



The Fourfold Gospel Witness

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The Fourfold Gospel Witness

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The Fourfold Gospel Witness.
(Celebrating Jesus Christ as Savior,
Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King)
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Welcome...

To our latest issue of our newspaper. We do hope there is something in this issue that will assist you in praying back the darkness in your community.

The theme in this issue is evangelism.

Nothing else should so grip today's church then evangelism. One of the things Jesus said to his disciples was that they were to "occupy till I come." I am quite sure when he talked about "occupy" he had in mind this theme of evangelism. During our Lord's earthly ministry, he was occupied with evangelism. It was His Father's business that he was about.

It is easy for today's church to get all caught up with activities that have no roots whatsoever in evangelizing our world. The articles in this issue should stir you up in this area of evangelism. We know not how soon our Lord will return, but may He find us all about His business of evangelism.

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THE SECRET OF THE VISION

A. B. Simpson

“Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! . . . Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him” (Job 23:3, 8, 9).

This is the cry of the soul that longs for God and feels after Him if haply it may find Him. This is the deepest cry of every true spirit, the deepest need of every human life and the greatest prayer that God can answer for a soul. For “this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hath sent.”

How shall we find God? How shall He become to our consciousness more real and satisfying than any other personality and other need?

First, we can find God in nature. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. . . . Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

Nature alone is not able to reveal God in His gracious character as the sinful soul needs to know Him. After we know Him from His Word, then nature is full of the most blessed illustrations of His character and the most vivid unfoldings of His love and power. The whole creation becomes to the consecrated soul a great temple with the blue heavens for its dome, the glowing stars for its lamps of fire, the vernal earth for its emerald pavement, and the voices of the ocean, the thunder, the hum and song of the whole animated creation for its ceaseless anthem of worship and praise. There is a sense in which everything we see in this beautiful world is but a letter in the great alphabet of truth, telling of Him who—

“Shines in the sun,
Refreshes in the breeze,
Glowes in the stars,
And blossoms in the trees.
Lives through all life,
Extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided,
Operates unspent.”

I am sorry for the man that cannot see God in every turn of the beautiful kaleidoscope of nature and hear His voice in every note of the great organ of this voiceful world.

Second, we find God in His Word. Nature alone spells out but half the sentence and writes upon the heavens and earth, “God is,” but leaves an awful blank and note of interrogation. The Bible alone can finish the sentence and write the complete revelation, “God is Love.” The nineteenth Psalm quickly passes from the natural to the supernatural and to the testimony of the Word respect in the attributes and glory of God. While the heavens declare His glory and the earth His handiwork yet it is “the law of the Lord that is

perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

This Book is the mirror of God. On every page, we behold His glorious face. In Genesis we see Him before there was anything else to see, the supreme and solitary Being who was before all things. Then we see the teeming universe spring from His mighty creating hand, sustained by His almighty providence. The fall of man wrecks His beneficent plan, but God is still there equal to the occasion with His wonderful resources of redemption. The story unfolds and each page shines with the presence of God. The brightest character of the ante-deluvian world, holy Enoch, is distinguished by the fact that he walked with God, and it is more than Enoch we see. Abraham is but a little child stepping out into the unknown, holding the hand of God. Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, all represent the peculiar presence and personality of the infinite and ever-present God. The whole story of the Old Testament is a constant revelation of God amid all the changing scenes and overruling all the elements and forces of evil as well as good. The New Testament brings to us the vision of God in the face of Jesus Christ and leaves us with the Holy Ghost as the perpetual Presence of God in the inmost heart and life of every believer.

The God of the Bible is more than this. To believing souls, He is not only God but also our God. This Book is more than a mirror. It is a love letter with your name inscribed upon it, a bank-book by which you draw from your great deposit all that it promises. The only way to make the Bible interesting is to learn to read it with your own name in it and to see in every promise a direct message for you. Would you meet God every day? Go to this precious Book for a personal word morning by morning and evening by evening and you will learn to prize it, to mark it as the memorial of life’s crisis hours and the history of your own experience.

Third, we may find God in His providences, in the things that come to us day by day. Faith learns to recognize God in everything in some sense, even the things that come from the adversary and the hostile world. Every difficulty that meets us is but a challenge to prove the resources of our heavenly Father, but a vessel to hold some part of

His usefulness, an occasion to prove that there is nothing too hard for Him, nothing too great for Him to undertake, nothing too little for Him to care about. Thus we find God not only in our blessings as we call them and the obvious tokens and gifts of His goodness, but in those things which are blessings in disguise, the trials, the sorrows, the obstacles, the adverse circumstances, the very temptations and conflicts that are pressed upon us by our relentless foe, the devil. It is possible to learn to look upon all these things as but tests that come to us from our Father’s hand and opportunities of proving His love and power to help us; and, if we so receive them, it will come to pass that the most delightful remembrances of our lives will be the things that were most trying because they shall have been transformed into blessings and triumphs. We shall learn to look over the head of the devil and see God above and beyond him. By and by, we shall be able even to recognize him in a sense our ally, as God takes our very enemy prisoner and makes him fight our battles and help to carry our burdens. This is the devil’s greatest humiliation and the Lord’s greatest glory.

There is a story told of an old lady who was praying for bread in a time of deep distress. Some rude boys heard her prayer, and thinking they would fool her, they brought a loaf of bread and ringing her doorbell; they slipped away and left it there. The old lady got the loaf of bread and immediately got down on her knees and thanked God for answering her prayer. This was too much for the boys and so they broke in on

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her and told her that she was only fooling herself, for God had not sent the bread at all but they had just brought it. "Ah," she said, "boys, I know better. It was the Lord that sent it even if it was the devil that brought it." There are so many things that the devil brings, but the child of God can see that God sent them.

Beloved, we greatly miss the discipline of life and the victories of faith if we do not watch for God in all the hard places that come to us day by day, and learn to rise from these to our sublimest victories, to take the stones of stumbling which the devil puts in our way or throws at us and build a tower with them which shall reach to heaven. If you want to meet God this week you will find a hundred places waiting you where you can either surrender to the difficulty or trust your Father for victory and go forward with thankfulness and praise.

Fourth, we can find God in His people. For the Church of Christ is His body and represents the very features of the glorious Head. It is "with all saints" that we learn to "know the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love of Christ." It is a divine art to learn to recognize the Master's face in the faces of His children and the Master's presence in the common things of every day.

A distinguished artist once was employed to paint the likeness of an empress. She was far from beautiful and yet he was expected to make a beautiful portrait. He visited all parts of the empire and took the portraits of all the beautiful women in the different cities, and out of these lovely portraits he made a composite picture representing all that was most striking and beautiful in each of them, and then, by an exquisite touch of art, he put into this composite picture the expression of the countenance of the empress, that subtle and peculiar something which belongs to a face which represents its personality. It was the countenance of the empress, but the features were those of all the princesses of the land.

In a higher sense, the people of God are the images of the Master, and if we have both His faith and love, we shall be able to find Him in His humblest disciples. Often when weary with service and even baffled at the throne of grace in finding the very thing we needed, have we gone forth to visit some sick and suffering child and found at that bedside the Christ we had been looking for and met in some simple expression, some incident, some word of message, some marvelous example of patient suffering or victorious faith the very thing we needed. We have met God. We have received the messenger wanted. We have received more than we gave, and we have gone forth deeply realizing that we have been with Jesus and that we have seen the Lord.

Fifth, we can meet God in the ordinances of His house, in the worship of the sanctuary, in the broken bread and memorial wine, in the hour of united prayer at the altar of public consecration, in the anointing service and baptismal flood and in the ministries and services of His own house. There is a peculiar sense in which His promise is true, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Let us not make the mistake of forsaking the assembling of ourselves together or lightly esteeming the sanctuary and its services, for while God is present in the hearts and homes of His people yet He loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Israel.

Sixth, we can meet God in the secret place of the holy heart and the inner vision of the wait-

ing spirit. This is God's favorite temple. While heaven is His throne and earth His footstool, His chosen sanctuary is the humble and contrite heart where He loves to come "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." God is always waiting to meet the devout spirit in the inner chamber of the soul when we come by the new and living Way in the name of Jesus.

Some things we must remember and do if we would really meet God in the secret place of the soul.

We must have the open face. "With open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord." Many things may intercept the vision. One of them is the love of the world. The heart that is intensely fixed on earthly pleasure and worldly delights is incapable of seeing God.

Yonder the mighty telescope at the Lick Observatory had to be planted five thousand feet above the sea to lift it out of the mists of the lower air and bring it into the unobstructed vision of the heavenly worlds. Down on the plains of Sodom, Lot had no vision of God, but on the heights of Bethel, Abraham with nothing on earth but God to care for, received the covenant promise and the heavenly vision.

Again, the cares of the world, the anxieties of life are just as powerful to hinder the vision of God. Many reading these lines are so worried and distracted by a thousand earthly perplexities and troubles that their hearts are not at leisure to fix their eyes upon Jesus and behold the vision of His love. One look at Him, one sight of His almighty care would take away all your anxieties and give you the peace of God that passeth all understanding. Oh, look up from your cares with open face and hear Him say, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

The fault may be some grosser sin. A heart steeped in earthly passion and unholy thought,



imaginations, desires, purposes full of hatred, full of bitterness or full of impure desire, can never see God. "Without (holiness) no man shall see the Lord." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

We need not only the open face but the open ear, for God wants to speak to us, and He will not speak unless we are willing to listen. And so we find old Habakkuk saying, "I will set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." He was ready to hear and therefore God had something to say. He expected that he might be reproved; instead, he received messages of promise that became the keynotes of faith to the Church of God for all the coming ages. God will speak to us if we will hearken and He will always speak some word of love.

