

2000 Issue No. 1

# Good News Australia

CHRIST  
HEAD OF  
THE BODY

Hijacked



The Gift Not The If

Published by Good News Unlimited



Good News Australia is published by Good News Unlimited Ltd., PO Box 6788 Sth. Tweed Heads. (Unit 2/54-60 Industry Dr., Sth Tweed Heads NSW 2486).

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Printer: Spartan Press. Queens Park WA.

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## Editorial

**J**esus was interested in total human well-being. He spoke a great deal of spiritual realities but he never neglected mundane needs. He railed against those who deprived widows of their basic necessities. He healed sick folk. The thought of a poor man starving at a rich man's gate was intolerable to him.

The Gospels reveal a Christ who wants us to have the things that we naturally want for ourselves—food, clothing, shelter and economic security.

When Jesus told us not to worry about what to eat and what to drink, he did not thereby make those things unimportant. He went on to say that the heavenly Father knows that we need them.

Christ's point was that physical well-being, a thriving economy and national security, are things which cannot be had without the fulfillments of a prior condition: 'But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you' (Matthew 6:33).

Christ was not voicing some visionary ideal. He was stating a universal law, as real and as unyielding as any physical law. Material necessities and delights can only be enduringly had, if they are not made an end in themselves. The chief end of humanity is to know God and to echo his righteousness.

Paradoxically, we can only keep the things we want if we do not want them supremely. It is so in marriage. Who does not want the joys and ecstasies of marital intimacy? But they cannot be retained without righteousness—fidelity and justice. Only as these are made primary, do the others last.

In Australia we are so fortunate. We love it here because we have large freedoms. There is room to move and improve opportunity. 'Australians all let us rejoice, for we are young and free.' Yet, according to Christ, we dare not put Australia first. Our freedom;

our economic happiness must be taken care of after we have looked to Righteousness.

The foundations for a good and safe society are to be found in God. What would it mean for Australia if all Australians put God and his righteousness before all else?

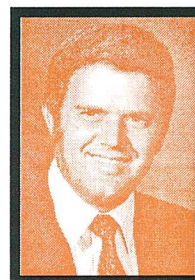
It would mean that the things we think of as necessities would be shared more equitably. We would not allow our governments to preside over an economic pie that is increasingly being eaten by people who are already too well fed, while the numbers of those who never quite get enough, multiply.

We would be far less content with the numbers of homeless among us. We would make greater efforts to house them. Long cherished prejudices, that make life hard for some social groups would begin to weaken.

And if Righteousness were our first duty, perhaps we would not have a society that is content to permit widespread termination of the unborn, for no higher reason than that of convenience. Life would certainly be very different if Christ's advice was obeyed.

Putting God first is a very personal thing. If Australia ever does, it will be because many individual Australians have done it. We are challenged by Christ to put God to the test.

If His words are true, one thing is certain: By placing personal freedom, our own material gain, our racial likes and dislikes, or any other valued thing, before the values of Christ, we will be creating for our children, a poorer and worse world than the one which we ourselves found. We will be building an environment in which misery will abound and happiness will be harder to find.



*R Allen*

**R J ALLEN**



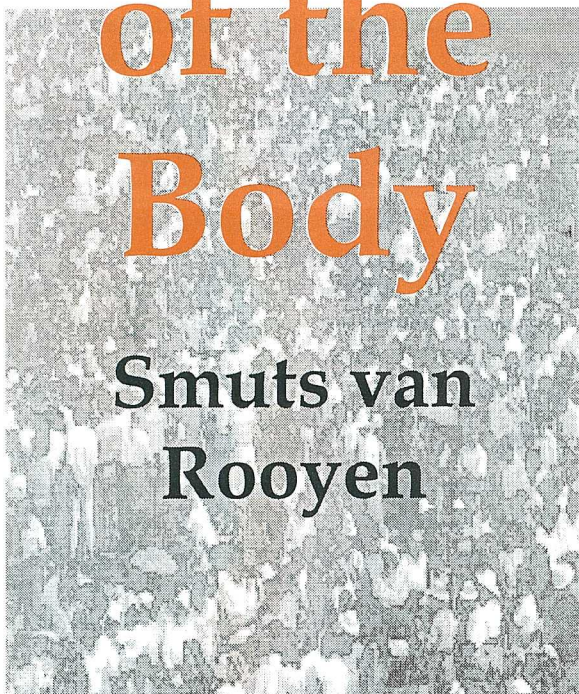
## BEING THE CHURCH



# Christ - Head

# of the Body

Smuts van  
Rooyen



**I**n Ephesians 1, Paul begins a long sentence in which he lists all the riches of Christ. He seems to have just gotten going when he breaks off into prayer; 'For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.'

