



THE Good News Unlimited Bulletin

Solo Christo • Sola Fide • Sola Gratia • Sola Scriptura

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The First Christmas Gift

*When our unrighteousness had come to its full term,
and it had become perfectly plain that its recompense
of punishment and death had to be expected, then the season arrived
in which God had determined to show at last His goodness and power.*

*O the overflowing kindness and love of God toward man!
God did not hate us, or drive us away, or bear us ill will.*

Rather, He was long-suffering and forbearing.

*In His mercy, He took up the burden of our sins.
He himself gave up His own Son as a ransom for us —
the holy one for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty,
the righteous for the unrighteous,
the incorruptible for the corruptible,
the immortal for the mortal.*

For what else could cover our sins except His righteousness?

*In whom could we, lawless and impious as we were,
be made righteous except in the Son of God alone?*

*O sweetest exchange! O unfathomable work of God!
O blessings beyond all expectation!*

*The sinfulness of many is hidden in the Righteous One,
while the righteousness of the One
justifies the many that are sinners.*

*In the former time He had proved to us our nature's
inability to gain life;
now He showed the Savior's power to save even the powerless,
with the intention that on both counts we should have
faith in His goodness, and look on Him as
Nurse, Father, Teacher, Counselor, Healer, Mind, Light,
Honor, Glory, Might and Life.*

Adapted from "The Letter to Diognetus"
in Cyril C. Richardson, *EARLY
CHRISTIAN FATHERS*, pp. 220-221.



THE Good News Unlimited Bulletin

Editor: Calvin W. Edwards

A Statement of Faith

A bulletin dedicated to three principal reference points of the Christian faith:

1. THE CENTRALITY OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST:

The Gospel centers on the person and work of Jesus Christ in history. Its principal modes of expression are those of law and covenant. In Jesus Christ God's final verdict on man has been rendered, and therefore the Gospel anticipates fully God's decision in the final judgment. It is the window through which all life and history is to be seen and understood.

2. THE AUTHORITY, SUFFICIENCY, AND CLARITY OF THE BIBLE:

The Bible is exclusively authoritative in all matters of faith and practice. While its writers reflect their respective contemporary world views, these do not compromise the integrity of their witness. While we admit that all Scripture does not enjoy uniform clarity, we affirm that the Bible is essentially clear in its central message — the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS:

The Gospel, through the Scriptures, is the central means by which God expresses Himself in the world, and constitutes the basis on which all Christian fellowship is built. We believe that true fellowship is best expressed and preserved in a congregational setting. The primary purpose of church government is the orderly preservation, teaching, and promotion of the Gospel message on the sole authority of Scripture alone, and we affirm all forms of government that prove compatible with this objective.

Our support of these objectives is without antagonism or prejudicial exclusiveness toward any individual or group. We feel a kinship with all who have embraced the good news of the cross, regardless of human distinctions such as race, color, denominational ties or forms of church government.

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Editorial

Here is a special Christmas edition of the Good News Unlimited Bulletin. It marks the final number for 1981 and brings to a close the first full year of operation for us. We have recounted several times the blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Most noticeable is the remarkable growth that the Lord has blessed us with. At this season of joy and festivity we give thanks to God for his leading in our affairs throughout 1981.

It has been an exciting year for the Good News Unlimited family. Our program has taken a definite shape. Our radio outreach has grown tremendously. Speaking appointments have flooded in and we are already booked out to April, 1982, and have invitations to Europe and South Africa during the spring. The Bulletin has been upgraded from a typed and duplicated sheet to the more presentable format you presently hold. Congresses and seminars have been held across the USA and in Canada.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the confidence that you have placed in us by your continued support. We operate on your mandate. Thank you for standing with us and praying for us. We hope to serve you to an even greater extent in 1982.

May I suggest a thought with which to commence the new year. "People are like stained glass windows. They glow and sparkle when it's sunny and bright; but when the sun goes down their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within." May this Christmas season bring more than good cheer, gifts and carols. May it renew that light within which testifies to an intimate knowledge of him who was born that he might be crucified for us.

This Bulletin brings you four articles by the ministers at Good News Unlimited in the hope that this joyful season of the year might fill you anew with spiritual joy. Let us celebrate together the Christ of Christmas as we contemplate anew the meaning of his coming to earth as a babe centuries ago. What an amazing thought that his name should be Emmanuel, God is with us (Matt. 1:23). Us, he is with us. Herein is the essence of Christmas.

Jesus the Unexpected

Noel Mason



"An unknown rabbi of Nazareth in a remote corner of Palestine? A handful of disciples, who, when it came to the showdown, left him in the lurch? A doubtful mob following him — publicans, loose women, sinners and a few women and children and folk who got help from him? On his cross the sport of passersby? Is this the kingdom of God? The shift in the ages?" (G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 72, 73).

On Christmas Day 1981, almost two thousand years after the birth of Christ, in a world that looks like "hell with the lid off," in a world of savage violence, hideous crime, shocking injustices and genocidal fears, we may feel tempted to ask those familiar questions again: "Is this the kingdom of God? The shift of the ages?"

Now that we feel "jailed" perhaps the Baptist's question has a point. "Art thou the Christ? Or should we look for another?" Did Jesus bring the kingdom, the new age? Is the world any better for his presence? Were the forces of evil too strong for him? Was the incarnation God's daring attempt to retrieve the world, an attempt that ended in an ignominious death and failure? Is this the reason why the world seems no better today?

