

# GOOD NEWS A U S T R A L I A

Registered by Australia Post  
Publication No WBG0048

1994 Issue No 2

## GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED

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

---



## GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED

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

## Editorial

*Each year I teach, I encounter deeper, more entangled family tragedies. Not alone, am I referring to so-called broken families. Rather, I refer to situations where increasingly parents have abdicated parenting.*

*Let me illustrate. Some students in my local area while not technically homeless are dislocated. That is, they move between two parents and sometimes two or even four sets of grandparents. In some cases, the only persons they stay with are one of four sets of grandparents.*

*Such a background inhibits growth in self-discipline or self-esteem. Distrust for any kind of human relationship becomes the norm.*

*Other situations exist also. Boys confronted with scenes of their father bashing their mother or in one extreme case having stabbed the mother after repeated threats. Boys and girls arriving at school in dark glasses to hide the bruising and sweltering in pullovers in century heat February days for the same reason.*

*In this context, I am proud of some of my fellow Australian Christians. Christians such as the Reverend Bill Crews through his Exodus movement which serves dozens of children in Sydney. Another such as Cindy Manassen who devotes her time to assisting homeless kids in the affluent Hills District of Sydney.*

*Many Christians bemoan the cause. How few, it seems, take up the challenge of providing succour and direction to kids who left unaided will become the basis of a permanent Australian under-class.*

*As mentioned in this column previously, Jesus reached out to all classes, ages and nationalities. If, as Christians, our concept of grace is not inclusive of street kids, prostitutes and derelicts then we have a false concept.*

*Practical, caring love is needed. Direction needs to be provided to the community by Christians. If Christians collectively lack the conviction or inclination to provide such direction one can expect that events such as the Mardi Gras will fill the vacuum.*

*Does your Christian love extend this far?*

*— Rob Cooper*



*Good News Australia* is published each month by Good News Unlimited (Incorporated in New South Wales), PO Box 10, Tugun, Gold Coast, Qld 4224. Phone: (075) 911 830, (066) 742 271.

Editor: Robert Cooper. Layout and Typesetting: Heather Cooper. Printer: Spartan Press, Queens Park WA.

Good News Unlimited is an evangelical, nondenominational, nonprofit organisation, with headquarters at Tugun on the Queensland Gold Coast. GNU is dedicated to proclaiming the everlasting Gospel.

GNU is not a church and does not seek to proselytise, but does believe in and encourage local church involvement. Its ministry includes radio presentations, preaching appointments, public seminars and the dispersal of audio and video cassettes and literature, emphasising the atonement of Christ. Local supporters meet at the GNU fellowship at Tugun.

GNU is supported solely by donations from those who believe in its ministries. Gifts are tax deductible in Canada, New Zealand and USA. Unsolicited manuscripts of interest to Christians of all denominations are welcome, but without guarantee of return. Under certain circumstances, payment may be made for manuscripts at the editor's discretion. Please send typed manuscripts or 3½" disks (MAC or IBM - Word 5, Wordperfect 5 or text only format) to: Editor, GNA, PO Box 10, Tugun, Gold Coast, Qld 4224.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.



# Good Gracious . . . God!

Desmond Ford

*The study of 'grace' in the Bible is profoundly rewarding.  
Grace is clearest in the gospel and in God's gift of Jesus to us.*



It's mentioned 130 times in the New Testament alone. It begins and ends each of the apostle Paul's letters.

It turned the western world upside down during the sixteenth century Reformation.

It led, more recently, one of the world's best-known Jehovah's

Witnesses to leave his group and write a book about his experience. Raymond Franz's book, written as a result of a study of this word in Scripture, has helped many Jehovah's Witnesses.

It gives hope to the hopeless and joy to the sorrowing.

It gives faith to the faithless and

life to the dying.

It is GRACE.

## Grace of God

The Greek word translated 'grace' is charis. It comes from a root word meaning 'to be joyful'. The noun form has a wide variety of meanings, but all are associated



with happiness and joy.

Theologically, the word signifies that God is for us even when we are against God.

It is a term for the active love of God that streams continually and prodigally from God as sunshine streams from the sun.

### Grace a Gift

Augustine said it is not grace unless it is gratis, that is, free.

Grace carries the meaning of generous gifts. When interpreted theologically it signifies redemption, and all that goes with redemption.

Grace is a word set in contrast to law, works, and human merit. We read:

And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace (Rom 11:6 NIV).

Only as we recognise that grace is essentially for the graceless, do we gather its fundamental sweetness (Rom 3:21-24; 5:20).

### That's Grace

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew synonyms for 'grace' signify favour and loving kindness.

Thus, the word 'grace' binds together both testaments.

'Grace' shows us that God is seeking sinners to bless them and change them, and to fill their lives with fruitfulness, innocence and joy. This is because God is what he is – Love.

'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son . . . 'Not . . . to condemn the world, but to save the world through him' (Jn 3:16-17). That's grace.

'This man welcomes sinners' (Lk 15:2). That's grace.

'People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy' (Mt 12:31 NRSV). That's grace.

