

July 2004

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# THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

## Editorial

### Christ In You

*is*

### The Hope of Glory

**By far, the majority of the weddings that I have conducted, have taken place in church buildings. A few have been conducted in gardens, a couple in homes, one in a five-star hotel and one at a secluded and beautiful beach.**

In Jesus' day, however, every Jewish wedding was a home wedding. One of the features of these weddings was an evening torch-light procession from the bride's home to the bridegroom's. At an appointed time, the groom would arrive to collect his bride, and together with the bridal party, they would return to the groom's home.

Jesus told a parable about a bridal party of ten virgins who waited with the unmentioned bride for the groom to come and escort them back to his home (Matt 25:1-13). For some unknown reason, the groom was delayed well beyond the time expected and everyone got comfortable and drifted off to sleep.

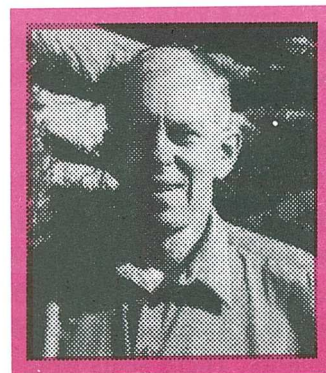
When the groom finally turned up, the lamps of the bridal party had consumed most of their oil and were about to go out. Five of the virgins, however, carried extra oil with them and were able

to quickly recharge their lamps and accompany the bride and groom back to the groom's home. The other five rushed off in another direction to get more oil. When they showed up at the groom's home sometime later, the groom refused to let them in. He told them bluntly, 'I don't know you.'

The Hebrew expression, 'I don't know you,' is not about knowing in a mental way; it's more about knowing in a heart way. It can be interpreted, 'I've never had any sort of relationship with you.' While the groom's judgment call sounds harsh, the relationship between the groom and the virgins, is intended to be seen as a reflection of the relationship between the lamps and the oil. The lamps without oil in them, represented the foolish virgins without the true Bridegroom.

Jesus' message in this parable is this: One day—we don't know when—we are going to come face-to-face with the Bridegroom, and the only way to be ready, is to have oil in our lamps—i.e. Christ in our lives. If he is not in our lives now, it will be too late to get him into our lives when he comes. When Jesus said, 'Keep your lamps burning' (Luke 12:35), He was stating the obvious—a lamp can only fulfil its purpose when it has oil in it; without oil it is useless.

A pattern that runs through the New Testament is that man has eternal life only if he has the Lord



in his life. We see this in the seed in the soil (Matt 13:1-23), the oil in the lamp (Matt 25:1-13), the heavenly bread in the stomach (John 6:51, 57), the sap in the branch (John 15:1-8) and the Spirit of God in the body temple (1 Cor 6:19). In plain language, the apostle John wrote, 'God has given us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:11-12). If 'Jesus Christ is in you,' wrote Paul, 'you are in the faith' (2 Cor 13:5). In fact, 'if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ' (Rom 8:9).

You can have neither forgiveness nor holiness without Christ. But when he comes into your life he brings these gifts of grace with him. That's why 'Christ in you' is 'the hope of glory' (Col 1:27).

—Ritchie Way

*Focus on the Gospel*



# GOD'S SEAL

(1)



Ritchie Way

Today we use a signature to authenticate a letter, a mortgage document, or a will. In Bible times a seal was used instead of a signature. These seals were usually engraved semi-precious stones, that either had a hole drilled in them so they could be worn on a cord around the neck (Gen 38:18), or were mounted on a ring to be worn on the finger (Gen 41:42; Esther 3:12).

In the past, when writing was done on damp clay, a seal would be pressed into the tablet before it hardened, to authenticate the text. If the writing was done on a scroll, a blob of hot wax would be put on it, which would be stamped with a seal while it was still soft enough to take an impression.

Many thousands of ancient seals have been dug up by archaeologists. Some very significant seals, such as the seal of Gedaliah, governor of Judah in Jeremiah's day (2 Kings 25:22), have been discovered.