We need the open heart for He has said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." God is waiting not only to speak to us but to sit down and feast with us, to bring His heavenly banquet for our supply and taste of our poor gifts and sup with us as well as have us sup with Him. But we must open the door. The heart must be yielded. The affections must be opened without reservation to the inmost depths of our being.

We must have the obedient and responsive will. "Whereupon," says the apostle, "I was not obedient unto the heavenly vision." God comes not only to tell us things but to have us do them. His visitation and messages are for a practical purpose, and He expects a practical response. Have we already obeyed what we know? Are we willing if He should meet us this day to gladly respond and say, "Lord, I will go; speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth"? He came to little Samuel of old because He knew that Samuel would obey Him. He will come to you if He can find an open face, an open heart and an obedient will.

Finally, God shows us the vision of His grace and glory that we may take all He shows us and claim all He reveals. "All the land which thou seest," He said to Abraham, "to thee will I give it." "We have received . . . the spirit which is of God," the apostle adds as an echo of the same truth "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." We know them first by the revelation of the Spirit and then we take them by the appropriating act of faith. So He is waiting today to show us the vision of His infinite grace and power and then to give us all He shows us. Lift up your eyes, beloved, and look far and wide and long and steadily. Take it all in; for all that you can see God will give you. Look out upon the hard places of your life and behold Him waiting to transform them into victories. Take in the whole circumference of His resources and promises and then say, "All is mine." It is as if a father should take his favorite child through some beautiful place and ask her to inspect and admire its treasures of taste and beauty and after she had feasted her eyes upon it and expressed her admiration of its loveliness, he should hand her the key and say, "My darling child, all this is yours." And so He says to us, "All . . . which thou seest to thee will I give it." Let us look, let us take, and then let us use the fulness and the blessing all for Him and for those to whom He has made us witnesses and trustees of His grace and blessing.



A World-Wide Vision

Oswald J. Smith

Has the Church of Jesus Christ lost its world-wide vision? Does the spirit of the great apostle no longer dominate it? Would Paul be welcomed today among its leaders?

To go to a church and find its vision entirely localized is a sad experience. Such a church can hardly lay claim to being New Testament in any true sense of the word. It sees nothing outside its own four walls, its own town and denomination. Other leaders are unknown. Denomination comes first. Thank God, some are bigger than their denominations, who are Christians before they are anything else.

Oh, for such a vision! Nothing less will put us in line with the divine plan. It takes a world vision to efface self. No church is too small. There may be less than a hundred members, but with a vision of a world's need, God will put it on the map.

Paul said, "I must also see Rome." Rome was farther from Jerusalem in Paul's day than the North Pole is from the South Pole today. Then, too, he planned to visit Spain. You could not keep Paul in Palestine just because there was still work to be done there. He was an itinerant missionary, a spiritual explorer. Jesus likewise had His mind on the "other sheep," the "other villages." He saw, not a single city, but a world. When He died, He died for a world. When God loved, He loved a world. He "so loved the world that He gave" a world gift.

Peter had to get that vision. He saw only the Jews until one day God showed him the Gentiles. Then he knew that the Gospel was for the world. Persecution had to scatter the believers everywhere until they had a vision of a world ministry. When John Wesley said, "The world is my parish," he was but expressing this world vision which is so essential today.

It is always easy to tell when a church has a world-wide vision. The prayer meeting is one of the acid tests. Listen, if you will, to the petitions. In the average meeting for prayer, they center around the local church and the individual needs of the people. In fact, the whole prayer could be summed up in but one petition: "Lord bless me and mine." When a church has caught a world-wide vision, the prayers of the people will be

worldwide in scope. Petitions will be offered for various missionaries, missionaries whose names have become familiar. Many countries, still unevangelized, will be included.

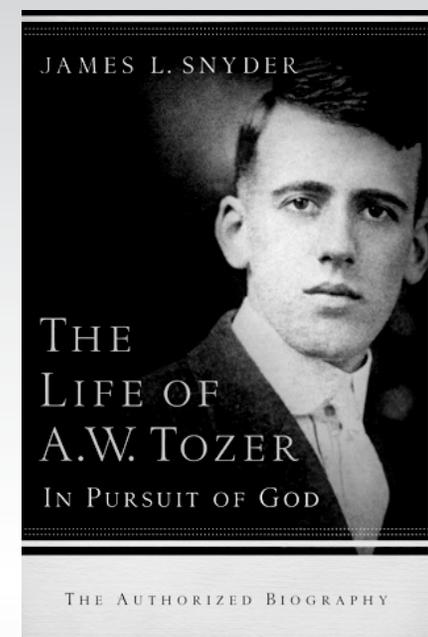
The type of building is another acid test. For the congregation that spends hundreds of thousands of dollars in creating a magnificent auditorium in which to worship, with every possible luxury and comfort and little or nothing for foreign missions, has never caught the vision of a world without Christ. I am afraid that if Jesus Christ were here, He would walk by many a church, for He could not avoid contrasting the Laodicean edifice of the twentieth century with the poverty-stricken mission fields of heathenism.

The same is true of the foreign field. Too much money by far is squandered in bricks and mortar. The converts of the Early Church worshipped in private homes, in cellars, in caves—anywhere. There is no record in the New Testament of the building of special places of worship. Churches, as we know them today, were not considered necessary in New Testament times. Jesus taught that God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Some societies built great institutions in foreign lands, only to have them confiscated in time of war and revolution. It is a known fact that the Faith Missions suffered least in the early disturbances in China, whereas others lost almost all, Faith Missions having put their money into the souls of men, rather than into buildings.

How can a church get a world-wide vision? By inviting someone who has seen the world to its pulpit. By enabling its pastor to visit the mission fields of the world. By getting the facts and accumulating a knowledge of conditions in other countries. By hanging a large missionary map of the world on the wall. By making a financial investment in the Regions Beyond. By holding an Annual Missionary Convention, and thus educating the people along missionary lines. Thus, a new interest will be created and a world-wide vision imparted.

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The Incredible Power of the Gospel

Keith M. Bailey



For the church to maintain the teaching and practices given to it by the apostles, it must go back periodically to the source; the revealed Word of God. Evangelism is one of those truths in need of in-depth review of what scripture says. Much of contemporary evangelism reflects the synthesis of biblical truths with the secular viewpoints and methodologies. It is not an exaggeration to say that the 21st century church has developed evangelism tools and methods difficult to identify with what the New Testament tells us about this subject.

The proclamation of the gospel is first of all a theological issue. Are we operating from a sound doctrine of the gospel? What makes up the message of the gospel? What is the full extent of the work done by the gospel? We cannot hope to move into the practice of evangelism until we have answered these questions.

In my own search for these answers, I was drawn to the epistles of Paul. This apostle evidently had a very high view of the gospel and sought to understand it in depth. His whole remarkable unfolding of the doctrine of salvation in Romans rests squarely on Paul's understanding of the gospel.

In Romans chapter one, Paul makes three important statements about his own association with the gospel. In verse 9 he says, "For God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing, I make

mention of you always in my prayers."

In the apostle's first insight on the gospel, he relates to the matter of prayer. He perceived that a large part of true evangelism was the ministry of prayer. The word "serve" used here by Paul means a priestly service. From Paul's stance, evangelism has its origin in prayer. Gospel work starts and ends with prayer. The evangelist must be a prayer warrior.

Paul again in verse 15 of chapter one speaks of the gospel.

"So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

If the gospel is to be preached with success, the evangelist must be ready. What does it mean to be ready? Did Paul mean that he has prepared a series of sermons on the gospel? Or, if he was to do personal one-on-one evangelism, did he have his tracts well-arranged and his Bible marked? No, Paul had something far more foundational in mind. He was referring to the spiritual preparation. He had already been crying to God in prayer for the souls of the Romans. Verse 14 indicates the old missionary felt a debt to both Jew and Gentile, and to people of every kind. That spiritual debt moved him to compassion for the lost. To know Christ as one's own Savior makes one a debtor to those still outside of Christ. There was nothing casual about Paul's passion for the lost.

The third reference to the gospel in the first chapter of Romans is a very clear explanation of

what the gospel is all about. It begins, however, with his own personal response to the gospel as a highly experienced evangelist. As verse 16 begins Paul is saying, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Here is a man who had suffered imprisonment, physical attacks and countless sufferings for the cause of Christ but in spite of all of them, he stood unashamed of the gospel. We, like Paul, must die to self to the extent we will never be ashamed of the gospel.

It is when the believer denies himself and takes up the cross that he is enabled in any circumstances to be unashamed of the gospel.

This verse moves on to state the gospel, which Paul preaches is the power of God. Because God's power is expressed in the gospel, this good news from heaven is unlimited in its power to transform the souls of men.

Touching the power of the gospel is an act of faith on the part of the person seeking God's grace so poured out in the gospel. In this phrase the power of God unto salvation, the central purpose of the gospel is defined. Salvation is more than the initial coming to God through Christ. This word embraces the entire work of salvation from justification to eternal glory. It is an ongoing process of sanctification.

Some gospel preaching proclaims the initial aspect of salvation with no references to the whole work of salvation. Good gospel preaching presents full salvation. Access to such blessing is by faith. To believe the gospel is more than acknowledging the truth of salvation through Christ. It is more than mental assent to truth. It is complete trust in the gospel message.

Verse 17 expands the gospel message to include the revelation of the righteousness of God. The gospel makes it clear that to be saved is to be not only forgiven but made righteous by the grace of God. A changed life is the most credible evidence of conversion.

Righteousness and justification are related in personal salvation. Being justified but lacking practical righteousness falls short of the expectation of the gospel. A true convert is saved by faith and continues to live by faith.

