

July 2000

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

A bimonthly newsletter produced by Good News Unlimited

Editorial

The system of law that governs the majority of the nations of the world today was given to us by the Romans. All their government decisions and directives became law. To them the law was supreme, everyone was subject to it.

Western democracies work according to this same system of law, right down to the last detail. Recently, we in Australia, learned that our law now states that hot chickens are subject to the GST and cold ones are not. This is the law and everyone is subject to it.

Throughout the history of the Christian Church many people have tried to reduce God's plan of salvation to a system of laws. Right down to the last detail! They usually start by saying that the ten commandments are God's law and must be obeyed. Then they add more detail of their own, but they overlook the reality that no one can keep the commandments perfectly, and that is why Jesus came. For those who adhere to this legal concept of Christianity, life becomes a series of do's and don'ts and if your life tally of do's exceeds your tally of don'ts, then you just might achieve eternal life.

Jesus never intended us to relate to him in this way. Jesus said that the greatest law is, 'You shall

love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind' and the second is like it, 'Love your neighbour as your self' (Matthew 22:37-39). Love must be a voluntary and spontaneous response of the heart. If a law commands love it is just a meaningless act. So Jesus' words above are not a law in the strict sense of the word. Our love to God must be our spontaneous response to his love for us.

What is this love of God that we respond to so wholeheartedly? It is manifested in his great desire to bring we sinners back to himself. This desire became reality when he allowed Jesus Christ—God the Son, to leave the glories of heaven and come down here to be born a helpless babe; to grind through the life that we mortals all have to deal with, then let down his deity for awhile, accept the sins of the whole world and die a cruel, painful death! When we see and understand who Jesus is and what he has done, our cold hearts are melted and we lovingly respond, saying, 'Thank you Lord Jesus.'

This love that we have for God is not a 'mushy, anything goes' type of indulging, which is often seen in the treatment of spoiled children. It is a resolute desire to put sin behind and to be holy as He is. In doing so, we will suffer the attacks, scorn and ridicule of the world, for the most wonderful state that we can achieve in life, is to

be one with Christ—and it is all based on his love for us.

The three members of the Godhead come and dwell within us to guide us into all truth and love. When this happens we do not need a law to say, 'Thou shalt not do this, and thou shalt not do that.' We are one with the Lord, we are living under, and by his Grace.

As the Apostle John said in 1 John 3:9 'Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin because he has been born of God.'

When we are tempted to sin—and we frequently are—the Holy Spirit speaks to our minds in a powerful way to guide us into the paths of righteousness, and as we faithfully follow his leading we know we are being made into the persons God wants us to be.

As we walk together with Christ we can rejoice that he has saved us for his eternal kingdom, not by us obeying a set of laws, but by accepting and responding to his love and grace.

May you enjoy the total freedom of the Gospel that comes through Christ alone.



Roger

Roger Jones

Focus on the Gospel

'It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master . . .' Matthew 10:25



Dear Friend

One of life's temptations is an impatience with the reality of things. The stern facts of existence are often hard to reconcile with the assertions of faith. Many believers are brought to despondency because they are overwhelmed by the way events question the reality of God.

For example, servants of Christ are frequently wearied by their efforts for him. There are some who claim that they never knew weariness until they gave their lives up to Christian service. But Jesus, who yielded himself more completely than any other to the Kingdom of God, claimed no such thing. He was often worn out from his labours. Once, he was so exhausted, that he fell asleep in a small boat during a storm. On the Calvary road, he was so drained that he could not carry his cross and someone else was forced to do it for him. Incidents like these are recorded, so that those who followed Christ would not fall into the trap of false idealism. It would be marvellous to feel radiant all of the time; to feel equal to any task on any day. But the Master knew nothing of this, there were times when he was utterly spent. And he tells us that it is enough that we be like him.

His words need to be remembered when we are misunderstood. To be misunderstood is a bitter experience. Nothing gives joy like being appreciated. It is a tonic and a spur to more devoted service. But to slave on for those who are skeptical about what we are doing, is hard to bear indeed.