I keep asking that God, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, will give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better.

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you; the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

That power is like the working of his mighty strength which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule, authority, power and dominion and every title that can be given, not only in this present life but in the one to come.

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body; the fullness of him who fills everything in every way' (Ephesians 1:15-23).

Paul knows that his congregation have accepted Christ, but he feels they are like the man who was blind and whose eyes were touched by Jesus. Jesus asked the man: 'How are you doing?' The man replied, 'I see men as trees walking.' And Jesus touched him again and he could see properly.

The Ephesians are like Christians who see men as trees walking. They are not blind any more. They have been touched by Jesus. They see, but they do not see it all. They are like Lazarus who came forth from the grave, who was still in his pre-resurrection bandages. The Ephesians are still hampered by their pre-resurrection prejudices. Paul looks at the Church and prays that the member's hearts and minds will be opened to know Christ better. He is trying to give them that 'second touch'.

What is it that the Ephesians are not seeing? Paul mentions the 'hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance



in the saints' (v18). Whose hope? God's hope! God has a hope for his church. God hopes to inherit something in his church. He has called us to be his inheritance. Paul speaks here of the riches of His inheritance in the saints. God wants to do something through the church and receive something from the church. God can inherit something. God can benefit from the church.

**What is it that the church can do for God? 'God's intention is that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known all around the world' (Ephesians 2:11)**

There is something we can say about God that has not been said. We can help reveal God's wisdom. Paul prays that the church will know God's power; that Christ will exercise his resurrection power for the church. He wants the church to know that Christ is far above all authority and dominion, or any title that can be given. He is head over everything in order to help the church. The church can reveal the wisdom. It has been given the task of helping to vindicate the character of God and show his glory. It is a huge picture; a huge goal that Paul gives to the church.

**God's goal for the universe is that everything is to be brought into subjection to Christ. Jesus, who is head over the church; head over everything. 'And God placed all things under Christ's feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body' (v23).**

The church is the body of Christ. Paul uses this idea of the body to show that the church is not the head. Christ is the head. The churches to which Paul was writing, saw themselves not as the body, but as the head. For Paul, that was a problem. While the church sees itself as being its own head, there is no peace; there is no unity.

Only as the church is under the headship of Christ, can peace and unity occur. Paul is arguing that the church is the body and Christ is the head of the church.

That means that the church is not *autonomous*. The church is not its own law. Jesus is the law for the church. The church is obedient to Jesus. The church is not *auto-cephalic*. That is, it is not its own head. It is not its own boss. The

church is not *auto-pedagogic*, which means, it is not its own teacher. Jesus is the teacher of the church. The church is not *auto-charismatic*. It does not give itself the gifts of the Spirit. Jesus gives the gifts of the Spirit.

Paul was praying that the church would see Christ and let him be head of every decision made, every programme run, every doctrine espoused; every work done. Christ the head, means that the church cannot just make its own agenda. Jesus sets the agenda for the church.

Hans Kung, the Catholic theologian, has described his own church in unflattering terms. He has challenged his church saying, 'Have you usurped the place of Christ? Are you responsible only to yourself? Do you treat your own directives as if they were the directives of Jesus Christ? Have you ceased to listen?'

**The church that has taken the place of Jesus no longer needs to listen to anyone else. It listens to its own teachings and feels it is listening to the word of Christ. Only God is infallible. That means that all of us in the church are in some way fallible.**

We might have wrong ideas. We might have a wrong interpretation. We may make mistakes. We therefore need to be open to a wider voice. We must be willing for Christ to be our head and remain open to him.

I need to be a willing slave of Jesus Christ. I must recognise I am but a creature and that there is only one God. That is why I cannot be God. I need to be willing to let Christ be my head, and it is only as each of us is willing – and as a church we are willing – that we can have any peace, unity and growth.