In the musical "West Side Story" — a reflection on contemporary youth of its time — there is a poignant moment when the two gangs, after being involved in a murder, gather at their usual meeting place — a drug store. The old man who owns the store, running out of patience, cries out: "You make this world *lousy*." The young leader of the gang retorts: "We found it that way." So did Jesus. He found it that way.

'Out of the darkness of Calvary come those simple words, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do".'

The "dragon" in the form of a murderous and jealous tyrant is ready to consume him the moment he is born. Religious people try to push him over the precipice after his first sermon. In anger the scribes and pharisees reach for stones. He barely manages to survive the priestly plots. Finally they surround him, despised and rejected, they crucify him.

God hardly seemed to get a "toehold." His world seemed to be too much for him. It was a world just like ours. A world of horrors, brutality, scourgings, blood-lust, denials, suicide, women mourning

and men breaking down, soldiers at their coarsest, judges at their most corrupt, religion denying itself, darkness and blood, horror and despair. Familiar world. But our question returns, "Sure he found it that way but has he made it any better?"

This Christmas, as we contemplate the hideous forces of evil and the seemingly helpless humanity of Jesus we find it hard to resist the question, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Mt. 13:55). For a moment faith balks, baffled. But then out of the darkness of Calvary, the moment when he seems weakest, at the mercy of evil, in stark contrast to the frenzied mob, come those shatteringly simple words, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

In that disarming moment our contemptibly petty jealousies, our cheap little lusts, our ego-tripping and our narrow-minded cultic mentality is suddenly laid bare before our guilt-stricken eyes. We are driven to the other end of the paradox of the Incarnation — the divinity of Christ. Now we see as Paul saw "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world" (1 Cor. 1:27, 28).

In the words of Father Jonathan Graham, "The Christian Gospel lies precisely there, in the character, the history and the person of him whose gibbet was placarded with this label: 'Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.' Here, proclaims the Christian, in this innocent victim of man's brutality, murdered on a certain day by the authority of a certain Roman Governor, here, in the very thick of it all, is God. Here, where we suppose religion to have failed, is God; here, where the world is out of control, is God; here is God accepting the worst that devils and darkness can do, here is God sharing to the bitterest and ghastliest limit the storm and onslaught of the basest devices of man. Here is God, saving the world from itself."

Later the same writer states: "What appears to be the place of death is the source of life; what ap-

appears to be the triumph of sin is the place of its defeat and forgiveness; what appears to be tragedy is high triumph. There is no other explanation which fits the facts; here is God in the thick of human corruption, transforming the worst into the best, avenging our sin by making reconciliation possible, atoning for all the insults we have offered God in denying the sole purpose of our existence. Here and here only is rest and satisfaction for twentieth century man; here and here only is life given adequate meaning. It is this that makes Calvary news." The God of Christian religion has turned all upside down.

But to return to our earlier question: is the world any better for all that God has done in Jesus Christ? The answer is "yes" and "no." The world is not any better in any automatic way. As one has written, "Christianity has never been tried and found wanting. It's never been tried." At least not by the world at large. During the last war an unknown British soldier wrote the following lines on the walls of his prison cell:

*If I must face the firing squad,
Though harm I did nobody,
Help me to love them still, my God,
As bullets strike my body.*

*If I must die a lowly spy,
Though spying did I never,
Stay in my heart, O God, and I
Will love thee more than ever.*

*Forgive them all the tortures done,
My thirst and my starvation;
For who could suffer more than
One*

Who died for our salvation?

His dark cell was the better for Christ's coming. There was no power that could fetter him. No circumstance that could discourage him. His last lines have that authentic note of freedom and victory.

In the vicarious sufferings of Christ he found a transforming, liberating experience that overcame vindictiveness and the fear of death. God is waiting and working for the world to have the same experience. It is his gift of grace that an unlovely world might be a better place. This Christmas let us celebrate that gift.



Christmas Story 2

The Unspeakable Gift

Desmond Ford

There was no room for him at the inn. But the cattle made room for him. The chosen people had no room for him, but strangers from the heathen east opened their hearts and purses. The great religious teachers of Jerusalem were not on the alert expecting the Messiah, but some of the lowly in Israel were looking for the Redeemer. Ignorant and poverty-stricken shepherds heard the good tidings of great joy and were filled with gladness, but the learned and the rich were moved with fear. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not, But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (Jn. 1:11).

And it is the same today. "... not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence."

There was no room for him at the inn. But the sacrificial stable creatures received him, for he came to be a sacrifice. The priests rejected him, but the common people heard him gladly, for he came to make all believers priests. The rich despised him, but the poor in spirit were blessed as they entertained him. Those who were self-righteous felt no need of him, but those who mourned over their sins and who hungered and thirsted after righteousness found all they lacked in him.

Those who were full and whose laughter was like that of fools — as thorns crackling under a pot — did not recognize him, for he was a

man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But the penitent, and the sick, the perplexed, and the lost, they saw in him One who removed remorse and disease, and who was the way to the Father's heart.

The people of this age see in their own birth the opportunity for life. He saw in his birth the opportunity for death. We view the world as our oyster, to be cracked and yield us its pearl. He came to so suffer that the true pearl might be formed. Behold him — our God contracted to a span. Though the One upon whose shoulder lies the government of the universe, he becomes so helpless as to hang at a peasant woman's breast.

Marvel at the condescension of his birth! But honor him best by seeing in him the divine Samson who delivers his people by his death. It was the end of his life which fashioned the lever to raise the world.