Paul turns to the human need for righteousness through the gospel. The good news of saving grace comes from heaven. As the heav-

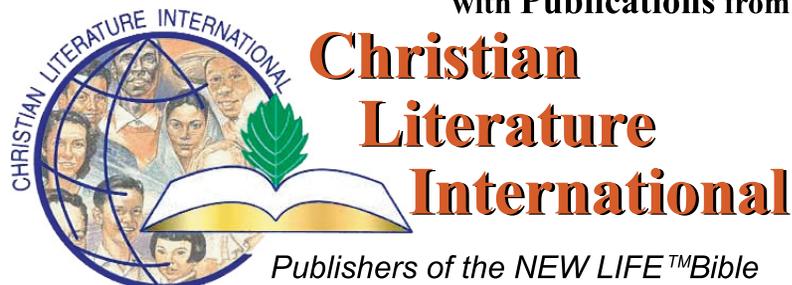
enly revelation portrays the righteousness that comes by faith, it also reveals the wrath of God, which necessitates the gift of righteousness. Have we really preached the gospel if no word is given of impending judgment?

One hears little of such preaching from contemporary pulpits. Evangelism literature is for the most part silent on this subject. Biblical salvation is more than relief and comfort for one's personal distress. It is deliverance from eternal damnation.

Everlasting punishment is the consequence of ignoring one's lost condition. We witness in our day to a culture that has no sense of the awful reality of being forever lost. That element of gospel preaching is a major need for the present generation. They could live a lifetime and die without ever hearing this gospel

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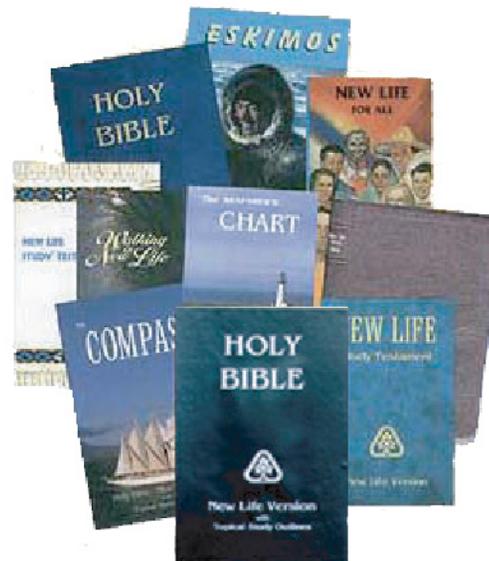


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truth. What's more, they may go to church every Sunday and not hear this truth.

There is a critical need to bring back the gospel the apostles received and preach it without hesitation. The gospel is not open to innovation. It is not ours to rewrite. The gospel is inspired scripture and, therefore, authoritative. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9).

The apostle continued dealing with this matter by reminding his readers that the gospel did not come by man. It came by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He later testifies to the fact that God had revealed His Son in Paul that he might preach Him among the heathens (Galatians 1:15-16).

In the first epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle to the Gentiles clarifies the fact that gospel preaching is preaching Christ. The passage on gospel preaching in I Corinthians 1:18 lays a finger on the heart of New Testament evangelism. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; But unto us that are saved it is the power of God." And, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:23-24).

Paul's understanding of the gospel was twofold. It was first of all the good news of God's Son and secondly it was the power of God unto salvation. No one would question the fact that Paul was one of the greatest evangelists of all time. At the core of Paul's doctrine of the gospel was the living Christ. No matter what tools or literature or other aids, you cannot succeed in presenting the gospel without knowing Christ, and loving Him above everything else in the world and surrendering to Him all your ransomed being.

If we are interested in recovering the kind of evangelism displayed in the Book of Acts we need to lay everything else aside, go to the cross and wait there until we are broken and totally depending on the power of God.

It is difficult to preach Christ crucified unless we are ourselves crucified with Christ.

Perhaps the time has come in the American church to carefully study the incident in Luke 5:5. When Jesus instructed the weary disciples to let down their nets again, the disciples responded, "Master, we have toiled all night and took nothing." But when they obeyed and let down the net, it was almost instantly filled with fish. Watchmen Nee made comments on this account that the disciples were blessed as soon as their expectation was from Christ.

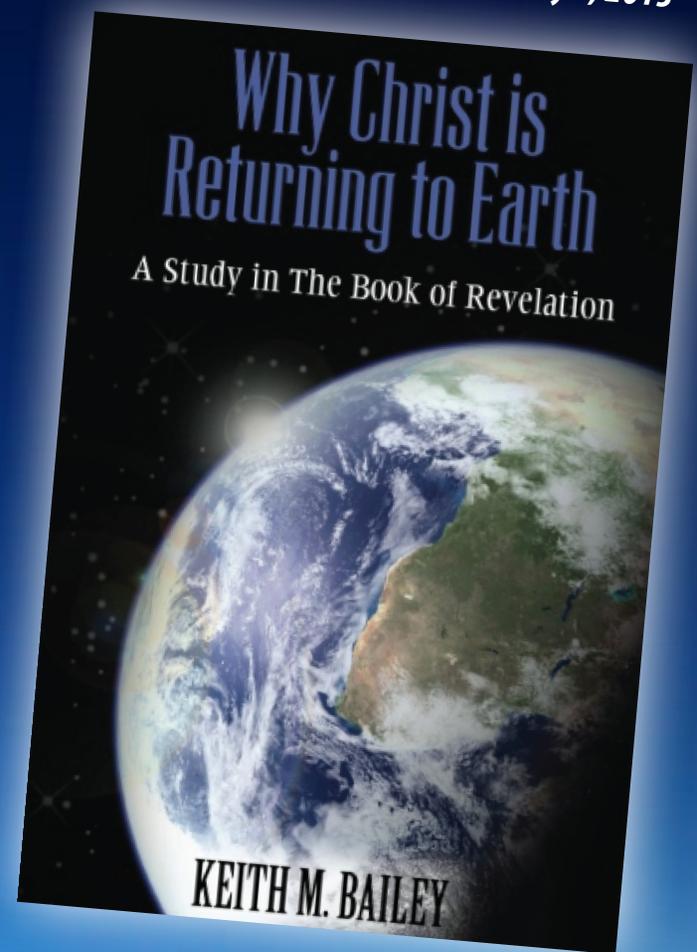
The multiplication of evangelism tools and methodologies no longer solve our problems. Could it be that as it was with Christ's disciples the modern church has grown weary of all the evangelists' activity and it is time in deep humility to listen for His voice saying "let down the net."

Be assured of one thing: The gospel of Jesus Christ has not lost its power.

Why Another Book on Revelation?

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Many believers find Revelation difficult and therefore they seldom read it and never have seriously studied it. It is also neglected from the pulpit. Both laity and pastors avoid it for the same reason. It seems too mystical and symbolic for anyone but a professional to understand. Such is not the case. It was written for all believers to read and comprehend. The Holy Spirit inspired the book of Revelation and if for no other reason the Bible declares it to be profitable for doctrine, correction, and instruction in righteousness.



This book is an attempt to let Revelation tell its own story. The central theme as set forth in the first verse is the unveiling of Jesus Christ in full victory and in His glorified state. The book begins with an announcement that Jesus has won. He is stage center and in charge from the beginning of the Revelation to its conclusion.

This last book of the Bible shows how the history of the world will terminate. Jesus Christ is to personally, bodily, return to earth and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. The fact that His church will reign with Him is of personal interest to every Christian. You cannot get this full story any place else in the Bible but the Revelation. The rapture of the church, the restoration of Israel, and the end of the times of the Gentiles show how God will close out history just as He had planned it. All these facts surround the incredible seven year tribulation period. It all makes sense when put in its context. History is laid aside and the door is opened to eternity.

This study of Revelation gives special attention to the key Christ gave John in Revelation 1:19. He told the apostle the book would be made up of three parts; the vision of the glorified Christ, the things that are an overview of the church age given in the seven letters, and the third section is comprised of the things hereafter. This third section begins with chapter four and continues to the end of the book. God is pleased to lift the veil on the future to the extent we need to be aware of it.

Other books by Keith M. Bailey may be found at www.kmbbooks.com.

Conversion: What Jesus Says About Salvation

Paris Reidhead

The Bible says that “in these last days [God has] spoken unto us by his Son” (Hebrews 1:2). Don’t you think it would be wise to discover what it is Jesus Christ says to us about His Father’s great salvation?

In Matthew 5:20, Jesus spoke to a company of people about the most important subject in the world: “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

What was the righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the law? It was a righteousness, which the most dedicated mind and consecrated intellect could produce without the Holy Spirit. The scribes and Pharisees fasted, tithed, prayed, abstained from eating meat, observed holy days and memorized scripture. They were most enthusiastic in discussions about their religion. Anyone can do all these things without the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

This says something of drastic importance to you and me: We can be orthodox in our theology, evangelistic in our zeal, missionary in our fervor and devout in the practice of our religion; we can fast, tithe and pray—all with our natural energy. You previously served the Devil with that same energy.

The Lord Jesus Christ says that the righteousness, which prepares you for heaven, is not produced with your own energy. The righteousness produced in us must be from another source entirely. The Lord wants His disciples to know that the righteousness, which is from above, results from the work of God in you.

Jesus spoke often about this new way of entering the life of the Spirit. He called it repentance—which is ceasing from trying to earn salvation man’s way and learning how to please God daily. In Luke 13:3-5, He says, “. . . Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

I must ask: Have you repented of your sin? Or have you neglected repentance? Without repentance, sinners cannot escape God’s wrath.

Repentance is defined by the Scriptures as a change of mind, turning away from the intention and purpose of pleasing self and choosing to please God. The seed of all righteousness and holiness is in repentance. Perhaps a man’s purpose—his aim and direction—is to please himself. When he repents, he must make an about-face. This is a complete turnabout.

