



March 2001

THE GOOD NEWSLETTER

A bimonthly newsletter produced by Good News Unlimited

Editorial

Harry Potter has taken our children by storm. Educators are thrilled, our kids suddenly want to read. This is all that seems to matter to our educators.

Who is Harry? He is the son of a wizard and a witch who follows in his parents footsteps and goes to the great school of sorcery and magic, known as 'Hogwarts'.

So what. Just another kids yarn. But to those of us who know a little about sorcery and magic, these books are somewhat disturbing. These things are always associated with power, hatred and evil, never with love, joy and peace, which is the outworking of the Spirit of God in our hearts.

There have been graduates of Hogwarts all through history. Primitive tribes have always had their witchdoctors who held power by using terror. Even our Aboriginal tribes had witchdoctors who could 'point the bone' at some poor unfortunate who would then die.

Now there are those in Christian circles who feel threatened by Harry and feel we should mount a crusade against him. But before we get carried away, we should look at Scripture to see what God has to say to us about sorcery and magic.

It is the key to the mighty head-on clash between God and Pharaoh in Exodus, when Moses and Aaron go seeking the release of the

Hebrews. It seems that Egypt is so given over to sorcery and magic that its cup of iniquity is full and God is set to act. The scenario being very similar to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Pharaoh's main advisers were sorcerers and magicians, so for Moses and Aaron to make any impression, they had to display some magic themselves. God prepares them for the meeting so when the opportunity comes, Aaron throws down his staff and it becomes a snake. Pharaoh promptly sends for his sorcerers and magicians, who throw down their rods and their rods become snakes too. But to everyone's surprise, Aaron's snake eats all the other snakes.

Magician's 'rods' are actually their wands, which according to Harry Potter are vital pieces of equipment, without them a magician is almost helpless.

Moses and Aaron are ordered to leave; Aaron grabs his snake by the tail and it becomes his staff again and Pharaoh is left with a bunch of wandless wizards. The story then moves onto the ten plagues, which are also examples of magic. The first one is where Moses strikes the water of the river Nile and it becomes blood. You find in chapter seven and verse twenty two of Exodus that the magicians do the same thing, also turning the water into blood. So far the battle is a one all draw.

The next plague is frogs. But in chapter eight verse seven, the magicians also bring up frogs. The

battle is now a two all draw.

In the third plague, the one of lice, the magicians fail to produce lice themselves, so now the battle is three to two—in God's favour. From now on the magicians fail at every attempt to match what God is doing. Pharaoh has set himself up as implacably opposed to God, so the Holy Spirit has withdrawn from him. Being under the control of the devil, and completely driven by his pride, he is bent on the destruction of himself and his nation.

Today we continue to wrestle with the power of the evil one and any of his antics which may be manifest through the likes of Harry Potter and his friends. When Harry is quoted to us, be ready to tell of how, when our God was confronted with sorcery and magic, he took it on and destroyed it to the uttermost. Whatever message the author of Harry Potter is trying to tell the world about magic, we know it is defeated and a failure.

It was defeated by One who has been invested with all power in heaven and on earth. Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour is that person.

Let us renew our commitment to Jesus our Saviour today.

Roger

Roger Jones



Focus on the Gospel

Dear Friend

Sometimes when we compare our lives with Christ's, the difference is too great for us. Let me explain. Once, a lad still in bed very late in the morning, was spoken to by his mother who said, 'Aren't you ashamed to be lying there so late?' The boy answered, 'Yes mother I am ashamed, But I'd rather be ashamed than get up.'

I suspect that most of us will more readily identify with the boy in bed than with the Christ, who, setting his face like flint, followed the will of his Father to the uttermost, through bloody trail unto death.

Well might the question be asked, what have we in common with such a figure? He is far too great for us ordinary folk. But is he? Can we not find something in the Christ who suffered on the cross, that the ordinary person can use in his or her life?

Think of this, when Jesus was going to the cross he was doing something that went far beyond what could be reasonably demanded of him. 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord' (John 10:18).

Years ago a steam ship was on fire. The chief wireless operator was George W Rogers. With the flames all around him, the floor was so hot he could not keep his feet on it; the air burning so that he had to breathe through a wet towel. He had reached the limit of his obligation to duty. He was urged by friends to flee for his life, but his answer was, 'I intend to stand by my post.' He did what no one could demand of him.

