

February 2012 Issue No. 2

# Good News Unlimited



Paul and John at Odds?

When God Went to Prison

The Silent Majority

Jesus is the Truth  
About Life After Death

How to Make  
Smart Decisions

Health

Discussion  
Point

Loyalties

Published by *Good News Unlimited*  
[www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au](http://www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au)



## EDITORIAL

**T**he subject of global warming is on almost everyone's lips these days. There can be no question that the world is getting warmer. Each winter is shorter and milder than the last, Arctic and Antarctic ice is shrinking, the alpine and arctic growth zones are increasing in size annually, and extreme weather events, triggered by the warmer weather, are becoming more common.

Global warming may not, however, be the disaster that many are predicting. The world has experienced warm periods in the past, the most recent being 'The Medieval Warm Period' of AD 950-1250. At that time the tree-line in the European Alps climbed 2000 metres, and grapes were grown 200 metres above present limits in Pomerania, East Prussia, England, southern Scotland and southern Norway. Wheat was grown right up to Trondheim in Nor-

way, and cereals were grown in Greenland. The population of Europe more than doubled due to the increases in crops and cropland. It was a golden period for architecture and art during which many cathedrals were constructed throughout Europe.

This three hundred-year warm period, however, flipped into 'The Little Ice Age' that lasted twice as long. Written records testify that it began in 1314 with three years of non-stop rain that prevented grain from ripening and left crops rotting in the fields. The resultant 'Great Famine' of 1318-1320, extending from the Pyrenees to Russia, and from Scotland to Italy, was marked by extreme levels of crime (stealing of food), disease, mass death, plus widespread reports of cannibalism and infanticide.

Hard upon the heels of 'The Great Famine' came 'The Cattle Plague' that swept over Europe killing the oxen needed for ploughing and harvesting, thus prolonging the crisis.

When better weather returned

the people were so weakened by bronchitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis; and so much of their seed stock had been eaten; and so many of their draught animals had died of plague, it was almost a decade before life returned to normal. But just when people were congratulating themselves on having survived these two crises 'The Black Death' of 1346-1353 struck, killing one out of every three people.

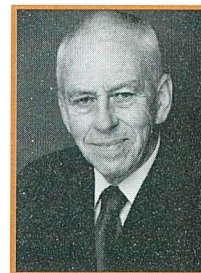
What does the future hold for us who are entering a Warm Period that is possibly being exacerbated by the amount of carbon we are injecting into the atmosphere? Agriculture will boom and currently impoverished populations in countries north of the Tropic of Cancer and south of the Tropic of Capricorn will increase manifold. The effects of a Warm Period upon the countries between these two Tropics, however, could be disastrous, driving them into starvation, dependency or migration.

But when Planet Earth self-corrects and switches back to an Ice Age there won't be enough food produced to feed the populations that were inflated by boom times in agriculture and migration. As a result, the weak and starving who have the financial resources, will either migrate to warmer climates or succumb to disease and plagues. The sheer size of such a world-wide catastrophe will bring about extraordinary changes that few will be prepared for.

If the above scenario comes to pass, those who put their faith in a stable climate and continual good harvests, stand to be shaken along with everything else that can be shaken. This is why the Bible bids all of us to put our faith in the only thing that cannot be shaken, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ and the unshakeable kingdom he established at the Cross (Heb. 12:27-28).

We don't know *what* is coming to us, but we do know *Who* is coming!

*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 Way** .....00116494822543

**Pastor:** ron@goodnewsunlimited.org.au

**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.





# LOYALTIES

Ritchie Way



**M**any children experience character changes as they grow up, but the developmental changes that took place in the life of the young Jewish lad, Josh, seemed rather extreme and were hurtful to his family.

Josh had been a model child and a pillar of support to his mother and siblings after his father had died prematurely. Like other Jewish families in their town, there were several children in Josh's family, four brothers and three sisters<sup>1</sup>, all younger than he. Caring for his younger siblings, as well as working at his trade to keep food on the table for nine people, was no mean feat. It meant hard work and long days for the young man, with the only break for him being on the Sabbath. Fortunately the town's people were sympathetic to the family's needs, going out of their way to give Josh paid work where possible. And the synagogue supplemented the family's income from its charity fund.

Every week Josh looked forward to Friday evening when he could lay down his tools and enjoy twenty-four hours away from his daily labours. While Josh had a trade, thanks to his father's foresight, he very early on demonstrated an interest in religion. Every Sabbath he would go with his family to the town's synagogue, and would often remain behind after the service to discuss the Scriptures with the elders there. He was even given permission to read the synagogue's scrolls—something that was not usually permitted.

The synagogue leader suggested to his mother, more than once, that the young man should go to one of the rabbinical schools for training. He knew the family could not support Josh in such a venture, but said the elders had agreed to pay his fees while he was in training. Josh's mother approved of the leader's vision, but told him she didn't see how that could be possible until her other sons were also earning an income for the family. That time came soon enough.

One day Josh sat down with his Mum and told her that now that his brothers were providing for the family the time had come for him to leave home to fulfil his calling. Her eyes lit up with excitement. 'What rabbinical school would you like to go to, son?' she asked. 'I understand that the synagogue's offer to help you with your fees still stands.'

'Mum, I have no desire to attend any of the rabbinical schools,' Josh replied. 'The Lord is my teacher. He will show me what to say and what to do.'

His mother's expression changed to one of consternation. 'I hope you're making the right choice, son,' she said.

'I can assure you, Mum, it is the right choice.'

After Josh left home his mother went to see the leader of the synagogue to share her concerns with him. His response, however, only heightened her worries about her eldest child. He told her about another promising young man who had the same views as Josh about synagogue schools, and who had gone off and got mixed up with a radical right-wing group.

Several months later Josh returned to his hometown looking very well, even though a bit gaunt. The townspeople were thrilled to see him. That Sabbath he was honoured by being asked to read the Scripture selected for the day and to give a homily on the passage.

It wasn't too long before the synagogue leader realised that his invitation was an awful mistake, because the young man seemed to have the high and mighty idea that Jehovah had called him to usher in the real Year of Jubilee. If that wasn't bad enough, Josh told the people there in the synagogue—the people of his own family and neighbourhood—that they shouldn't think they were God's people just because they were Jews and worshipped on the Sabbath. There was far more to being God's people than observing external ordinances, he said. In fact he knew Gentiles that God favoured more than most Jews.



Well, as you might imagine, those ‘injudicious’ words completely blotted his copybook. The congregation became enraged! How dare he treat them like that after they had supported his family in their years of hardship! What base ingratitude and self exaltation! His mother and sisters were in tears and his brothers were seething. People stood to their feet and shouted him down. They were so angry they would have struck him down then and there had it not been for the intervention of Josh’s mother whose fervent pleas diverted their attention long enough for Josh to escape.

After the Sabbath the leader of the synagogue visited the family home to talk with Josh’s mother, Miriam, and her other sons. He emphasised how important it was that they reign in Josh before he got himself deeper into his religious fantasies, and brought further shame on his family. ‘You saw for yourselves, today, what strife he got himself into with his radical views. If that sermon is indicative of what the rest of his ministry is going to be like, then I fear for him and his future,’ were his parting words.

As he set off down the path he called back, over his shoulder, ‘Jacob, you’re the head of the family now. It’s up to you to put a stop to Josh’s foolishness.’

As the seasons advanced Josh gained quite a bit of popularity as an exponent of the Jewish Scriptures and as an exorcist. When the religious leaders were asked about his extraordinary powers, they claimed that God would never empower anyone to cast out demons if he turned his back on the leadership of Israel, as Josh was doing. And because his power couldn’t have come from the Lord, then the only other source for it had to be the devil himself.