Seals were placed on documents to authenticate them (Esther 8:8). Jezebel was able to get action taken against Naboth because she wrote a letter in the King's name and sealed it with his seal (1 Kings 21:8). The King's seal gave the letter authority. Seals

were also used to indicate ownership. Many ancient storage jars have been retrieved which had their owners' seals stamped on their handles. At other times, seals were fixed to receptacles and doors to make them legally secure. Daniel, for example, was sealed in the lions' den (Dan 6:17), and Jesus' body was sealed inside Joseph's tomb (Matt 27:65-66). To break one of these security-seals without permission would be to break the law and thus incur a severe penalty.

The New Testament tells us that all true believers have God's seal on them. Just as the Hebrews put a mark of blood over their outside doors, to protect the people in that house from the death-angel during the plagues on Egypt (Exodus 12:21-23), so Christians have a mark, or seal, on them to protect them from Satan's destroying angels during the plagues of the end-time (Rev 9:4).

According to the Bible, people receive God's seal the moment they receive Christ as their Saviour. What, then, is this seal that believers receive? It is the Spirit of Jesus who comes into our hearts when we are born again (John 3:3-7). The Bible says, God 'set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come' (2 Cor 1:22). Note that this seal is a 'seal of ownership.' Once we receive the Lord into our lives we no longer belong to Satan; we belong to God.

2 Cor 1:22 reveals that the Holy Spirit in our hearts is but a deposit of what God will give us at the Second Coming of Jesus, at which time he will give us new bodies that will be fully inhabited by the Holy Spirit. In our present corrupt bodies we can only experience a fraction of the Spirit's power, guidance and supervision,

but when we receive our new 'spiritual bodies' (1 Cor 15:44) they will be possessed by the fullness of the Spirit, as was Adam before he sinned, and as was Jesus when he walked among us.

Ephesians 1:13-14 says, 'Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.' It is clear, from this verse, that the Holy Spirit is God's seal upon believers. All who have this seal are guaranteed a home in the New Earth. And in Ephesians 4:30, we are challenged not to grieve the Holy Spirit with whom we are sealed, by negative emotions such as bitterness, rage, anger, slander and malice, but to be kind, compassionate and forgiving instead.

## GOD'S SEAL

1. God puts His seal of ownership on everyone who believes in Jesus.

2. God's seal is a deposit of the Holy Spirit, guaranteeing that the full measure of the Spirit will be given to us when Jesus comes.

3. God's seal is also a seal of protection.

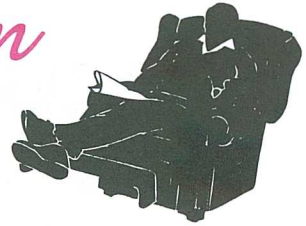
The last book of the Bible tells us that God's people are sealed in their foreheads (Rev 7:2-4) with the name of the Father and the Lamb (Rev 14:1). On the one hand, Paul tells us that God's seal is the Holy Spirit, while on the other, John tells us that God's seal is the Father and the Son. These two seals are not different, just two aspects of the same seal—which is God revealed in the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Paul says all believers are sealed, while John says there are 144,000 who have God's seal. What is the difference—if any? In the book of Revelation, the

(Continued on page 7)



## Take a minute with Clem



**John 4:42 'They said to the woman "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'"**

**W**hy did the Samaritans find it relatively easy to believe in the Messiah, and yet the Jews found Jesus to be a real conundrum?

Could it be that the Samaritans did not come with so many preconceived ideas about the Messiah and about themselves?

One attitude where the Samaritans appeared to differ, was in the view they had of themselves. There appears to have been a more humble and down-to-earth view of their place in the world order—something that appears to be lacking in the Jews. These people were probably ready to receive a mes-

sage of love and forgiveness. This is highlighted by the attitude the Jews had towards the Samaritans and all Gentiles—all of which were considered to be fourth-class citizens (one needs to be careful here not to label all Jews with the one brush, furthermore, it is certain that there were proud and arrogant Samaritans). There is nothing so calculated to keep people out of Gods Kingdom than for some to think themselves better than others.