In our lifetime, we have seen the work of God in bringing human systems into subjection to himself. We have seen the collapse of what has, perhaps been the greatest challenge the church has ever faced. I speak of Marxism.

Karl Marx had accepted the theological thinking of Feuerbach (German philosopher 1801-1872). Feuerbach said that God does not exist. Human beings create God from their imagination because they are afraid of death. Because there is death, there is God. God is a psychological projection that human beings have made in order to deal with their own mortality.

It is an argument that seems intimidating at first. But it isn't really. Human psychological



states do not themselves create facts. Motive does not prove fact. Yes, people are afraid of death but that has nothing to do with whether or not God exists.

**Marx said more. He said that the upper classes want God to be there. He said religion is nothing more than a class struggle. The rich classes subject the proletariat by means of religion. They teach them that it is a virtue to be poor. They teach the poor to think: 'I am better than the rich man because I am poor.' He said that the rich have taught the poor to think that this life does not matter; that only the future life matters.**

So he thought of starting a society without a God; without a ruling class. A society based on equality and science and everybody sharing together. And so for the first time in human history, a government came into existence, based on atheistic principles. There is no history of any other nation being based on the foundation of atheism. Marxism set out to build a nation without God, without Christ. The churches were closed. Bibles were confiscated. Ministers were put in prison. Christians were terrorised.

**Within a short time Marxism created one of the most powerful military machines in the world. They began to intimidate the rest of the world with their armed forces. I can remember thinking, 'How will Christianity ever overthrow Communism?'**

Even though this Godless, Christless state became formidable. It wasn't long before the dream began to turn into a nightmare. It was a state where ten people lived in two room apartments. People lost initiative. They lost their love of life. Grey dreary buildings grew all over Moscow.

**Art became a propaganda instrument—not self expression but the expression of the will of the state. Russian people turned to alcohol. People spent much of their lives waiting in line.**

Fifty miles from Moscow, villages existed without water, power, sewerage or telephones. There were many localities that had no roads leading in or out. Farmers would grow their

crops, but there was no adequate way of moving the produce.

Dissidents were put in mental hospitals. Thinking people were sent to Siberia. Stalin, the great communist, executed twenty million of his own people. The great Godless dream turned into a nightmare. Like Humpty Dumpty sitting on the wall, it finally fell with just a small push.

Jesus has begun to bring the Russian people under his Lordship. Jesus has won. God has won. In our history we have seen God working—working for the church. We can participate in the triumph of Jesus if we remain under his headship.

Thomas Bridges got his name because he was left to die under a bridge by his mother, on a cold London night. It was St. Thomas' Bridge that he was left under, so he was named Thomas Bridges.

**As a young man, Thomas found Jesus Christ and decided that the purposes of Jesus would be the purpose of his life. He went as a missionary to Tierra del Fuego in South America.**

When Charles Darwin came there in his ship 'The Beagle', he was so impressed with what Bridges was doing there with the Aborigines, that he sent him a donation and a letter, saying: 'I feel such compassion for you living down there on that desolate coast.' Bridges wrote back:

*'Please do not pity me. Pity those who have no purpose. I have found my purpose. I have found my Saviour and I work to bring everything under subjection to Christ.'* \*





# HIJACKED

Lyndon Schultz



**T**here are times when people hijack my life, and I wonder: 'Where could God be leading me through all of this?' During such times my faith is strengthened by two Bible stories where I can clearly see God working – not through some miraculous event, but through the everyday circumstances of life.

An example of this is in the book of Esther. Let's introduce the characters. There is the vain, pompous, cruel and vicious Haman. There is stubborn Mordecai, who refused to bow down to Haman. Then there is the king, who lived for pleasure; who cared little for good government and left everything in the hands of his trusted official – in this case, Haman.

Haman wanted to kill Mordecai. The plan to wipe out Mordecai would have succeeded if only Haman could have controlled his impatience. Before the appointed days of destruction, Haman had made gallows for Mordecai, all he needed was King Ahasuerus' permission to hang Mordecai, today, right now!

**But that night the king could not sleep. At that point the fortunes of Haman and Mordecai were reversed. And the reversal turned on the seeming triviality of the King's sleeplessness.**

The king asked for his diaries to be read to him. It was found, recorded there, that Mordecai had exposed Bigthan and Teresh, two of the officers who guarded the door, who had been involved in an assassination attempt on the king.