His family heard about this and decided to make a long journey to go and see him. Jacob<sup>ii</sup> determined he was going to sort him out. Josh’s ‘thumbing of his nose’ at the religious authorities had gone too far. It was time to put a stop to his nonsense. They all agreed, ‘He is out of his mind’.<sup>iii</sup>

They arrived to find a large crowd at the house where Josh<sup>iv</sup> was teaching. This gave them an excuse not to go in. They didn’t want their presence in there to give anyone the idea they supported him and his unorthodox teachings and extreme views. So they sent someone in to call him out.

Josh was told, ‘Your mother and brothers are outside and want to see you.’

Josh asked, ‘Who is my mother and who are my brothers?’ Then he looked at the people sitting around him and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who obeys God is my brother, or sister or mother.’<sup>v</sup>

These words signalled a change in Josh’s loyalties. Up until now he had been obedient to his par-

ents, but this conflict between loyalty to his parents and loyalty to God had forced him to make a decision that would apparently indicate that he had rejected the authority of his family. That however, wasn’t true. He would always love and care for them, but he could not support any decision they made that would cause him to disobey God, or turn his back on his divinely ordained mission.

Imagine for a moment what would have happened had Josh submitted to the will of his family. His mission would have been stymied, and there would have been no salvation for anyone, including his own loved ones.

It is a perilous thing to choose father, or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter ahead of the Lord, even if they threaten to cut you off from their love, or disinherit you. The Scriptures warn, ‘A man’s enemies will be the members of his own household’ (Matt. 10:36-37). Eternity will smile on you only if you put the Lord first in all your decisions.

Because Josh stuck to his principles he ended up saving his family. The second oldest son, Jacob (James), became head of the Jewish church, even though he remained rather conservative in his beliefs. And his other brothers became missionaries (Matthew 13:55; 1 Corinthians 9:5).

We only stay true to our family when we stay true to the Lord. Anyone who puts the wishes of their family before the wishes of the Lord is choosing prejudice rather than love, trouble rather than peace, failure rather than victory, and death rather than life. For the sake of your family as well as yourself, don’t yield to anyone who seeks to draw you away from the Lord and his will for you. ❄

#### Endnotes:

i. The number of Josh’s sisters is a guesstimate. It is known that he had several sisters, but exactly how many sisters there were in his family was never recorded.

ii. James is the Greek name for Jacob.

iii. Mark 3:20-21.

iv. Jesus is the Greek name for Joshua.

v. Mark 3:31-35 CEV.

## 79 Words

*‘What shall I think when I am called to die?  
Shall I not find too soon my life has ended?  
The years, too quickly, have hastened by  
With so little done of all that I’d intended.*

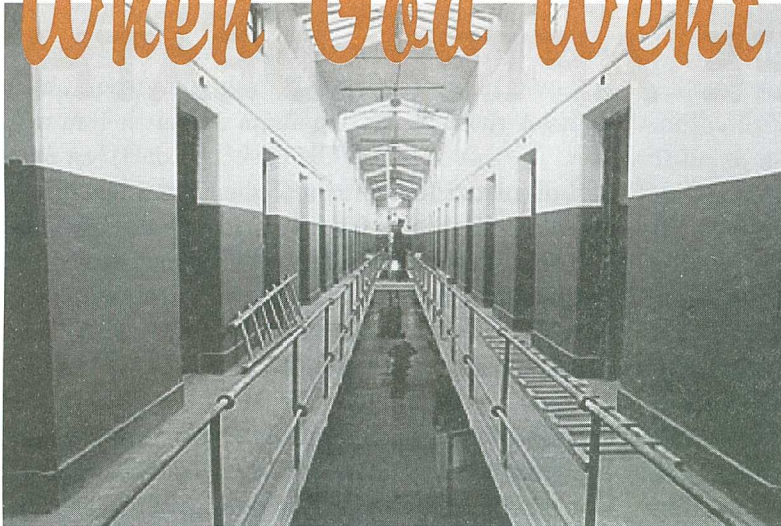
*‘There were so many things I’d meant to try,  
So many contests I had hoped to win;  
And lo, the end approaches just as I  
Was thinking of preparing to begin.’*

—Written by an unknown soldier in a  
Singapore prisoner-of-war camp.



**I** was raised a Catholic but walked away from my religion as a teenager. While I still ‘believed’ in God, I was so self-sufficient I felt I didn’t need him. The problem with my independence was, that the further away from God I got, the messier my life became. But, as the Lord says in the Bible, we may leave him but he never leaves us, he is only a prayer away.

# When God Went to Prison



Christine  
Chmiel

wouldn’t get beaten up. I begged God to show him his love and mercy—things that were not common in his life.

**A friend of mine, in his late twenties, had spent most of the last ten years of his life in prison. I was twenty-seven at the time and would visit him every Sunday.**

**One particular Sunday, as we sat in the cold, barren visiting room, he told me not to be surprised if I saw him with two black eyes and a broken nose the following weekend. I laughed and told him not to be silly.**

**With eyes filled with sadness he said, ‘No, Chris, when someone in here announces that you’re in for a hiding, he has to carry it through, otherwise he’d lose face.’**

When visiting time was over and I watched him lining up at the door, I felt a tremendous sense of helplessness. I could smell the fear in that place but was powerless to do anything about it. As I drove home I had never felt so compelled to help another human being, but knew the situation was beyond my ability to do anything about it. Then I heard a voice say, ‘Your only hope is God.’ I knew that was true, but because I wasn’t living as a Christian should, I felt that God wouldn’t listen to my prayers. But he was my only help, so that night, when everyone else was asleep in the house, I went into the lounge, lit a candle and got down on my knees.

I said, ‘God, I know I’m a sinner, however I’m not asking for myself but for a friend who doesn’t know you. You are his only hope.’

I can’t recall what I said after that, but sobbed and pleaded with God to intervene so my friend

When I opened my eyes the flame on the candle in front of me rose up until it was about twenty centimetres high. I jumped to my feet and danced around the room full of joy and gratitude.

‘Thank you God! Oh thank you, thank you!’ I said as the candle flame shrank back to its normal size.

This experience of me praying to God, and God answering my prayer was so out of character with my life up to that time, I couldn’t bring myself to tell anyone about it.

The next Sunday, when I was waiting in the visiting room at the prison, my friend walked through the door looking his usual self, without a bruise in sight. As I gave him a hug I asked, ‘Where are all your bruises? I thought you were getting the bash.’

I will never forget his reply. ‘It was really weird,’ he said. ‘They gathered around and he was just about to smash me when this incredible peace came upon the place and everyone calmed down. Nobody knew what hit them. Everyone was walking around in circles, like, Wow! And that night, when I was locked in my cell, I felt really free inside. I never felt like that before.’

While that experience took place a few years ago, I will never forget the day when God answered my prayer and walked into Christchurch Men’s Prison.

*P.S. I’ve prayed with the candle on other occasions since, but the flame has never ever flared up again as it did that first night. ❄*



**G**od came to Earth in Jesus and revealed to us the truth about everything essential to our salvation. This truth was disclosed in his life, death and teachings, which is why Jesus said, 'I am the truth' (John 14:6).

# JESUS IS THE TRUTH ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH

Ritchie Way

## THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS ON DEATH

Jesus taught that God's salvation didn't extend just to death, but beyond death into eternity.

Every great religious leader this world has ever known has been overcome by death. The only one ever to conquer death is Jesus Christ. His resurrection from the dead revealed that he alone has the power to conquer man's greatest enemy—death. His resurrection is a foretaste of what will happen when he returns to Earth and resurrects all who have died in him (1 Cor. 15:20-23). Like a mighty army the dead in Christ will come forth from their graves to be re-united with the Lord and the faithful of every age. It is for this reason that Jesus renamed death 'sleep'. His own resurrection from the dead robbed death of its permanence, making it nothing more than a time of rest until the redeemed are woken up at his second coming (John 11:11-14).