Some people, of course, are more fortunate than others, but that is not the same as being better; better implies morally superior. Decisions on moral superiority are best left to the reader of hearts, He who looks not on the outward appearance.

What prejudices threaten us here in Australia? Could it be our ideas about Aboriginal people, or

people from Asia who may be Buddhist, Hindu or Moslem etc?

We would do well to remember that two of the biggest wars in recent times were essentially fought between powers with strong ties to Christianity.

The message of the Woman at the Well and of The Good Samaritan, should teach us that goodness can be found in unexpected places. The good news of Gods love can permeate the most unlikely recesses. Like C S Lewis, we should allow ourselves and indeed, *invite* ourselves, to be 'surprised by joy'.

Clem Moss

**Last Newsletter we appealed to our readers for financial help to publish Des's book September 11, 2001, Christ and Antichrist and the Last Days ( *The End of Terrorism*). We thank you for the great response we have received. It is not too late to give to this project, we welcome any assistance you are able to give.**



**Dr Desmond Ford has donated to GNU a 350+ page manuscript of his new book:**

## The End of Terrorism

***What the destruction of the twin World Trade Towers can mean for thoughtful Christians as they survey the threat of world-wide terrorism and the Arab-Israeli crisis.***

**If you would like to help meet the cost of publishing this book please send your donation to GNU marked 'for Des' book'. It would be greatly appreciated.**



# Discussion Point

I we continue not sure  
hope faith agree discuss believe

faith  
right  
believe

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 many 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.

## A reminder from Ritchie's first editorial

'...as the new Editor of *The Good Newsletter*, I want to share with you, in the feature articles, some of the things that I have learned. Your response to what I write will be predictable. If your faith is built on your beliefs, your security will be threatened and you will react strongly. On the other hand, if your faith is built on Jesus, you will be free to examine what I write without being threatened. My feature articles will have two purposes, firstly, to challenge you with new concepts, and secondly, to get you into some serious Bible study, checking whether these things are so ...'

### Dear Ritchie

I have read all of your articles with interest over past months. With regard to where we are going when Jesus returns, I don't think the prophet Zechariah has been mentioned. I would like to refer you and readers of *The Good Newsletter* to Zechariah chapters 12, 13 and 14—especially chapter 14:9.

Connecting this with 1 Thessalonians 4:17 means we will be on earth with Jesus for the Millennium and on the new earth after the Millennium (Rev. 21).

Yours faithfully

G C. NSW.

### Dear G C

Thank you for your thoughts. I agree with you. Zechariah 14 is a bit of a mystery to most, but becomes clear when interpreted in the light of Revelation 20.

Ritchie.

### Dear Ritchie

The points of view in recent Newsletters concerning the age of the earth and the creation story have been very interesting.

One thing I have found helpful in Bible study, is to look at the

culture of the time when the particular Scripture was written.

In the creation story, Genesis 1:6-8 tells how God made the firmament (All text are from the KJV).

JR Dummelow's Bible Commentary, states that the word 'firmament' means something 'solid' or 'beaten out' like a sheet of metal. The ancients believed the sky was a solid vaulted dome stretched over the earth, its ends resting on the mountains and the heavenly bodies fastened to its inner surface. Its upper surface served as the throne of God (Eze. 1:26, Exodus 24:10).

The purpose of the firmament in Genesis 1:6-8 was to divide the waters. Above, it supported the upper waters which fell as rain upon the earth, through the 'windows of the heaven' (Gen 7:11, 8:2). God was also thought to pour out blessings through the 'windows of heaven' (Mal. 3:10).

Below the firmament were the waters on which the ancients believed the earth rested and from which it emerged.