'Whoever comes to me I will never drive away' (Jn 6:37 NIV). That's grace.

Love is grace. Mercy is grace. Forgiveness is too. All gifts are grace. Joy is grace.

Indeed, you cannot think of any good thing that is not related to grace, one way or another.

There could have been no grace for us whatever but for the fact that God the Son, in Eden, volunteered to take our place and redeem us. 'Grace . . . came through Jesus Christ' (Jn 1:17).

### Study Grace

If you want rich hours, look up 'grace' in your concordance.

In the New Testament especially, trace its usage. Take in some of its derivatives and related words also.

Where grace is, there also is the gospel (Lk 4:18-20; Acts 14:3; Rom 3:21-24; Col 1:6).

Rejoice as you read 'where sin increased, grace increased all the more' (Rom 5:20).

Plumb the depths of being 'not under law, but under grace' (Rom 6:14).

Marvel at that grace that, as the King James version rightly has it, is something so abundant that it guarantees to us 'always having all sufficiency in all things' (2 Cor 9:8 KJV).

The only condition, as in our prayers, is God's sweet and wise will.

### Grace and Good Works

Notice that you can frustrate and nullify the grace of God. You do this if you seek God's favour by trying to be 'good enough' in yourself (Gal 2:21).

You can 'receive God's grace in vain' (2 Cor 6:1) if, subsequent to receiving God's grace, you fall into the trap of legalism (or its opposite, antinomianism).

Divine grace does work in us. But it does not produce legalism. Grace makes us more than conquerors and overcomers of the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 2:14; 1 Jn 4:4). But this victory is the fruit or result of grace in our lives, not its cause.

Neither are we to sin in order to make grace abound (Rom 6:1). That is antinomianism. We don't

need that. We have sinned quite enough already.

### Grace and Last Days

If you take the privilege of finding out the significance of 'grace', this key word in the New Testament, you will have access to treasures – treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

For example, if you understand grace, you will see why in the last days the gospel will suddenly explode in its impact. It goes to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people through the power of pentecostal fires kindled in every city of the globe.

News that travels very fast is usually very bad or very good (usually the former). In the last days, it will be the latter.

If the gospel were something trite, such as, 'Be good and God will save you,' it would barely travel outside its hometown – Legalismville. If, instead, the gospel is grace, and the gospel is joy, and forgiveness, and power, and fruitfulness, and mercy, and a thousand other good things, then we can understand how one day it will take wings. One day, when the gospel is understood, it will take wings, and cross all barriers.

In other words, instead of people being told 'IF' 'IF' 'IF' they are good, God might love them, people in the last days will be told the gospel. The news will travel at the speed of light! People long to hear that God is a God 'who justifies the wicked' (Rom 4:5), who 'welcomes sinners' (Lk 51:2), who promises that 'people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy' (Mt 12:31 NRSV).

### Examples of Grace

We need to tell the world that grace is God's unimaginable generosity. It led God to give us Christ, God's 'gift that is too wonderful for words!' (2 Cor 9:15 CEV). It led God to promise to supply as we need it 'exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think'



(Eph 3:20 KJV).

Remember Abraham praying for Ishmael: 'O that Ishmael might live before Thee!' (Gen 17:18). Our munificent Heavenly Father not only gave him Ishmael – whose descendants will exist as long as the world – but also Isaac. God also gave Abraham a progeny as numerous as the stars of heaven, for we, if Christ's, are Abraham's seed (Gal 3:29). Abraham asked for the life of one. God gave him millions. That's grace.

Remember Jacob. Jacob prayed that God might guarantee him bread and clothing (Gen 28:20). What does God do? By the time Jacob comes that way again he is rich – living high, so to speak. He is a man full of children and all good things.

Remember the paralytic being lowered into the room where Christ is preaching (Mt 9:1-7). The suffering man hopes for physical restoration.

What does Christ, the generous Saviour do? He not only gives the man what he hopes for, but also something more wonderful. 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven' (Mt 9:2 NIV).

Now remember the starving prodigal son in his tattered clothes and almost broken spirit (Lk 15:11-32). He resolves to go to his father. His father's servants have bread enough to eat and to spare. The son will ask to be made a servant. What happens?

The son is reinstated in his father's house! He is given a ring, special shoes, a valuable robe – and a feast. This is a picture of divine grace in action.

### Grace and Joy in Bible

Christ told many stories about parties. He told only one, a mini-parable, about a funeral (Mt 11:17).

Similarly, the Old Testament ordered many feasts, but only one fast. That was the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29-31).

No wonder we read 'the joy of the Lord is your strength' (Neh

8:10 KJV). Anyone who understands grace can only be joyous and strong.

Look how prominent the word 'joy' is in the early Gospel narratives (Lk 1:44,47; 2:10; 24:52).

It's not surprising that after the gospel was preached in the city of Samaria we find the cheerful record, 'There was great joy in that city' (Acts 8:8).

### Grace and Joy and Jesus

When we remember the last hours of Jesus, we do not find him speaking in funereal tones about negative matters. We find him constantly reassuring his disciples that soon they would have his joy and peace (Jn 14:27; 15:11; 16:33).