Some people teach that Jesus wasn't intending that we should define death by what happens when someone falls asleep, rather, he was just using the word 'sleep' as a euphemism for death. If this were true, how would we interpret Jesus' words in Luke 8:52-53? He said there, of Jairus's daughter, 'She is not dead but asleep.' Now if sleep were just a euphemism that Jesus was using for death he would be saying, 'She is not dead but deceased', which would be a nonsense. Jesus used the word 'sleep' to point out that the deceased would one day be woken up from their unconscious state.

## THE PROOF FOR THE RESURRECTION

The most radical and extreme doctrine taught by Christians is that Jesus himself rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion. The apostle Paul presents the evidence for Jesus' resurrection from the dead in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians—

part of a letter that he sent to the church in Corinth about AD55. In this letter Paul names several well-known witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, as well as five hundred others, most of whom who were still alive at the time of writing (1 Cor. 15:3-8).

## BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION

Because Jesus is the archetypal man, that which happened to him between his death and resurrection is what will happen to us (1 Cor. 15:20).

The question is, did Jesus go to the Father in heaven above between his death on the Cross and his resurrection from the dead? One of the first people to see Jesus after his resurrection was Mary Magdalene. She fell down and worshipped him, clasping his feet. Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, for I have *not yet* returned to the Father. Go instead



to my brothers and tell them I am returning to my Father and your Father ...' (John 20:17).

Because Jesus, God's Son, did not return to his Father between his death and resurrection, his followers should not be claiming that we lesser mortals do. And because Jesus is the truth about death as well as about life, we, his committed followers, should be upholding him, not Plato, as the foundation of our



belief about the state of man in death. The word ‘soul’, in the sense of an intelligent entity that survives death, does not exist in the Bible.

The author of Hebrews listed, in chapter 11, many of God’s people, such as Abraham, Moses, David, Samuel, etc., who were saved by their faith in the Lord. He concludes his list with these words:

*‘All these people are known for their faith, but none of them received what God had promised. God planned to give us something better so that they would be made perfect, but only together with us’* (Heb. 11:39-40 NCV).

Until Jesus had offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins, believers could not enter into the eternal inheritance promised to Abraham and his faithful children (Heb. 11:13). In this age we enter that inheritance by faith; in the Age to Come we will enter it literally together with Abraham, Moses, David and Samuel. In the meantime, they, together with all other deceased believers, are sleeping, waiting for the resurrection of the faithful when Jesus comes (1 Thes. 4:15-18).

When Jesus returns to Earth, these Old Testament heroes of faith will be made perfect ‘together with us’. At that time the Lord Jesus Christ ‘will transform our lowly bodies so that they will become like his glorious body’ (Php. 3:20-21). On that day, and not when we die, Jesus will say to the redeemed of all ages: ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; *take your inheritance*, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world’ (Matt. 25:34).

Consider this: How could Jesus say to those who are raised to life at that time, ‘Enter into the joy of your master’ (Matt. 25:21, 23 NASB) if their spirits had already been basking in God’s presence for hundreds of years?

### Promise

The prophet Daniel wrote that in the last days Michael, the great prince who protects God’s people, would arise (Dan. 12:1). The same Hebrew word that is used of Daniel rising from the dead in verse 13 is used of Michael in verse 1.

Who is Michael? In the book of Revelation, Michael is the name given to Jesus—the One who cast down Satan by his blood (Rev. 12:7-12). Daniel 12:1, therefore, points to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Because of Michael’s resurrection, ‘Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt’ (Dan. 12:2).

### Inauguration

Jesus died and rose again from the dead. At his death the tombs of many holy people broke open

and they ‘were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and *after* Jesus’ resurrection they went into the holy city’ (Matt. 27:50-53). Because Jesus paid the price for our sins his death cancelled our death penalty and unlocked the grave. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we too shall rise from the dead to live with the Father in the Holy City.

### Fulfilment

As soon as we put our faith in Jesus and die spiritually to the kingdom of this world, our sentence of death is revoked. We cross over from death to eternal life (John 5:24).

Those who die with Jesus are also resurrected with him (Rom. 6:5). And all who rise up in a spiritual resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5) enter into the spiritual holy city, the New Jerusalem, the place where Jesus resides (Heb. 12:22-24; John 14:23; Php. 3:20; Matt. 18:20; 28:18-20).

### Consummation

When Jesus comes again the dead in Christ—who were raised up spiritually to a new life—will be literally raised from their graves with new bodies similar to Jesus’ resurrected body (Php. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:22-23, 49).

Only because of the resurrection of Jesus will we be resurrected and taken into the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, to live with the Lord forever. At that time it shall be proclaimed, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them’ (Rev. 21:3).

## JESUS AND PLATO

Plato taught that the mortal body, which was evil, belonged to the evil earth, while the immortal soul, which was holy, belonged to the holy heaven. He taught that at the death of the evil body, the holy soul was released to go to its true home up in heaven. So when Paul preached in Athens that the dead would be raised to life again, the Greeks sneered (Acts 17:31-32) because what he was teaching was contrary to their Hellenist beliefs. The biblical teaching of the resurrection from the dead is contrary to the Greek teaching that our souls leave our bodies to go to heaven at death.

Paul’s most extensive study on life after death was written to the church in the Greek city of Corinth (1 Cor. 15). Elsewhere, Paul teaches the gospel truth that it was Jesus’ death which unites us with God, not ours. Jesus, not Plato, is the key to our destiny.

Consider this: If the soul is immortal and we go to heaven when we die, we don’t need Easter. It is only because ‘when you’re dead you’re dead’ that the resurrection of Jesus is such incredibly good news.



## WHAT ABOUT PHILIPPIANS 1:21-24?

Paul wrote: *'For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake'* (NASB).

Firstly, this text should not be used to make Paul contradict himself in his teaching on death and life after death in 1 Corinthians 15. Secondly, it was not Paul's objective, in Philippians 1:21-24, to teach the nature of the afterlife, but to make the point that he would glorify Christ by his life, and, should he be condemned to death by Caesar, he would also glorify Christ by his death. And, regardless of whether he lived or died he would be with Christ. Neither life nor death

would separate him from Christ for 'to [the Lord] all are alive' (Luke 20:38).

Because God is omnipresent, the issue of where the dead dwelt with God wasn't a concern to Paul. All that mattered to him was that the relationship of a believer with the Lord isn't severed by death anymore than it is severed by sleep. If we want to know what happens to a person between their death and their resurrection, we should seek to understand this truth in the light of what happened to Jesus while he lay in Joseph's tomb, for **he is the truth**.

But, most important of all, is Jesus' promise that because he has conquered death, the keys to our graves are hanging from his belt and when he comes back he will unlock our final resting places and call us forth to live forever with him (Rev. 1:18; John 6:39-40).



**O**ur parable for this month is found in Matthew 20:1-16. It is the story of the workers who were hired to bring in the grape harvest. The agreed rate of pay in those times was a denarius a day, which was a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

Now some hired labourers worked for many hours through the heat of the day, while others, who were hired in the last hour, worked for just a short time. But when they all lined up to receive their wages they all received exactly the same pay—a denarius. The workers who were hired first naturally thought they would get a lot more than those who were hired last and really complained when they received the same wage.

When the boss heard their complaints he said, 'Don't accuse me of being unfair. No-one here got less than the going rate for a day's work. If I chose to be generous to those who only got an hour's work, don't I have the right to do as I please with my own money? Are you envious because I was generous?'

This parable is about God's generosity. Some people, like Timothy, who are Christians from their youth, serve in 'the Lord's vineyard' all their lives. When Jesus returns they will receive eternal life as the 'reward' for their faithfulness. Others, like the thief on the cross, become followers of Jesus in their last hour. When Jesus returns, they too, will receive eternal life as the 'reward' for their faithfulness. While the length of their service is vastly different, their 'reward' will be the same; God will give to the last the same as he gives to the first. And he will do this because of his overflowing generosity.