From that moment on, the intention of this man is to please and glorify God—to satisfy only Him. The salvation of which Jesus speaks is not our being satisfied with Him; rather it is His being satisfied with us. Can you see how fatal it is to neglect the salvation that comes in repentance?

In Matthew 18:3, we get a picture of the Lord walking with His disciples. They have been arguing about which one of them will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. To illustrate His point, Jesus called a little child and set him on His knee. Then he turned to His disciples and said, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

The word for change in the King James Version is that good Bible word “converted,” which means, “turn again.” The Lord Jesus was saying

this to His disciples: Though you have repented—received and believed me—the evidence of the genuineness of my work in your heart is that every time your mind is in conflict with my mind, it must be my mind that prevails, just as a little child must accept the will of his parents.

This is the reason for Paul’s exhortation. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2).

Many of the things we carry into the life of forgiveness and pardon are not ordained of God and not according to His will. Therefore, at every step of our pilgrimage, when we find some sinful attitude in conflict with what His holiness prescribes, the evidence of a genuine work of God in our heart is that we turn again—we are converted—so that His way prevails.

For example, let’s say you are about to make a certain wrong choice or enter a wrong relationship—you are set on a direction He has allowed (not commanded) you to go. Suddenly, the Spirit of God stops you. His voice in your heart says, “You cannot go that way.” If you are His child, you will turn again and go in the way He leads.

Conversion is the attitude of correcting wrong things in the day-to-day Christian life. Suppose you have decided to drive from Minneapolis to New York City. The first thing you need to do is to head in the right direction—east. Even after you have decided to go east, you cannot just lock your wheels and step on the gas. All along the way, there will be tens of thousands of minute course corrections. As you drive along, there may be a slant in the road and so you will need to correct the wheels to allow for it.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we have a new tendency in our disposition—in our nature. Our purpose is to please God, and the evidence of the genuineness of His work in our hearts is that whenever we sense a drift toward that which is not of God—whenever we know something in us that is not pleasing Him—we make a correction in our course. By an act of our will we turn again from whatever would pull us into a ditch.

Conversion, then, means to have an attitude of constant correction from our will to the will of God, a continuous concern that we will please Him in all we do. This is not just the fact that at some point in our past we may have signed a decision card. Today—this very moment—the attitude of our heart must be: I want to please God.

If He shows you some action or attitude, anything you are doing that does not please Him, do not neglect the opportunity He gives for immediate deliverance. Do not rest in the past. Do not fall into the sin of neglect. Move continuously toward His will, and say in your heart, “Lord, I want to please You today as much as the day when I first met You.”

The Lord Jesus continues to speak to us of His so great salvation in John chapter 3. Three times, in as many verses, he says, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (v. 3). And, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (v. 5). And again, “Ye must be born again” (v. 7).

Our Lord Jesus could not have made it more clear. What prepares us for salvation, He

says, is not some action or movement we make toward God, but an action God has made toward us. His initial call to us, through the Holy Spirit, is a love-gift.

Before we lose our way here, however, you must understand that there is something we must do toward God, following the Holy Spirit’s wooing. We must repent. We must believe. The evidence of the genuineness of repentance and faith is this: When you repent and believe, God regenerates you by His Holy Spirit and gives the witness of the Spirit within your heart that you have passed from death to life. He lets us know, without a shadow of a doubt, that we have been born again.

It is fatal to commit the sin of neglect at this point! Be absolutely certain you repent, turning away constantly from the righteousness that is produced by our human effort, and turning toward the righteousness produced by God through the sovereign and supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

You may well ask, “How is this accomplished?”

In the gospel of John, the Lord spoke to a company of people who would make Him king. They wanted to be His disciples, but they asked Him for some certification, a credential—a miracle, for instance—that would prove He was who He said He was.

He responded:

“Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54).

So salvation is not just Christ on the cross, or Christ in the tomb, but Christ raised from the dead, ascended to the throne and pouring His eternal life back into you and me. It is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). It is He, becoming so united with the believer that it is as we have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood. He has become bone of our bone and life of our life. He has joined himself to us and we have received Him. Salvation is not from Him, salvation is in Him. He wants to be in you—to be your life. This is the testimony of the Word.

Therefore, if Christianity has not been meeting your high expectations, I encourage you to investigate your own heart. Is it possible you have neglected something God has been trying to have you know? Can you say, “Christ the Lord is my salvation”? That truth was clear to David, who exclaimed in Psalm 27:1, “The Lord [Jehovah] is my light and my salvation.”

You see, Christ is not our Savior because He is in heaven. He is our salvation when He lives in US.

Just as Jesus spoke to those Jews, He will continue to speak to us in these last days, something else about this so great salvation: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour” (John 12:24-26).

This so great salvation, which He purchased for us at such great price, insists on our following Him.

Where did the Lord Jesus go for us? He went to the cross and was crucified in our place

and in our stead. Like a kernel of wheat, He “fell to the ground and died,” knowing that if He did not suffer crucifixion He would remain but a single seed. He knew the Father had sent Him into the world for that hour and purpose. And so He had to die on the cross to produce many new seeds. Those who believe in Him and live in this world as He lived are the fruit of His love.

It is important for you to understand that our Lord, in His earthly ministry, mentioned the word “cross” only four times and it was always mentioned in reference to His disciples.

To the Twelve He said, “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:38).

Speaking to the rich young ruler, whom He instructed to sell all his possessions, He said, “. . . Come, take up the cross, and follow me” (Mark 10:21).

On two other occasions, Jesus made it plain that “whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (see especially Luke 14:27).

People could not understand what our Lord was saying then, and Christians today do not understand what the word cross means when Jesus used it in this context. Taking up the cross—that is, by daily identifying with His death—we are not only delivered from sin and hell, but it also means being delivered from the bondage of the world in which we live. This world governs and controls us. It forms our attitudes, fills our heads with its maxims and enslaves us by tantalizing us with its rewards and alluring interests. Taking up the cross includes salvation from our own personality, nature, traits and habits—and from those fleshly attitudes we have developed that make our hearts cold and dead to God’s Spirit.

When we live in Christ, we also experience deliverance from the Devil. We were his bond-slaves, since he was given control of our lives—first, by the father of the race, and later confirmed by us through our own choice when you and I reached the age of accountability. As children of the Devil, we exhibited his nature, performed his acts and accepted his government.

Now we have come to Jesus Christ, whose purpose is also to save us from the Devil, with all of his power and cunning and craftiness. The Lord Jesus died to set us free. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Will we allow our concern and interest to be fixed on worldly things that are more appealing to the human heart? Or will we accept the heavenly treasures that have been purchased for us at the tremendous price of the blood of Christ?

Today, you have heard the voice of the Lord concerning the length, breadth, height and depth of the salvation offered to you. Perhaps you feel a new stirring within. Perhaps what you are feeling is the awakening of your soul to truths that you may be seeing for the first time.

Awakening is itself, the first step in the spiritual pilgrimage. It is to this subject we must now direct our attention as we go step by step in our look at the “so great a salvation” that Jesus offers.

Dr. Jeffrey



Mackey

Any Way You Can Make It . . . Make It Home

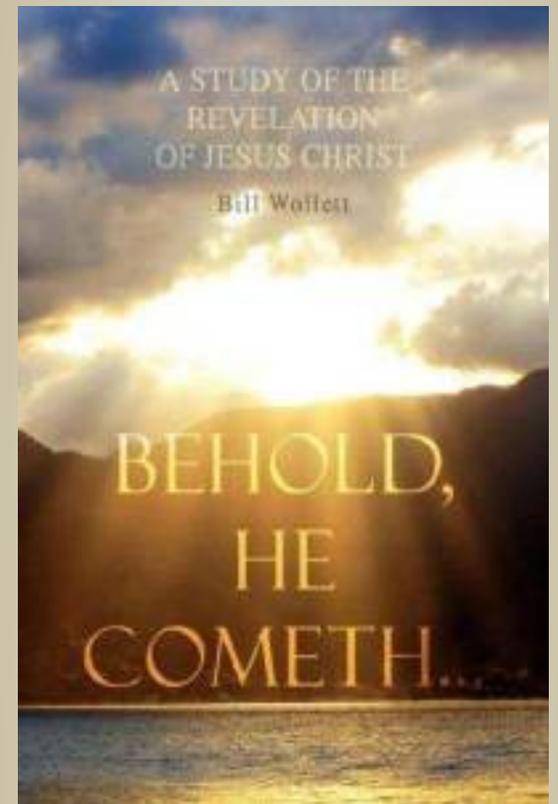
I must begin with one confession, and that is that the basic idea of this article came in 1995 at a convention, which was not recorded, and no notes were distributed. I remembered the outline, and the balance of what you read here is mine. Hats off to the man who preached something along these lines: lines, which have stayed with me for many, many years [truth has a subtle way of doing that—have you noticed?]. We move the “previous question,” therefore, basing what I wish to share about evangelism under the rubric of another’s outline.

I have been the same height since the October of my sophomore year of high school. That fact made every coach and every gymnastics teacher want me to play on his basketball team. They also saw the stride I had then—quite considerable—and were sure I would be a perfect baseball team player. Now, do not get me wrong, I am always a team player. As a matter of fact, right now, as an Episcopal priest, I am on the team of a Bishop who is one of the two or three most godly men I have ever met. I am on his team—but I am not on his team because I can shoot baskets or run bases. Oh yes, and once these coaches and gym teachers saw “Mr. Trip-Over-His-Own-Two-Feet” run, they did everything they could to make sure there was no place for me on any of the teams. I knew my deficiency, they needed to learn it. I don’t even endeavor to dance because

I would be a fatal partner. At my youngest son’s wedding, people made bets on my dancing versus my not dancing [and I love to watch a well choreographed waltz and dream]. To prove that I would, at least, try to dance, I took my son, in his borrowed tux, out into the parking lot where he and I danced. I was so dangerous that he reminded me: “Dad, this is a borrowed tux; don’t make me fall.” We gave it up and I went back into the party and discussed academia with his philosophy professor from college. Let’s settle that dancing is out—and sports are out, so I went into the ministry. But I know baseball, and if I had a favorite team sport to watch, it would be baseball [“Go Yankees!”].