The king then asked, 'What honour has Mordecai received for this?' 'Nothing has been done for him,' the attendants answered. Then the king said, 'Who is in the court?' Now Haman had just entered the outer court to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows he had erected for him. 'Haman is standing in the court' said the attendants. 'Bring him in,' said the king.

**When Haman entered, the king asked him, 'What should be done for the man the king delights to honour?' Now Haman thought to himself, 'Who is there that the king would want to honour other than myself?'**

So he answered, 'For the man the king delights to honour, have them bring a royal robe the king has worn, and a horse the king has ridden; one with a royal crest placed on its head. Then let the robe and horse be entrusted to one of the King's most noble princes. Let them robe the man the king delights to honour and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, "this is what is done for the man the king delights to honour."' (See Esther 6:10).

'Go at once' the king commanded Haman. 'Get the robe and the horse and do just as you have suggested for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the King's gate.'

Everyone acted in character. Events took their normal course. It was Haman's vanity that finally tipped things over the edge. While Haman was leading Mordecai around on the



King's horse, perhaps the king was thinking: 'What a strange reward. Any other adviser would have suggested gold, diamonds, land, clothes, a holiday or a thirty-day banquet; not a parade in the King's robe on the King's horse.' It was becoming clear, maybe Haman wanted to be king . . . *better watch out for Haman.*

**Who but God could have caused so many streams of action to come together?**

Centuries before, Joseph had learned that God can lead, even through the jealousy, hatred and revenge of close family members. That is why he could say to his brothers: 'And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.'

For two years now there has been a famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be ploughing or reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then it was not you who sent me here but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt' (Genesis 45:5-8).

Joseph waited on God's time, before he was reunited with his father. He stayed in Egypt through those seven years of plenty without going home to Canaan for a visit. Though he desperately wanted to see his dear old dad, he

waited till circumstances—the famine—brought his brothers and then his father to him in Egypt.

Years before, Joseph's brothers thought that they had made the fulfillment of his dreams impossible by selling him into slavery. Rather, they had set him one step closer to the fulfillment of those dreams and God's purposes for all their lives.

At the pit, Reuben had his ideas, Judah had his plans, Simeon his schemes. But God took the whole complicated situation of the different plans of men, together with their envy; jealousy, cruelty and callousness, making them all serve his own benevolent purpose.

No outcome of God's providence happens by chance or coincidence. The many circumstances of life which go to make up an event may all occur naturally. But their conjunction is of Divine ordering. And this is how God leads in our life.

*Lyndon Schultz grew up and lived in Cooranbong NSW till ten years ago, when he moved to Brisbane QLD. He currently works in the factory side of the cosmetic industry. He has experienced the dramatic increase in pressure on people in the workforce over the last ten years. He has found strength to face these pressures from reading the Bible through the eyes of authors such as Carlyle B. Haynes, Alfred Edersheim and Martin Luther.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**Special all-day Sydney Seminar for SDA Readers  
Redefining Adventist Eschatology  
For A New Millennium**

**Thornleigh Community Centre, Cnr., Phyllis and  
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**MARCH 18, 2000 9.30AM - 4.30PM**

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**Christ, the Central Theme of Prophecy  
Uriah Smith in Light of Modern Apocalyptic.  
Do the Papacy and the U S A figure in Bible Prophecy?**

**DR ARTHUR PATRICK:**

**Historical Perspective of Eschatology.**



# JUSTIFIED ABSURDITY

Elizabeth Price

**G**od communicates with us in poetry, prose, parable, and in strange ways we hardly dare trust. I mean, can you imagine God talking through a donkey – and a stubborn one at that?

'The Lord then made the donkey speak and she said to Balaam, "What have I done? This is the third

time you have beaten me."

And guess what?

Balaam answered back! And the donkey spoke again and Balaam answered

again. A man conversed with a donkey! What an absurdity! (Numbers 22:28). There was no other way God could get Balaam to listen, so God became absurd in order to save people.

God spoke also in strange dreams, like sheaves of wheat bowing down to Joseph's sheaf, or the sun, moon and stars bowing to him. It all sounds so un-Godlike to us. Our rationalistic Western minds are uncomfortable with it. But it is not uncomfortable for the spiritually minded.