Why God permits such a chilling atmosphere to surround his workers, I do not know. But clearly God allowed his own Son to be so enveloped. Christ's good deeds were attributed to demons. On the Cross and forsaken, people thought he was calling out to Elijah. His exquisite sensitivities were brutalised by callous thanklessness. A drop of gratitude here and there would have been balm to his wounded spirit. But it was entirely lacking.

There are other moments when spiritual labour is dogged by a sense of failure. How many parents are there, who, having poured forth love on their offspring, are met with rejection and loss? How many physicians, counsellors and social workers and those who are obliged to look back over their toils, see scarcely any sign of human progress? And what of those preachers who feel that all their words have been in vain—who feel that they never want to preach again?

A postman's work is done when the letters have been delivered. A bricklayer can see what has been accomplished when the bricks have been laid. But those who work for souls, must often toil lifelong without seeing much fruit for their efforts. Their sense of futility is often overwhelming. Is it wrong? Do they lack faith? It seems to me that without such seeming failure they would miss something of fellowship with Christ. He faced failure as none other has done. Hear his lament, 'How often would I have gathered you together . . . and you would not.'

It is a fact that people who live together often grow to resemble one another. In faith one is our Master, even Christ. His life is our ideal. True spirituality is a growing conformity to him. And although I cannot say that I understand it, I have learned that there is a mysterious consolation in the fellowship of Christ—even in his disappointments. It is enough that we should be like him.

May His grace be sufficient for you.

Yours in service

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Ron J Allen'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

RON J ALLEN

From Clem's desk

Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?'

Jesus answered, 'How can the guests of the Bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the Bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.'

This passage in the ninth chapter of Matthew's gospel is one of the many that gives a clear indication of the experience that characterises the experience of the followers of Jesus.

The good news of the gospel should elicit great joy, celebration and a time to party. Jesus was accused of being a party-goer and he never denied such an accusation, nor did he ever discourage the like. At the wedding of Cana, Jesus not only made wine, he made *more* wine, so that the party could continue. The human race has many things to celebrate and should not be back-

ward in taking hold of such opportunities. Let me indulge myself and suggest just a few:

The fact that there is a God.

The fact that God wants, desires and seeks to give everyone eternal life.

The fact that God loves us without hesitation.

The fact that God never gives up on anyone.

'Party on' Believers and let the spirit of the party infect every person you deal with in your day to day life—your spouse, your children, your friends; your associates and especially your enemies. Let the Spirit of God possess you so that you may indeed live the joy of the Lord. In so doing, build up the community of faith that all may be encouraged in their own experience to crowd out the darkness of trial and discouragement, with the party spirit of joy and gratitude.

Sing hallelujah and give thanks



Clem Moss



Can God Use Me?

Midge Holdenson

Did you ever wonder how God could possibly use you? Did you ever feel inadequate or that you have no special gifts and talents that God could use?

These days we have mass-media, world-travelled evangelists, huge active churches, etc., but God still uses ordinary people like you and me to do his work.

God used a simple carpenter and a peasant girl to rear his son.

Moses was not an eloquent speaker and was very unsure of himself, yet God used him to lead the Israelites to freedom (Exodus 3:13 and 4:10).

Paul describes his feelings of inadequacy in 1 Corinthians 2:3-5 when he writes, 'I came to you in weakness and fear and with much trembling.'

When we look to God's word we see him using shepherds, fishermen, a tent-maker, and so on. God chooses the 'weak things of the world to put to shame the things that are mighty' (1 Corinthians 1:17)

Maybe we can pray for someone who is sick, comfort someone who is hurting or reassure someone of God's unconditional love for them. A small act of kindness, a word of encouragement, or a sincere testimony could be the beginning of someone changing the course of their lives.

Whatever it might be, God is looking for ordinary people who are committed to him to do his extraordinary work.

If we supply the willingness, God supplies the power.