Christ is no thoughtless optimist. He knows full well that there will be strife and pain for his followers. But remember how balanced and comforting his words are. 'In this world you will have trouble.' But 'In me you may have peace' (Jn 16:33).

Similarly, Jesus promises us a hundredfold good things, but adds 'and with them persecutions' (Mk 10:29-30). He was – and is – a realist. He and his disciples could sing a hymn even as he set out on his way to the cross (Mt 26:30).

Nestling in his realism is joy. Because of grace.

### Grace and Covenants

I must leave it to you to study the connection between grace and the divine covenants. Be sure to observe that in the covenants of grace God never leaves us to ourselves. When the Comforter comes, that Spirit writes the law in our hearts and causes us to walk therein (Eze 36:26-27; Heb 8:10).

That's grace indeed. God makes us want to do what we ought to do then enables us to do it!

### Gracious Benediction

The last verse of Scripture says, 'The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people' (Rev 22:21). We are to accept that benediction. We

are to feed upon it by investing it with all the comprehensive blessings that grace includes.

Revelation begins and ends with grace (just as do the letters of Paul). 'Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come' (Rev 1:4).

Are you seeking peace? It can be yours only when the grace of God is received. With grace, and through grace alone, comes peace.

'Grace and peace to you from him.'

### Grace never absent

As you fall in love with the word 'grace' and all it signifies, you will discover it even where the word itself is absent. For example, near the Bible's closing benediction:

The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life' (Rev 22:17).

'Free gift' – that's grace.

### The Treasure of Grace

No wonder the Spirit painted a gloriously exciting picture in 'The Parable of the Hidden Treasure' (Mt 13:44). Here is a man stumbling his way through the field of Holy Scripture. He suddenly discovers a treasure – the treasure of grace!

'In his joy [he] went and sold all he had and bought that field.' He counts nothing else of comparable value to that treasure. He empties his hands of every earthly thing in order to receive and keep that treasure. That treasure can be his for all eternity.

Is that joyful treasure-hunter you?

If not, why not?

Come. All is free. Come. All is grace.

Today.

**'In the coming ages [God] might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.'** Ephesians 2:7 ❖



# Women who were there at the crucifixion

---

Some churches are still struggling to define women's role and authority in the Christian faith. Helen Nicholson reminds us that a group of loyal women were at Christ's side as he died.

---

**W**omen play a central role in the Easter story. Jesus' female followers stood by him at the crucifixion after the men had run away. They were the first to discover the empty tomb on Easter morning, while the men were in hiding. Yet only Mary Magdalene has been recorded as an individual, while the others remain mere names. Who were these women?

The first three Gospel accounts largely agree on their identities. Mark names Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joseph, and Salome. Matthew lists Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. Luke gives us Mary of Magdala, Joanna and Mary the mother of James.

We have four or five women here. All agree on Mary of Magdala – better known as Mary Magdalene. Mary the mother of James, or James and Joseph, must be Jesus' mother – Matthew and Mark have told us earlier that she was also the mother of James, Joseph, Simon and Judas.

Mark next mentions Salome, without telling us who she is. Presumably he expects us to know. She is obviously a prominent fig-

ure. Matthew gives us a description instead: the mother of the sons of Zebedee. These were Jesus' famous disciples James and John, nicknamed 'sons of thunder' for their fiery tempers.

Luke also mentions Joanna. This must be the Joanna he mentioned earlier among the women disciples who gave financial support to Jesus.

The Gospel of John gives a different list. Independent of the other three, it was written much later and names Jesus' mother and her sister, Mary wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. It is surprising that Mary of Magdala and Mary mother of Jesus appear again, but not Salome. This writer claims to have got his information on Jesus' life from Salome's son, John, and depicts him as a witness of the crucifixion. So, as John's mother was present, why isn't she listed?

In John's gospel, the disciple John is always disguised as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'. Perhaps his mother is disguised in the same way. Maybe the writer means us to understand that Mary, Jesus' mother, was present with her sister, John's mother, and Mary wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala. In this case, James and

John, Jesus' prominent disciples, would have been his cousins – hardly surprising in a society in which family ties were so important.

But who was Mary wife of Clopas? There is no other Clopas in the New Testament, but a similar name occurs in Luke's gospel. Cleopas and a companion, disciples of Jesus, are returning home to Emmaus, depressed by Jesus' recent death. They encounter a traveller whom they recognise as the resurrected Jesus and they rush back to Jerusalem to report the good news. Are Clopas and Cleopas one and the same? Was Mary, Clopas's wife, who watched Jesus die on Friday, one of the first to see him alive on Sunday? It is tempting to think so.