Life is made up of things which we have to do and things that no law or custom can demand of us. In national life we must pay our taxes; we must obey the civil laws. In families, there are some things that have to be done that are a minimum requirement if the family is to function as such. However, there are a great number of things in human experience which are not required, but greatly enrich us when they are carried out. Lord Moulton said to the English, 'The greatness of a nation lies in the number of its citizens who can be trusted to obey self imposed law.'

In Australia, most of us reckon that if we could get everyone to keep the laws that we do have, we would be a lot better off. This, however, would not make Australia great. Greatness lies in a higher realm, where people do far more than can be demanded. Take as an illustration the basic matter of honesty. An American farmer wrote to his senator, urging him to vote for the Pure Food Law. The Senator knew that the farmer in question was adulterating the syrup he was marketing, so he wrote back expressing his

surprise that he, of all people, would want to enact the Pure Food Law. The Farmer wrote again, 'Yes I am adding brown sugar to my syrup, that is why I want you to vote for the new law. I want you to pass a law to stop me from doing it.' Here is an example of the deep problem that we humans face. It is the difficulty of acquiring the kind of character that will choose honesty, without having it forced upon us.

There are three kinds of people in the world. There are the rank lawless, the law-abiding, whose rectitude comes from without—from codes, customs and what society requires. Then there are those who get their standard of conduct from within. They have an inner Sinai, more noble than an outer one.

The second class of people are a danger to humanity at large. They are the 'barely' good. No family, city or nation can be sustained by such people. Our only hope is in the people of the last category, people who have a conscience, which, as Huckleberry Finn said, 'Takes up more room than all their insides put together.'

No law could ever ask what Abraham Lincoln did for his people. No substitute could ever require what Mother Theresa did for the poor of her world. All true Christians belong in this last category. Christian living means imitating the spirit of the cross in doing far more than any law can exact. This is the very marrow of Christ's teaching and it was never taught more clearly than when he hung on the cross and died.

'How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him, unto seven times?' 'Not seven times but seventy times seven . . .' (Matt. 18:21-22). The privilege of being generous begins where the law ends.

The cross of Jesus is the centre and the source of the spiritual power we need in order to live well. The cross means that even in the ordinariness of our lives we can do something extraordinary—we can do more than is demanded. Those who find the realm beyond the sanctions of external enforcements, can discover the exhilaration and freedom that Jesus knew.

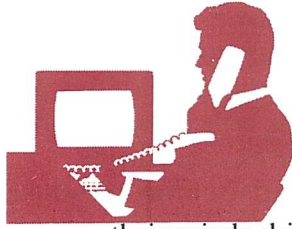
Consider Paul who lost his heart to Christ and went out to change the world. The world is a better place when men and women fall in love with Christ and so do not measure stingingly what they do for him.

Yours in service

RON J ALLEN



From Clem's desk



The good news according to Matthew—An interesting account of the life and ministry of Jesus, but it was more than that, much more. The account of Matthew was his experience, it was the pouring out of an experience that was a once in a lifetime event. How the hearts of the gospel writers must have been moved as they put pen to paper, or stood up to preach, as their minds drifted back to experiences long ago. As the writers of the Scriptures retold the events of the past and they interpreted the Divine hand in rather common events, I am sure the excitement of the past was relived and renewed as new beauties were seen in old stories and songs.

The existence of the Scriptures poses a question to humanity, and it is this: 'What story do you have to tell?' Every one has a story of course, just as the Bible writers did, but what is your story?

We may not write in a canonical sense as the Bible writers did, yet our story may be just as far-reaching as Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. The testimony of the Scriptures is a dead letter if it does not issue in any other testimonies being written every day in the sands of time by fellow believers. The Scriptures record only the beginning of blessings. Today we should expect to hear of the Gospel of Fred or the Epistle of Terry—not in the written 'book' sense, but in the sense of 'living epistles'—ministering to everyone in the community.

'God is not mocked.' He is and will be honoured in the lives of those who are immersed in his forgiveness and love—those who have experienced the good news of God and are driven by such excessive, life-changing grace.

The Berlin Wall—Again

Elizabeth price

A favourite text of mine goes like this: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, Bond nor free, male nor female. All are one in Christ.'