In the New Testament Jesus adds another dimension. He said that if necessary, stones could become children (Matthew 3:9). And again, 'If my disciples are silent the stones will shout out loud' (Luke 19:40). So now we have stones that could be children and stones that could talk aloud if God decided.

In Revelation we have the ultimate in animal talk. An eagle calls out. A Lamb receives a

document. Locusts wear golden crowns and the ultimate piece is a red dragon chasing a pregnant woman across the sky.

I mention these things to explain that God will use whatever means necessary to bring people to himself. If he must enact stories to do it, he will enact stories. If the world thinks it absurd, let the world think so. Stories of the so-called 'impossible' are an integral way of getting a point across all through Scripture. They grip the imagination when nothing else will.

Witness approving audiences at movies like *Jurassic Park*, *E.T.*, *The Lion King* and so on. And how many generations of children have learned ethics from *Aesop's Fables*.

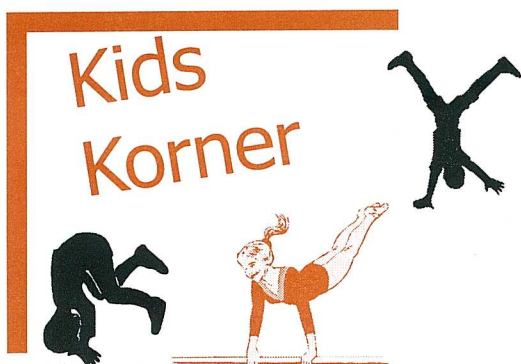
Stories will reach where stark truth will often be shut out through prejudice and fear. The unseen world has often been opened, as in the second book of Kings, through the work of Elijah and Elisha. Elisha prayed, 'Lord open his eyes and let him see.' And the young man's eyes were opened to see the hills round about covered with horses and chariots.

God has no fear of taking us into the unseen world. We do not know how many have come to Christ through that imagination masterpiece, *Pilgrim's Progress*.

To Jesus, people are more precious than political correctness; more precious than any preconceived notion of what is proper for God to do. Whatever God chooses – no matter how absurd – as his means of communication, he justifies it. ♦







## Kids Korner

### Sarah, The Girl Who Helped The Commander-In-Chief

**S**arah was an Israelite slave girl who worked for Naaman's wife. Naaman was a commander-in-chief to the King of Syria. Naaman had a sickness called leprosy.

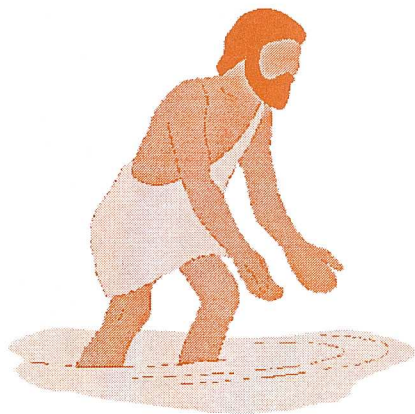
One day, Sarah told her mistress that she knew how Naaman could be cured. 'Elisha, God's prophet, can cure my master of leprosy,' she said.

Naaman's wife went at once to tell her husband the good news. Naaman made up his mind to go to Elisha. First he had to ask his king if he would allow him to go. The King of Syria said that he certainly could go, and he wrote a letter to the King of Israel asking him to help Naaman.

The King of Israel read the letter and was angry: 'This letter tells me to cure Naaman of leprosy. 'It's crazy! I can't do it!

Elisha heard about the King's anger and sent a message, telling him to send Naaman to him. So Naaman left the palace and went to Elisha's home. He waited for Elisha to come out, but instead, out came his servant.

'Go and wash in the River Jordan seven times,' he told Naaman.



Naaman was angry. 'Wash in the Jordan?' he fumed. 'If I wanted to wash in rivers I needn't have left home. We have rivers in my country that would make the river Jordan look like a puddle!'

The servants looked upset, then one of them said: 'Look, sir, it's only a simple thing to step into the Jordan. Why don't you try it? If Elisha had told you to do something hard to make you better, you would have done it.'

Naaman stopped raving. 'Alright . . . I'll do it,' he said.

So he went and bathed in the Jordan seven times and came up . . . cured.

Naaman was delighted. 'Look at me, I'm cured!' he shouted laughing and shaking the water off himself.