This parable is also about God's grace. Some

## JESUS' PARABLES

### THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD



people like Samuel and Daniel serve God in righteousness all their lives. When Jesus returns they will receive eternal life as the 'reward' for their faithfulness. Other people, like Samson or the Prodigal Son, serve themselves and their lusts most of the time, turning to God only at the end. When Jesus returns they too will receive eternal life as their 'reward.' While the quality of their service is vastly different, their 'reward' is the same; God will give to the least the same as he gives to the greatest. And he will do this because of his overflowing grace.

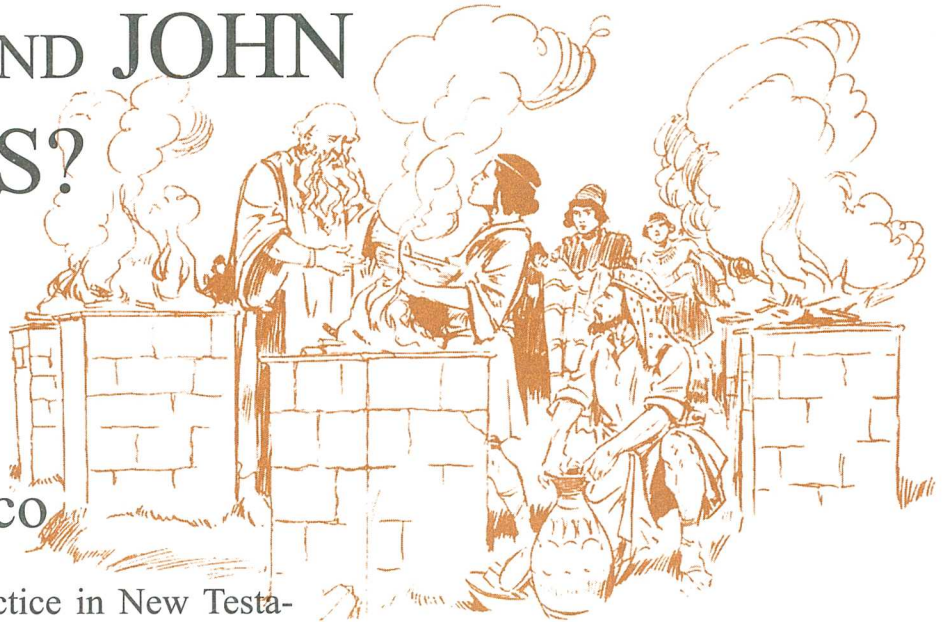
We need to understand that this parable is about God's love. His love cannot be divided into twelve parts so that some get all twelve parts while others get only one twelfth. His love is unlimited and will fill every life, no matter how long the door to the heart has been open to it—a long time or just a short time.

What about you and me? How does this parable apply to us? Firstly, we need to have our hearts open to the love of God. Secondly, the longer our hearts are open to God's love the richer our experience will be. Our 'reward' won't be any greater than the 'reward' of someone whose heart has just opened to God's love, but living in God's love is much better than not living in it.





# PAUL AND JOHN AT ODDS?



## Santo Calarco

**I**t was the practice in New Testament times for a family to purchase a bullock to offer as a special sacrifice. They would take the animal to their temple and dedicate it to their god before it was slaughtered. A part of the animal was then burnt on the altar, a part was given to the priests, a portion of it was cooked in the temple kitchens and enjoyed in a communal meal by the family and invited guests, and the rest was sold in the meat markets.

The apostle Paul saw nothing wrong with Christians joining their pagan families in eating meat that had been offered to idols—as long as that didn't shake the faith of weaker Christians. Paul says the eating of such meat was a matter of personal choice (1 Cor. 8:4, 8). John, however, says something different. In the messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor, John strongly forbids this practise (Rev. 2:14, 20).

Are Paul and John at odds? Why were animals that were offered to idols a problem for John but not for Paul? Paul said that eating meat which had been dedicated to idols couldn't have a bad effect upon Christians, simply because these false gods didn't really exist (1 Cor. 8:4, 7-9). John, on the other hand, said the eating of such meat was a denial of Christ. So how can we reconcile these apparent differences between Paul and John?

The book of Revelation was written forty years after Paul. By the time of Revelation, the historical situation had changed quite dramatically. Citizens of the Roman Empire, as a sign of their loyalty to the emperor, were required to partake of meat that had

been offered to Roman gods. In John's day the eating of meat sacrificed to idols had now become Roman law and was imposed on Christians as part of emperor worship. This was not the case during Paul's life.

Years before the writing of Revelation, and during Paul's ministry, the right of Christians to be excluded from Roman worship was protected by law since they were considered a part of the Jewish faith—the only legal religion exempted from Roman worship practices (Acts 24:5). But by the time of John, the historical situation had changed. The Jewish faith had excluded Christians from their communities, and the Christians did not wish to be associated with Jews whose revolutionaries were causing massive problems for Rome throughout the Empire. Consequently, Christians were no longer exempt from emperor worship. Their refusal to participate in idol feasts in honour of the emperor, therefore, marked them as anti-Roman.

As you read the messages to the seven churches, you'll see that a group of false leaders were teaching believers to compromise and participate in the idol feasts (Rev. 2:14-15). These pseudo Christians were exalting Roman worship before the worship of God. In response to their teaching John calls for no compromise! Zero tolerance was called for. Citizens in the Roman Empire were required to acknowledge Caesar—not Christ—as Lord! In this setting we can understand why the angel commends those Christians who 'have endured hardship for *my name*'; who have 'remained true to *my name*'; and who 'have not denied *my name*' (Rev. 2:3, 13; 3:8). John is addressing Christians in Asia Minor who were facing persecution and even death for upholding Christ alone as their Lord (see Rev. 2:13; 3:8).

For Paul, eating food offered to idols was a per-



sonal choice, but, by the time John wrote Revelation, circumstances had drastically changed. This meant actions that were acceptable in the past were now considered rebellion against Rome! It is in these two different settings that we not only have apparently conflicting statements about eating meat offered to idols, but also about obedience to the Ten Commandments.

Paul makes it clear that a person does not gain or maintain a relationship with God based on his obedience to the Law (see Rom. 3: 10, 28 cf. Gal. 2:16, 21; 3:10, 12). John has a different perspective on our attitude to God's commandments. He makes it clear that true believers keep the commandments of God and are faithful to Jesus (Rev. 12:17; 14:12). Again, we need to remember that John is not talking about the commandments from the perspective of Jewish-Christian legalism; he was describing the believer's relationship to the commandments from the context of false worship in his day.

John saw that the worship crisis faced by Christians in a local setting in the early era of Christianity would be faced by Christians globally just before the end. It is a profitable exercise to compare the messages sent to the seven churches with the message of Revelation 13-14.

As we compare both sets of passages we notice a number important parallels and points of contact. Both speak about perseverance, endurance; hardships testing; persecution, being faithful; martyrdom, remaining true, keeping the commandments, patience and a worldwide test. The messages to the churches of Asia Minor seem to be a microcosm of the end. In other words, the historical sections within Revelation seem to be a microcosm of what will happen globally in the Endtime.

This means that the statements of John, in relation to the commandment-keeping of the saints in the Endtime, needs to be understood in the context of the coming worldwide enforced false worship. John is not addressing Jew-Christian legalism as was Paul, but false worship and martyrdom for those who refuse to

compromise their faith. It is in this unique setting that he makes penetrating statements about the saints and their commandment keeping.