It is a verse that puts paid to all the petty divisions that Church and society have thrown up in every generation—divisions of denomination, divisions of nationality, divisions of sex, divisions of credibility, divisions of intelligence, and so on.

God sidelined all those divisions with the passing of Jewish law.

Under Jewish law, divisions were ordained, but regulated. As much as they extolled Jewish nationality, Jewish creed and Jewish men, they guarded non-Jews and women from exploitation.

In spite of safeguards, non-Jews and women were divided, manipulated and exploited. So Paul had to deal with a perverted philosophy. The only way to deal with it was to turn the Church on its head. 'In Christ,' he says, 'you are all one.' There are no divisions—none. No divisions of nationality, denomination, sex etc (Galations 3:28 - 29).

Even more emphatically, he drags everyone into the delivery room; everything created is there. He has men, not as onlookers, but groaning with birth-pain.

There is no greater leveller than that, dignity is gone; self sufficiency is gone. In the eyes of God, men are every bit as defenceless as a woman when she is at her most helpless and dependent.

But not only that, the *whole universe* is there. Nothing, not even astronomical phenomena is exempt. The entire universe is in the delivery room, groaning under its own helplessness; groaning with the inevitability of birth (Romans 8:22).

It is only when the church goes outside the delivery room that it has divisions. Then it invents 'women's Bibles' and 'men's Bibles'. It says women 'cannot' or 'must not' do this or that in the Christian Church.

It puts up the Berlin Wall—again—which Joel predicted the Gospel would abolish: 'I shall pour out my spirit on all mankind; your sons and daughters will prophecy . . . I shall pour out my spirit in those days, even on slaves and slave-girls' (Joel 2:28-29).

Certainly Paul came down hard on some academically inclined, but undisciplined, women at Corinth (a city noted for its liberalism). Adam Clarke also mentions that where Paul's letter to Timothy says 'I do not permit women to teach,' etc. it was because of a *Roman* law forbidding women to do so. Paul was protecting women.

But the same Paul commends Lydia's competent pastoring in Macedonia. And the same Paul puts men, along with all their territories and achievements, in the delivery room, groaning like a nine-month pregnant woman.

Everyone who is 'in Christ' is equal. No divisions. There is not one portion of creation or Church that is superior to a groaning, helpless woman about to deliver.

And when the whole Church goes where Paul puts it, we can expect a glorious birth.

Hello, my name is Tony, and this is my story of a lifelong struggle to find true inner peace and happiness. I eventually found it, not by looking at earthly things, but looking at heavenly treasures.

I was playing tennis at state level, doing very well at school, and even as a sixteen-year-old, enjoyed a good relationship with my parents and family. A bottle of vodka changed all that.

One night I ran into a school friend. We bought a bottle each and drank the lot. It wasn't long before I was an alcoholic—and didn't care. I enjoyed the lifestyle, drinking, taking drugs and chasing girls. With my friends I smoked drugs, picked fights with strangers and vandalised everything from cars to schools. Within two months my life was rolling out of control downhill.

I gave up playing tennis—I was always too drunk or hung-over to play. My relationship with my family deteriorated; I dropped out of school and became violent because of the alcohol. But I neither saw nor realised what was happening. All I wanted was to hang out with my friends and to party.

After some years of this high life, my health deteriorated badly. This I could see happening, but the partying and drinking was more important. I believed I was immortal, nothing could happen to me. I was foolish and blind.

I began to work in a strip club and my drinking problem worsened, boozing seven nights a week, but through the drinking and partying I yearned for true happiness.

Finally my kidneys gave out, and I was taken to hospital. About the same time I noticed I was losing my memory and I was becoming extremely violent. One morning a man approached me, asking

Tony

the time. For no reason, I turned and started to hit him. Why would I hit a person for simply asking me the time, I wondered? The alcohol was turning me into a monster. I was arrested over this incident.

Not long after being released I was back into my old lifestyle, but now I also began using amphetamines (speed). I would drink continuously for two or three days, going without sleep or food, kept going by the drugs. You can imagine what this did to my body, But I didn't care.