(*The Next Step* magazine)

Letters

Dear GNU

Here is my email address for latest news and updates. Thanks for the page on Canadian Coalition against the Death Penalty in your newsletter recently. I visited the site and stayed there for hours. I am now writing to two deathrow people. Hope my letter can help brighten their day. Again, thanks for including the CCADP in your newsletter.

P G VIC.

Dear Friend

I received May 2000 Newsletter last evening.

I read the editorial three times. I just could not believe what I was reading. Faith is the noun of the verb to believe, that a verb is a 'doing word' is the first thing one learns in grammar at primary school.

Jesus said, 'If you love me keep my commandments' and your editorial states 'Any attempt to keep them is futile before we start.'

I have twenty versions (Hebrew, Greek, English etc.) of the Scriptures and none even hint that this is correct.

So please discontinue sending any more of your literature to me.

R P NSW

Dear R

Modern translations like the NKJ and the NIV translate John 14:15 as, 'If you love me you will keep my commandments' making it into a statement rather than a command. That is, 'If you love me you will find yourself

keeping my commandments.' Our love for Christ produces our obedience not the other way around.

What are these commandments Jesus is referring to? In Mark 12:28-34 we find they are, 'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.' Then, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

This love which we find ourselves generating toward God and our fellow humans, is the result of our salvation.

The relationship God desires to have with us is not one of obeying laws but one of walking together in love.

Roger Jones - editor.

Dr Ford, Ron Allen and all who work for this cause

Never will I cease to be interested in Desmond Ford except when I am near the end of my life, when all the trials and setbacks of this present age are over.

Please send me the latest seminar cassette set.

The *Good News Australia* is wonderful reading, thank you for sending it to me. Enclosed find a cheque to cover costs.

I'm not into all the modern ways and means now available even though they may be quicker to manage, like the internet etc. Wonderful for you folk at GNU. Praise God for the progress of your work through these means.

God bless you all, may the

Kingdom of God come soon. His will be done.

Roger, I loved your opening remarks on the first page of *The Good Newsletter*, issue No. 2 2000—so very, very true too.

Life is just so full of many problems one way or the other, but He is always there to sustain and strengthen us. Praise be to God!

Bless you all at GNU

The love of Jesus keep you all, and keep up the good work.

A H NSW

Dear Mr Jones

I may be a bit late but have a comment about your May editorial describing 'churchgoing Sabbath keepers' as not having a 'gospel-centered (sic) lifestyle' and also having to make a difficult transition to that position.

My experience is, that in every Christian group there are those who appear to love and live the gospel, and those who don't. As a 'church going Sabbath-keeper' myself, (who is blessed by Dr Ford's gospel preaching), I regularly hear sermons that are gospel oriented and, unfortunately, those which are not. There are differing views on what constitutes living a gospel-centered life style.

You noted that it is futile to attempt to keep the fourth or other commandments, that Jesus had kept them for us and imputes this to us when we accept him. Remembering the Sabbath as a day to worship and to bless others rather than to earn salvation, was important enough for Jesus to risk his life over on several occasions. If Jesus is to live out his life in me, it will be important in my life too, while ever being alert to the very real temptation to become legalistic. Legalism—thinking that your way

being alert to the very real temptation to become legalistic. Legalism—thinking that your way of belief and behaviour earns you credit—is a danger to be avoided by all.

PS. I can't believe you really meant it doesn't matter if our worship doesn't acknowledge God as Creator.

C S QLD

Dear C

I believe a gospel centered lifestyle is one where your salvation is solely dependent on the Grace of God, received by your faith in the atoning death of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. By believing this you have the assurance that God is dwelling within you, guiding you at every turn and leading you to eternal life with him.

Your comments about the Sabbath were well supported by Dr Ford when he answered a question at the Sydney Seminar in March of this year. He summed up his answer succinctly by saying, 'We do not keep the Sabbath, we celebrate it.'

Your PS regarding acknowledging God as Creator. This is a very contentious point throughout Christendom. Unfortunately, vast numbers of Christians either do not believe it, or think it does not matter. God has raised up several para-church ministries throughout the world that specifically teach creation, and they have quite a rough time of it.