The people of those early times had no idea of the vastness

of the universe, or the tremendous distance to even the closest star. Perhaps the creation story was written using the prevailing view of science at that time.

Would this detract from the marvel of creation? Do we really need to know exactly how the universe was made?

Sincerely

P W QLD.

### Dear P W

You show much wisdom in your understanding of Scripture. The only way God can speak coherently to anyone, is in terms of their understanding—that is the way he did it through all Scripture. He gave Pharaoh a dream about cows; wheat and the Nile river, also, Nebuchadnezzar a dream about an idol-like image. He led the three wise men (astrologers) by a star. God's word's are comprehensible only when he speaks to us in the context of our thought-world.

Can you imagine how confused people in Moses' day would have been had God used our scientific understanding of the universe to convey his message to



them. If the first chapter of Genesis spoke of a spherical planet that hung in interstellar space; of a solar system, spiral nebulas, super clusters and light-years, it would have impressed us, but it would have been utter nonsense, not only to the people to whom it was first given, but to all believers over the following 3000 years. They wouldn't have had the faintest idea what God was talking about.

All this shows how important it is for us to distinguish between the perfect message that God gives and the faulty vehicle which brings that message to us. Most of us seem to manage this quite well with the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), but stumble when it comes to applying the same principle to Genesis 1.

**Ritchie.**

#### Dear Ritchie

Your conscientious study of Scripture is to be emulated. In search of balance, I would like, however, to highlight the principles of mutual respect and Bible priorities in response to the debate that has started over whether 'heaven' is up, or down on earth. I want to say three things:

1). Who knows for sure? It's all a matter of interpretation. Furthermore, 'nit-picking' over Scripture is a certain way to keep us from the essential matter of how we are relating to the mercy and love of Christ (John 5:39, 40).

2). For me (and many 21<sup>st</sup> Century people) the answer doesn't matter particularly. What matters is that *God will rescue* us in time from sin and out of what is offensive to the natures he has made us to have, that yearn for goodness and beauty.

I thank God that the willingness to live with different interpretations while highlighting the important underlying principles, is a

lesson that is being learned by one church that persecuted people for different beliefs in minor areas, it is good that their congregations are moving on from multiple factions to unity comprising diversity. I still hurt at how badly so many of my colleagues, including yourself, got treated by that church. As regards all of us thinking the same way on small issues; our vastly differing backgrounds and styles of thinking (eg. concrete verses abstract) make it impossible, in my experience, for people to think the same way on all issues. What matters is what doctrines tell us about God.

3). *How we discuss* these issues is important—discussion with mutual respect and love, love characterising all our relating (Mark 12:31; Titus 3:10). Decimating another's point of view does not come across to me as loving. Rather, it seems aggressive and controversial, a style of relating that Paul admonishes Christians to avoid (1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 2:23).

I think the above three principles also apply to the record of creation. *None of us were there!* One does not have to mythologise Genesis 1-3 to reconcile the ancient age of rocks with a seven-day creation if one sees the expression, 'the earth was without form', as meaning that earth matter was here, but in a chaotic state.

The issue concerning salvation of people who do not label themselves 'Christian' also urges me to comment and offer a further reason for Ron's perspective. In 1 John 4:7 we read that no-one can show (altruistic) love, unless influenced by God. In fact, it is stronger than that: 'Everyone who loves, has been born of God and knows God.' This suggests to me that people who are truly loving have a connection with the Holy Spirit without being aware of this. Such people who also recognise

their own inadequacy and reach out for a higher power source, in effect, are reaching out to their Saviour though they may not be aware of this. To insist that people have the right verbal labels for a process that connects them to the Holy Spirit, seems to me to contradict the above verse.

As regards future directions for *The Good Newsletter*, I hope there will not be further intellectual 'nit-picking' of Scripture. They will be exciting for me, however, if they inspire readers to worship God, because we learn how God is worthy of our trust and admiration. As we know, the end-time Church will be 'big' in worshipping God (Rev. 14:6, 7).