I began to make a lot of friends in the strip club and brothel scene. When I finished working at the strip club, I started work at a brothel, and also what was called a 'shooting gallery' where people went to use heroin and cocaine. There were many prostitutes that worked there. I witnessed many horrible things during this period, overdoses and people close to death. Numerous people died in that place. It's shocking what drugs do to you—not just to your appearance, but your behaviour and moods as well. I've seen people deteriorate within weeks from heroin use. It's sad to see a healthy girl, happy and attractive one day and only weeks later, she's sick and depressed. Drugs and alcohol bring very temporary happiness, and in the end a flood of sadness and depression.

For me, things got even worse. One evening I went out with a couple of friends. In the early hours of the morning we sat drinking in a café. I left for five minutes and by the time I returned, one had been shot in the

back of the head. He died later that morning.

I started to wonder about life. Death is so near and comes to us all sooner or later, but what happens then? I asked myself.

Next, I saw my friends turn on each other, even to stabbing and shooting. It was like something from a violent movie. This is absolutely ridiculous, I told myself. All this over pride and greed. I began to see the destructive realities of my lifestyle. Some of my friends were also getting locked up and sent to prison. I didn't want to head the same way.

Then a friend of twelve years was shot and killed, this time at a dance club. By now my eyes had really began to open and I saw my lifestyle was a dangerous one. Time went on until, one morning, after drinking heavily and taking amphetamines, my right hand suddenly went numb. The numbness rose up my arm, then my whole right side went numb. Eventually I couldn't talk.

I was taken to hospital. I had had a stroke. I was thinking though, repeating to myself, 'Please God help me and I will change.'

The incident scared me so much, I stopped drinking and taking drugs. I stopped going out all together and it wasn't long before I slipped into a deep depression. I thought I was suffering withdrawal, and hoped it would pass in a week or so. After eight months I was more depressed and empty than ever.

Now, for the first time in years, I sat back with a sober mind and looked at my life. What did I have in my life? What is life all about? Is death the end? Why am I here? All these and other questions surfaced.

Deep down I was hurting. I felt lonely, depressed, empty,

hopeless, with no sense of peace; without direction or purpose. From the void in my heart I knew something was missing from my life.

My depression worsened, until one morning I fell on my knees next to my bed and really prayed for the first time in my life: 'Dear God, please help me,' I pleaded. 'I need your help, I'm so unhappy and depressed, please God, help me. I need you so.'

Shortly after this I was told about a Christian neighbour. I'd never spoken to him before, but now I thought, great, I will go and have a talk with him. I went. I wanted to know what God could do for me.

I heard how God was prepared to forgive my wrongs and be part of my life. This was a great discovery. I was overwhelmed with excitement when I learned that heaven is real and that Jesus has set me free from my sins and terrible life through his perfect, sinless life and death. All I could do was reach out and accept his forgiveness, his gift of salvation and heaven. I also learned that I didn't have to work my way to heaven—which was a great relief. I couldn't wait to invite Jesus into

my heart.

Having asked Jesus to be part of my life, I went home. I sat staring at the wall. 'Wow' was all I could utter. I had goose-bumps all over. Something wonderful has just happened to me! At last, true joy, peace, security and wonderful hope. For the first time in years the pain and loneliness in my heart was gone. I was overwhelmed.

Also, in that instant of confession and surrender to Jesus, I was cleansed of any desire for alcohol and drugs. In its place was a flood of joy, peace and hope.

I wouldn't trade it for anything belonging to this world. It's been a long journey for me, but these days instead of starting out blindly, I start with a prayer instead. I ask God for wisdom, strength, courage and guidance throughout the day and to fill me with his peace, joy, love and presence. I ask him to be my support and shield to carry me through the day. And I ask myself, how did I ever live without Jesus?

I never would have believed this change could occur in my life, but it has. My life is proof that Jesus forgives us our past, and loves us deeply. His love is unconditional and unlimited.

Today I have total assurance in my Saviour's love and forgiveness and my going to heaven—because I have placed my trust in Jesus and keep my eyes focused on him. This assurance of going to heaven which I have found in Christ, has brought so much peace and happiness into my life.

It was only when I turned away from myself and earthly things and looked towards Jesus, that I found true pardon and peace. It was only when I looked towards Jesus, an inner light of joy in my heart ignited. You can also experience this wonderful joy if you fix your eyes upon him.

Nothing in this world will give you true joy except to look to Jesus and trust him alone. Deep in my heart I know that Jesus will return and I will be with him in heaven. You can also have this same joy and assurance when you place your trust in him.