Roger Jones - editor.

Welcome Back Des and Gillian



It has been around twenty years since Des and Gill Ford left Australia to take up residence in the United States of America. During their time away they have travelled many thousands of kilometers in their outreach for the Lord.

Now it is time for them to take things a little easier, (if possible) so they are heading back to

our sunny shores in a few months time to retire—to the delight of their family and many friends.



Wanted: The Perfect Wife

Wanted for possible lifetime contract: A woman for permanent employment as a wife. The applicant must be attractive with a strong constitution, good teeth and temper, prepared to work with efficiency and flair at lovemaking, childrearing, sewing, cooking; housecleaning and interior decorating. A good working knowledge of child and adult psychology, basic nursing, minor home repairs and a driving licence are also required. A degree in home economics is not essential, but would be useful.

There will be a few additional duties such as all family letter writing, sending of Christmas cards, birthday cards and purchasing of appropriate gifts for such occasions. The applicant must also be capable of educating the children in table manners and social behaviour plus scholastic coaching as required.

A good memory is a must. All bills must be removed from trouser pockets or from the top of the dresser and properly filed for income tax purposes.

The applicant must take care of all children's dental and vaccination appointments as well as possess highly-developed ESP in order to know when to have meals ready, and for how many.

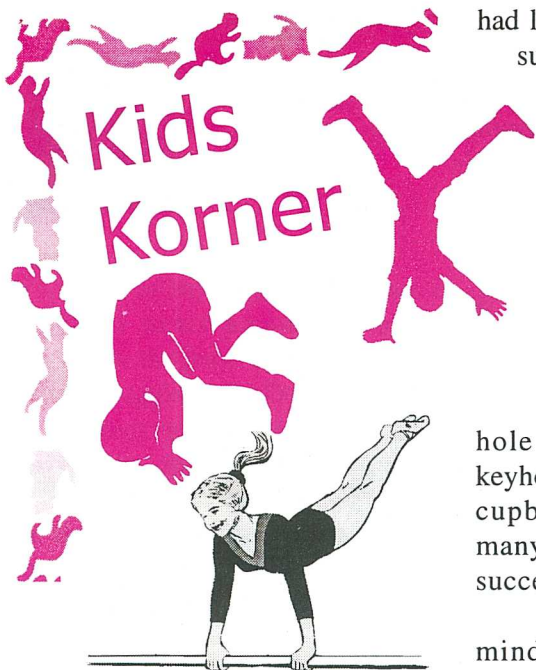
Hours are flexible, but will normally be from around 6.00am to 10.00pm, seven days per week, although these hours may be extended upon demand. The employer has generously agreed that the seven days a week will not be extended. Holidays will be granted each year, but the household duties and care of children must be carried on during leisure time and regular duties such as gardening and lawn mowing are not to be neglected.

Housekeeping allowances

will vary according to income. There will be no salary, sick-leave, social security or pension plan attached to this position. Room, bed and food will be provided for so long as she cleans the room, shares the bed and cooks the food. The employer has the right to terminate this employment at any time should better prospects appear on the horizon.

Applicants must have a good sense of humour and be able to distinguish between nagging (her complaints) and constructive criticism (employer's complaints). Once accepted, the successful applicant must be able to produce an authorised certificate of sanity, issued by a qualified psychiatrist, so that she may not later plead that she must have been out of her mind when taking the position.

-Author unknown.



The Happiness Key

Proverbs 17:22

One day when Susan was going on an errand, she saw something bright and yellow on the path in front of her. She pounced on it and picked it up, 'Some kind of key' she said, 'a funny kind!'

The little key was made of brass. Its handle was in the form of two fat cupids with roses around them and the stem was hollow.

Susan took it home and showed it to her mother.

'I've never seen a key just like that,' her mother said. 'What can it belong to? Perhaps someone will advertise in the paper for it.'

