years; she has a university level of education. This lady was keen to do the translation for us, which is encouraging. The cost of this translation will be met by monies on hand, but we will need your help with the printing costs. **We thank you in advance for your help.**

Please send your donation *and mark it project 2012*, to Good News Unlimited, 52 Kohekohe Street, New Lynn Auckland 0600 if you live in New Zealand or to Good News Unlimited, PO Box 6788, Tweed Heads South, NSW 2486 Australia if you live elsewhere. ❀



Q&A 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.

CHRIST IN YOU

Dear Pastor Ritchie Way,

I was delighted, on opening the November issue of Good News Unlimited, to read a short article entitled, Gospel Nugget. Whoever wrote it did a great job!

About sixteen years ago, during the time that my wife and I were hosting the Good News meetings in our home at Burleigh Heads, I became aware of the term 'Christ in you', frequently used in the Bible and especially in the writings of John and Paul. I was unable to obtain further understanding of this concept but continued to study and pray for enlightenment.

A short time later I was invited to a Men's Breakfast at the local Church of Christ. The guest speaker was an American by the name of Bob George and he spoke Christ into my life. God revealed to me at the time that this was the answer to what I had been seeking. I was filled with joy and awe to realise that Jesus Christ, through his Spirit, actually indwelt me and was able to work through me. I have been available for him to use me however he chooses ever since that awakening.

After making some enquiries I found out that Bob George had been brought to Australia by a Ministry called Torchbearers International which was started in the Lakes District of England in 1945 by Ian Thomas, who had been a Major in the British army. Thomas's best-known book is called The Saving Life of Christ. In due course I became affiliated with this Ministry and my wife

and I are still actively involved.

After being enlightened regarding the 'Christ in you' message I presented it to the Board of Good News of which I had been a member for many years. Sadly, however, I received a negative reaction so we moved into another field of Ministry. This has been hugely rewarding. Now I am thrilled to see that your magazine has embraced and shared this important aspect of the gospel message.

I would like to take this opportunity, Ritchie, to commend the work you have been doing as Editor. You have been sharing concepts with your readers in a gracious and informed way. God has certainly used you for his glory.

Yours with sincerity and respect,

Your brother in Christ,

B. T.

Dear B.

Thank you for your letter. It exudes the Spirit of Jesus. God bless you in your witness for him.

Grace and peace to you,

Ritchie.

FOOD AND DRINK

Dear Ritchie,

Do you really believe that God, in the Bible, is actually concerned with what we eat and drink? Doesn't he have more important things to deal with than what we put in our mouths?

F. D.

Dear F.

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

Ritchie.

FAMILY CONVERTS

Dear Ritchie,

If Jesus' brothers lived with him for thirty years, why did it take the miracle of his resurrection to bring them to the place where they believed he was the Messiah?

M. J.

Dear M.

I expect that it was because 'familiarity breeds contempt', and also that the Jews expected the Messiah to be more than the son of a mere carpenter.

On one occasion the people of Nazareth asked, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" And they took offence at him.

But Jesus said to them, "Only in his home town and in his own house is a prophet without honour" (Matt. 13:54-58).

But when Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven in full view of a multitude of people—something no ordinary man could do—his family could no longer live in denial of his divinity. Nevertheless, had there been anything negative in Jesus' past life, while he lived at home with his family, they would have rejected him outright. Instead, James became the leader of the Jewish branch of the Christian Church, James and Jude (Judas) each wrote a book in the New Testament, and all the brothers became missionaries.

Abundant blessings,

Ritchie.

NABOTH'S HOMETOWN

Dear Editor,

I understand that the capital city of Israel was moved to Samaria by King Omri, the father of King Ahab. Yet when I

was reading the story of Naboth in 1 Kings 21, I noticed that 'Ahab king of Samaria' had his palace further north in Jezreel and not in Samaria. Are you able to cast any light on this and why the change was made?

P. K.

Dear P.

Ahab lived in Samaria for some time before he moved to Jezreel. First Kings 16:29 says: "Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel for twenty-two years." It was in Samaria that he built a temple for Baal. Ahab was still in Samaria when Ben-Hadad I, king of Aram, besieged the city (1 Kgs. 20).

It was after the second such siege that Ahab moved to Jezreel, a city which had a commanding view across the plain to the Jordan (cf. 1 Kgs. 20:43 with 1 Kgs. 21:1). He remained there for the rest of his days. Why he moved we are not told, but Samaria still remained the seat of government during Ahab's entire twenty-two year reign.

Ritchie.

TESTING TIME

Dear Ritchie,

I work with a group of men who are highly skilled, but who are also very worldly and crude in their speech. I enjoy my job, but find these characters a bit hard to put up with. It wouldn't be so bad if their vulgar jokes and coarse language were just something that happened occasionally, but it's continual, like they were taking part in a competition to see who could be the most shocking.

I'm not sure what I should do. I can't really resign because jobs are hard to get at the moment, and I need the income to pay off our mortgage. So, what to do? Do you have any suggestions?

P. M.

Dear P.