Jesus knows all my faults, and yet I know that he forgives me and loves me anyway. Jesus is the perfect gift. He is my best friend, and he can be yours too.

Matthew 6:33, 'But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well.'



Good News USA

Since October last year, Carmen (my wife) and I have served at GNU in Auburn, California. At the

time of this writing we are back at our Australian home, to assist with meetings and seminars here.

During our sojourn in North America we have had the privilege of meeting regularly with the GNU Fellowship at Auburn, California. The GNUF at Auburn is led by Pastor Roy Gee, an able preacher and much loved leader. As well as regular preaching appointments at the fellowship we have managed to meet and speak to believers in Banff and Toronto, Canada, as well as folk in Cleburne, Texas.

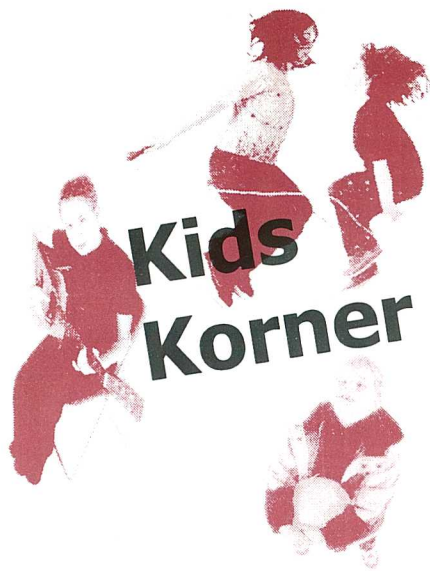
Wherever the gospel takes root, it produces the same authentic results in human life. We have benefited from the joy, hope and love of the people of America. It is the same blessed fruit-

age that we have seen in Australia for so many years.

Another one of the effects of the gospel is generosity. It produces a largeness of heart in its adherents. Since our transfer to California, your support for GNU in this country has continued undiminished. We had hoped for this, and since it is something over which we have no control at all, we give God praise, and thank you for your continued donations.

GNU is proof of the grace and providence of God. Staff at Tweed Heads: Dennis and Pat Tedman, Carolyn Wagemaker and Lionel Hartley, express gratitude to you for making their service possible.

— Ron Allen.



Sally and Sam's New Home

Joanne Rutis

Sally and Sam lived with their mother and father in their house which was in a small town.

One day their father arrived home and told them that he had



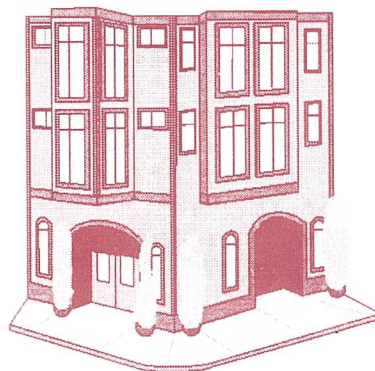
a new job and they would be moving.

What excitement! They helped their mother to pack all their clothes, they helped put all their toys and clothes into boxes, then they watched the moving man as he loaded all the family's belongings into a big truck and drive away.

Sam and Sally climbed into the back seat of their car, mother got in the front with dad

and then they drove for many hours.

The new city they were going to live in was much bigger than the small town they had lived in before. The home they would live in was different too. Their mother explained that in their new home there would be other people living in the same building, only in different apartments.



When they arrived at the big city Sam and Sally saw many people on the streets. They saw many people coming and going from the apartment house that was going to be their new home.

Some of the people they saw wore strange clothing, some had dark skin, some had brown skin; some had yellow skin, and some had light skin.

This was all very strange to Sally and Sam, who had never before seen anyone who didn't have light skin like their own.



When a dark-skinned lady and man introduced themselves as their next door neighbours, Sally and Sam couldn't help but stare very hard at them. After the dark-skinned husband and wife left, Sam asked his mother why the people around them looked so different.

'The people in our old home town were all of white ancestry,' their mother said. 'That means that they all came from families who had light coloured skin from years and years back. It's different here, there are people whose ancestors came from many different lands. Some of the people were born with white skin, some were born with brown skin, some were born with black skin and many were born with various shades in-between these colours.'

'Why did God make so many different colours of people?' Sally asked her mother. 'And which colour is best?'