Although Susan read the lost-and-found column for a month, she could not find anyone who

had lost a little key with cupids surrounded by roses. Then, because she liked to imagine things she pretended that it was the key to an enchanted garden, to a magic room, to a princess' trunk that had been lost, to a King's castle—to all sorts of things.

She tried it in every keyhole she could find—in the keyhole of the piano, the linen cupboard, cedar chest and many other things—without success.

'Never mind,' she said at last, 'it's my happiness key and must belong somewhere, one day it will unlock something.'

'Susan,' said her mother one day, 'I'm going to take you to call on some people who moved into town a few weeks ago. There is a boy in the family who cannot walk and is very unhappy, we must try and cheer him up.'

They went to visit, and Susan did her best, but James was hard to amuse, he sat by a window with his toys and books but was tired of them all.

Susan made funny rag dolls out of her handkerchief and he did laugh at that, but he soon grew sad again as he watched the boys outside playing ball.

All at once an idea came to Susan. She tugged at the yellow ribbon which she had tied on the key. 'Did you ever see a

happiness key?'

James looked at her, 'A what kind of key?' He asked.

'Happiness,' Susan answered. Then she told him all that she had imagined about the key.

But James felt too tired to play make-believe.

'Perhaps it will unlock something real,' he said. 'What about trying the locks in this room.'

Susan got out of her chair and started to experiment.

She tried the key in some of the drawers, but it was not long enough. Then she tried it in the door, but it went in too far, it went in as far as the two cupids. She even tried it on the eight-day clock.

James watched her, 'It won't work you see.' He took the key from her and turned it over in his fingers. 'It won't work at all.'

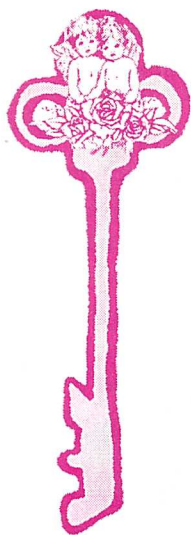
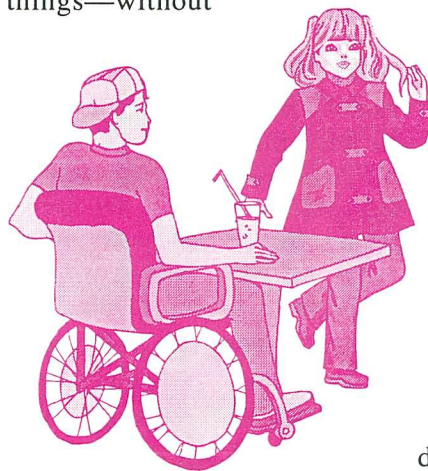
Susan felt disappointed in the key, it certainly wasn't bring much happiness to James.