They went back to Elisha's house and the prophet smiled when he saw Naaman.

'Now I know that your God is the true God,' Naaman told him \* \* \*



### Rain

I know the rain does good to flowers;

But I would like to know,  
If I pour water on my chick,  
Will it make it grow?

-Author unknown.

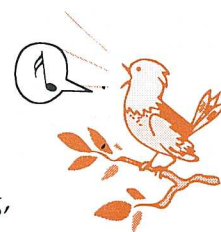
### Thanks

We found a little bird  
That had fallen from its nest,  
We took it home so carefully  
And there we let it rest.  
We fed it, and nursed it,  
And soon it grew quite strong,  
And every day it thanked us  
With a merry little song.

-Winifred Alexander.

### The Robin

When father takes  
his spade to dig,  
The robin comes along;  
He sits upon a little twig,  
And sings a happy song.  
Or, if the trees are rather far,  
He does not stay alone,  
But comes up close to where we are  
And bobs up on a stone.



-Lawrence Tadema

Do you think that you could make up some poetry too?



# GOOD INFLUENCE



## Mike Nelson

'The good influence of a godly citizen causes a city to prosper' (Proverbs 11:11).

**T**hose of us who watch professional sports are continually exposed to advertisements demonstrating ways that athletes are involved in helping their communities. In Atlanta, Steve Smith and Dikembe Mutombo of the Atlanta Hawks, have become legendary for their generosity with their time and wealth.

President Clinton gathered some of the nation's most influential citizens to focus our attention on the need for all of us to volunteer our time and presence to helping others. Every company and business is wise to look for ways to enable its city or cities to prosper. Whenever people believe their company is doing good for the community, they develop a greater sense of pride in themselves and the company.

However, as individuals we have the greatest power. Each one of us needs to find ways to use our influence in helping others. Churches, schools and all kinds of community programs are dependant on volunteers. But it is important to

recognise that each of us has a need to give ourselves in ways that do not directly benefit us.

Sometimes we wonder if our influence really makes a difference. Mother Theresa once said, 'One act of love seems like taking a glass of water from the ocean, but we believe the world is enhanced by every seemingly insignificant act.' Mother Theresa's own influence has impacted the world perhaps more than any other religious leader of the century. But she did not set out to influence the world on a global basis. She simply set out to be 'Jesus to the dying lepers of Calcutta.' Once we begin to exert influence, one person at a time, only God knows how far that influence will spread.

At the same time, we need to focus our influence on the places where we work. My last company was small, with less than two hundred employees. My present company is worldwide with over 1500 employees. It is easy to feel unimportant to the overall success of the company, but I am challenged today to make certain my influence causes it to prosper.

What are some of the ways we can be a good influence on the companies for which we work? First, we need to pray for our company, its executives, customers and our co-workers. St. Paul exhorted us to pray for those in authority. I'm not sure whether I have ever prayed for my company's CEO and other senior vice presidents. I do pray regularly for the members of my team and my regional associates. Each day when I interact with our customers I try to remember that to them, I am my company. If I am honest, diligent and courteous, they will see my company in those ways.

The greatest influence we can have on our company is by our example. Most people do not have the authority to preach to people about their performance. But we all have the power to influence others by the pace we set and the manner in which we function. Perhaps you have heard the rhyme, 'What kind of a church would this one be, if every member were just like me?' It is a great question to ask about our company and about our city, as well as our church.

Jesus exhorted us to be salt and light. Salt and light are most effective when they are blended into their environment without calling undue attention to themselves. When food is too salty, we cannot eat it. When the light is too bright, we cannot see. Spiritual influence is most powerful when it is subtle.



# THE GIFT NOT THE IF

Douglas Cooper

*'... you may know that you have eternal life ...' (1 John 5:13).*

**W**hen I returned from a long business trip recently, I brought back with me a gift for my young son. When I took it from behind my back and gave it to him, Danny's eyes glowed in excitement and a big grin creased his freckled face.

After he had given me a hug of thanks he was off to enjoy the gift. It has a permanent place now in the back pocket of his blue jeans.

I noticed that when I offered our son this gift, he did not hesitate to accept it. He did not look up at me and say, 'Dad, do I really deserve this? Does my behaviour of the last few weeks justify this gift?' He did not say, 'What do I owe you for this?' Sensing my love for him, he reached out his hand and took it with joy and gratitude and began to use and enjoy it.