I understand your problem well, having worked in that kind of

environment for six years. This could be a time when "God is testing you in order to know what is in your heart" (Deut. 8:2). Will the seeds sown by your fellow workers find any lodgement in the soil of your heart, or will they be rejected? Will you stay as pure as the lily that grows in mud?

The engineer who introduced me to the Lord, worked in such an environment, but he was always positive, helpful and happy. He was never judgemental of his fellow workers and didn't look down on them. Just the fact that he didn't take part in their swearing or dirty yarns was judgement enough. The mosquitoes of their impure speech couldn't get through to him because he was like someone covered in heavenly Deet.

Missionaries don't forsake their posts because mosquitoes plague them; they just take antimalarials, cover themselves with insect repellent and sleep under a mosquito net at night. You must protect yourself in the same way at your post. If your heart is filled with God's grace, peace and love, and if you are covered with his impenetrable Spirit, you will not only survive, you may have the privilege of winning some honest soul to the Lord.

Grace and peace to you,

Ritchie.

REJECTION

Dear Ritchie

I really appreciate the hours of study you must put into your articles. We may not agree with everything you write, but, as you have said, you accept full responsibility for what you write, and we must accept full responsibility for what we do with what you write. In this regard I appreciate the freedom that you give to us to choose for ourselves what we will or won't believe. I, for one, am grateful that you do not force your views on us as dogmas, but

offer them to stretch our minds and inform our faith. We respect you for treating us as adults and not as children as my church still does, which really riles me.

I find it very stimulating to consider aspects of truth I was completely unaware of. Often, when reading what you have written, I feel like swinging from the chandeliers—if we had them.

There must be people, however, who are threatened by what you write. I would be interested to know your response to them.

Keep up the good work,

T. M.

Dear T.

Thank you for your affirmation. It inspires me to do better.

In Revelation 12 we are told about a woman who was heavily pregnant and who cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then an enormous red dragon appeared and stood in front of the woman so he might devour her child the moment it was born.

Each new illumination of truth is like that unborn child. It is conceived in secret and develops slowly out of sight. But the time arrives for it to be born. This is a time of pain and hard work, but ultimately one of great joy.

However, the moment this truth-child is born, the dragon attempts to gobble it up. That's the reality. Every new truth—especially the gospel—has its religious detractors who want to consume it, be they the conveners of the Diet of Worms or the administrators at Glacier View. But God rescues that truth and exalts it to his throne where it will judge those who sought to destroy it.

This knowledge is marvellously liberating. It's our responsibility to proclaim God's Word, but it's not our responsibility to judge those who disagree with it. According to Jesus, the Word will be its own judge (John 12:48).

Ritchie.

GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED

Our parable for this month is the story of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22:2-14. Jesus said:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants [the apostles] to those who had been invited to the banquet [the Jews] to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fatted cattle have been butchered [Christ has been sacrificed], and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them [e.g. Stephen and James]. The king was enraged. He sent his army [the Romans] and destroyed those murderers and burned their city [Jerusalem].

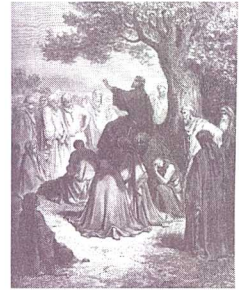
Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners [the places where prostitutes and other bad people hang out] and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, [Jews and Gentiles] and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless.

Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are invited, but few are chosen.'

In this parable the guests are transformed into the

JESUS' PARABLES



bride (a common literary practice among Jews). It starts with the King inviting all Jews to attend the wedding of his Son. For the most part, however, they were too busy about their own affairs to come. Some of the invitees even seized and killed the people who brought them invitations to the wedding. When the king heard about this he was very angry and sent his army to destroy and burn the city of these murderers—which was Jerusalem.

The King then told his servants to go out and invite sinners and Gentiles to come to the wedding banquet. And when the wedding hall was filled the King came in to see the guests. As he moved through the crowd he saw a man there who wasn't wearing wedding clothes. Now as wedding clothes are worn by the bridal party, and especially by the bride, not having wedding clothes on is a statement that you have no wish to be united with Christ. As a result, the disrespectful guest is tossed out into deep darkness. That the invited guests become the bride with the wedding clothes is supported by the following quotation from Rev. 19:7-9:

"The wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. [Fine linen stands for the righteousness of the saints] ... Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!"

Do our lives reveal that we are wearing 'wedding clothes'—that we are one with Christ? ❀

STANDING IN THE NEED OF PRAYER

Good News Unlimited is supported by a group of people committed to praying for the needs of our readers. If you have a prayer request please share it with

Carolyn at the office. You don't have to be specific if you wish to keep the matter private. Your request will then be passed on to a group of intercessors who will take it to the Lord on your behalf. They would be honoured to support you in this way.

Dr Ford Live on Broadband

Peachester meetings,
2nd & 4th Saturday each
Month 2.30pm-4.00pm at
www.desford.org.au
and click on 'Dr Ford Live'.