It was Calvary rather than Bethlehem which accomplished the new creation, justified God, ransomed the world, consolidated heaven, shook hell, and condemned the devil. It was Calvary which magnified the law, satisfied justice, delighted God the Father, glorified God the Son, and brought down to earth God the Holy Spirit. It was Calvary which nullified sin, justified sinners, and petrified Satan.

Yet it is appropriate that at this season we should celebrate the coming of the Son of God to this foolish, fitful, feverish planet. For that was the coming of eternity into time, day into night, summer into winter, life into death, a stooping of heaven to earth that earth might be lifted to heaven.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" "A broken and a contrite spirit, he will not despise."



Through Shame To Glory

Calvin Edwards



Camels are no way to make a long journey. But this trip could not be missed. A star drew them forward and would not let their minds rest until its goal was reached. The wise men from the east had embarked on a journey that could not but profoundly affect their lives. Camels or not, they would seek out the one born as king of the Jews.

Wearily they made their way into Jerusalem, the famous center of Jewish civilization. Here was a city with splendor and culture. Here was the seat of learning, the home of the pious and the center of religion. Surely this was a fitting place for the king to be born. Excitedly they questioned, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?" (Matt. 2:2). The response they met was unexpected.

All Jerusalem was thrown into an uproar. A king? Did this mean relief from the Roman tyranny? Where is he? What is his program? How long do we have before the bloodshed starts? Most threatened was Herod, the local Roman ruler who was often referred to as king (2:3). After consulting with the chief priests and scribes, he called in the distant travellers and advised them that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.

With an urgent request to find the new born king and bring word of his location, Herod sent the wise men in search of the Christ child. But disguised under the claim that he wished to worship the new king, Herod sought information that he might kill the infant. From his birth Jesus' life was lived in the shadow of death.

It was to a stable that the star led the anxious searchers. And here their long journey met its reward, for they were some of the first to see the holy Son of God — he who had condescended to human flesh that humans might ascend into the

courts of glory. Immediately they fell down and worshipped him, opened their treasures and gave him gifts.

Again we are reminded that Jesus has come to die. He is surrounded with animals in a lowly stable, animals so often used for sacrifice. We are born and we must die; he was born in order to die.

At the same time some shepherds who had been tending their flocks at night were startled by an angel. He came saying, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk. 2:10, 11). No sooner had this intrusion broken the serenity of a calm evening than the whole sky was filled with an angelic host singing in magnificent harmony, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men" (Lk. 2:14).

Here was something to sing about. The long awaited Savior was born. This day God had visited the house of Israel. The Lord yet worked in Zion for he had brought into its midst a deliverer, one called to set free the people.

Unable to contain their curiosity, they rushed towards Bethlehem. There they found the Christ child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a humble manger. What a contrast to the choruses they had heard in the skies! God had been praised and exalted but this did not look like any place fit for God to inhabit. Why was he not surrounded in luxury, pomp and ceremony in the official court in Jerusalem? Why not at least a cheap room in the local inn?

But no, none would surrender a bed for him who gave up all for a lost world. Busily caught up in their own whirl of activities, they

had no room, no time for the celestial visitor. But the humble men of the fields saw here one greater than a mere babe and two travel-worn parents, they recognized him as God incarnate, the Savior of the world, the King of the universe contracted to a few pounds of crying human flesh.

And knowing who it was that they beheld, they praised and glorified God (Lk. 2:20). Soon their testimony spread far afield.

Within a short time an angel appeared to Joseph and warned him to flee into Egypt lest Herod kill the newborn child. By night the little family hurried away to safety.

In this nativity story we see two responses to the coming of the Christ. Out of jealousy and fear one seeks to kill. Herod's attitude is marked by anger and an unwillingness to accept Christ for what he is.

Others, both the learned and the simple, see in Jesus God's gift to the world. Here is the one who is sent to redeem, the promised Messiah, the consummation of the hope of Israel.

Today we are confronted with the same choice: how will we react to the Christ child? Is he something that is to be avoided, shunned, put out of the way? Or is he someone who brings forth our worship and praise? Does he evoke curses from our lips, or does he set the heavens ringing with glorious melody? Would we travel the world by camel to greet him, or leave our flock unattended to adore him? Or have the things of this world taken priority in our lives?

Jesus lies there at his mother's side. He is innocent as a babe and, unlike us, as an adult too. Here is the King of all the cosmos hidden amongst the chaos of a stable. The One who created all *now* issues

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No Wonder They Wondered

Smuts van Rooyen



Luke 2:18: "And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."

Can you see this little shepherd, at one o'clock in the morning, running from the fields, approaching his little house. His visit is unexpected because he should be with his daddy and the sheep.

The little shepherd boy arrives at the door, all out of breath, and his mom says to him, "Son, why on earth are you here? Is dad hurt?"

"Well, Mom, I have something to tell you! Last night we were out there in the fields and suddenly a light —"

"Oh, no, a ghost!"

"No, Mom, not a ghost — an angel!"

"An angel?"

"Yes, an angel, Mom! And we were so afraid!"

"Well, I should guess you would be!"

"We fell down on the ground, Mom, and we were all terrified, curled over our knees."

"What did the angel say?"

"Well," he said, 'Don't be afraid,' so I looked up, and sure enough, I wasn't afraid. And he said to me and the others, 'For unto you [that's us] is born this day in the City of David a Savior'."

"A Savior? Son, who's he?"