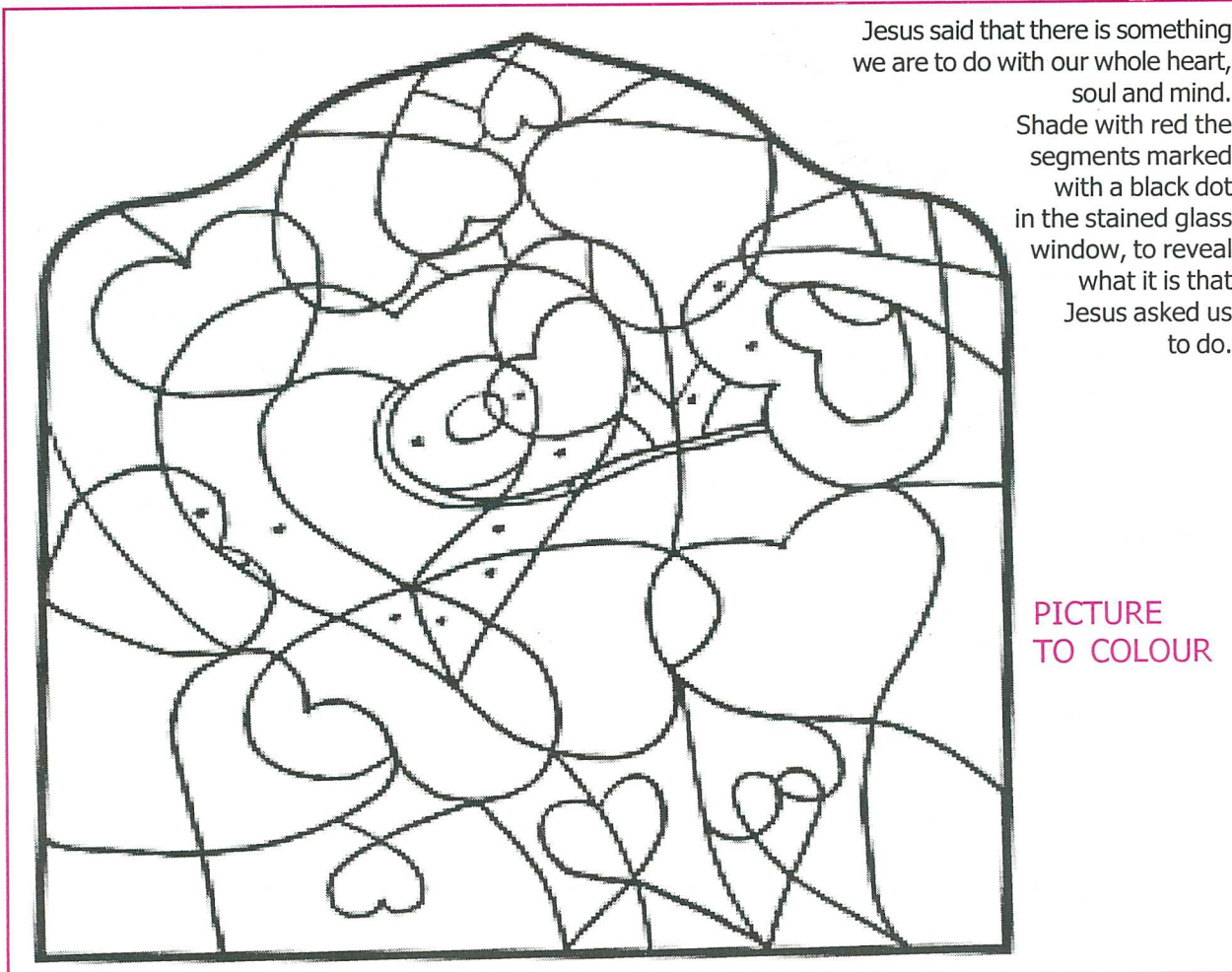
Then she spied a box that was hidden under some papers. 'What's that?' Susan asked.

'What's what?' Said James. 'That box,' she said pointing to it.

'I think it is a music box,' James said but it won't play because there is nothing to start it with. I had forgotten all about it, a lady near the town sent it to me when she moved away, because she heard I couldn't walk. But it won't play because something is lost or missing.'

Susan turned the box round and round. 'It must play,' she





Jesus said that there is something we are to do with our whole heart, soul and mind. Shade with red the segments marked with a black dot in the stained glass window, to reveal what it is that Jesus asked us to do.

PICTURE
TO COLOUR

said. 'It must work somehow.'

Then suddenly she saw a small hole on one side of the box. She looked at it closely.

'Give me the happiness key!' She said. James handed her the key and she quickly put it into the small hole. 'It fits!' She cried.



James, now interested, sat up straight in his chair. 'Turn it,' he said excitedly. Susan turned

and turned. She grew quite red in the face; her heart was beating fast, the lid flew open!

Then all at once the cylinder began to turn slowly and a clear sweet tinkling began. The little music box was playing!

It played and played a lovely rollicking tune that went on and on.

James, whose cheeks were now all pink with happiness, beat time on the arm of his chair.

'I knew it was a happiness key,' said Susan.

Do you have a happiness key? A smiling face will unlock almost any door and a kind and helpful spirit will bring happiness to others.