May God lead you

**J H QLD.**

#### Dear J H

I wish all Christians had your spirit—a willingness to accept the ultimate reality, even if time reveals it to be considerably different from what we most ardently believe. Our convictions on issues that are not absolutes, should be kept fluid and not be allowed to set like concrete.

And, yes, we do need to treat others whose beliefs differ from our own, with respect. I confess that I have as much to learn here as anyone, and I apologise to those of our letter writers who have detected an aggressive note in some of my replies. I make no excuse for this and beg your forgiveness.

**Ritchie.**

#### About Growing Old

- When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you are down there
- It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody asks the questions.
- Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician



# God In You

(2)

Ritchie Way

When God created animals on our planet he did not personally breathe the breath of life into them; they were made as living beings with breath already in their nostrils. It was different however, with the creation of man: Adam came alive only after God had breathed his *Neshamah* into him. So why this difference? What did Adam receive from God's *Neshamah*, which the animals didn't receive when they came alive? The significance of Genesis 2:7 is that God gave something of himself to Adam (cf. John 20:22), revealing that there was a relationship between the Lord and man that did not exist between the Lord and the animals. Or, to put it another way, man, unlike the animals, was created with a capacity for God in his life, and without God he would be an empty vessel.

When God breathed the breath of life into Adam, the *Neshamah* entered him to dwell in the temple of his body. It was God's Spirit<sup>[1]</sup> dwelling in Adam that set him apart from the animals, even the intelligent human-like animals. They were just creatures of the flesh; he was a living union of flesh and eternal Spirit.

According to Genesis, once Adam received holiness and immortality through the indwelling Spirit, he no longer belonged in the mortal world, so God took him out of the world of temporal life into his own realm of eternal life. In the picture language of Genesis: 'Now the Lord God had planted a garden

in the east, in Eden and there he put the man he had formed' (Gen 2:8). And 'the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden' so he could 'work it and take care of it' (Gen 2:15).

The fact that Adam, like the animals, was made outside of God's realm, suggests that he did not have either holiness or eternal life as an inherent right and was only a higher form of animal until God filled him with his Spirit. It was God's Spirit in Adam that gave him holiness and eternal life, thus making him a citizen of God's realm. As long as Adam had the Spirit he would be entitled to remain in Paradise. His citizenship there, however, depended on him maintaining this union with the Lord. God told him clearly that if he broke this relationship he would find himself back outside his realm, in the place of mortality where, like the animals, he would die.<sup>[2]</sup>

When Adam rejected the Divine Spirit and lost the covering of God's glory, he was returned to the earth from which he had been taken (Gen 3:23) because only those who were a union of the human and the Divine could remain in Eden (God's kingdom).

Here in Genesis, for the first time in Scripture, is portrayed the contrast between God's kingdom and man's. God's kingdom is the Eternal Paradise, which is the realm of all who have the Lord; man's kingdom is the temporal world outside of Paradise, which is the realm of all who do not have the Lord. And in between was a barrier that no man could penetrate (Gen 3:24).

This theme—of being united with, or separated from God—runs right through the Bible from the beginning of its first book to the end of its last. Being one with God is to have eternal life and to be in his kingdom; being separated from God is to have temporal life and to be out-

side of his kingdom. Paradise is a picture of God's Kingdom.

What then is the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian? Watchman Nee asks: 'How can we know who is a Christian and who is not? "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him" (Rom. 8:9). According to the Word of God, every person in whose heart Christ dwells by his Spirit, is a true Christian. Christians may differ from one another in a thousand respects, but in this fundamental matter there is no difference between them—one and all have the Spirit of Christ dwelling within them.