"Well, he's Christ the Lord."

"Oh, you mean the Messiah! You mean this really happened?"

"Yes, Mom. And as we were all there listening to him suddenly the whole sky lighted up, and there were hundreds of his friends and they all began to sing 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men'."

"Well, what happened then, son? Did you go? Did you find the child?"

"Oh, yes, we did. We left our sheep and we headed for the city of David."

"Bethlehem?"

"Yes, we headed for Bethlehem. And there we found him."

"Who did you find, son?"

"Well, we found the baby. He was all wrapped up and his little fists were clenched and he was crying because he'd just seen the daylight — the lamp light — for the first time in his life."

No wonder she wondered.

The story that the little shepherd boy told has been painted on the ceilings of cathedrals, painted on canvas and walls, sculptured in stone and set in stained glass, and we suddenly realize that the story of the little shepherd boy is not his story, it is God's story. No wonder we wonder.

The story of Christmas is the greatest love story that has ever been told. It begins where we can

understand: The love of an ordinary man for an ordinary woman.

The story begins where there is love in tension, and Joseph is in his room alone. He is saying to himself: "Can you believe it. In my wildest dreams I would never have thought that it was still possible for an old man like me to find such a young woman. I can't believe that she loves me. Old Joseph with his teenage kids. Why, my boys are almost as old as she is!"

And then a shadow crosses his face, and his heart aches with pain. And he continues, "But why, why did she do this to me? Did she lead me up the garden path with her young charms — me, a vulnerable old man? And now this! What has she done to me?"

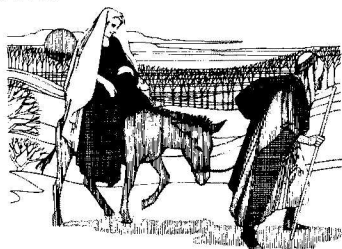
Of one thing he is sure: Mary is with child, and he is not responsible. It must be some other man.

"Was I so blind? Was I so madly in love that I could not see that I could not please this young woman? But I know Mary — I know she wouldn't do this to me."

What a way to start a story! And it wasn't Joseph's child. And it wasn't any other man's child — it was God's child. But what a way to confuse a man. No wonder he wondered.

And so they go on their journey. Imagine being on the road when your wife is expecting. And she's

riding on the donkey and says, "Honey, I think it's time." And you start to worry: "What shall I do? Where will I find a doctor? Where do I find an emergency center? Where do I find a midwife?"



Joseph goes from inn to inn and there is no room. And finally somebody sees their plight and says, "The way things seem now, you'd better get down into the stable."

And they go to the stable.

And there this man, who knew how to cut wood and to work with ropes and twines, and who knew all about nails and saws and hammers, is now faced with the incredible task of delivering a child.

Surely Joseph must have said to himself: "What kind of woman is this? I am always confused. I'm always in some kind of trouble because of her." The first hands that held that child were rough hands of a carpenter. Hands that had often cut rope now snipped a little umbilical cord, washed the Child, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.

Mary was always confusing Joseph. He loved her so deeply and it seemed that she was always bringing some kind of crisis to him. Now it was to be the greatest crisis of all: He must leave Nazareth.

He loved the place. Here he had his little shop. He had his friends. Here were all of the familiar surroundings — Dad lived there; Granddad lived there; Great-grandad lived there. But he, because of the woman and the child, must now head for — of all places — Egypt. No wonder he wondered.

The Christmas story is a love story. The love story of a man for his woman. At Christmastime all of us should be confronted by this thought: husband and wife, how is it between you?

Have you, during the course of

this year — during the course of the years — slowly become more and more indifferent to the needs and likes of your spouse?

Have you recently looked into your wife's eyes and deeply and sincerely told her that you loved her? Is your marriage in trouble because deep down you feel dissatisfactions and yearnings that you know should not be there?

That same God who sent the Savior to us will be as active in your marriage relationship as he was in the relationship of Mary and Joseph if, as Christmastime approaches, you choose for God to be there.

It's also a great love story because it tells the story of the love of a woman for her child. What a Child and what a challenge he gave her.

Isn't it funny that we like to think of love in terms of nice, easy, sentimental days, when instead love is always confronting us with the nitty-gritty of life and challenging us to be bigger than we are, to love more than we think we can?

Love is always there urging us, prodding us and helping us to grow.

Can you see Mary? She has just given birth to this child. Visiting hours in the maternity ward have not yet even been posted when there is a heavy knock on the door, and into that little room walk a bunch of wide-eyed shepherds, their clothes still smelling of sheep and smoke from their fire.

And they start to tell the incredible story of the angel and the heavenly choir, and of what they were directed to do.

Mary is worn out. She is tired. And as she lies there she is thrilled, but also overwhelmed by a sense of responsibility. What kind of child is this? No wonder we wonder as we hear this story!

And the Child grew, and when he was 12 they went to the temple and he confused her. He got lost. And when she found him, he said to her, "Don't you know that I should be about my Father's business?" As if she was supposed to know that.

And then he grew some more. And he came to Nazareth, and they asked him to leave. His home town

would not love him, and Mary was faced with coping with his rejection.

Here was her Boy — come home — and the town didn't like him. So she and Joseph bore the social pressure of a town that didn't like their child.

'Let God's messenger, Gabriel, come into your home and leave some Christmas star-light there, some heaven-sent peace.'