So as the soldiers crucified Jesus, a group of women disciples stood nearby. Among them were Mary of Magdala, who was later the first to encounter the risen Christ, Jesus' mother Mary, and her sister Salome, mother of James and John. There was also Joanna, one of Jesus' most dedicated supporters, and Mary wife of Cleopas, who later encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus. ♦

*The Guardian*  
(*Sydney Morning Herald*)



# THE UNKNOWN

*Ron Allen*

There have always been those who have scoffed at religious folk saying 'So heavenly minded – no earthly use.' Criticism like this may be justified sometimes but very often those who do most to make life better in this world, are those like Paul, who believe 'their citizenship is in Heaven.' They play a helpful and courageous part in the world for the reason that they think often about the world to come.

Though Christian bookstores abound with speculative works on last day events and the Kingdom to come, Scripture supplies scant basis for such elaborate representations. Even Jesus, while leaving us in no doubt about an after life, offers little detail for its visualisation.

The fact is, God has chosen not to reveal much about the future. We ought therefore humbly admit to an ignorance which is no doubt for our advantage. 'No eye has seen; no ear has heard; no mind has conceived what God has prepared for them who love him' (1 Cor 2:9).

Apparently there are no categories of thought; no form of words which can be used to picture an existence which is different to the present one.

Try describing a beautiful sunset to a blind person. Imagine describing a magnificent symphony to a deaf person. You might say that the sunset is like a symphony and that the symphony is like a sunset. But both individuals would still not appreciate what was being communicated.

Another possible reason why the future is largely veiled from us is that thorough knowledge would make us too intolerant of the present. If I glimpsed some splendid place where life is magnificent in its

fulfilments, beauties and rewards, I should perhaps give up in disgust when I came back here. Back to stress, work, pain, worry, crime and pollution. It could make one morose and useless for the rest of his days.

If all could be known about tomorrow it might overwhelm us in another way. Our minds may be too fragile to encounter the glories of a supernatural world. Perhaps it was for that reason that a cloud swept across the mount of transfiguration. Jesus was at home in both realms but his disciples were not. It was a mercy that after they had woken from their trance they looked and saw no one except Jesus.

Lack of information concerning the beyond does not mean Christians must live in an anxious muddle of uncertainty. They believe on Him who came from God; who died and rose again; returning to the father.

The future is not an undiscovered place to Jesus. If someone asks whether he had anything to say after returning from the grave the answer is yes, he did. 'He came to them saying, 'All Hail!' It was a Greek greeting – rejoice! But it was also a report. It meant rejoice, all is well!

When the Lord was about to take leave of his disciples they were afraid about the future. He told them, 'I am going to prepare a place for you, that where I am there you may be also.' He also said, 'were it not so I would have told you.' These words assure us that whatever else may be said of the future, it will be a future for us with Him. It will be shaped and determined by Jesus. If we had needed to know more, He would have told us. Rejoice! All is well! ♦







The Foremost Formula is:  
Fact + Faith + Feeling =  
Successful Christian Living



# Foremost Formula

*The most important formula is:*

$$\text{Faith} + \text{Feeling} = \text{successful Christian living}$$

*Roy Gee*

**H**ere's a fun formula you can try out on your favourite eleven-year-old. It's fun because when you apply this formula, everyone can start out with a different number but still end up with the same answer!

The first step in the formula is to choose any number between one and ten. Next, multiply that number by nine. Next, add together the digits of that number. And subtract five.

Keeping that number in mind, change it to the equivalent letter of the alphabet. For example, if you have one, then that is A. If you have two, that's B. Three is C, etc.

Now, think of a country that begins with that letter. Take the second letter of that country, and think of an animal, a mammal, that begins with that letter. There's your answer.

So, we all started out with a different number: 1,

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10. We all end up, after applying the fun formula, with the same answer. An elephant from Denmark!

What? You have a rat from Sri Lanka! An aardvark from Canada! Well, the fun formula may not work every time.

In contrast, I want to give you a formula that does work every time. (Thank you Dr Ford, for giving me this formula during one of your Bible lectures.)

It is the Foremost Formula for Christians. It is foremost because, if followed exactly, the formula guarantees successful Christian living.

It is simpler than the fun formula, and more trustworthy. However, although it only contains three factors you must follow the formula carefully for it to work. Each component must be present and in the correct order.



## 1. FACT is the Foremost Formula's first factor

'I want to remind you of the gospel . . . By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you . . .

'For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died . . . was buried . . . was raised on the third day . . . he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.

After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me' (1 Cor 15:1-8 NIV).

### Facts of first importance

Paul the apostle is often accused by theologians of misusing Jesus. 'Paul takes the simple, travelling, Galilean preacher of the Gospels,' they complain, 'and transforms him into the "transcendent Christ of faith". Paul ignores the details of Jesus' life and ministry.'

Yet, in this passage Paul lists many historical facts as he describes that which is of 'first importance', the gospel that saves.

Paul lists the historical facts and details that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. He confirms the resurrection of Jesus with the facts that the risen Christ appeared to Peter, the Twelve, 500 (some still alive), James, all the apostles, and Paul.

### Believe because true

We love to hear the gospel preached in terms of its benefits.

We love to hear that because of the gospel our sins are forgiven, we are reconciled to God, we are declared righteous, we are accepted by God, we have the Holy Spirit, and our lives are put in order.

All these benefits, of course, are real.