So what is the connection between the commandments and worship? The Ten Commandments define true and false worship. In Revelation 13 we see that the world is worshiping the beast and making an image to him (verses 4, 14-15). This flies directly in the face of the first two commandments which forbid just that (Exod. 20:3-5). So when we read that the saints keep the commandments of God, John is telling us that the faithful will not succumb to the false worship in the end time; they remain true to Jesus and worship God alone, demonstrated by keeping the commandments. Keeping the commandments and true worship are intimately connected in Revelation; the former demonstrates the latter! But nowhere does Revelation say that the saints are keeping the commandments to earn salvation. That is totally foreign to the whole context of the book. The commandment keeping of the saints demonstrates their relationship to God; it does not earn it.

Keeping the commandments in Revelation in the face of death is the ultimate way Endtime believers will demonstrate their love for Jesus. These Endtime saints are deeply in love with the Lamb who shed his blood to redeem them (Rev. 14:1-4). They would rather die than give their allegiance to the beast or his image. They worship God and Jesus alone (read Rev. 13:3-4, 15 cf. 14:6, 12). They worship God and remain faithful to Jesus by keeping the commandments of God that define the differences between true and false worship!

Had the apostle Paul, rather than John the Beloved, been the one exiled on Patmos, he would have given exactly the same counsel that John himself gave: This persecution 'calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus' (Rev. 14:12). ❄

## MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

Try  
*Message of the Month*  
for three months  
for free!

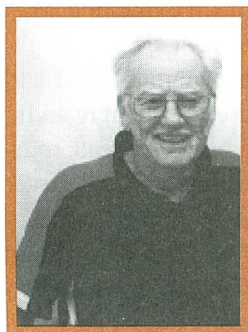
For an annual subscription of **\$75.00** you will receive each month an uplifting CD or Audio Cassette. For an extra **\$8.50** you can store these monthly gems in a purpose made presentation case.

An annual subscription to *Message of the Month* would make a very worthwhile gift for your family or a friend.



# 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.** William (Bill or Spider) Sinclair.

**Q.** Where do you live?

**A.** Queens Park Western Australia.

**Q.** How many children do you have?

**A.** 5 Daughters - fifteen Grandchildren and seven Great Grandchildren.

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

**A.** They are all good Mums and all live within calling distance.

**Q.** What is your ministry with GNU?

**A.** Past printer for twenty-seven years, currently packing and distributing GNU and GNFA. Chairman of GNU Board.

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

**A.** Promoting the Gospel without any baggage.

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

**A.** To see the Gospel go to all the world.

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

**A.** 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

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

**A.** Des Ford, because of his vast knowledge of Scripture and Robert Gordon Menzies—a great statesman.

## Health Snippets



### HEALTH BENEFITS OF ALCOHOL?

For a long time the drink industry has been promoting the health benefits of moderate drinking. It pointed out that the French people, who had relatively unhealthy lifestyles, reduced their cardiovascular disease risk by drinking wine with their meals. Recent studies, however, have revealed that the French paradox is a farce—the French weren't living longer than we were.

Other studies demonstrated that those who drank light to moderate amounts of alcohol were less susceptible to heart disease than those who abstained completely. But that research has also been shown

to be fatally flawed. It was discovered that a significant portion of those classed as abstainers had given up the drink because they were suffering from poor health, and were actually reformed alcoholics.

The evidence is showing that the more people drink, the more they get cancer. The ethanol in alcoholic drinks is a known human carcinogen. Alcohol also acts as a solvent, enhancing the penetration of carcinogens into our body cells.

About a quarter of alcohol-related deaths are due to cancer. New research by the Cancer Council of Australia shows that more than one out of five cases of breast cancer are related to the consumption of alcohol, and that the risks increases with the level of drinking. The World Cancer Research Fund has discovered that consumption of alcohol is a cause of oesophageal, mouth, pharynx and larynx cancers, as well as colorectal cancer in men. ❄



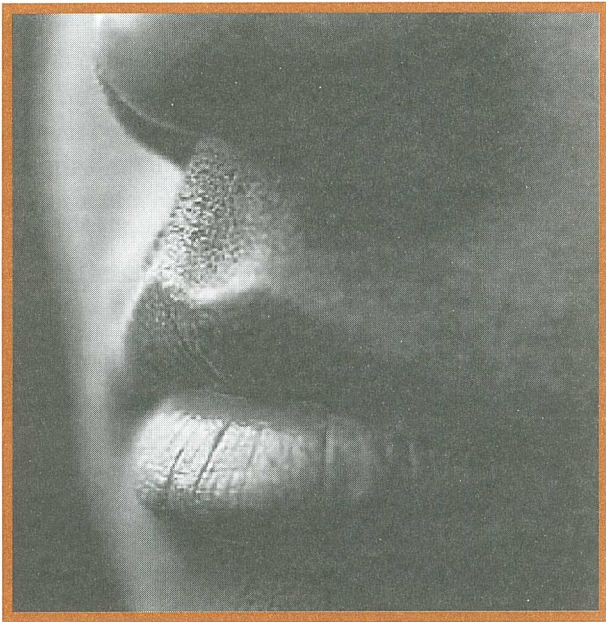
# THE SILENT MAJORITY

Emanuel Tanay, M.D.

**A** man, whose family was German aristocracy prior to World War II, owned a number of large industries and estates. When asked how many German people were true Nazis, the answer he gave can guide our attitude toward fanaticism:

‘Very few people were true Nazis,’ he said, ‘but many enjoyed the return of German pride, and many more were too busy to care. I was one of those who just thought the Nazis were a bunch of fools. So, the majority just sat back and let it all happen. Then, before we knew it, they owned us, we had lost control, and the end of the world had come. My family lost everything. I ended up in a concentration camp and the Allies destroyed my factories.’

We are told again and again by ‘experts’ and ‘talking heads’ that Islam is the religion of peace, and



that the vast majority of Muslims just want to live in peace. Although this unqualified assertion may be true, it is entirely irrelevant. It is meaningless fluff, meant to make us feel better, and meant to somehow diminish the spectra of fanatics rampaging across the globe in the name of Islam.

The fact is that the fanatics rule Islam at this moment in history. It is the fanatics who march. It is

the fanatics who wage any one of fifty shooting wars worldwide. It is the fanatics who systematically slaughter Christian, or tribal groups, throughout Africa and are gradually taking over the entire continent in an Islamic wave. It is the fanatics who bomb, behead, murder, or honour-kill. It is the fanatics who take over mosque after mosque. It is the fanatics who zealously spread the stoning and hanging of rape victims and homosexuals. It is the fanatics who teach their young to kill and to become suicide bombers.

The hard quantifiable fact is that the peaceful majority, the ‘silent majority’ is cowed and extraneous.

Communist Russia was comprised of Russians who just wanted to live in peace, yet the Russian Communists were responsible for the murder of about twenty million people. The peaceful majority was irrelevant.

China’s huge population was peaceful as well, but Chinese Communists managed to kill a staggering seventy million people.

The average Japanese individual prior to World War II was not a warmongering sadist. Yet, Japan murdered and slaughtered its way across South East Asia in an orgy of killing that included the systematic murder of twelve million Chinese civilians—most killed by sword, shovel and bayonet.

And, who can forget Rwanda, which collapsed into butchery. Could it not be said that the majority of Rwandans were ‘peace loving’?

History lessons are often incredibly simple and blunt, yet for all our posers of reason, we often miss the most basic and uncomplicated of points: Peace-loving Muslims have been made irrelevant by their silence. Peace-loving Muslims will become our enemy if they don’t speak up, because like my friend from Germany, they will awaken one day and find that the fanatics own them, and the end of their world will have begun.