'There is no best colour Sally,' her mother explained. 'God made people in so many different colours because he likes variety. Remember our flower garden? Remember how you liked the red roses? Well, didn't you like the daisies too? The daffodils and the pansies that Grandma grew in her garden?'

All the flowers are beautiful in their own way and they are all made by God. The town you were raised in was like a rose garden with just one variety of flower. But our new home is a scatter garden—full of many different kinds of flowers. When you put them all together you have a big, beautiful bouquet.

It isn't what colour your skin is, or how tall you are, or how short, skinny, or heavy.

**PICTURE
TO COLOUR**



What matters to God is how we treat one another. Those who don't show love and concern for others are like weeds in God's

garden.

God wants us to be kind to all people, no matter what colour their skin, where they live, how they dress or what language they speak. All people, no matter what they look like, are God's children.

Soon you will be meeting new people and making new friends. How many friends you have will depend on how you treat others.' * * *

<http://www.antelope-ebooks.com>

The Poppy

This morning in my garden bed
I watched a poppy tall
Push from its little crinkled head
A soft green hairy shawl.
How could it tell just when to throw
The cosy hood aside?
How did it know the day had come
For it to open wide?
God, who fashioned little flowers
And knows what each will need,
He stored the rules that guides the life
Within each tiny seed
—author unknown.

1. PRASJE _____
2. ARIPHSPE _____
3. LOYCHEACND _____
4. MAREDEL _____
5. YADNORXS _____
6. DASURIS _____
7. ETHOCLSYIR _____
8. REBLY _____
9. POZAT _____
10. SHASROYCPER _____
11. CAITHNJ _____
12. EATYSMHT _____

Unscramble the names of the twelve jewels that will form the foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem (See how many you can figure out before looking up Rev. 21 NKJ.)

What jewel will the 12 gates of the wall be made of?
Unscramble the circled letters and see!

Letters

Dear Pastor Ron

In Luke chapters one and two we note that Zacharias was told by an Angel of the Lord while he was on duty at the temple, that his wife, Elizabeth, was to have a son (John the Baptist). When Zacharias' duty at the temple was over, he went home and in due course Elizabeth conceived.

Six months later the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was to conceive and bring forth a son, Jesus. Mary visited with Elizabeth for about three months. John was born, and six months later Jesus also.

Luke 2:8 says: 'And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.' If we get our Hebrew calendars and start with Zacharias leaving the temple, then add nine months then add six months it seems that Jesus was born about September/October.

Anyway it snows in Israel in December/January. Shepherds and sheepies are tucked up in their barns at that time. Am I right or wrong?

There seems to be some well established treachery afoot regarding Jesus' real birthday. I would appreciate your thoughts.

G P AUST.

Dear G

Thank you for your observations about Christmas. Yes, I understand that December 25 was the date for the winter solstice and the pagan celebration of the sun's return from its ever lowering position in the northern skies. I am not sure that I understand your concern however.

It was the easiest thing for the new Christians in the fourth

century to reinterpret this festival and transform it into a celebration of Jesus—the Son of Righteousness, rising with healing in his wings etc.

For Christians, December 25 is not a celebration of the 'date' of Jesus' birth. It is a celebration of his birth. A celebration of the incarnation of God's Son. Since we have no way of knowing the exact time of Jesus' birth, no particular day would be any better than another for celebrating.

As long as we keep this in mind there is no illusion and no lie.

Yours in Jesus

RON

Dear GNU

My head is spinning from all I have read in the past few weeks. I stumbled onto Sydney Cleveland's website and finally made it over to yours.

I am one of those who were raised in the Adventist Church, but was never quite content with the teachings of E G White. I was the 'trouble maker' always questioning in school.

I see I have much to study in the Bible, I feel like I must start all over again, even though I have been in Sabbath School for thirty four years (from cradle roll). I need to start reading the Bible by itself without the 'little red books'.

It is people like you who allow others the courage to question and feel strength to go beyond the SS lesson study.

In Christ

R T USA.

Dear R

Than you for your message. We are glad you made it to the GNU website. There is much reading there for you to choose from A

great deal of it is written by scholarship, and if you wish to operate at the academic level, this is fine.

*At GNU we have some fine books which you may want to look at. Have you read **What's So Amazing About Grace?** by Philip Yancey? You will love it! Take time, if you will, to read *Good News for Adventists*.*

Keep in touch. We will gladly share with you what has been given to us. God is your friend. You are on a journey of discovery which will thrill and satisfy you.