Envision with me a baseball diamond. There are three bases: first, second, third and home plate. As simply as I can put it, the object of the game is to get as many “runs” as possible. A run is a player moving from home plate, where he begins, to first base, then second base and then to third base. Once on third base, it is the intense goal of that player to complete the “baseball diamond” and return to home plate. That is called a “run” and whichever team has the most “runs” at the end of the game wins! The Apostle Paul, though he would not have known baseball, knew about winning, and in I Corinthians 9:4 wrote, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receives the prize? So run, that ye

Without controversy, the Book of the Revelation is the most neglected book of the Bible. However, this first-century vision of St. John takes the reader into the 21st century and beyond! Written in down-to-earth language, this work enables even the reader with limited Bible knowledge to understand God’s message for these last days. “Behold, He Cometh...” provides a valuable guide for Bible Study groups, especially teens, by answering many questions and generating thought-provoking discussions. Also, those who are looking for a practical way to present the Gospel to friends and loved ones will find this book to be a gift that will speak to the heart.



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may obtain.” Similarly, he writes in Philippians 3:14 [NIV] “I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” We are not, therefore, too far off base [no pun intended] when we look at the Christian witness as a witness with four parts—you see conversion is more than just a personal “Jesus-and-me-and-I-don’t-know-about-you” kind of thing. Coming to Jesus Christ, completing evangelism is bringing a soul to Christ, making them conspicuous parts of his body, the Church and then following Jesus’ instructions, pressing them into service for God until they are called home to be with God Himself. What are these bases?

First base is conversion to God through the witness of the Holy Spirit to the work and provision of Jesus Christ. This is personal salvation. This occurs in so many and varied ways, there is not enough paper in the world to list the various ways people come to know Christ Jesus in a personal way. Every person’s dynamic encounter with the Trinity is different, while being all along, at the center, the same. So we must touch first base if we get no farther. This is essential to

each human person—to come to faith in Jesus for, as He, Himself tells us, “I am the way, the truth, and the life, no person comes to the Father except through me.”

Second base is a type of “conversion” to the local church. Many people come to Christ and never convert to the visible body of Christ. Others seem to be intimately converted to a local church and they seem not to know Christ at all. All the epistles of Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude, along with the seven letters of Jesus to seven churches in the book of The Revelation to John seem to indicate that personal involvement with the local body is not optional but that we must take it as a serious part of Christian life.

Third base is a “conversion” to service. According to Apostle Paul, each person has at least one gift of the Holy Spirit with which we are to be serving in Christ’s body, the church. This may include outreach, pastoral care, evangelism and any multitude of possible means of service to people. But if we have come to first base, the next two are expected of us as graciously obedient responses to the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But here, dear reader, is where the analogy with baseball breaks down. For, in baseball, a runner has no option . . . none whatsoever but to run the bases in order [that is why they are numbered, by the way]. First is followed by second is followed by third is followed by home plate and a “Run is scored!”

In the Christian faith, as long as you touch first base, you get home. It is the order in which you get to first base that does not matter at all. To those of us who are trying to “do the work of an evangelist” as Paul writes, this can be frustrating, because we have been taught first, then second, then third, then home. But people, as I wrote at the beginning of the article, are different. Some run those bases 1, 2, 3 and home; some run those bases by becoming involved in the church, then meet Jesus, and then begin service; and there are those who are doing service who discover the church and then finally come to Jesus. A story may help here, for my point again is this: reaching first base in Christianity is guaranteeing that you have made it home.

In the 1990s, I knew of a church in my town. The church was in a Jewish neighborhood of Long Island, New York. The church decided to open a thrift shop, and soon was stocked with some of the best items at phenomenal prices. The thrift shop was exclusively run by the women [and a few men] of the local church. The customers were from all ethnic groups and the shop thrived and met many needs. It also provided a wonderful outlet of service to others on the part of those church members involved.

One Saturday morning, a little Jewish lady, one who had donated many times, stopped at the counter and asked, “Do you need any volunteers? My husband died last month and I am lonely—I’d love to work here.” The pastor’s wife was behind the counter and grabbed the little lady and said, “Oh yes, you are welcome to work here whenever you wish, we are happy to have you.” And the little Jewish lady did! She worked when the store was open and she worked when it was closed and sorting was happening.

One day, after about eight months of faithful service, she asked the pastor’s wife, “Would you, your husband or anyone else be offended if I visited one of your church services?” Again, the pastor’s wife gave her a complete list of all the services the church held. Within two weeks, this little Jewish octogenarian was not only one of the most dependable workers in the thrift store, she was in regular attendance at every service of the church—her record exceeded that of many long-time members. She also began asking questions.

Then the day came. It was Palm Sunday, when she asked to speak to the pastor to see if she could be baptized and declare herself a Christian, saying, “I believe Jesus is the Messiah of the Jews and the Gentiles too!” The pastor was, of course, elated and scheduled her baptism for Pentecost Sunday, fifty days after Easter. He and his wife spent the time instructing her in the fundamental truths of the Christian faith.

You have already guessed the application. Had the pastor’s wife not been open enough to allow this little lady to run the bases backward, she may never have been challenged by the lives of Christians. She “converted” to service (third base); she “converted” to the church (second base); and she converted to Christ (first base); and knew at that point she was home: and home is the final goal of evangelism is it not? Great that we have the church through which to serve: but better to have Christ whom we serve. Keep the avenues open, you never know, you might see a grand-slam [ask your kids], and that would be an unparalleled blessing.

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Evangelism EPISCOPALIAN Style

Rev. Jeffrey A. Mackey

I am sure it is commonly held by most of the readers of this article that Episcopalians do not do evangelism. Many people think we are all about women priests (even to the point of calling them “priestesses”); or about consecrating homosexual bishops (as in New Hampshire in 2003); or most recently about approving trial rituals for the blessings of same-sex relationships. Those are the three things that have made the national news since the 1970s more than anything else about the Episcopal Church. I will not blame you if you do not go any further in reading this article. However, though the overall denomination is one of the fastest declining in America, it is one of the fastest growing in Africa, South Asia and South America. Hundreds a day are being led to Christ on the continent of Africa daily. This does not make the news. There are even churches in America where there are conspicuous numbers of people becoming Christian or returning to Christianity through the witness of Episcopalians. About eighteen years ago in the denomination a book was published that gave evangelism a push - - and the book should be slightly changed and rewritten for every “denomination” in America. It was given the title, *Leading Episcopalians to Christ*. That, coupled with what has been coming from Great Britain called, *The Alpha Course*, has turned the direction of many lives toward the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Discipleship, mentoring, and spiritual direction following men, women, young people and children in and outside of the church in finding out what it really means to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them and animating them spiritually 24/7.

What makes Episcopalian evangelism different is method, not message. There is only one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [even though as I write this, Actor Jamie Foxx has just declared, “our lord and savior Barack Obama”]. It matters not where you stand politically, that is the height of blasphemy—period. But there is only one Lord Jesus Christ and I wish to show what has been historically, currently and will have to be used in the future for Episcopalians to evangelize.

First, the method of Episcopalian evangelism was through the church or by family witness. Invitation to the Christian community, such as into a Christian family’s home for a dinner or dessert would be an American way, while many of the “High Church” Episcopalians would tend to invite people into the Lord’s redeemed family by inviting them to corporate worship. Therefore, usually lengthy, portions of Scripture are read, and we are convinced, no matter how mediocre the preacher, “God’s Word will not return to him void (empty).” I have watched now since November 1991 when I entered ministry in the Episcopal Church, how many people come to Christ because of invitation; open discussion; welcomed skepticism; and hospitable

enthusiasm. People expect to find something in a Church—Episcopalians, in theory, if not always in practice, understand this—shouldn’t we all? [As a side road, the Pastor’s Manual of an Evangelical denomination, some years ago included a service for receiving members. It said to the receiving church members, “All that these new members are led by Scripture to expect among believers they should experience here.” If many, really and truly, took that to heart—the church may be more effective in these early years of the twenty-first century.

That being a lesson from past Episcopalian evangelism, currently there are two or three movements, the best known being *The Alpha Course*, which teach people into the Kingdom of God. Many churches using *The Alpha Course* have no idea that it was begun and is led by Anglicans in Great Britain [Anglican: the word the Brits use for we “Episcopalians,” in the USA], and one need not agree with everything Alpha teaches to get amazing positive responses to the

Lord Jesus. Teaching someone into the Kingdom is very much a biblical model for it allows questions which Peter tells us we must be ready to answer: “Be ready always to give a reason for the hope that is in you whenever asked” (I Peter 3:15). So current evangelism takes past successful methods and adds to them the “apologetic” or the “have an answer” model to what has worked before. I know I have led many people to faith in Christ when then come to my study after church with a myriad of questions, many of which I can answer and they light up. Just last year [2011] a seventy-nine year old woman remained after a Good Friday service obviously to speak with me. She had one question, “You preach and act as if all this really happened: Jesus, crucifixion, burial, resurrection. Is that what you see as actually true and not myth?” I answered in the affirmative so rapidly that she almost fell away from me. She replied, “I’ve been taught from a child that this is just a nice story and a clean way to live. Nobody told me it was true and that Jesus really lived and is my Savior. I now believe it and He IS my Savior

and Lord. What a different Easter this will be!”