And when she feels he's working too hard, and her mother heart yearns for him, and she sends her stepsons to call Jesus and tell him to come and take a rest, He sends back this reply, "Mom, you and Dad and the boys aren't really my family. The people I'm working with are my family." What kind of reply is that? No wonder she wondered.

And then came the prophesied day when the soldier drove the spear through the side of Jesus. But he drove it not only through the heart of the Savior, he drove it through the heart of Mary. What confusing love! What a love story of a mother for her child.

And at Christmastime, friends, we are again given a great opportunity to evaluate our relationships with our children.

How are things between you and your boy? Between you and your daughter? Do they love to be at home? Do you still communicate? Are there tensions that make your home unpleasant?

Is your home a Christian home in every respect, except that you and your children don't get along?

Children, how do you relate to your parents? Have you rejected them simply because they are old?

Maybe they have nothing to offer you in terms of intellect. Maybe they're not as bright or as educated as you are, but have you seen that worried look of love flash across their faces?

At Christmastime the question comes to all parents: what about the little flock? Are you all still on the way to heaven? Are you still a flock?

I appeal to you that if you are not, let God's messenger, Gabriel, come

into your home and leave some Christmas star-light there, some heaven-sent peace.

The story of Christmas is a love story not simply because a man loved a woman and a woman loved her child. But it is supremely a love story because of the infinite, yearning love of God for man.

The Christmas story is the story of the love of God for you. Think of the descent of Jesus. In the book of Philippians we read about Jesus coming down the up staircase, making the grand descent.

He who was equal with God took the first step: he became of no reputation. No honor, no glory.

When Jesus came to this earth he didn't come riding on a horse, in a grand and royal procession. Instead, when the Savior of the world came, he came like a servant to the back door, holding his hat in his hand. He made himself of no reputation.

But he did not stop there. It says he took on the likeness of human flesh. He became a man. That was step number two.

And he not only made himself of no reputation and took on the likeness of a man, but he also came in the form of a servant. He took one more step down that grand staircase.

But that wasn't enough for Jesus. Scripture says that he was obedient unto death. That was the depth to which Jesus came. But even that was not deep enough for Jesus. He took the very last step into the basement of humiliation, for He was not only obedient to death, but even to the death of the cross. Can anything be lower than that?

So God revealed His love to us when Jesus came.

There is a beautiful text in John 10:17, and it tells us an amazing fact: "Therefore doth my Father love me because I laid down my life." This means that God's heart was moved because Jesus helped us. No wonder we wonder!

When we were in academy my brother and I were playing around with some weights in the dorm one day. He picked up 150 pounds, which was too heavy for him, and as he got it up his feet slipped and he fell down and snapped both

arms. He was in terrible pain.

We took him to his bed, and laid him down. He writhed and groaned and it was a terrible thing. I could hardly bear to see my brother in pain.

I tried to speak to him but I couldn't get through. As he lay there, the dorm monitor came by. I could not stand the dorm monitor. But Louie came over, took in the situation, and tried to talk to my brother, but he couldn't get through my brother's pain. Then he sat down at his bedside and began to sing hymns. He sang "Rock of Ages" and then some other songs — I don't remember what they were — and as he sang, my brother calmed down.

Then he started to ask him questions that forced him to get his mind off his broken arms. And my brother told him about happy things he'd done in the past. Final-

ly they had prayer together, and then the doctor came.

You know, it was a funny thing. The monitor that I never could stand, I truly loved after that. Not because of what he had done for me, but for what he had done for someone I loved.

John 10:17 tells us that God loved Jesus more in appreciation for what Jesus did for us. The Christmas story is the story of the love of the Father for you.

How is it at this Christmas season between you and your Heavenly Father? Is your heart like a Bethlehem inn — full of busyness, full of cares of this life, full of your own plans, full of yourself?

Or is your heart like the stable — humble, open, ready for the new birth of the Savior in your heart? Are you participating in the wonder of it all?

Through Shame To Glory . . .

forth from a woman's womb. It is a miracle that he who molded the woman is now molded by a woman. The Almighty who filled the universe with all things cannot now find room in which to lay his head. The Lord of all heaven who has been attended by angelic anthems is welcomed by the lowing of cows and the bleating of sheep. He who inhabited the glories of heaven lies helpless in the crudest of all rooms. The God who has surrendered all to redeem mankind is greeted by men who will not surrender one whit for him.

For us Christmas is a time of joy, pleasure and fun. But it marks the entry into this world of our Lord Jesus Christ, an entry where his own received him not. Will this Christmas be a time where we receive the Christ of Christmas again, or will he, like the first Christmas, be relegated to some unimportant position?

He gave up all for us. He challenges us to give up all for him. With God the way of exaltation is via the way of the cross. Crucifixion Friday is always followed by resurrection Sunday. The early church put this thought together in an ancient hymn, "Christ Jesus . . .

though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:5-11).

Praise God for his willingness to endure such condescension. Praise him too that the shame is followed by the glory. He who gave up all has received all.

Today he calls us to follow his pattern. Like Herod we should be troubled by the birth of the Messiah, for he calls us to commit our lives to him in surrender. But like the wise men and the shepherds, our response should be to worship and adore him. To do this will bring us through means of the cross to the right hand of him who is exalted above all. O glorious thought!



A Radio Breakthrough

In a modern scientific age where every event can apparently be accounted for by natural causes, one's belief in the supernatural leading of God is challenged. Here is a story which I believe indicates that God has not left his children alone in this world.