Every other religion in the history of the world has taught that entrance into the kingdom of God was a reward. The Saviour said it was a gift!

The Master's radical, reassuring message of acceptance and assurance comes ringing down through the ages still. 'Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom' (Luke 12:32). By this wonderful statement, Jesus certainly meant the kingdom is available right now.

A gift is a gift. It cannot be paid for at any price because it is a gift. You do not earn it. You do not receive it as a reward for diligent service, or for obedience, or for being good enough. A gift is given to you simply because you are — and because you are loved.

People talk of the 'gift of life.' They mean the gift of waking up to a new day. The gift of being alive and conscious. Even a pagan; even an atheist is grateful for this gift. Why are we shocked and horrified by a suicide? Because someone did not value the precious gift of their own life.

When you got up this morning, did you feel you had to do something, be something, or believe in something in order to qualify for the day of life that was given to you? Of course not! You cherish and appreciate your life this day. And on some deep level, you know it is a precious gift. It is not a reward for your good behaviour. You did

nothing to qualify for it or deserve it. Yet it was freely given to you this morning.

To receive a gift you have to do nothing! Martin Luther once said, 'If ever a monk could get to heaven by his monkery, it was I.'

Sadly, there are still many who cannot accept the good news that the master came to bring. They are still trying to earn the kingdom of God by their monkery — by their struggles to obey and to per-



form. They think that a person has to earn their reward, and must earn the Kingdom of God by a lifetime of effort.

There are some who are convinced that God cannot welcome them into his presence until they have cleaned up their lives. They say, 'Let me get rid of my drinking problem, my sex problem or my anger problem first. Then, when I get my problem fixed, then, maybe I'll be ready for salvation and the kingdom of God.' No! The Master said he came to save sinners. The Bible says, 'Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, and that is God's own proof of his love towards us' (Romans 5:8).

*Douglas Cooper lives with his wife Pam, and two children, in Angwin California. Doug is a successful author, businessman and preacher. He has a Ph.D. in psychology.*



# HOW TO SURVIVE THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY

**W**e live in a world where we hurry and worry and bury. The American psychologist, William James warned us: 'Beware those absurd feelings of hurry and having no time — of breathlessness and tension, anxiety of feature, solicitude of results; that lack of inner harmony and ease.'

We need to face the fact that today's world puts strain on the nerves, emotions and the mind in general — not on the muscles. It is difficult to live a balanced life in the twenty first century. Plato said that all sickness is a result of lack of proportion between the use of body and mind. Thomas Jefferson warned the students of his day: 'Unless the muscles are exercised at least one hour a day, you'll not be truly efficient.'

If we were able to move backwards in time to the 1890's, the first thing we would notice would be the quietness of life. But our world is a noisy bedlam that brings emotional and physical jadedness.

One of the most common problems the modern generation faces is fatigue. Constant weariness makes enthusiasm for work difficult or impossible. How can one be a witness and a worker for Christ if he or she is always tired?

To a great degree, prolonged fatigue is a modern phenomenon. For thousands of years people became weary through heavy physical labour. But that is rare today. Tiredness from heavy physical exertion is easily healed by a good night's sleep. But most modern weariness is not so easily remedied. Nine-tenths of modern fatigue is mental and emotional in origin, and to understand that fact is to be half way towards the cure.

The Bible doesn't address the subject of

fatigue in any direct way, but its writers do make some astute observations. Consider Ecclesiastes 10:15: 'The toil of the foolish wearies him, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.' That is equivalent to, 'he doesn't know enough to come in an out of the rain.' The text means that the labour of the foolish person is wearying. When a person is confused and doesn't know the right way to act, that person will suffer from unnecessary fatigue.

In contrast, read John 4, where we read of Jesus being wearied with his journey, sitting by the side of a well. This fatigue was not emotional but physical. Jesus had walked twenty miles that morning. The reason John makes that reference is to assure us that Jesus had a nature like ours — a truly physical nature. He was a real man. Even Adam would have been wearied by toil in the garden of Eden.

Consider the most important reference in the Bible on weariness. Here are the most beautiful words in the world. 'Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:28-30).