Finally, tomorrow must be addressed. The Episcopal Church as a denomination; an institution; is crumbling in many ways and in many places—with glowing exceptions. God is asking many of us priests, both pastors and itinerants as well as deacons and Bishops and laity as well, learn how to take the “faith, once for all delivered to the saints,” and create methods that in no way contradict that and tell the story. From yesterday, and from today, tomorrow must reflect the evangelistic method of “come and see.” The Samaritan woman ran throughout her town after Jesus told her all about herself crying out, “Come and see.” They did, and they were changed. Episcopalians, like many other Christians in America need to straighten up in many, many ways, so that when we say, “Come and see,” those that do will see some things they have never seen before—things that can only be explained by the conspicuous fact that Christ is present—welcoming whosoever will, to come.

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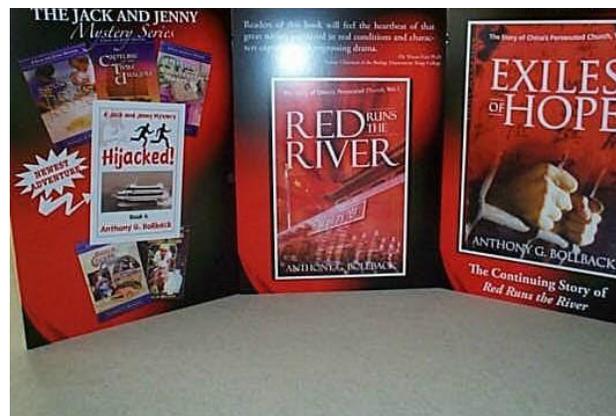
YOU MAY HAVE SEEN THIS HEADLINE BEFORE but the message never grows old! The fact is that it is happening in China right now as you read this! The task of reaching almost 1 1/2 billion people cannot be accomplished through trained pastors alone. There would never be enough. The answer lies in training believers to share their faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, and one-on-one. The B2J or Back to Jerusalem movement within the Church in China is doing just that and the Word is spreading so rapidly that it boggles the mind.

A Compass Direct News report this month states that Chinese Christians are beginning to make use of the Internet to share their faith. Facebook and Twitter are banned in China, but in their place is their own state-regulated social network called Weibo. It reportedly boasts of some 400 million users and it is growing rapidly. Christians are beginning to share their faith through testimony or prayers. Let us join in prayer for the Christians to be bold and for millions to hear the Word. One billionaire businessman shares prayers with his 6 million plus followers every Sunday! Imagine the impact on the nation!

that forbid Christianity to exist. Give thanks to God for thousands who are coming to Him for hope and the assurance of salvation. LET US PRAY for these believers to be strong in the Lord and clad in the full armor of God. Pray that they will be bold in their newfound faith, and when persecuted, to endure triumphantly.

AS GOD LEADS give to Church In China, Inc that is supporting several training institutes where believers are being trained. It requires about \$850.00 a month to keep one worker on the field. CIC has been able to send an average of \$300.00 a month to this project.

ABOVE ALL, please pray for all of these projects to reach many with the Good News. (See next page on how to give to this work.)



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BELIEVERS ARE SCATTERING all across the old Silk Trail not necessarily transporting spices to the mideast and Europe as in the days of Marco Polo, but carrying the gospel country by country with the goal of planting the seed that some day will become a church. And what success can we report? It is possible to tell you that Timothy, Esther, Adam, John, Paul, Luke, Mary, Eve, and hundreds of other Chinese believers, like their first century counterparts, are spreading the gospel person-by-person and country-by-country. Their real names and locations cannot be revealed for security reasons, but they are transferring their faith to others who in turn are transferring it to others. Christ at great physical risk in lands

As they work through a prescribe course of study in many cases, they are strengthened in their faith. When they move on to other areas, they begin a new group and train them to be witnesses. Pray for these Cultural Centers to be an effective means of building the Body.



News from Dalat

SOME URGENT PRAYER REQUESTS

have reached us from Penang, and we ask for your prayer support. Danielle Swenson, Jonathan and Julia's oldest child, lives in Japan with her husband who works for the military. She is in the midst of her second pregnancy but all is not going well. The military doctor recommended that she return to the States for the baby's birth in the spring because there may be difficulties giving birth. Please pray for God's miraculous healing touch at this time. Jonathan and Julia also have another need. Because of these circumstances and other considerations, they sense God's direction to return to the States in June after completing their two-year term. That means Jonathan is trusting the Lord to direct them into a new ministry here in the States. Please join them in prayer for this urgent need. Thank you to all who are contributing to their support. Anyone wishing to help meet the need at this time, please make checks payable to Community Alliance Church for a tax deductible receipt. Mail to 1622 Calvin Circle, Kissimmee, FL 34746. Your prayer support is most important.

Evangelists All

Serena Berthoud

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.”

Matthew 28:19

Evangelism the winning or reawakening of personal commitments to Jesus. Most Christians would take the position that these words are meant for others not themselves. I would venture to say that Jesus meant for every Christian no matter their station in life to go forth and make disciples of all nations. However, we expect our church leaders to be the evangelists, but can they reach the same people that you can? My ministry is different from my pastor’s ministry; the teenage Christian’s ministry is different from mine. We all have different opportunities in our daily walk to affect different type of people. We should embrace our ministry, win lost souls for Christ and make no mistake you and I do have our very own ministry.

As my pastor told us one Sunday where we are is where we are suppose to be, there is a purpose in our being at this place in our lives.

“And there they preached the gospel...” Acts 14:7

The apostle Paul and Barnabas were almost stoned and driven out of Iconium because of their evangelizing, they then came unto the towns of Lystra and Debre. Did they in fear no longer evangelize? No on the contrary their passion to spread the good news that, Christ had come to offer all that call on his name, eternal salvation never diminished? Can you claim the same eagerness to share your Christianity or are you a closet Christian? Do those that know you even know that you are a Christian and your savior is Jesus Christ? If your answer to these questions are no, then I would say that your Christianity is in question; or at the least on very shaky ground. Let’s draw strength from those who came before us, Jesus who died on the cross to carry away our sin, the disciples that suffered unspeakable persecution and even death but never shied away from the word and there commitment to give others a chance at eternal life.

“But watch thou all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” 2 Timothy 4:5

Now that we have established that we are evangelists, that we each have a ministry, what do we with this knowledge? Be ready. Ready for what you might say? I say ready for your opening. What opening? The openings the Lord gives us each and every day to share our testimony. You and I may be the only person that stands between a lost soul and the fires of hell.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:13-14).

They will hear through our voices raised for the cause of Christ, we are his preachers, his warriors; we are on the front lines of the battle. Reading this you may think, this is a heavy burden that I would rather not carry, but where would you be if Christ did not shoulder your burden. Why don’t we take the glass half-full mentality, turn it around and look at it as an awesome privilege that we have been given. Imagine you

have the power through the Holy Spirit to open up an eternity of unspeakable joy for a soul in need.

“And he gave some, apostles; some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some; pastors and teachers...” Eph 4:11

Do not expect that your road will be easy when you choose to follow the Lord’s command to go forth and make disciples of the nations. The world hated and feared the Savior so much they crucified him and still today, their hate of him is evident. The very name of Jesus threatens their way of life and brings into the light what they wish to stay in the dark. This world is not our home, but we are not to isolate ourselves from it, instead we are to bring this world Christ and help those suffering, thirsting for the word. Do you ever really look at the person sitting next to you and ponder what their faith would be if they perished today? Are you comfortable in the fact that if they do not know Christ that they face an eternity of damnation? If this thought breaks your heart then why are you not more passionate about telling everyone you encounter about Christ. Search your heart find your passion time is of the essence.

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28-29

Make sure that you understand and impart to others that it is not enough just to know the Lord, but you must call on his name with your whole heart. Their will be many good people in hell that were only willing to give a small part of themselves to the Lord, when he gave all to us. Our Father accepts nothing less from us; this is an all or nothing proposition. We cannot half step on our

commitment to God

“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will be devoted to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” Luke 16:13

Cain was wrong; we are our brothers’ keeper. The stranger sitting next to us may be our brother or sister in Christ, we are responsible for them; tell them the good news, Jesus is alive. We can spend eternity with him, take up your cross carrying it with grace and determination, the gates of heaven await. We are evangelists all.

My Ministry

Serena Berthoud

My ministry was long ago planned for me
Before I took my first breath and opened my eyes to see
My Savior already knew the road I was to take
He knew all the errors and mistakes I would make

But I was His from the very beginning
He entrusted to me souls for the winning
I must always be willing to

Speak His word
I was created to love him and serve

My ministry is to spread the good news
Jesus already gained the victory, you can no longer lose
You were born a sinner
But by accepting Jesus you become a winner

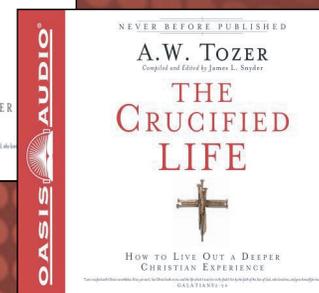
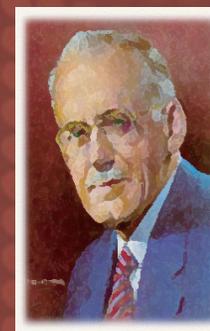
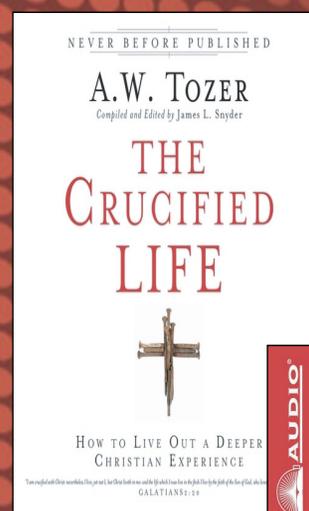
Go forth and tell others about Christ
How he lived, died, rose again, endured all the world’s strife
Now death no longer holds any power
We no longer have to live in fear of it and cower

My ministry is my greatest work
But around every corner the enemy cunning lurks
He creates diversions and smoke screens
Hold on to the Father and be washed clean

Tell Satan to go back to the pit
For with Christ in eternity I will sit
The Devil’s tests I will gladly endure
For my Savior carried away my sins to wash me clean and pure

My ministry is my destination
The reason for my creation
I embrace my evangelism
The Lord is my decision

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IPM

Interim Pastoral Ministries

Strategic Planning For Church Health and Growth

Tom Harris, Executive Director

In the nine churches I have served as interim pastor, after a season of correction there always came a season of redirection. At this stage of interim work, I have led our church and its leadership in a six step strategic planning process. The outcome of this planning is to discover and begin implementing God's plans for the church's future.