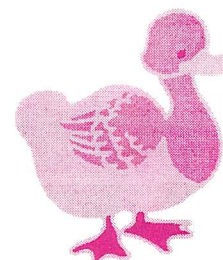
- Eleanor Fairchild Pease



The Frog

One day in early April
He jumped towards the brook,
I watched him in the sunshine
And saw the leap he took.

This little frog however,
Had rather dreadful luck,
Because he went and landed
Inside a greedy duck.



A Review of Good News Australia

Issue No. 2 2000

John Rosendahl

It may be unusual to review *one* copy of a periodical magazine. However, I think in this case, one could make an exception.

The issue is a glossy magazine, A4 in size, printed in two colours throughout, with a masthead just inside the full-colour cover. It is published by Good News Unlimited from tweed Heads in New South Wales under executive editor, Ron Allen. Layout and design by Patricia Tedman; the printing by Spartan Press, located in Queens Park, Western Australia.

Looking at the articles, *Christ's Acted Parables of the Last Judgement* (by Des Ford) is a start in explaining a gospel paradigm of 1844-1914. *He Saved Others* (by Ron Allen) explains what Jesus did, so simply it might even seem unoffensive to one associating with the *WatchTower*. An article on the Resurrection (page 7, by Ron Allen) deals with the subject so important in the New Testament, some would even hazard it could be called the very heart of the gospel. The topic of Zaccheus (page 10, Dorothy O'Neill) is a story that has appeal to every short, balding and possibly plump man. Not so uncommon in my age group!

'Zaccheus' also includes all the people who feel lonely, and a bit put out. No matter who you are, male, female or handicapped. Even if one is so bright, some folk might feel too intimidated to strike up a conversation with you.

The isolated, inconspicuous person who felt she or he was too disadvantaged to see Jesus, discovers that Jesus is going to notice them! Right now, you, you and 'you' are important.

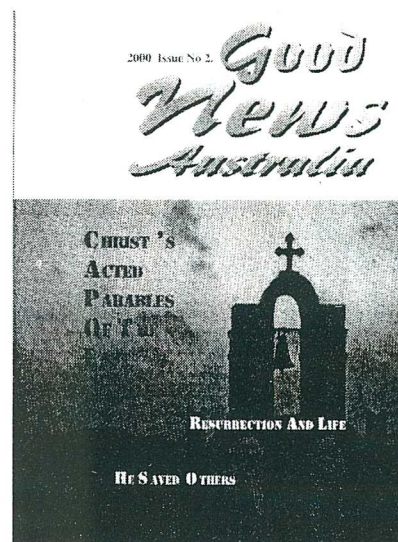
Mike Nelson (page 12) helps one get away from the 'Sevvy culture'¹, which can be a bit intimidating.

Elton Trueblood (page 13) opens a window and lets in a breeze. Thus illustrating GNU makes no claim to be the sole fountain of wisdom. There is no ego problem in the gospel. One should beware of a novelty. GNU accepts that other authors can grasp the gospel too.

And of course Elizabeth Price is so brilliant, no respectable magazine could be considered complete without her by-line. Brief and hitting another one, of the twin foci² of the gospel. Sinner centered doctrine³ is both cultic and a calamity.

Hebrews chapter two, three and four—a total of fifty-four verses—wrestles with the problem that Price dispatches in nine paragraphs. Her article is an utter gem.

Then the ads for the CD



ROM and availability of videos—both could appeal to mainstream Christians.

The guest editorial by Roy Gee shows the depth of GNU. In no way could the magazine content be described as dependent on the talent of any one man.

A snippet from the life of John Wayne 'The Duke' (page 2) is not going to frighten off a reader whose interests are largely secular.

The Cross on the cover does not dominate—the bells (symbolic of the three figures on Calvary) and the architecture, the hill, and the sunset. Even the back cover is essential, supplementing the improved masthead on page two, with more readily accessible information which might enable a casual reader to make contact out of curiosity.