Alternatively go to:
www.ustream.tv/channel/dr-desmond-ford

The link is on
Youtube Channel page with times
<http://au.youtube.com/user/pangear>

GRACEGATE
Auckland, New Zealand
There is an invitation to all
GNU supporters who are in
Auckland, New Zealand
on a Saturday, to worship with
us at **Gracegate**.

Lunch is provided.

We meet in the Oteha Valley Primary
School Hall, on the corner of
Oteha Valley Road and
Medallion Drive in Albany.
Worship starts at 10.30am sharp

Narellan
Sydney NSW
Focus for Life
Christian Fellowship

Those living in or near Narellan are
warmly invited to meet for Bible
study and fellowship in the Salvation
Army Worship Centre on the corner
of Exchange Parade and Narellan
Road in Narellan, every Saturday at
1.30pm. For further information
contact Pastor Santo Calarco.
phone: 04 0402 9822

Good News Unlimited Gospel Congress 2012
**THE TRUTH ABOUT
 PREDESTINATION**

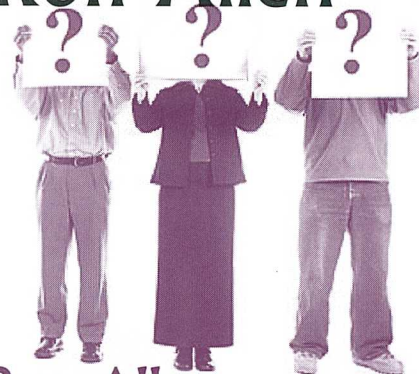
Desmond Ford
Brisbane:

April 21st 10.00am - 4.00pm
 Springwood Tower Apartment Hotel
 9 Murrjong Road
 Springwood

Desmond Ford

- ◆ *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*
- ◆ *Great Men Make Mistakes*
- ◆ *Questions & Answers*

Ron Allen



Ron Allen

- ◆ *Jacob I loved, Esau I Hated*

Good News Unlimited

Saturday Bible School 9.30am

Bible study at the GNU office

2/54-60 Industry Drive

Sth Tweed Heads NSW

Morning tea provided

Please bring your Bible

April 14; May 5; May 19;

June 2; June 16; July 7

For further information

Phone: 07 5524 5040

Email: admin@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

140

Words

**NAPOLEON
 BONAPARTE'S
 TESTIMONY**

My army has forgotten me while living. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself, have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force! Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon love: and at this hour millions of men would die for him.

I have so inspired multitudes that they would

die for me, but, after all, my presence was necessary—the lightning of my eye, my voice, a word from me—then the sacred fire was kindled in their hearts. Now, that I am at St. Helena, alone, chained upon this rock, who fights and wins empires for me? What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, who is proclaimed, loved, adored, and whose reign is extending over all the earth! ❁

—(A. T. Pierson, *Many Infallible Proofs*, p. 231).

Overseas Readers

When ordering books, tapes etc., credit cards are a preferred method of payment. However, if paying by cheque please take into account the conversion rate on cheques, which is \$10.00 Australian..

The Last Word

*'If you're not a missionary,
 you're not a Christian'*

—Charles Spurgeon

Good News Unlimited

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP63221900015
May be opened for inspection.

THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE ...

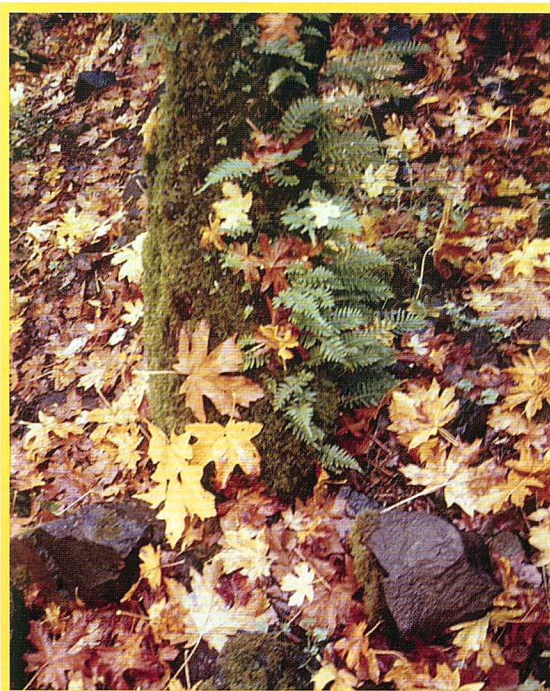
To ensure regular copies of *Good News Unlimited* please advise of any change of address. Return old label and your new address details to:

Good News Unlimited
PO Box 6788
SOUTH TWEED HEADS NSW 2486

Subscription is free on request. As a guide for those who wish to assist this ministry, each magazine costs at least \$35.00 per annum, postage included. Gift subscriptions are invited, either free or financed

GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED magazine is printed by Good NewsUnlimited, a non profit Christian resource organisation.

www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au



PRINT
POST
63221900015

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

The Heart of the gospel is forgiveness. Jesus' last words to his disciples were:
"Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in my name to all nations ..."
—(Luke 24:46).