A simple process for discerning your church's future is to ask and answer these six questions:

1. What is our purpose? Our ultimate purpose is to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:13). The Westminster Confessions says that we exist to "love God and enjoy Him forever."

2. What is our mission? Mission asks and answers the question: What work has God given us to do? The work God has given us is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Therefore, help your church express this mission in a short and memorable statement. One church I served labored hard and came up with this excellent mission statement: Share Christ (Evangelism) Build Believers (Edification) and Serve Others (Extension). Another church simplified it into this memorable statement: Our mission is to help people find and follow Christ. The church I currently serve has this excellent mission statement: "Our mission is helping people Come to Christ, Grow in Christ and Serve for Christ." These mission statements are short, memorable and biblical.

3. What are our values? Your values are the core principles that identify what is important to your church. They are "why" you do what you do. So, what drives your church? Correct values like prayer, knowing and applying the Word of God and Evangelism? Or is your church being driven by incorrect values like "status quo", "inward focus" or "traditionalism."

4. What is our vision? Vision asks and answers the question: Where are we headed? Vision is a faith statement that paints a picture of what your church will look like in the future

when your church is "hitting on all cylinders" and reaches your preferred future? So what is the compelling picture of where your church is headed?

5. What is our strategy? Strategy asks and answers the question: How will we fulfill our mission and vision. I like to have my churches implement their evangelism, discipleship and missional extension through six programs: (1) Outreach (2) Assimilation (3) Worship (4) Spiritual Formation (5) Service locally (6) Missions globally. These six programs sequentially put programs in place to complete the mission of Evangelism, Discipleship and Missional Extension

6. What are our one-year goals and objectives? Goals and Objectives are the actions steps to fulfill our plan. As an interim pastor, you will have about a 12 month time period to accomplish the initial goals and objectives. Many of these goals and objectives will become part of the job description of the new Pastor and they will indeed inform the profile of the type of Pastor who can carry this church to its preferred future.

So, the next time you are leading a Church's Visioning Team use this six-step process and your church's dreams will become reality. God bless you in the strategic journey. For a great planning resource, see Strategic Planning by Aubrey Malphurs.

Interim Pastor Ministries' mission is to "serve, stabilize and strengthen churches in pastoral transition." IPM fulfills this mission by recruiting, training and placing interim pastors into churches that are without pastors. IPM has served over 850 churches in its 22-year history.

If you know of a church that needs an interim pastor or if you are a Pastor who would like to serve as an Interim Pastor, please contact IPM at (800) – 501-7117. You can also visit IPM's website at:

www.interimpastors.com



Rader-GRAMS

The Old Miner's Bride -

You cannot work for your salvation, but bless God, you can work for your crown and you can suffer with Him that you might reign with Him.

Like the far-famed Western miner who became suddenly worth five millions of dollars. A great company in London bought his mine and paid him five million dollars. He did not know there was that much money in the world. When he got his check and his lawyers had told him how to arrange his finances, he began being liberal. A great city in the West invited him to a great banquet. They wanted him to give them a city park. One of the committee on arrangements said after his arrival at the hotel, "You look rather seedy. Your whiskers are too long, and your hair, we will give you a valet and he will cut your hair and get your whiskers looking nice, and polish you up, and put you in a dress-suit and you will look fine."

The old fellow said, "Go as far as you like. I suppose if I accept the invitation I have to take the whole business." So he had his whiskers trimmed in a nice Van Dyke. Then came the awful ordeal of getting into a dress-suit, but he made it. You could not ask for a finer looking man of sixty. He was a humorous old fellow. They were not fooling him at all, but thought they were. He said to himself, "I would just as well see what those fellows call life, I guess. I pity them if what they are doing now they call living."

He had seen life on many sides and knew it front and back, but he wanted to see what fools they would make of themselves. They entertained him royally. Men came to him with a thousand schemes, all of them lovely. They saw so much to him and admired him so much (five thousand dollars' worth, and others ten thousand dollars' worth). He listened to all of them, accepted their invitations to pink teas and yellow teas and blue teas. He went and ate their crackers and their ice creams and puddings and talked it over.

Every woman who had a marriageable daughter that could get an invitation brought her around, some of the widows were there and folks that wanted to look at the man with so much money. Finally, one young woman who thought she was extra bright warmed up to him. She was with him on many occasions and the papers were saying that there might be a marriage later. "Oh, you must lead such a romantic life in the mountains," she was saying to him in the presence of a young reporter, "with their murmuring streams, and you know those little things they call burros."

"Yes," he answered, "we call them the Rocky Mountain Canary Birds."

"Why?" she asked.

"Because they sing so nicely early in the morning. Did you ever hear one sing?" "No-o—not exactly."

"They never sing exactly."

"What is it?"

"A little thing about half the size of a mule."

"Did you ever see a pick?"

"A tooth-pick?"

"No, I mean a pick that you dig earth with."

"Wouldn't that be romantic, turning the soil over and the gold right underneath? How perfectly dear and wonderful. You drink out of the streams, don't you? You must have lovely things to eat—bear meat and deer meat. Oh," she exclaimed with her eyes, looking great longing looks into his eyes, "I am just wild for such a life, I really am."

The old fellow got sicker and sicker. She did not know anything about his life and yet she would have married him gladly for his money. Other women said like things, but he could stand no more. Finally, one night in the hotel he saw the fire-escape rope and how to work it. He took off his dress suit, wrote a little note and left it on the table, and sneaked out the back window and took the train and went home.

Everybody hunted for him. The report ran out that the millionaire had been kidnapped. They hunted everywhere for him. Finally a newspaper fellow said, "I know where he is," and went up to his old mine.

Up the rugged paths the newspaperman climbed. Finally at the falls above Trout Lake he came to the little pine log cottage with its great porch overhanging the side hill. On the porch stood a big, brawny but sweet faced woman saying, "Welcome to our country, young stranger."

"How do you do," he answered.

"What do you want here?" she asked, "won't you come in and have something to eat? You look like you were starved to death. My, but you are a spindlin' lean one. You are not a miner, are you? What in the world did you wear those shoes for? You must have paid five dollars for them, and you never can wear them again. What are you doing up here?"

"I thought maybe there was a man here by a certain name."

"There is," she answered, and went to the back door and said, "Hey, Jim, there is a boy here wants to see you." The reporter was very nervous but big Jim, the old miner, put him at his ease with a hearty handshake.

"How did you get out of the hotel?" finally ventured the reporter.

"Slipped down the rope fire escape."

"What for?"

"Come on boy; sit out on the porch a minute." The old man sat down, stuck his boots on the porch rail and began talking to the boy. "Son," he said, "that lolly-pop life you folks lead down there is sickenin'. You're all bluff. You never fooled me. Those fellows don't know how to live. They are living a little trivial kind of an existence. The last night that gal was talking to me—think of me marrying that. Now you know, I would sit down comfortable some evening to tell about my hardships when I used to be kicked out and people wouldn't even give me credit for a dollar's worth of stuff, and I would wander around and get a stake from some fellow, and go up in the hills again. She wouldn't know anything about it. And here is Mary, you know—"

"Who is Mary?"

"Mary is my bride."

"Mary your bride?"

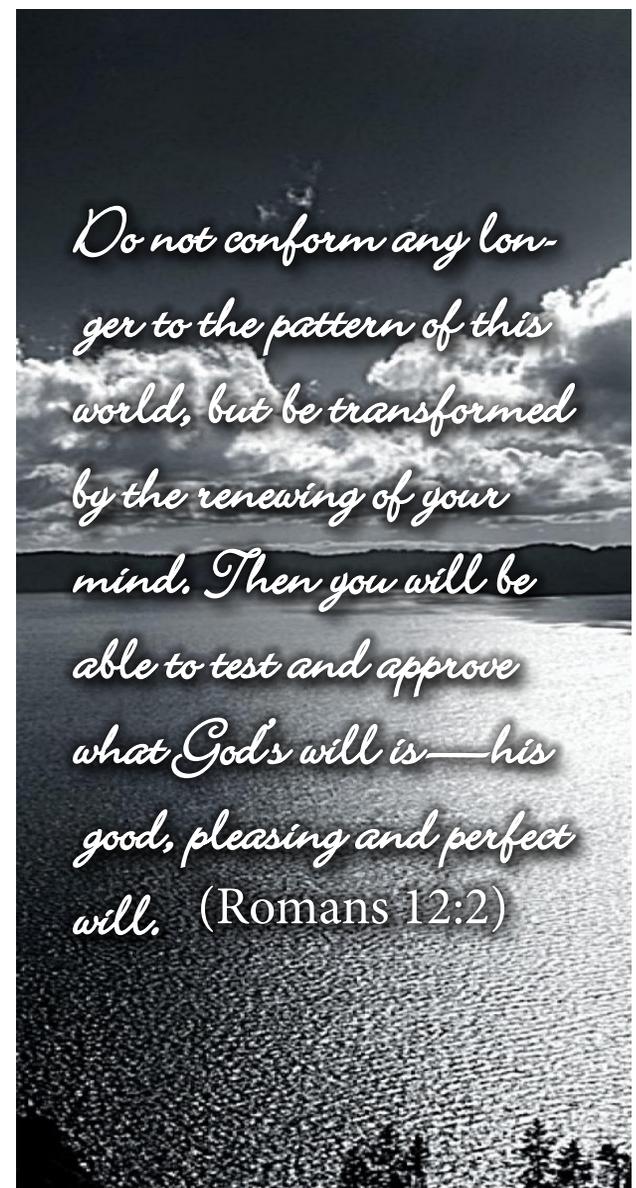
"Sure."