Peace-loving Germans, Japanese, Chinese, Russians, Rwandans, Serbs, Afghans, Iraqis, Palestinians, Somalis, Nigerians, Algerians, and many others, have died because the peaceful majority did not speak up until it was too late. ❁

## The Last Word

**God loves you whether you like it or not.  
Nothing you do will make him love you more.  
Nothing you do will make him love you less.**



# HOW TO MAKE SMART DECISIONS

Pastor Ian



**S**uccess is largely a matter of making wise choices. As F. W. Boreham said, 'We make our decisions and then they make us.' That's why every decision has an element of risk to it. We can't always predict the outcome. Are you dealing with any difficult decisions these days? Try following these eight steps for decision-making from the book of Proverbs in the Bible:

## STEP 1: PRAY FOR GUIDANCE (Inspiration)

Start by asking God to help you see his perspective on the problem. Intuition is often wrong. *'A man is foolish to trust only himself. But those who use GOD'S WISDOM are safe'* (Prov. 28:26 LB)

## STEP 2: GET THE FACTS! (Information)

Don't make decisions out of ignorance. Find out all you can first. *'Every prudent man acts out of knowledge'* (Prov. 13:16). *'How stupid to decide before knowing the facts'* (Prov. 18:13 LB). *'Get the facts at any price ...'* (Prov. 23:23 LB).

## STEP 3: ASK FOR ADVICE (Consultation)

If possible talk to someone who has already taken the risk. It's wise to learn from experience—but it is even wiser to learn from the experiences of others! That way you don't have to learn everything the hard way. *'Get good advice and you will succeed'* (Prov. 20:18 GN). *'The intelligent man is always open to new ideas—in fact, he looks for them'* (Prov. 18: 15 LB).

## STEP 4: SET YOUR GOAL (Selection)

Be sure you understand the reason and purpose for the decision you're about to make. You can't chase two rabbits at the same time. *'An intelligent person AIMS at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions'* (Prov. 17:24).

## STEP 5: COUNT THE COST (Evaluation)

This is called a 'calculated risk.' Ask yourself (1) Is it necessary? (2) What will it cost in terms of time, energy, money? (3) Is it worth it? *'It is a trap to dedicate something rashly, and only later to consider your vows'* (Prov. 20:25).

## STEP 6: PLAN FOR PROBLEMS (Preparation)

Remember Murphy's Law—and he was an optimist! Don't ignore problems—they won't ignore you. So be prepared. *'Don't go charging into battle without a plan'* (Prov. 20: 18 GN). *'A sensible man watches for problems and prepares to meet them. The fool never looks ahead and suffers the consequences'* (Prov. 22:3 LB).

## STEP 7: FACE YOUR FEARS (Confrontation)

Fear is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of your humanity. Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather it is moving ahead in spite of your fears. *'Fear of man is a dangerous trap, but to trust in God means safety'* (Prov. 29:25 LB).

## STEP 8: GO FOR IT! (Initiation)

This is the point at which you must stop talking and start acting. You must begin. *'Commit to the Lord whatever you do and your plans will succeed'* (Prov. 16:3). ❄



# DID YOU KNOW?

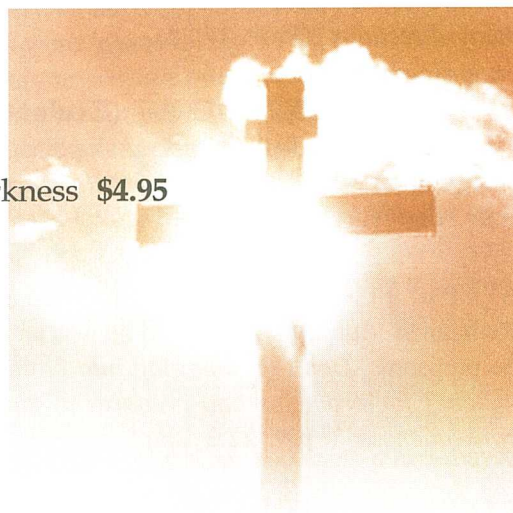
## COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

Many common sayings in the English language come from the Bible. Most of these have their roots in the *King James Version* of the Scriptures. Here are some examples. No doubt, you will think of others.

- ◆ A broken heart (Psa. 34:18).
- ◆ A fly in the ointment (Eccl. 10:1)
- ◆ A law unto themselves (Rom. 2:14)
- ◆ A little bird told me (Eccl. 10:20)
- ◆ A sign of the times (Matt. 16:3)
- ◆ At his wit's end (Psa. 107:27)
- ◆ A thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7)
- ◆ A voice crying in the wilderness (John 1:23)
- ◆ A wolf in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15)
- ◆ Baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11)
- ◆ Beat their swords into ploughshares (Isa 2:4)
- ◆ Blind leading the blind (Matt. 15:14)
- ◆ By the skin of your teeth (Job 19:20)
- ◆ Can a leopard change its spots? (Jer. 13:23)
- ◆ Don't cast your pearls before swine (Matt 7:6)
- ◆ Feet of clay (Dan. 2:33)
- ◆ Go the extra mile (Matt 5:41)
- ◆ He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword (Matt. 26:52).
- ◆ Living off the fat of the land (Gen. 45:18)
- ◆ Man does not live by bread alone (Deut. 8:3)
- ◆ My cup runneth over (Psa. 23:5)
- ◆ On the straight and narrow (Matt. 7:14)
- ◆ Pride goes before a fall (Prov. 16:18)
- ◆ Sow to the wind and reap the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7)
- ◆ The apple of his eye (Psa. 17:8)
- ◆ The patience of Job (Jms. 5:11)
- ◆ The powers that be (Rom. 13:1)
- ◆ There's no rest for the wicked (Isa. 57:20-21)
- ◆ The salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13)
- ◆ The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak (Matt. 26:41)
- ◆ The wisdom of Solomon (Luke 11:31)
- ◆ The writing on the wall (Dan. 5:5)
- ◆ Wash my hands of the matter (Matt. 27:24)
- ◆ Wheels within wheels (Eze. 1:16)
- ◆ You reap what you sow (Gal. 6:7).

## BOOKS BY DR DESMOND FORD

- A Kaleidoscope of Diamonds 1 \$6.50
- A Kaleidoscope of Diamonds 2 \$7.50
- Clarifying the Covenants \$1.00
- Coping Successfully with Stress and Distress \$3.95
- Crisis 1 \$11.95
- Crisis 2 \$22.95
- Daniel and the Coming King \$31.50
- Daniel (original book) \$39.95
- Eating Right for Type 2 Diabetes \$13.95
- Genesis 1: The Light that Challenges the Darkness \$4.95
- God's Odds—How to Win the Wager \$3.50
- How Long, O Lord? \$3.95
- How to Survive Personal Tragedy \$3.95
- In the Heart of Daniel \$13.95
- Is the Law Sin? \$3.50
- Jesus & The Last Days \$3.50
- Jesus Only \$24.95
- Right with God Right Now \$31.50
- The Coming Worldwide Calvary—Christ Versus Antichrist \$11.95
- The End of Terrorism \$24.95
- The Final Rollercoaster \$8.95
- The Gospel of the Cross \$8.50
- The Time is at Hand! An Introduction to the Book of Revelation \$7.95
- Will There Be A Nuclear World Holocaust? \$2.95
- Worth More than a Million \$30.00





*Good News Unlimited Gospel Congress 2012*

# THE TRUTH ABOUT PREDESTINATION

**Desmond Ford**

with  
**Ron Allen**  
**Ritchie Way**  
**Milton Hook**

## **Melbourne**

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 9.30am - 4.00pm  
Carey Baptist Grammar Chapel  
Bakers Road  
Kew

## **Newcastle:**

March 17<sup>th</sup> 10.00am - 4.00pm  
Madison Hotel  
109 Madison Drive  
Charlestown

## **Sydney:**

March 31<sup>st</sup> 9.30am - 4.00pm  
Thornleigh Community Centre  
Cnr. Phyllis and Central Avenues  
Thornleigh

## **Brisbane:**

April 21<sup>st</sup> 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**

- ◆ *Jacob I loved, Esau I Hated*

## **Ritchie Way**

- ◆ *When God Commands*

## **Milton Hook**

- ◆ *The Most Primitive Christianity*



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.