Rarely, however, are we urged to

believe the gospel because it's true! Yet that is how Paul describes the gospel that saves. He describes it as historical fact.

I've heard preachers say, 'Even if there is no afterlife, no heaven, no earth-made-new, I would still be a Christian. Because it's the best way to live!'

This is a fine sentiment, but Paul disagrees. 'If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men' (1 Cor 15:19).

If we believe something that is not true, we are not just to be pitied. We are the most pitiable people of all humanity!

### Lottie Moon

Charlotte Moon was called Lottie by her friends. In 1873, Lottie went to China as a Southern Baptist missionary.

Lottie was soon accused of mental imbalance by one of the missionary wives. Lottie was guilty of 'lawless prancing all over the mission lot.'

The reason Lottie was rushing around (other than that she was full of life) was because she was in charge of church planting. This was an unusually important leadership task for a woman in the church in the 1870s.

The turn of the century brought many disasters to China, and Tchengow province. There were outbreaks of plague and smallpox. In 1911, there was a revolution. This was brought on by famine.

Starving children came to Lottie's door. She gave them all she had. She wrote letters to Christians in America, asking for food and money.

One day, the tireless, energetic Lottie became ill. Her friends were surprised. A doctor examined her. Lottie was dying of starvation! She had given all her food away.

Her shocked friends hired a nurse, and put the nurse and Lottie on a ship for America. On Christmas Eve, 1912, Lottie died

while the ship was anchored at Kobe, Japan.

Lottie's life of compassion and her death had a great influence on women in the church back home. A Christmas fund was set up the following year in Lottie's name. The money was for missions.

The fund still functions in Lottie's name, after all this time. Recently, the fund reached at least \$20 million annually.

### Christians function by fact

We have policies, practices, and prejudices regarding the role of women in the church.

However, the facts are that down through the centuries women have stood side-by-side with men in sacrificing, suffering, and even dying, to take the gospel to all the world.

Christians need to remember that they do not live by prejudices but by facts.

Paul tells us that the greatest facts are these:

1. Jesus lived a perfect life for us
2. Jesus died for our sins
3. Jesus was raised for our justification.

In these historical facts and details Jesus has reconciled the human race to God!

## 2. FAITH is the Foremost Formula's second factor

'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God' (Eph 2:8).

### In and Out

Grover is a monster.

He is, however, a lovable, furry monster.

Grover does not have many gray cells between his lovable, furry, purple ears. Grover is, therefore, given only the simplest teaching tasks on Sesame Street.

Grover teaches children the difference between 'Near and Far'. He presses his face right into the camera, squashing his bulbous



nose. 'Near!' he squeaks. Then off he runs to a distant spot. 'Far!' he shouts.

Back and forth Grover awkwardly runs. Puffing and panting, he finally collapses.

Grover also teaches 'Up and Down'. He starts at the bottom of a long staircase, and explains this is, 'Down'! Up the stairs he runs, and at the top, declares 'Up'! Up and down he goes until he can no longer drag himself up one more stair.

'In and Out' is Grover's masterpiece. He's a waiter carrying a huge tray dealing with a cantankerous customer. Grover keeps getting the order wrong. He goes in and out of the kitchen, through the swing doors, many times. He finally drops the tray with a tremendous crash.

### Subjective and Objective

Human beings are amazing creatures. God has made us so we live in an internal world and in an external world. We need to know clearly which is which.

The world inside us is the subjective world. The world outside us is the objective world.

Scientists tell us that when we see a rose in the outside world what we actually see is an image of that rose (upside down!) inside our brain.

When we touch and kiss the hand of our beloved, we are actually experiencing sensations sent along nerves through our skin and fingers and lips.

Some say, 'The internal world is everything!' Some go so far as to say, 'There is no outside world!'

The Bible clearly teaches there is an objective world, and an objective God.

Because it is so dominant, however, the inside world often rules us. We live by our feelings, impressions, and experiences, instead of by the objective laws and principles of the external world.

### Faith reaches out

'Faith' is that 'thing' (or tool, or instrument, or sensibility) that enables us to reach out of our subjective world. It is the bridge by which we cross to the objective world.

Faith grasps the historical facts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. 'Yes,' says Faith, 'Jesus actually lived, and died, and rose again. These are perfect, unalterable, unchangeable facts of history, Jesus did this righteous work to reconcile humanity to God.'

But Faith goes on. 'Jesus did it for me! In Christ, I am accepted by God.'

### Light blinks on

Sid Caesar said, 'The guy who invented the first wheel was an idiot. The guy who invented the other three, he was a genius.'

While Sid was making millions laugh in the early days of American TV, he was struggling with depression, drink, and drugs.

One night in Toronto, on stage, he didn't know the next words he was supposed to say. He'd done his act a thousand times, but didn't know what he was to do next, or even where he was! He collapsed and was carried to his dressing room.

That day began a long struggle back from darkness for Sid Caesar. First, he had to determine whether his life was worth fighting for. (His wife was the deciding factor. She inspired and helped him.)