I was recently attending a convention of the National Religious Broadcasters in Los Angeles. Persons from all parts of the religious broadcasting scene were there — program producers, radio station owners, sales persons, speakers, consultants, etc. It was a time for inspiration and sharing with others of ideas, methods and approaches that were successful.

One evening there was a banquet provided by one of the sponsors and at the beginning the host asked each person present to introduce himself. When it came my turn I stated briefly that my name was Calvin Edwards and that I represented the radio broadcast "Good News Unlimited." I sat down and did not think that there would be another consequence.

Earlier I had noticed or met several station managers whom I knew to be broadcasting our program. More than one of them commented on how much they appreciated our series and how pleased they were to have it on their station.

Unbeknown to me one such person leaned across to another sitting beside him as he heard my introduction and said, "That's a good program, we have it on our station." A third person sitting at their table heard the comment and turned to see who it was that was associated with this "good" program.

After the banquet Jim Thomas, the sales manager for WZZD in Philadelphia, approached me and asked about our ministry and the type of broadcast that we had. He

was the third person who had heard the brief testimony of one of the radio station managers. I gave him some details and answered his questions as best I could.

He told me that WZZD was the largest radio station in Philadelphia which is rated as the fourth largest religious market in the USA. He also mentioned that they had a twin station in New York which was the Number 1 station in the Number 1 market. As I described to him the type of program that we have and the kind of responses that we get from our listeners, he said, "Calvin, I'm very interested in listening to a sample tape. I think we could have your program on our two stations."

As soon as I got back to the office I mailed a reel to him and within days the reply came back that they wanted to commence broadcasting on both stations almost immediately. A special discount price was offered and I was informed that we were getting the first available time slot on a Sunday on the New York station in several years. If we did not take it there was a waiting list of others that would.

The only problem left was to raise sufficient funds — in excess of \$2,000 per month. We were convinced that it was worthwhile for the Lord had already been at work in all that had occurred thus far. If we could see this project through, it would bring the Good News Unlimited radio broadcast into the hearing of a further 32 million people. We had to raise the money, somehow!

After thought and prayer we contacted a person whom we knew to be interested in our ministry and proposed the idea to him. He could immediately see why we were excited and agreed to try to help. It was not many days before he called back with the news that he had managed to rally together a group of donors who would support the program for the first six months.

Our prayers were answered. God had touched the hearts of various persons to put money into this project. He had led in all the events, though at times we were not aware of it.

What is especially significant for Good News Unlimited is that it

means that we have now started to enter the largest metropolitan markets with our gospel program. Previously we had been primarily on smaller town stations. Now we are represented right at the top! Please pray for the success of our radio ministry. Radio work is not known for its fast or dramatic results, however we do believe that it is one means to fulfill Christ's commission to go into all the world.

We praise God for this breakthrough and acknowledge him as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. To him be all glory.

—Calvin Edwards



Questions & Answers

Q. With all the doctrines that are about regarding biblical interpretation one tends to get confused. What would you say is the best thing to do in order to attain salvation?

A. The question you ask is most important. I recognize the confusion one faces as a whole variety of doctrinal positions and alternate interpretations are confronted. What is comforting, however, is that we are not saved by some esoteric knowledge, but by faith.

Sometimes we tend to think that we need to have all the right facts in our heads to be saved. As if it were easier for a person with a high IQ or better memory to be saved than one less endowed! No, this is not the case. A finely honed doctrinal schema is not a prerequisite to salvation.

Jesus' words are reassuring, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). There's the key — to believe in Jesus. Paul puts it similarly when he quotes from Joel 2:32, "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Those who recognize the hopelessness of their own position, and in acknowledgment of their inability to be right with God, cast

themselves at his feet, the same shall be saved. Faith is the act of coming to Christ, it is turning to him, gazing at his face, seeing him in all his glory.

What doctrines we bring in our minds to the foot of the cross will not alter the fact that Jesus' blood falls on us as we are bowed there and covers our sins, making us acceptable to God. The thief on the cross would have had little knowledge of any doctrine — right or wrong. Praise God, he accepts those who come in faith, who reach towards him in earnestness.

This is not to say that doctrine is unimportant. But it is not crucial to salvation. Doctrine has its place in the life of the Christian who seeks to know God's ways and will. But no one will be saved by knowledge. This was an early Christian heresy called gnosticism which some tend to perpetuate today.

Stand firm in the storm. Jesus is the anchor. He will see you through. He is the rock of ages. In him you cannot fail.

—Calvin Edwards

Q. Doesn't it limit the power of God in our lives to say that perfection in the ultimate sense is not possible until glorification? If God can perform the miracle then, why not now?

A. The delay of perfection in the absolute sense is no more to be wondered at than the delay in conferring immortality. God could banish all sickness and death from Christians now, but his plan is to do that at the second advent. Part and parcel of that same complex of blessings is absolute perfection, which in harmony with God's customary principle of economy of miracle transpires with the granting of a new body and mind, and the forsaking once and for all of our present bodies which are so marked by the original curse and our own subsequent transgressions. See Philippians 1:6 in any modern version. God could choose to make us perfect in the ultimate sense now, but he has not done so. This is not more a limitation of God's power than is the fact that he has not chosen to prevent our hair from graying. —Desmond Ford



Annour

Australian congresses

Plans are proceeding well for the series of Australian Gospel Congresses in February and March, 1982. A major program will be held in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

At each location the series will run for the whole weekend with the exception of Saturday morning. Dr. Ford will get the program off to an inspirational start on Friday night and the spiritual blessings will not stop until Sunday noon. Smuts van Rooyen, a preacher who has been blessed enormously by God with a talent for reaching the hearts of people and touching their lives with the gospel and its benefits, will be heard twice. Since he has not visited Australia before, we are sure that this will be a particularly rewarding feature of the program.