### BISHOP SPONG

*Dear Pastor Way,*

*Bishop John Shelby Spong and his supporters cast doubts on the authenticity of the Gospels, and claim that they were written long after the time of Jesus and his apostles, at which time the stories about Jesus had become magnified and exaggerated with fictitious miracles.*

*I personally find such conclusions quite unsettling, for my faith is dependent upon the Gospels being a true and accurate account of the life and teachings of Jesus, without the input of fictional material by the authors, who falsely claimed to be Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.*

*What evidence is there, if any, that the four Gospels were actually written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?*

**V. M. F.**

**Dear V.**

This is a perennial question, which says something about its importance. There are two very good books that deal with the problem you mention. The first is *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* by Richard Bauckham (Eerdmans, 2006), and *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel* by Craig L. Blomberg (IVP, 2001).

Professor Bauckham has a chapter on Bishop Papias (60 – 130AD) who lived and ministered in Hierapolis, a city between Colossae and Laodicea. About the year 110AD Papias finished his five-volume work entitled, *Exposition of the Logia of the Lord*. In this work he quoted 1 Peter and 1 John. He revealed a knowledge of the book of Revelation, and the Gospels of

Mark, Luke and John. Papias probably made many other references to the New Testament writings, but we may never know because none of his books have survived. The only knowledge we have of them is from other Church Fathers who quoted from them—quite extensively in some cases.

Papias interviewed people who had personally known Andrew and Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John and Matthew—all Jesus' disciples. Both Eusebius and Irenaeus report that two of Jesus' disciples, not named in the Gospels, Ariston and John the Elder, were personally known by Papias. Papias was also acquainted with the daughters of Philip who are mentioned in Acts 21:8-9.

The evidence that the Gospels were written by Jesus' disciples: Matthew, Mark, John, and by Luke the physician, is overwhelming. If these Gospels weren't the real deal, I doubt the devil would waste his time attacking them.

Grace and peace to you,

**Ritchie.**

### SHOULD WE TITHE?

*Dear Editor,*

*All my life I have tithed my income and have been blessed for doing so. But just recently we have had a new person join our congregation who seems to know quite a bit about the Bible and he is making a big issue of the fact that tithing is 'old covenant.' He reckons that if we tithe our income we are in bondage to the Old Covenant. He has confused me quite a bit and I don't really know what to believe. I honestly wish this issue hadn't been brought up, because it has robbed me of the peace I used to*

*have. I would be very grateful for your counsel on this matter. I want to do the Lord's will.*

*Yours truly,*

**J.A.**

**Dear J.**

Refusing to eat fat is also old covenant (Lev. 3:16-17). If I choose not to eat fat does that mean I am under condemnation because this practice is 'old covenant'? Is it 'old covenant' because of my actions, or because of my motives? Circumcision was also old covenant, yet Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3; see Gal. 2:3).

Old and New Covenants aside, who do you think will receive the greatest reward in the resurrection: the 'old covenant' person who faithfully contributes ten per cent of his/her income for the proclamation of the gospel of the Lord's saving grace, or the 'new covenant' person who puts his/her loose change in the offering basket?

Under the New Covenant we recognise that one hundred per cent of our income is the Lord's, not just ten per cent. We give what we can, but whether we give twenty per cent, ten per cent, or six per cent of our income to the Lord is a matter between him and us. We each shall be rewarded according to our investment in the gospel.

Sometimes I think that the people who make such a big issue about tithing being 'old covenant' take this position because they would rather spend the money on themselves than give it to the Lord.

I recommend that you read again what Jesus said about 'treasure in heaven' in Matthew 6:19-24. He said there that the person with 'a good eye' (i.e. a generous person) is full of light, whereas a person with 'a bad eye' (i.e. a stingy person) is full of darkness. In my forty-five years of ministry I have never seen an exception to that law. Generous people are the happiest and most fulfilled by far.

Continue to give freely to the



Lord and one day he will give back to you eternal blessings, shaken together, pressed down and overflowing.

Peace to you,

**Ritchie.**

### THE SECOND COMING

**Dear Editor,**

*There's a lot in the Bible about the second coming of Jesus. I'm so fed up with this world I can't wait for him to come back. Have you any idea when he will come again?*

**J.R.**

**Dear J.**

Some Christians will see him coming today, because, for them, time will cease between death and the resurrection (1 Thes. 4:15-17). Some will see him sooner than they expect (Matt. 24:44, 48-50). Most will be totally surprised by his coming (Matt. 24:37-41). Nobody knows the exact day or hour of his coming (Matt. 24:36).

The Bible says: 'About times and dates ... the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night', that is, when people least expect him (1 Thes. 5:1-2). His coming will take place after the gospel has gone to all the world and the Antichrist appears (Matt. 24:14-15; 2 Thes. 2:3). We can speed the coming of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:12) by doing everything in our power to take the gospel to all the world, either by proclaiming it ourselves, or by helping the proclaimers with our financial support.

The admonition of Scripture is that we must *be* ready at all times for Jesus' return. Jesus doesn't ask us to *get* ready—because that may be too late if we get hit by a bus—he tells us to *be* ready (Matt. 24:44). The apostle Peter says the same thing: 'The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God ...' (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

**Ritchie.**

### DEPRESSED

**Dear Ritchie,**

*Someone told me that you had written about depression in an earlier magazine that I don't have access to. But I have been feeling a bit low lately and full of negative thoughts. I don't have any significant problems at work or at home that would cause such negativity, so I don't know what the cause of my melancholy is.*

*Have you any suggestions that might help me with my problem?*

**M. S.**

**Dear M.**

The first thing you should do is get a thorough check up by your doctor to ensure that there is no physical basis for your depression.

Secondly, ensure that you are eating a good balanced diet.

I would also suggest that you practice three things every day:

1. Go for a good walk of thirty to forty minutes daily, regardless of the weather.

2. Eat four squares of dark chocolate with your lunch every day.

3. Reject negative thoughts. Every time a negative thought comes to you, quickly replace it with a positive thought. This is most important. Give no place to a single depressing thought. Praise God for the good things of life instead. With practice you will soon notice the difference in your mental health.

Abundant peace

**Ritchie.**

### FEAR GOD

**Dear Editor,**

*The first angel of Revelation 14 says, 'Fear God and give him glory' (verse 7). Why does God require us to fear him? It doesn't seem right to me that we should serve a loving God out of fear. After all, doesn't the Bible say that 'perfect love casts out fear'? So how can God be both a God of love and a God of fear?*

**L. G.**

**Dear L.**

The Greek word for fear is

*phobos*, the word from which we get 'phobia'. This word is used three times in Romans 13:3-4 where it says: 'Rulers are not a cause of **fear** for good behaviour, but for evil. Do you want to have no **fear** of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do evil, be **afraid**; for it does not bear the sword for nothing' (NASB).

Notice that it's not law-abiding people who fear the authorities, but the law breakers. It's the same with Christians. God is to be feared only by those who rebel against him.

God is like the sea: limitless, bounteous, to be enjoyed by swimmers, surfers, water skiers, kite boarders, board sailors, yachties, scuba divers, fishermen, artists, and holiday makers, etc. But woe-betide the person who treats the ocean with a lack of respect, who tries to paddle a small canoe down to Antarctica, or swim across the Tasman.

Love of the sea and fear of the sea are two sides of the same coin. And so it is with God. If we accept the gifts that God has for us—especially the gift of eternal life—we will dwell in his love. But if we thumb our noses at God and choose to ignore his great gift for us, we will, sooner or later, have cause to fear the consequences of our choice.

Revelation 14:7 calls upon those who are rebelling against God to fear him because the hour of his judgement against them has come. There is still a chance for them if they fear or respect him enough to accept his free gift of salvation.