Yours in service

RON

Dear Mr Allen

Thank you for forwarding your excellent magazine. I enjoy the magazine so very much, it somehow faithfully complements whatever is my current Bible study topic.

Your editorial for Issue no. 6, 2000 is interesting and appealing. Your story of Jim's 'rescue' of his mate in no-mans-land is a poignant one, especially for myself, as I carry in my wallet my dad's 'meat-ticket' or 'dog-tag' the soldier's identification disc.

Jim's comment, 'Yes, but it was worth it, Sir' reminds us of the lovely value system which Christ's compassion gives us. You mentioned our 'fellowship link' in a previous letter—the spirit of man.

Dr Desmond Ford's tapes on Clarifying the Covenant still remains at the top of my list despite competition from Derek Prince, Bayliss Conley and Mark Rutland and the rest. Dr Ford is truly superb.

I note the seminar notices and will try to attend.

With best wishes for the new year and God's continuing blessing upon your ministry, yourself and your family.

Sincerely

W P AUST.

A Special Address: Part 3

Given by Fr. Rom Haynes at Bethanga Catholic Church

Reported by Elizabeth Price (The Next Step magazine)

A huge shanty town had developed in a desert valley. A million people had been driven out of their homes in the mountains by the military-style action of a group known as *The Shining Path*.

A million people is something like ten times Albury/Wodonga put together, but with none of the infrastructure or fine buildings. 'The troops came in and drove them off a few times, and in driving them off, there would always be a few deaths' Fr. Rom said, 'but they came back. They needed a place to live.'

Fr. Rom and his co-worker, Tom, had set themselves up in a little shack to be as much like the people as they could be. 'The human crisis was terrible' said Fr. Rom, 'but the people were great.' Fr. Rom and Tom's venture into this area of Peru was all about getting the shanty town working. 'Every little block had its own little government, and they all came together to form a kind of government,' explained Fr. Rom.

'It was just a wonderful thing, how ingenious the poor are when they need to be, for their own survival—they come together and work together to create community.' He said, 'Tom and I gathered the leaders together and asked, 'what do you want of us? What can we do for you?' Fr. Rom explained that a big problem is foreigners going in and only seeing what *they* think is needed. So he and Tom wanted to know what it was that the people themselves saw as their need.

What they said to Rom and Tom was, 'All we want of you is to help us to organise ourselves—organise ourselves to build chapels so that we can gather together to pray, to worship. It will also help if we set up soup kitchens.' The soup kitchens were quite famous, where women came together in groups of about sixty and they not only prepared food, but the soup kitchens were also a place where people could learn.

'It was just a wonderful scene,' commented Fr. Rom, 'these women learned to read and write and go to the market, paying for their purchases and know when they had the right change. This became our big venture in the four years we were there. The soup kitchens became the face of all learning, of all human development, sharing and caring. They became a kind of medical process too. Women were taught, for instance, that when their babies got gastric upsets, they were to continue giving the baby water to drink, or they would become dehydrated. This was such a simple thing to learn. One in four deaths were kids, and very often it was gastric problems that caused the deaths.'

It was a wonderful experience for Fr. Rom and Tom living with the people. The sense of community was so strong because everyone needed one another. People even shared their candles for light, as they were so poor.

'Water was the biggest problem' Fr. Rom said, 'we had to go down and badger a truck driver just to bring water into our area, and then when it came . . .' He left unspoken the state of the water, but the impression was that it was none too pure. 'This is the awful thing, we could buy Coca Cola any place around the town, but do you think we could buy water? Not a drop! It's capitalism gone mad.'

Next issue, a light that shines in the soup kitchens—and in a million hearts of Peru.

Dr Ford at Kellyville, Sydney, On April 7, 2001

Dr Ford will be speaking on the lower ground floor beneath the hall of the Kellyville SDA Church, Spurway Drive, Kellyville. (On the left, just before the golf course.)

11.00am 'Righteousness by Fate or Righteousness by Faith?'

An examination of predestination in the light of the Gospel.

2.30pm 'Does God exist?'

The case for the reality of God in the twenty-first century.