If we wish to know who belongs to the Lord, then we only need to discover whether he has the Spirit of Christ or not. Whoever has the Spirit of Christ is inside the Church circle, and whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ is outside the circle . . . "Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not realise about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?" (2 Cor. 13:5). There is a subjective line of demarcation between the Church and the world; all within that line are saved, and all without that line are lost. This line of demarcation is the indwelling Spirit of Christ.<sup>[3]</sup>

There are numerous passages in the Bible that point out the distinction between those who are redeemed and those who are not. Saved people are a union of the human and the Divine; they have the Spirit of God living in them (Gal 4:6; Eph 3:16-17; Col 1:27). Lost people are simply human; they do not have God in their lives (Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 13:5).

What must we do in order to have the Lord dwell within the temple of our bodies? According to the Bible, we must be crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20). If we allow our old sinful nature to be nailed to Jesus' cross, the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead



will also give eternal life to us by dwelling within us (Rom 6:6-11; 8:9).

**Endnotes:**

<sup>[1]</sup> The parallel use of *neshamah* (breath) and *ruach*

(Spirit) in Job 27:3; 33:4 & Isaiah 42:5 indicate that they are synonyms.

<sup>[2]</sup> Immortality is conditional upon having the immortal One (1 Tim 6:15-16) dwell in us. In union

with God we are immortal; without him we are mortal (1 John 5:11-12).

<sup>[3]</sup> *The Normal Christian Church Life* (Anaheim, California: Living Stream Ministry, 1994) 75-76.



## GOD'S SEAL

(1)

(Continued from Page 2).

figure 12 is the number that represents all the saved. The Holy City for example, which represents the bride of the Lamb, i.e. the redeemed (Rev 21:9-10), has twelve gates made of twelve pearls. The walls of this city are 12,000 stadia long, 12,000 stadia high, and 12 X 12 cubits thick. The wall had 12 layers of foundation, made of 12 precious stones and named after Jesus'

twelve disciples. Twelve angels guard the city's twelve gates, which are named after the twelve tribes of Israel. Inside the city is a tree that bears twelve kinds of fruit, twelve times a year.

The one hundred and forty four thousand inhabitants (12,000 X 12,000) of this city come from the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev 7:1-8). They are those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev 21:27). These are people who believe in, and follow Jesus (Rev. 14:1-4; Gal. 3:7, 28-29). In the book of Revelation the figure twelve is a sym-

bol for all the saved.

God's seal is the presence of God himself in our lives, and that presence accounts for the difference in our lives since he took up residence there. If there is any difference between the seal of the Pauline epistles and the seal of Revelation, it might be, that the Father and the Son change our minds and understanding through the Gospel (sealed on the forehead), and the coming of the Holy Spirit changes our hearts and enthuses our passions (sealed in the heart).



## SYDNEY ADVENTIST FORUM

is pleased to announce  
**Dr Desmond Ford**

Dr Ford will give an address at the Thornleigh Community Centre  
(Opposite Bunnings Warehouse off Pennant Hills Road, Thornleigh)

**August 21st at 3.00pm**

### **A 21st Century Look at Daniel and Revelation**

Daniel and Revelation are forever the cauldron of prophetic evidence and future hopes; the workshop of interpreters—both conservative and bizarre; the glass balls that are fashioned in the heat of the age, only to be smashed by a subsequent turn of history.

**Should they have been abandoned in the hands of their original readers?**

**Have they any relevance today?**

**The interpretation of apocalyptic has been so diverse, often convoluted and discredited a thousand times. Is it too hard for the laity to understand?**

**Having learnt from misinterpretations in the past, can we apply some better guidelines that will help us to appreciate the two books?**

**What does the best biblical scholarship have to offer from these two books for the minds of the 21st Century?**

**This promises to be an outstanding meeting.**

**All welcome. Expense collection.**



# ORIGINAL SIN (3)

Ritchie Way

Original sin is the name given to the debt that we inherited from Adam. It is the sin that keeps all of Adam's descendants—without exception—out of God's eternal kingdom. The Bible tells us that we are excluded from Paradise because of what Adam did (see Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:21-22).