Our Lord sees so clearly that our weariness is chiefly weariness of the soul. He says we can find rest for our souls — our hearts. Our minds can be filled with peace and the result will be that our body will be filled with the energy, vitality and effervescence that grows out of joy.

If we are worried that our Christian witness is impaired by our constant fatigue, we should look into the matter and ask ourselves, 'Is my fatigue that rare physical type, or is it emotional or pathological?' Sometimes a medical checkup reveals that an organic disease is



responsible for weariness. A heart defect, diabetes, and thyroid problems can produce the same results. But this type of fatigue, like physiological fatigue, is the exception, and not the rule.

The chances are more than ninety out of a hundred, that if we are continually tired, there is some emotional conflict, some great anxiety, or perhaps some extreme boredom.

Our chief weariness is weariness of the soul, anxiety about our failures, our sins, our loved ones, our troubles. When we realise that Jesus took our place for us; that by accepting

the gift of salvation by simple faith, we stand before God as sinless as Christ himself, then it is our privilege to experience great peace of mind.

When we remember that we can never be lost as long as we look to Jesus our Lord, then we shall find peace, joy, and abounding energy.

If Christ can be trusted with our greatest problems — guilt and impending death — he can be trusted with all the rest.

**Taken from Desmond Ford's book, 'Worth More than a Million' pp 593-605.**

## WILL YOU WILL?

Every year, thousands of people die in Australia without leaving a will. Many of these are Christians. In a majority of cases, they were good Christian stewards in life, but they made no provision for continuing their stewardship after death. They left their lifetime savings to be distributed by the court. While alive they would never have sanctioned the court's decisions on distribution.

None of us will die all the sooner for making legal provision for the final allocation of our goods. These are goods that God has loaned us. Legal provision should not be delayed for even a day, especially now, when the making of a will can be both simple and inexpensive.

If you have not already done so, will you pray and act on this matter of a will? Will you remember the work of the gospel, that others may come to share the eternal life in which you now rejoice? It is within your power to make provision so that some find the treasure to which our lord referred (Matthew 13:44). That gospel treasure illuminates the shadows of death, points to the everlasting gates of pearl, and reveals a welcoming Saviour.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13). — Desmond Ford.



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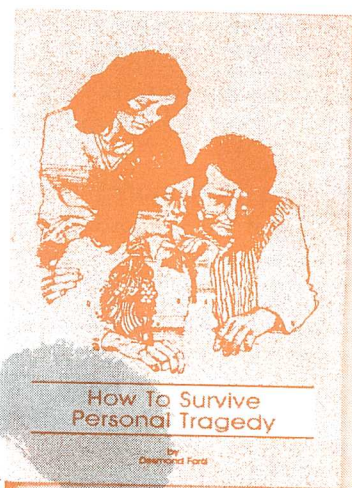
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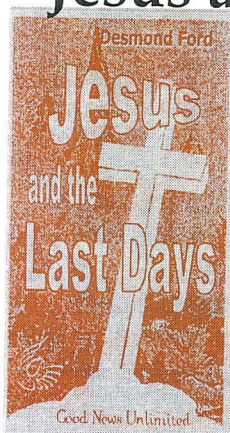
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Taken from *Jesus and the Last Days* - Desmond Ford

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**Melbourne.** Friday February 25 at 7.30 pm and Saturday February 26 from 10.00am - 4.00pm. The meetings will be held at the King Village Resort, 137 Mountain Highway, Wantirna.

**Rockhampton.** Tuesday February 29 at 1.00pm and 7.30pm. The meetings will be held at the Central Queensland University building, 18/G40 Health Science Lecture Theatre.

**Brisbane.** Friday March 3 at 7.30pm and Saturday March 4 from 10.00am - 4.00pm. The venue will be the Mercure Hotel, 85-87 North Quay, Brisbane City.

**Perth.** Saturday March 11 from 10.00am. Gurney V. C. (R.S.L.) Community Centre, Fred Bell Drive, Victoria Park, will be the venue for these morning and afternoon meetings.

**Adelaide.** Sunday March 12, from 11.30am at the Holdfast Bay Community Centre, 51 King George Avenue, Hove.

**Cooranbong.** Wednesday March 15 at 7.30pm and Thursday March 16 at 7.30pm. These meetings will be held in the Toronto Neighbourhood Centre, 9 Thorn Street, Toronto.

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