This issue is a total humdinger and a good read. *

Endnotes

1. 'My boyhood Sunday School teacher, Mr Church . . .' [2nd paragraph of Mike Nelson's article.]

2. The other being Pastor Ron Allen on page 7.

3. 'If my church-going is centered on me.' [paragraph 7, page 14. *Gibber Stones* by Elizabeth Price.]

I'm Fine Thankyou

There is nothing the matter with me
I am as healthy as I can be,
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to be on the street.
Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm all right.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is this, as my tale I unfold,
That for you and me who are growing old,
It's better to say 'I'm fine' with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape we are in.

Old-age is golden I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed.



With my ears in the drawer, my teeth in a cup,
My eyes on the table till I wake up.
"Ere sleep overtakes me, I say to myself
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?

When I was young my slippers were red,
I could kick my heels right over my head.
When I was older my slippers were blue,
But still I could dance the whole night through.
Now I am old my slippers are black,
I walk to the store and puff my way back.
How do I know my youth is all spent?
Well my 'get up and go' has got up and went.
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
Of all the grand places my 'get up' has 'bin'.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
And pick up the paper to read the 'orbits'.
If my name is still missing I know I'm not dead
So I have a good breakfast and go back to bed.

-Author unknown.



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Good News Unlimited

Mission Statement



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

In view of it's history, GNU recognises a special duty to assist Seventh Day Adventists in their journey of spiritual discovery and growth.

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Time Out

When Christians live like the salt of the earth, people in the world will get a thirst for God.

Des Collins (The Next Step magazine)

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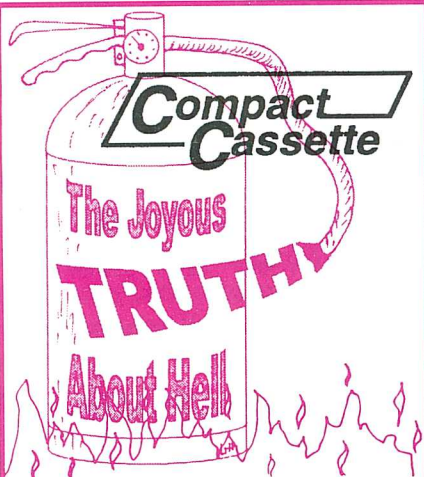
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Perth: phn. 08 94585469
Meets monthly, on the second Saturday of the month, followed by a basket lunch.

Gold Coast: phn. 07 55355329
Meets twice monthly and enjoys a fellowship lunch each meeting.

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For further information contact Evelyn O'Grady.

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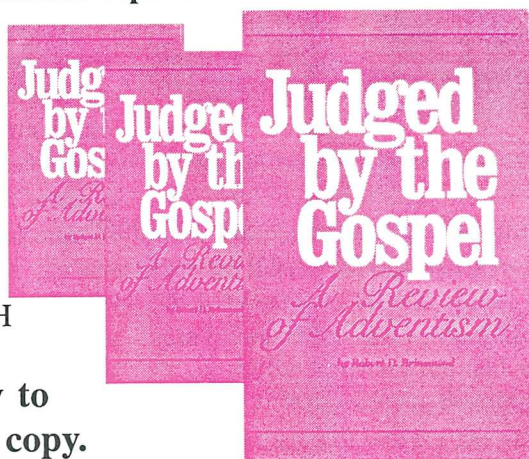
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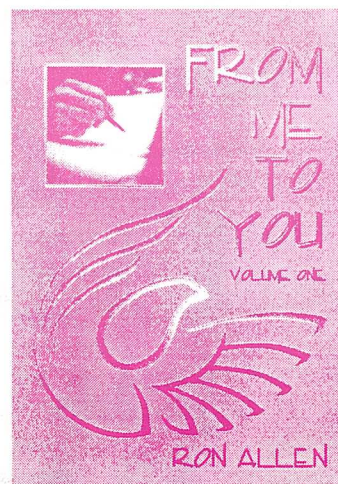
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