Dr. Ford will give several presentations and Noel Mason and Calvin Edwards will also proclaim the word of God. Our next *Bulletin* will contain full details of the program, but be assured that this will be a spiritual feast that Australians will not want to miss.

Can you believe that we have already been informed of several Americans who are going to Australia to attend one or more of the Congresses? I guess kangaroos, koalas, and the Great Barrier Reef also have something to do with it. Our "down under" readers must be sure to be there.

Advertising will soon be in the

mail for our Australian subscribers. The schedule of programs is as follows.

February 12-14 Adelaide
Morphetville Entertainment Center
Morphetville Racecourse, Park Terrace
Morphetville, South Australia
February 19-20 Melbourne
Camberwell Civic Center
240 Camberwell Rd., Camberwell, Victoria
February 26-28 Brisbane
Crest International Hotel
King George Square, Brisbane, Queensland
March 5-7 Sydney
New Chevron Hotel, 81 Macleay Street
Potts Point, New South Wales

In addition to the Gospel Congress there will be a meeting of a more theological nature for those interested on Sunday evening in each location. The format of this meeting will be a question and answer session where doctrinal and theological questions of a contemporary and urgent nature may be raised. Full details will be available in the January *Bulletin*. In the meantime, Australians must plan to be there and share the good news with others.

Back issues

Many write requesting back issues of the *Good News Unlimited Bulletin*. We have been happy to supply these as they are available. Presently we have some available of each of the first eight issues except Vol. 1, No. 4. Anyone wishing to make their set complete may write for the copies desired. A love gift to help cover our expenses would be appreciated.

GNU Speakers' Itinerary

| Speaker | Place | Date | Sponsor | Phone |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Smuts van Rooyen | Napa, CA | Jan. 9 | Valley Christian Fellowship | (707) 255-2217 |
| | Paradise, CA | January 23 | Paradise Gospel Fellowship | (916) 873-0553 |
| | Sacramento, CA | March 20 | Church of God, Seventh-day | (916) 487-1193 |
| | Watsonville, CA | March 27 | Biblical Adventist Church | (408) 724-1975 |
| | Bakersfield, CA | April 10 | New Life Fellowship | (805) 398-8003 |
| Desmond Ford | Grand Junction, CO | Jan. 9 | Merritt Schuman | (303) 243-7013 |
| | New Zealand/Australia | Jan. 22-Feb. 6 | AAF, Ken Myers | (049) 77-1611 |
| | Bakersfield, CA | March 20 | New Life Fellowship | (805) 398-8003 |
| | Albuquerque, NM | March 27 | Ana King | (505) 344-1988 |
| Calvin Edwards | Paradise, CA | Jan. 16 | Paradise Gospel Fellowship | (916) 873-0553 |
| Seminars/Congresses | Atlanta, GA | Dec. 18-20 | GNU | (916) 823-9690 |
| | Adelaide, Australia | Feb. 12-14 | GNU | (916) 823-9690 |
| | Melbourne, Australia | Feb. 19-21 | GNU | (916) 823-9690 |
| | Brisbane, Australia | Feb. 26-28 | GNU | (916) 823-9690 |
| | Sydney, Australia | March 5-7 | GNU | (916) 823-9690 |



Subscription information

Our secretaries have been working intensely to keep our mailing list both up to date and accurate. If your label is incorrect, please write a brief note letting us know. Keep in mind that with computerized mailing lists some abbreviations are usually necessary, also, kindly enclose an old label to assist us in identification. Use the same procedure for address changes.

If you receive the *Bulletin* but do not really wish to, please inform us so we can remove your name from our list. What is more likely is that you know of other persons whom you believe may be interested in receiving the *Good News Unlimited Bulletin* on a monthly basis. If this is the case, feel free to forward their name and address to us. If you prefer, we can send you sample copies of recent *Bulletins* with special gift offer cards for you to share with friends and church members. Just write with any requests in these areas and we will do our best to be of assistance.

New brochure

A new promotional brochure is being mailed at about the same time as this *Bulletin*. It has been carefully designed to present the work and objectives of Good News Unlimited in an attractive and informative way.

We trust that you will read it carefully and gain a clearer conception of our work from it. If you would like more copies to share with friends, please let us know.

Visa petition approval

On November 19, 1981, Dr. Desmond Ford's third preference visa petition was approved by the Officer in Charge at the Sacramento branch of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. After waiting for some twelve months, this came as very welcome news.

Being an Australian citizen, for Dr. Ford to stay in the USA indefinitely it was necessary for him to obtain a visa granting him per-

manent resident status. It is expected that the finalization of these details should proceed without the lengthy wait that has occurred with this first, crucial step.

We at Good News Unlimited see in this successful application an indication of the leading of God. Not a few prayers had ascended on this matter. Jesus, in the sermon on the mount, said, "... how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask!" (Matt. 7:11). We are reminded that Jesus is Lord, that we are in his hands and that he works his will in the affairs of men.

Finances

Many have responded generously to our recent appeals for funds. Some have inquired whether our financial situation is critical or not. Because we are in the Lord's hands we do not view our position as something to be anxious over. It is true, however, that we do not have the reserve funds that are necessary for a secure foundation.