Sid was in Paris on vacation. One afternoon, he went for a long walk. He thought about life, and whether it is worth fighting for. At dusk, he walked alone down a gentle hill.

Suddenly, before his startled eyes, the streetlights of the City of Lights blinked on at once, as far as the eye could see.

Sid was ecstatic. 'It was beautiful,' he said. 'I realised that life can be good, can be lovely, and is worth the struggle. As the lights

blinked on outside me, a light blinked on inside me.'

### Faith brings Light

That's how faith is. In the first chapter of his Gospel, John tells us that this world is dark. But the light of heaven blinked on when Jesus came from heaven (Jn 1:4-5, 8-9).

'Faith' is that 'thing' that reaches out from the darkness of our own inner world to Jesus, the light of the world. The light that blinked on out there, in the historical life, death, and resurrection of Christ, now blinks on in here, in you, in me. We make the gospel our own as we grasp it by faith.

### 3. FEELING is the Foremost Formula's third factor

'Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind' (Rom 12:2).

Paul writes that our lives (including feelings) are transformed when our thinking is transformed.

Our thinking is transformed when, by faith, we grasp the facts of the gospel.

I'm a slow learner, but I was unusually slow in learning, 'Feeling Follows Thought'. I was in my 40s!

Paul promises our feelings are influenced by our thinking.

### Enthusiasm

Some theologians accuse Dr Norman Vincent Peale of heresy. I know this: he's superb at describing practical Christian living.

Dr Peale is enthusiastic about 'enthusiasm'. He explains that the word is two Greek words: 'en' meaning 'in', and 'theos' meaning 'god'. So enthusiasm is 'God in you'.

Dr Peale tells of the most enthusiastic person he ever met: Barney, in Indiana. Dr Peale was invited to give a talk, and Barney was on the platform with him.



Barney was enthusiastic about the crowd and about Dr Peale's upcoming talk.

'Barney,' asked Dr Peale, 'how do you manage to stay so enthusiastic?'

'By using the "as-if" principle,' answered Barney. 'In combat, people are scared, but they act as if they are courageous. And they are courageous! I act as if I'm enthusiastic – and pretty soon I am!'

### Life transformed

'A few years ago,' continued Barney, 'I was a second-rate salesman, tired, travelling through small towns, and eating in cheap restaurants.'

'One day, in a town of 500, I had a fine meal. I ordered pie. Dr Peale, it was the finest pie I ever ate! Every week I made sure I was in that town, and every week the pie was the best I ever tasted.'

'One day it wasn't. I asked the manager about the pie.'

"The little old lady who made our pies retired," the manager explained. "I had to buy pie from the store."

'At that moment, Dr Peale, I knew it was my destiny to be a pie-man.'

'I visited the lady, but she told me she was finished baking pies. I took my wife to meet her, and they liked one another. So my wife learned how to make those pies, and I've had a bakery in this town ever since.'

'Dr Peale, what time will you go to bed after the meeting tonight?'

'About eleven,' answered Norman.

'I'll have a pie delivered to your room,' said Barney. 'You can taste for yourself.'

At 11.45 there was a knock at Dr Peale's hotel room. A bellboy had a pie in each hand.

Barney's note said, 'Here are a cherry pie and an apple pie. Have a slice of each before you go to bed.'

It was a little late for Dr Peale to eat, so he tried only a tiny slice of cherry pie. It was delicious! He

tried a tiny slice of apple pie. It was equally delicious! He ate some more.

The next morning Norman spoke to Barney on the phone. 'Those pies were terrific!' Norman said.

'Life's terrific!' answered Barney.

'How do you know life's terrific?' asked Dr Peale.

'Because,' said Barney, 'Jesus lived, died and rose again for me, and won me for God.'

'That means life has meaning and purpose. God has given me enthusiasm for people and God. Life's terrific!'

### Feelings will follow

Because of sin, the delicate link between thought and feeling is damaged in human beings. If you carefully follow the Foremost Formula, however, (including each element in the correct order) you will know feelings of acceptance and peace with God.

We often act as though we are saved by our feelings. We are not, but they are of vital importance to us. If by faith we grasp the facts of the gospel, we will taste the fruit of good and wholesome feelings.

### A Widow fights fear

Jacqueline de Rothschild Piatagorsky is the widow of Gregor Piatagorsky. Gregor, along with Rostropovitch and Pablo Casals, was one of the twentieth century's three greatest cellists.

Jacqueline recently played tennis in the singles final of a national tournament in Baton Rouge.

She didn't win the singles, but she did win the doubles. Jacqueline is 81.

For years, she was the second-ranked chess player in France.

'I gave it up for tennis,' she explains. 'Chess is too rigorous. Too many late nights in smoke-filled rooms.'

She published her life story in 1988. The first line is, 'Fear is the story of my life.'

Did being married to Gregor Piatagorsky help her conquer her fears?

'Once we were driving through a dangerous part of town. A man jumped in front of the car, and stood there daring Grisha to get out.'

'My husband lit a cigarette and began reading the paper. The man got bored and left.'