The key to a correct understanding of original sin is this: Original sin is not something that Adam has given to us, it is something that he has taken from us; it is not a plus, it is a minus. Sin never gives anything of worth to people; it only takes away. We are deprived because we have been deprived. We can only inherit from our parents what they possess; we have not been able to inherit a relationship with the Spirit of God from Adam, simply because he no longer had it to give us. And that is the reason why we are all born into this world naked of God's presence. Instead of being created in God's image, as Adam was, we are born in Adam's image, as Seth was (Gen 5:1-3). We are born desolate of God's presence. Every one of us has come into this world without the presence of God's Spirit in our lives.

It is important for each of us to understand that God does not exclude us from his realm because we commit sins. That would be totally unjust, because without the presence of God in our lives from conception, sinning cannot be avoided; it is as inevitable as the downhill flow of water. We are excluded from God's realm because we lack the one thing that

qualifies us for citizenship—his Holy Spirit. We are all sinners whether we choose to be or not, but no one will receive God's Spirit *unless* they so choose.

Original sin always refers to the *root* of our iniquity, that is, our inherited separation from God, never to the *fruit* of our iniquity, which are the sins we commit because God is not in us. Our sinful state points to the absence of God in our lives. If the root of the Spirit is absent, so will the fruit of the Spirit be absent. It is the absence of the Holy Spirit in our lives that leaves us without a shield against evil.

As descendants of Adam, we have inherited a body-temple desolate of God's presence. We are born as empty vessels, and, like the animals, we don't have citizenship in God's kingdom, simply because we don't have the Spirit of God. Man without the Spirit is nothing but an intelligent animal.

How then do people, who don't have God in their lives because of original sin, become united with him? Jesus told the Pharisee, Nicodemus, that he could only enter God's kingdom if he was born again of the Spirit.

'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit' (John 3:5-8).

We receive eternal life by having God come to dwell in us. And God is able to dwell in us because Jesus made this union possible by his death.

## THE OTHER ADAM

Only one Person, other than

Adam, has ever received the Spirit of God at the beginning of his earthly life, and that was Jesus (Matt 1:18-20). Both Adam and Jesus were born into God's kingdom, bonded with the Spirit, whose presence produced the fruit of holiness in their lives.

The New Testament tells us that 'Adam ... was a pattern of the One to come' (Rom 5:14) and that 'the One to come' was Jesus (Luke 7:19-20). Jesus is called 'the second Adam' because, like the first Adam, he too received eternal life from the Holy Spirit at the same moment he received physical life. Jesus was born without original sin because he had the Spirit in his life from conception. And it was this presence of the Spirit in Jesus' life (Luke 1:35) that kept him from sin.

Because Jesus had the Holy Spirit from conception, he belonged to God's kingdom—the kingdom of heaven. You and I, however, as sons and daughters of the first Adam, are born outside the kingdom of heaven. None of us had the Holy Spirit living in us from conception, which is why we must be born again of the Spirit, if we wish to be taken into God's kingdom as citizens.

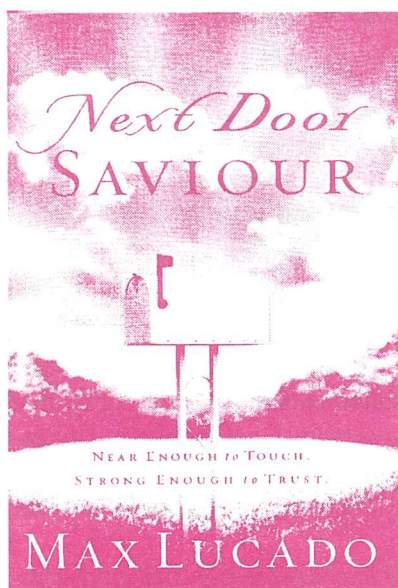
We lost eternal life in Paradise because of what the first Adam did; we receive eternal life in Paradise because of what the second Adam did. If the first Adam had not rejected the Spirit we would all have been born into Paradise. But now, as children of the second Adam, Paradise is the home that we are re-born into. When Jesus said to the repentant criminal who was crucified with him, 'Today you will be with me in paradise' (Luke 23:43), He was telling the truth. The very moment that robber professed faith in Jesus, he became a citizen of Paradise. And so will you.