Please continue to lend us your support through prayer and finances. We would also like to say a very sincere thank you to those who have contributed to Good News Unlimited.

Satanic Influence?

Christianity Today, the most influential evangelical magazine in the world, recently made reference to Dr. Desmond Ford and Smuts van Rooyen (November 20, 1981). In a news item dealing with the troubles faced by the Seventh-day Adventist church, the writer constantly referred to Ford and van Rooyen as two dissenters from traditional Adventism.

Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference of SDAs, is cited by the writer as claiming that Ford and Rea, a former SDA pastor, were a part of "Satan's subtle sophistry and cunningness." These are strong words for a church leader to utter and one wonders how one may dare to presume so precisely where the forces of

good and evil are at work.

Most churchmen would see Satanic forces at work primarily outside the body of Christ, but it would appear that Wilson views those out of step with his official church dogma as being agents of Satan.

"You will know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:16). Good News Unlimited is proud to have Desmond Ford and Smuts van Rooyen on their staff and *you*, who benefit from our ministry, will be the ones to assess whether their message comes from above or below.

Letters to the Editor

Spiritual refreshing

Dear Good News Staff,

We enjoyed the Monterey Gospel Congress very much. And we can't tell you what a spiritual refreshing we had a couple weeks ago in St. Helena when Smuts van Rooyen spoke. Our prayers are with your whole staff as you continue with more Congresses and your special ministry.

Sincerely,
Roy & Renee Aijala
Healdsburg, CA

Prayers and support

Dear Brethren,

As I am a believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ I have to believe that I must support the gospel ministry. I am returning my tithe and my wife is also to where we believe the gospel is being taken to the world. Our prayers and our support are with you and your great work.

Enclosed is a check and make sure we are on your mailing list.

Mr. & Mrs. Irvin J. McComes
Newton, IA

Tithes and offerings

Dear Gospel workers,

It is our conviction our church does not preach the everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ. We can no longer support this church which continues to purge its ranks of the Gospel believers.

Many of these people are our friends who have worked hard for many years to spread the Gospel. Now they have no job, and certainly no future in the church. Where will it end?

Therefore, my wife and I will support your ministry with our tithes and offerings. In doing so we hope our support will help spread the gospel to the world, and especially our church.

In Jesus Christ our Lord,
Christian,
S. Oregon

100 Copies!

Dear Dr. Ford,

I would like a copy of your messages on How to Understand the Bible (KCVR, Lodi). If you have the complete messages in printed form I would like 100 copies, if not, please send the cassette.

This would be helpful for me to pass out to my Sunday School class at Pioneer Baptist Church. May the Lord richly bless you.

Your brother in Christ,
Roland N. Icke, M.D.

Trimming expense

You could trim your expenses by removing my name from your mailing list. I would appreciate the removal effective immediately.

Thank you,
Norman Ensminger
Oregon

An enormous blessing

Dear Editor,

Someone kindly included me on your mailing list for the *Good News Unlimited Bulletin*. The August copy arrived some weeks ago. I did enjoy the contents and was really blessed.

I was excited to read in the latest "Sydney Forum" that Dr. Ford and his colleagues are to visit Australia in February-March next year. Praise the dear Lord for that.

Over the years Dr. Ford has been an enormous blessing to thousands around Australasia, indeed around the world. Few men lift the Christ of Calvary as high and as clear as does this man of God.

The preaching of the gospel of Christ in all its clarity will soon shake the world as to its great need of Jesus. The good Lord bless and guide you one and all as you uplift the savior of the world to a hopeless world, and to many confused and wandering saints in our churches.

Your brother in the great battle for truth,
Ron Laughlin
Galston, NSW, Australia

Attacked by a mouse!

Dear Sirs,

Thank you very much for five extra copies of the *Bulletin* No. 7 by airmail, but we have not received the five extra copies of No. 6. We hope you have some of these yet and you will send them by airmail. The only copy we received has been damaged by a mouse. It is the first time it has ever happened with our literature and we had only this one copy.

We are very happy because the work of God now goes forward. We have come in touch with active gospel workers in Norway . . . and now we have plans for translated literature in a new paper. So we can use much new literature from you in English to those who read English, and we will translate as much as possible for those who cannot read English.

May the Lord bless all his workers who spread the everlasting Gospel all over the world. We also thank the Lord for your good work for him.

Yours in the blessed work of the Gospel,
Svend & Else Porse
Denmark

More response

Hi!

Just a line to tell you we are sorry we took so long in sending the money for KHIS in Bakersfield. Thank you for sending us copies of the responses from the broadcast. We have seen more response from our sponsorship of the program than in the 15 years we have paid tithe to the church.

As they say, it's more blessed to give than to receive, and we sure have been blessed. Keep up the good work. We will continue to sponsor for the upcoming year.

God bless,
Mr. & Mrs. Sorensen
Bakersfield, CA

Marvelous

Dear Sir,

The *Bulletin* and *Evangelica* are such marvelous publications. We do need the gospel of Jesus Christ preached to us so very much.

We attended the Monterey Gospel Congress and were blessed by the meetings.

I'm enclosing a check that you might send some material to the name withheld in Tamil Nadu, India.

May God bless you in all your work and especially your Australian Tour.

Sincerely,
Arlene Eyer
Patterson, CA

Thank your for your gift — we have mailed our correspondent a full set of the Monterey Gospel Congress cassettes.
—Editor



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