'A few nights later, we heard a noise outside the house. Grisha was too afraid to go look. I went. It was a kitten.'

'That was my husband. A brilliant musician. Unafraid of a dangerous man. Scared of a kitten.'

### All are inconsistent

Like Gregor, we are all inconsistent.

In some areas of our lives we are brilliant; in others, dull. In some areas of our lives we are brave; in others, cowards. We are both strong and weak.

We are consistent only in being inconsistent.

In our instability we need something sturdy and stable to cling to, something we can trust. The Foremost Formula is just that.

### A stable formula

The formula begins with the Facts of Christ's life, death and resurrection. These historical facts have reconciled the human race to God.

Next, Faith reaches our from our inner selves to the outer world of the gospel. By faith we make those saving facts our own.

Finally, Feelings follow. Sometimes correct feelings are delayed, but if we carefully follow the formula, they will come.

Because of your faith in the gospel you will have feelings of peace, forgiveness, joy, assurance, and acceptance with God.

That's successful Christian living! ♦



*We are measured by how high we look when we stand beside the Cross*

## CROSS THOUGHTS

# THE CARD CARRIER

*Elizabeth Price*

**I**t was a childhood full stopped, semi-coloned and comma,d by love affairs: an unlikely toddler who tamed a wild bush kitten, a child captivated by wrens and wagtails, a developing teenager enchanted by rainbow birds mounting their curious song on shimmering bronzed wings as they soared into blue sky.

Love was unforgettable, God was in heaven, the world was OK, and Saint Francis of Assisi was the role model.

Until – ah, the sadness of the until – the coming adult watched helplessly as the silver-grey cat killed and ate a wagtail. Why did the two most beautiful creatures in the world hate each other? The world went berserk, Saint Francis was a fool, and God washed his hands of the whole affair.

If God was love and God made them all, where did the slit eyes of the hunter and the terror of the hunted originate? The world of why's began and there were no answers, well none that made sense and that couldn't be torn to shreds in one.

However you philosophised and pushed the words around or turned the questions on their heads, the bitter fact was that lovely kittens killed and ate lovely birds and love was irreconcilable. Even when fed, amused, and nurtured by the fire, cats were cruel, selfish stalkers who made their own rules.

The world was two stages, one where children sang, the bush thrived and God was extolled: the other where cottages were bombed, creation groaned and God was on the winning team. It was a nightmare for the underdog and any card-carrying Australian could not resist the odds of taking on the winning team.

God was in a dilemma: Europe he could handle with its multitudinous rituals and traditions guaranteed to overwhelm card-carriers: the East he could marinate in its own mysticisms and rituals guaranteed to confuse card-carriers. But Australia was the ultimate wild-card, unsubdued by ritual or mysticism and thumbing its nose at philosophy.

It was a divorcee, tossed on its own resources by the West and unclear in the eyes of the East. It took on God, and all God asked from his position on the winning team, was that card-carrying Australians play by the rules. He put the rule book on the table and Australians turned up faithfully every week to learn them.

There were only two, because divorcees see through the crap and want it straight from the shoulder. God obliged: love deity with all you've got and love each with all you've got.

Any fool could see that nobody did and that is why the stalker has slit eyes and the hunted has terror.

When we learn to play by the rules the wolf and the lamb will curl up together and the cat and the child will be enchanted by the wagtail. As a card-carrier, I'm on the side of the wagtail. Or the cat. Or maybe the child.

Is anybody picking teams?

### References:

Leviticus 19:18

Deuteronomy 6:5

Matthew 22:37-39

Luke 10:27

Isaiah 48:18

Isaiah 11:6 ♦



# LETTERS

*Dear Editor*

*The newlook Good News Australia says, 'GNU is dedicated to proclaiming the everlasting Gospel, spelled out most clearly in the books of Romans and Galatians and epitomised in the cross-resurrection event.' How did GNU come to specifically select these two books?*

*While GNU finds these books the clearest, the apostle Peter said that many people in his time found Paul's writings positively unclear. Perhaps there are some heretical members of GNU who, like me (a non-member), find the everlasting Gospel spelled out most clearly in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as outlined in the Gospels.*

*Incidentally, I wonder whether jargon such as 'epitomised in the cross-resurrection event' may be a barrier to non-Christians (and many Christians) whom GNU may wish to reach with the Good News.*

*Best wishes*

*GK, Victoria*

## **Editor's response**

Oops! Our slip was showing. The new-look Good News Australia (Issue No 1, 1994) hadn't completed its new look. This issue we have replaced the statement with which you take issue. We agree that jargon often obscures meaning. Furthermore, we agree that the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as outlined in the Gospel also illuminate the good news of salvation.

At the same time, we do believe that Paul's writings provide a secure basis for the study of the gospel.

In this context, we hope that you and our other readers will identify with our newly formulated Mission Statement which graces this issue's cover. We also hope that this is accessible to our fellow Australians, both Christian and non.

We await with interest our reader's reactions to the Mission Statement.