For further information:

Danielle and David Kadrian <mailto:dkadrian@hotmail.com>
or phone Trevor Lloyd 02 9875 2519 or <mailto:trevorlloyd@ozemail.com.au>



**April 21, 2001 at 2.30pm Dr Ford will debate
with atheist, Brian Wiltshire,
2GB radio announcer, at the Wesley Centre, Pitt Street Sydney.**

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WOULD ANYONE KNOWING THE WHEREABOUTS OF GEOFFREY J PAXTON, AUTHOR OF *THE SHAKING OF ADVENTISM* CALL US AT THE GNU OFFICE ON 07 55245040. WE HAVE SOMEONE ANXIOUS TO CONTACT HIM.

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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.

eMail
GNU Aust: goodnews@coolgold.com.au
Ron Allen: ronallen@goodnewsunlimited.org
Goodchat: goodchat@coolgold.com.au
Free Ezine: FreEzine@telstra.easymail.com.au
Chairman: patandroger@telstra.easymail.com.au
Treasurer: tedman@coolgold.com.au
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GNU Website design: grobins@westconnect.com.au
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Phn. 0268 292976 (Tony Fitzgerald).

BALLARAT GOSPEL RADIO, VIC
Phn. 0353399958 (Pam Fowkes)

RADIO RHEMA TAMWORTH NSW
Phn. 02 67612360 (Karen Barter).

RADIO RHEMA CENTRAL COAST Gosford, NSW
Phn. 043248525 (Mark Roberts).

TOOWOOMBA 92.9FM QLD
Phn. 076 394977 (Cassie Aub).

Fellowships

When visiting interstate or in New Zealand, you may like to know where to worship.

Adelaide: phn. 088 3224118

Adelaide meets each week and once a month they enjoy a fellowship lunch.

New Zealand:

phn. 0011 09 8270070

Perth: phn. 08 94585469

Meets monthly, on the second Saturday of the month, followed by a basket lunch.

Gold Coast:

Phn. 07 55355329 17th March at Bruce & Beverley Tulloch's home, 10 Lower Vantage Point Dr., Burleigh Heads QLD. Fellowship meeting at 10.00am. with Pr Allen, lunch, then Board meeting to follow.

Hervey Bay: Phn. 07 41281261. Meets once a month at 'Dan-Dinna House' 459 Boat Harbour Drive, Torquay.

For further information contact Evelyn O'Grady.

*Any others meeting regularly?
We would love to hear from you.*

Dr Desmond Ford

7.15am Breakfast Seminar

March 16 and April 20

**Alexanders Restaurant at the
Metropolitan Motor Inn
106 Leichardt Street, Spring Hill,
Brisbane. Cost: \$13.50
Corner of Upper Edward Street.
(There is parking under the Motor Inn)**

**On the 18th and 25th of
March at 9.00am Dr Ford
will be speaking at the Bap-
tist Church, Stafford Heights,
268 Appleby Rd., Brisbane**

**Dr Ford will also be speaking to the
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the year. Dates have not yet been
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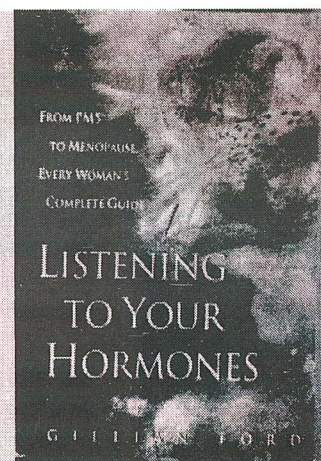
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Editor:Roger Jones 07 55245040
Chairman: Roger Jones. 07 55245040
Pr Ron Allen:07 55245040

Zone 1 Western Australia	William Sinclair 08 9458 5469	Fax 08 93610867
Zone 2 Sth Aust. Vic. Tas	Bruce Johansen 03 5381 1330	
Zone 3 Sth NSW	Roger Jones 07 5524 5040	Fax 07 55245040
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GNU Aust: 2/54-60 Industry Drive, Sth Tweed Heads NSW 2486. (PO Box 6788)
Phone/Fax: 07 55245040 eMail: goodnews@coolgold.com.au
Website: www.goodnewsunlimited.org.au

USA Office: 11710 Education St. Auburn CA 95603 - 2499 USA.
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Canadian Office: 57 Virgilwood Drive, Willowdale, Ontario, M2R 2B5 Canada.
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