**Ritchie.**

Good News Unlimited  
PO 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



**I**n Colorado, USA, there lies the ruin of a gigantic tree which is favourite of naturalists. Why? It stood for hundreds of years; survived lightning many times and innumerable avalanches and storms. But in the end, an army of beetles leveled the tree to the ground. Beetles so small a man could crush them between his forefinger and thumb.

My friends, it's the beetles that get us down. Trivialities are at the bottom of most marital and employment unhappiness. Very few of us are cruelly and greatly wronged. It's the small blows to our self-esteem that cause our heartaches.

—Des Ford.

**You've heard it before, but it's worth repeating every day:**

'Lord' said St. Francis of Assisi, 'Make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there's hatred, let me so love. Where there's injury, pardon. Where there's doubt, faith. Where there's despair, hope. Where there's darkness, light. Where there's sadness, joy. Our Divine Master grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console. To be understood is to understand. To be loved, is to love. For it is in the giving that we receive. It is in the pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.'

Pray this prayer today my friends.

—Des Ford.

**I**n industrialised countries more people commit suicides each year than die from the five most communicable diseases. Twenty times as many doctors as manual labourers die from heart failure, for they lead tense lives and pay the penalty.

William James declared that, 'The Lord may forgive our sins, but the nervous system never does.' And one of our great sins is worry—unnecessary fear. Is there an answer? Yes, my friends. In holy writ there are about 365 fear notes—one for every day of the year. The whole book is full of the same message, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.'

Read and believe.

—Des Ford.

**T**here is one thing you can be quite sure about, everyone in this wide world wants to be loved.

People haters are those who think they are ugly because they feel unloved. This means that we can change the world by love; minds can be changed; attitudes transformed and people made new. There's a little bit of God in all love. The more we have of him, the more we have of it. Whether your world looks sour or sweet to you, depends on whether you've discovered this secret.

It really is love that makes the world go round. Help it spin aright this very day.

—Des Ford.

**S**aid one man, 'I've experienced many terrible things, but most of them didn't happen to me.'

What he meant, of course, was that he had experienced these horrors in anticipation. And so it is for you and me too often. Wise old Thomas Carlyle had the answer, he said, 'Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand'. That's why William Oursler, when he addressed students at Yale University, advised them, 'The load of tomorrow added to that of yesterday and carried today, makes the strongest halter. Shut off the future as tightly as the past. The future is today—there is no tomorrow.'

That's good counsel my friends. Try it!

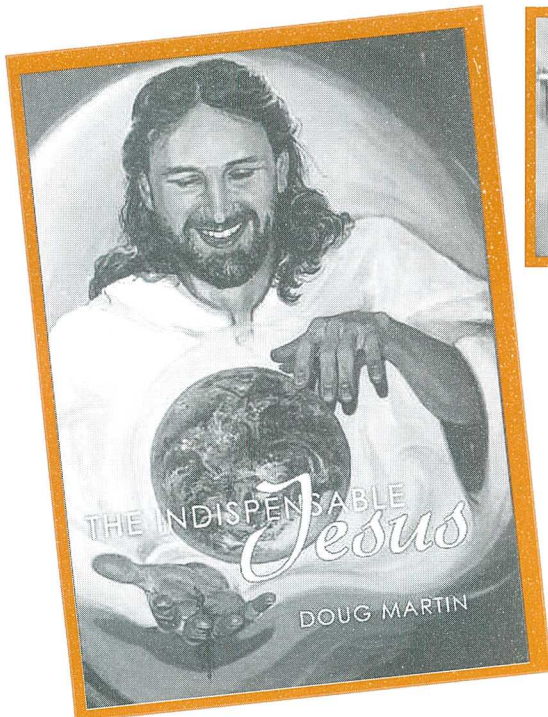
—Des Ford.

## **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.



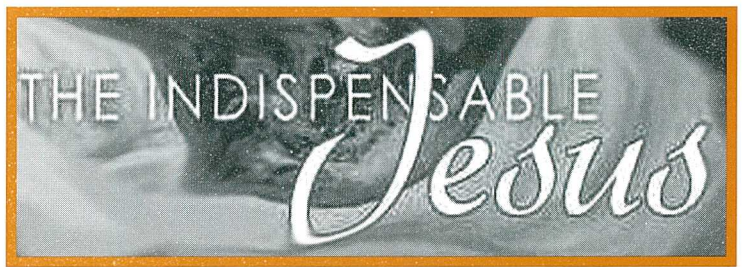


***The Indispensable Jesus***  
**insists that**  
**Christ is Christianity.**

- ◆ Thirty-five challenging chapters.
- ◆ Bible-based and truth filled.
- ◆ Interlaced with true-to-life stories.
- ◆ Inviting all to investigate, enjoy, and choose for life.

*'This book has been a blessing to me. It reveals the loveliness of our Saviour and warms the heart. Why not include it in your morning devotions'*

—Des Ford



**DOUG MARTIN**  
**Jesus: the focus of our faith;**  
**the source of our hope;**  
**the inspiration of our love.**

*The Indispensable Jesus* is in three parts:

- ◆ His personal qualities which confirm his greatness, thus establishing a firm foundation for Christian faith.
- ◆ His important life-giving accomplishments, clarifying the meaning of what he did for us, making possible the reconciliation of God with mankind.
- ◆ His present influence enabling our responses. He inspires our love, joy, peace and gratitude—all on a higher level than is natural, dispelling inner conflicts. As he said, 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' Life with meaning and no regrets—ours for the asking.

Soft cover \$22.95 #1TI0001 plus  
 Hard cover \$37.95 #1TI0002 PP&H

Good News Unlimited,  
 PO Box 6788 Sth. Tweed Heads 2486  
 Phn: 0755245040 Fax: 0755245900  
 eMail: admin@goodnewsunlimited.org.au  
 Web: www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au

**Dr Ford Live on  
 Broadband**

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

Alternatively go to:  
[www.ustream.tv/channel/  
 dr-desmond-ford](http://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

PRINT POST APPROVED - PP63221900015  
May be opened for inspection.

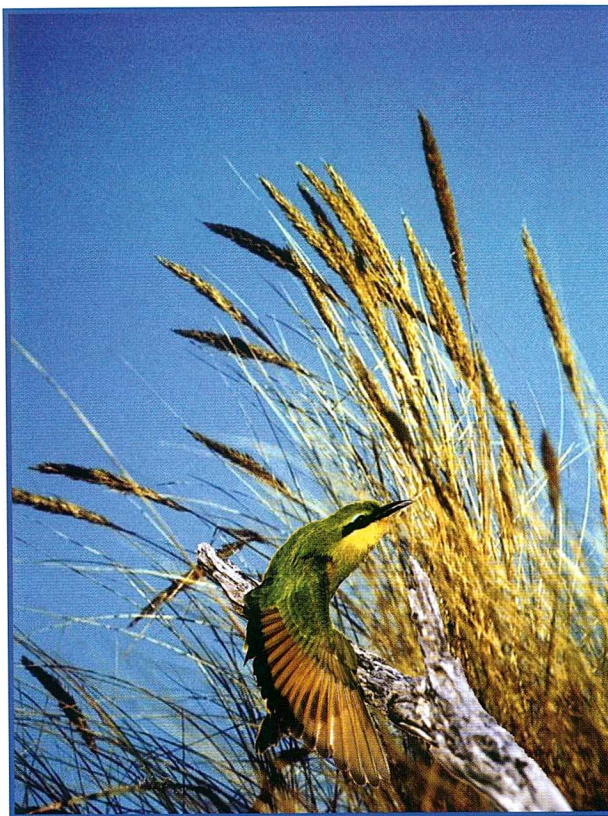
## THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE ...

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.



PRINT  
POST  
63221900015

POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA

God came to Earth in Jesus and  
revealed to us the truth about  
everything essential to our  
salvation. This truth is disclosed  
in his life, death and teachings,  
which is why Jesus said, 'I am  
the truth' (John 14:6).

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