— Editor



# ODDS AND ENDS

## Fellowship Meetings

For times and places of fellowship meetings in your state, phone:  
WA - City (09) 458 5469

NSW - Sydney (02) 899 1183  
(02) 481 9907  
NSW - Central Coast (043) 84 6555  
NSW - North Coast (066) 72 1630  
QLD - City (075) 91 1830  
QLD - Gold Coast (075) 35 0694  
NEW ZEALAND (85) 238 5756

## GNU Addresses

**Australian office:**  
GNU, PO Box 10, Tugun,  
Gold Coast, Qld 4224

**Canadian office:**  
PO Box 3068 Station D Willowdale,  
Ontario M2R 3G5 Canada

**New Zealand office:**  
PO Box 329, Pukekohe, Auckland NZ

**South Africa office:**  
PO Box 11096 Universitas 9321  
Republic of South Africa

**USA office:**  
11710 Education St  
Auburn, California 95603-2499 USA

**Desmond Ford Publications:**  
7955 Bullard Drive  
Newcastle, California 95658, USA

## Become a member of GNU

GNU's members pay a once only membership fee of \$20 to become voting members of a limited guarantee company. This legal entity enables GNU to spread the Gospel via this magazine, gospel congresses, radio, tape and video ministries.

We invite anyone who would like to become actively involved in this ministry to contact us for a membership application form.

## GNU Investments

GNU has an experienced Christian investment representative who can advise in areas of Estate Planning, with particular regard to interest free investments to benefit GNU, also bequests. Contact GNU.

## GNCM Phone Directory

Australian office (Pr Ron Allen, Director) .....phone/fax (075) 91 1830  
GNU Ltd USA .....0011 1 916 823 9690  
New Zealand .....0011 64 9 238 5756  
GNA Editor (Rob Cooper) .....phone/fax (02) 899 1183  
GNA Printer (Spartan Press WA) .....fax (09) 361 0867 .....phone (09) 458 5469  
GNU Investments .....fax (074) 82 7707 .....phone (074) 82 7055  
Treasurer (Dennis Tedman) .....mobile phone (018) 76 8877  
Book & Tape orders .....fax (066) 74 3232 .....phone (066) 74 2271

## GNU Board:

Bruce Johanson (Chairman) .....(053) 81 1330  
John Benner .....(075) 35 0694  
Ron Dunning .....(08) 356 3086  
Roger Jones .....(064) 93 0353  
David Martin .....fax (02) 875 2744 .....phone (02) 980 6920  
Brian Patterson .....(02) 481 9907  
Bill Sinclair .....(09) 458 5469  
Hanjo Smith .....(074) 82 4516  
Bruce Tulloch .....(075) 35 5329

## THE GOSPEL AND THE FUTURE

The 1994 Seminar series titled 'The Gospel and the Future' is now available.

Three audio tape set for \$15.  
Includes PP&H within Australia and New Zealand.

## Pen Friends

Isaac Donkor	Moses Koomson
Methodist JS S	Edusco JS School
PO Box 26	PO Box 17
Nkenkaasu Ash Reg	Namkessim C1 Region
Ghana, West Africa	Ghana, West Africa

Isaac is looking for a pen friend. He is a student. Moses is a 15 year old African lad and would like a pen pal in Australia.

## Start your own Fellowship

Wanting to set up a Gospel fellowship in your area. GNU is happy to assist with advice and resource materials.

Phone Pastor Allen on 075 911830.

## Send Good News to a Friend

For \$20 you can have *Good News Australia* sent to a friend for one year.

## The End of Historicism

Kai Arasola's book *The End of Historicism* is now back in stock. Write now for your copy of this popular publication.

220 pp. \$24.50 includes PP&H within Australia and New Zealand.

## Tape of the Month

The Tape of the Month has proved a useful devotional resource for many Good News supporters. Speakers include Ron Allen, Smuts van Rooyen and Des Ford.

Subscriptions are \$75 per annum. Also, all donations automatically qualify as a TOM subscriber, eg a donation of \$20 will attract three months supply of Tape of the Month.

## BALLINA FAMILY CAMP

Please keep Friday 28 to Sunday 30 October 1994 clear for this year's Ballina Family Camp. All welcome. Details published later in *GNA*

Contact Pastor Ron Allen or this office.

## Back Issues of Magazine

Back issues of *Good News Australia* are available free of charge on request.

## Send all correspondence to:

The Secretary  
Good News Unlimited  
PO Box 10,  
Tugun, Gold Coast Qld 4224

## Send Good News to a Friend

To sponsor a friend to receive the *Good News Australia* magazine, please fill in and mail to GNU, PO Box 10, Tugun Qld 4224.

Suggested donation of \$20.00 per name.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....State.....Postcode .....



# GOOD NEWS

---

A U S T R A L I A

Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. WBG 0048

*May be opened for Postal inspection*

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

Postage  
Paid  
Australia

## **THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE...**

To ensure regular copies of "GOOD NEWS AUSTRALIA"  
please advise of any change of address.

Return **OLD LABEL** and your **NEW ADDRESS** details to :-

**GOOD NEWS CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES**

**P.O. BOX 10**

**TUGUN QLD. 4224**