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**I**n 1965 Roger Lausier, four years old, was saved from drowning by a women called Alice Blaise. Nine years later, Roger saw a man drowning on the same beach, he dived in and saved him.

He was Alice Blaise's husband.

**S**outh African Danie du Toit, gave a lecture warning that death could come at any time. He sat down, popped a peppermint and promptly choked to death.

**I**n 1998 Jose Ricart was walking around Burgos, Spain, with a banner that read 'The end of the world is nigh'. Sure enough, a truck ran him over.

(From Ritchie Way)

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# ***A Book of One-liners and short Statements from Desmond Ford Material***

## **Dear GNU Supporters**

For many, many years you and I have had the privilege to be exposed to one of the 20th Century's great teachers of the Gospel, Dr Desmond Ford. We have been uplifted by his God-given insight into the deeper things of God's Word. He, as no other that I know, has the ability to express grand thoughts and concepts in one-liners and short statements.

I believe that it is time for the wider community of 'searchers for meaning to life' to have access to these enlightening short statements from Dr Ford. I would like to think we could work on a project together that will bring to fruition a book of Dr Ford's one-liners and short statements that can be published and distributed worldwide in Christian bookshops and good book outlets.

My proposal is this, that we as a Christian community who have been blessed and inspired by his ministry, bring this publication to the world together. The publication will be a beautifully bound hardcover

book that will have titles on every aspect of Christian life for easy reference. For example:

- ♦ 'Living for God's glory can be regarded as the rent we owe for the space we occupy here on earth.'
- ♦ 'Christ is the only man who ever lived who claimed to be God, yet was judged sane by his wisest contemporaries.'
- ♦ 'Philosophers are like someone, who, on a dark night in a dark room with no windows is looking for a black cat that isn't there.'
- ♦ 'Just as there can be no shadow without light, there can be no doubt unless there is truth.'
- ♦ 'People prefer to believe what they prefer to be true.'

We need volunteers to listen to his sermons and isolate statements that can encapsulate grand thoughts in short statements. I would imagine that most of us would have many tapes, books and magazines with Des' sermons or answers to questions, etc. We should exhaust these avenues before we duck into the archives.

We do need all hands on deck to make this happen. I know we will all find great satisfaction in producing a quality publication that we all had a part in. This is a huge task due to the volume of Des' life's work, but it is worth doing and we can achieve it together. Let's make it happen, and when we bring it to fruition, we will deliver a valuable contribution to God's literary collection.

Please register your interest in being part of this endeavour by contacting me in any of the following ways, **Email:** [briancherry@optusnet.com.au](mailto:briancherry@optusnet.com.au) or **Fax:** 02 94843464 or **by writing to:** 19 Warne Street, Pennant Hills 2120 NSW.

Yours sincerely

**Brian Patterson**

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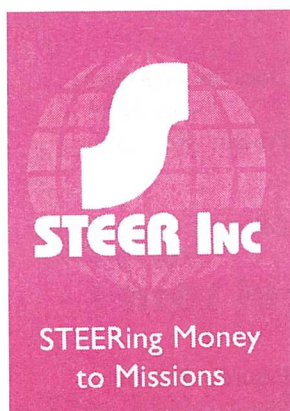
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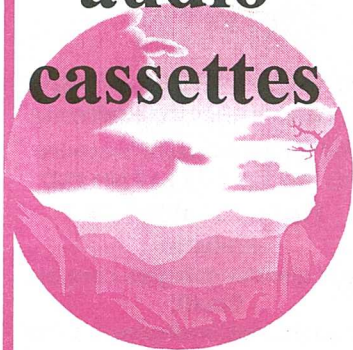
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