"They told me she was your washerwoman!"

"That is right, she washed for me for nothing and I would pay her up when I could. Come a time when I was broke and Mary would say, 'I guess I can give you a little grub,' and when I struck it rich do you suppose I was not going to remember Mary? She has been my friend and when everybody else would turn me down, she would take me in. I have always loved Mary, but didn't have anything to give her and didn't have gall enough to ask her to marry me. As soon as I got the fortune I came back and we got married right away and I am going to build her the finest house and everything that millions can buy. Everything that gal's heart wants, it is going to get. Why? Because Mary suffered with me and put up with me when I wasn't wanted by others."

"And Mary and I can sit down and say, 'Do you remember that hard winter when the snow was deep and we thought we were going to starve?' and she will answer, 'Indeed I do,' and we can chum together. We have suffered together, gone through things together, and she knows what the shovel is and the pick and she has had calluses on her hands where she has helped me when I was down on my luck. She stuck by me when I was a nobody and now that I'm somebody I'm going to lavish my fortune on her. I'm goin' to get all my fun doin' things for her."

We are the bride of Christ. Will we go through suffering now for Him? He is coming again as a king.



ROSE OF SHARON

Jesus the sweet Rose of Sharon is,
Jesus the lily fair.
Now the summer is fled
And the flowers are dead;
Thou art alive up there.

Jesus, the heart of my heart of hearts,
Jesus is ever nigh.
When my flesh has grown numb
And this tongue has grown dumb,
I will shout with Thee on high.

Jesus, for Thee I yearn.
Thou wilt soon come again
Like the fresh spring time rain,
Quickly, O Lord, return.



THE FIRST OBLIGATION OF THE CHURCH

The first look of the church is toward Christ, who is her Head, her Lord and her All.

After that, she must be self-regarding and world-regarding, with a proper balance between the two.

By self-regarding I do not mean self-centered. I mean that the church must examine herself constantly to see if she be in the faith; she must engage in severe self-criticism with a cheerful readiness to make amends; she must live in a state of perpetual penitence, seeking God with her whole heart; she must constantly check her life and conduct against the Holy Scriptures and bring her life into line with the will of God.

By world-regarding I mean that the church must know why she is here on earth; that she must acknowledge her indebtedness to all mankind (Rom. 1: 14, 15); that she must take seriously the words of her Lord, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" and "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The task of the church is twofold: to spread Christianity throughout the world and to make sure that the Christianity she spreads is the pure New Testament kind.

Theoretically the seed, being the Word of God, should produce the same kind of fruit regardless of the spiritual condition of those who scatter it; but it does not work that way. The identical message preached to the heathen by men of differing degrees of godliness will produce different kinds of converts and result in a quality of Christianity varying according to the purity and power of those who preach it.

Christianity will always reproduce itself after its kind. A worldly-minded, unspiritual church, when she crosses the ocean to give her witness to peoples of other tongues and other cultures, is sure to bring forth on other shores a Christianity much like her own.

Not the naked Word only but the character of the witness determines the quality of the convert. The church can do no more than transplant herself. What she is in one land she will be in another. A crab apple does not become a Grimes Golden by being carried from one country to another. God has written His law deep into all life; everything must bring forth after its kind.

The popular notion that the first obligation of the church is to spread the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth is false. Her first obligation is to be spiritually worthy to spread it. Our Lord said "Go ye," but He also said "Tarry ye," and the tarrying had to come before the going. Had the disciples gone forth as missionaries before the day of Pentecost it would have been an overwhelming spiritual disaster, for they could have done no more than make converts after their own likeness, and this would have altered for the worse the whole history of the Western world and had consequences throughout the ages to come.

To spread an effete, degenerate brand of Christianity to pagan lands is not to fulfill the commandment of Christ or discharge our obligation to the heathen. These terrible words of Jesus haunt my soul: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when

A promotional banner for the 'LIFE 2013 Countdown' event. The top section has a yellow background with the word 'LIFE' repeated five times in a stylized, 3D font. Below this, a large, semi-transparent 'LIFE' logo is centered over a background image of a crowd of people with their hands raised. A red banner across the middle contains the text 'Preparing for LIFE 2013' and 'Attention Youth Pastors!' with a hand icon pointing right. Below the red banner, the text 'LIFE 2013 Countdown' is written in white. The bottom section features a large, stylized 'LIFE 2013' logo in red and white, with 'St. Louis, MO' and 'July 9-13' written below it in a white, hand-drawn style. The background of the bottom section is a dark image of a crowd.

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he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”

To win men to Judaism from among the Gentile nations was altogether a good and right thing to do. Thousands of happy converts were won to the religion of Moses during the years of Israel's spiritual ascendancy, but at the time of Christ Judaism had sunk so low that her missionary effort wrought actual harm instead of good.

It would appear logical that a subnormal, powerless church would not engage in missionary activity, but again the facts contradict the theory. Christian groups that have long ago lost every trace of moral fire nevertheless continue to grow at home and reproduce themselves in other lands. Indeed there is scarcely a fringe sect or heretical cult these days but is enjoying amazing success among the backward peoples of the world.

The evangelical wing of the church has in recent years become world-regarding to a remarkable degree. Within the last twenty years evangelical missionary activity on foreign fields has been stepped up tremendously. But there is in the whole thing one dangerous weakness. That weakness is the naive assumption that we have only to reach the last tribe with our brand of Christianity and the world has been evangelized. This is an assumption that we dare not make.

Evangelical Christianity is now tragically below the New Testament standard. Worldliness is an accepted part of our way of life. Our religious mood is social instead of spiritual. We have lost the art of worship. We are not producing saints. Our models are successful businessmen, celebrated athletes and theatrical personalities. We carry on our religious activities after the methods of the modern advertiser. Our homes have been turned into theaters. Our literature is shallow and our hymnody borders on sacrilege. And scarcely anyone appears to care.

We must have a better kind of Christian soon or within another half century we may have no true Christianity at all. Increased numbers of demi-Christians is not enough. We must have a reformation.

RELIGION = *Action*

Religion Should Produce Action

A. W. Tozer

The supreme purpose of the Christian religion is to make men like God in order that they may act like God. In Christ the verbs to be and to do follow each other in that order.

True religion leads to moral action. The only true Christian is the practicing Christian. Such a one is in very reality an incarnation of Christ as Christ is the incarnation of God; not in the same degree and fullness of perfection, for there is nothing in the moral universe equal to that awful mystery of godliness which joined God and man in eternal union in the person of the Man Christ Jesus; but as the fullness of the Godhead was and is in Christ, so Christ is in the nature of the one who believes in Him in the manner prescribed in the Scriptures.

God always acts like Himself wherever He may be and whatever He may be doing. When God became flesh and dwelt among us He did not cease to act as He had been acting from eternity. "He veiled His deity but He did not void it." The ancient flame dimmed down to spare the helpless eyes of mortal men, but as much as was seen was true fire. Christ restrained His powers but He did not violate His holiness. In whatsoever He did He was holy, harmless, separate from sinners and higher than the highest heaven.

Just as in eternity God acted like Himself and when incarnated in human flesh still continued in all His conduct to be true to His holiness, so does He when He enters the nature of a believing man. This is the method by which He makes the redeemed man holy. He enters a human nature at regeneration as He once entered human nature at the incarnation and acts as becomes God, using that nature as a medium of expression for His moral perfections.

Cicero, the Roman orator, once warned his hearers that they were in danger of making philosophy a substitute for action instead of allowing it to produce action. What is true of philosophy is true also of religion. The faith of Christ was never intended to be an end in itself nor to serve instead of something else. In the minds of some teachers faith stands in lieu of moral conduct and every inquirer after God must take his choice between the two. We are presented with the well-known either/or: either we have faith or we have works, and faith saves while works damn us. Hence the tremendous emphasis on faith and the apologetic, mincing approach to the doctrine of personal holiness in modern evangelism. This error has lowered the moral standards of the church and helped to lead us into the wilderness where we currently find

ourselves.

Rightly understood, faith is not a substitute for moral conduct but a means toward it. The tree does not serve in lieu of fruit but as an agent by which fruit is secured. Fruit, not trees, is the end God has in mind in yonder orchard; so Christ-like conduct is the end of Christian faith. To oppose faith to works is to make the fruit the enemy to the tree; yet that is exactly what we have managed to do. And the consequences have been disastrous.

A miscalculation in laying the foundation of a building will throw the whole superstructure out of plumb, and the error that gave us faith as a substitute for action instead of faith in action has raised up in our day unsymmetrical and ugly temples of which we may well be ashamed and for which we shall surely give a strict account in the day when Christ judges the secrets of our hearts.

In practice we may detect the subtle (and often unconscious) substitution when we hear a Christian assure someone that he will "pray over" his problem, knowing full well that he intends to use prayer as a substitute for service. It is much easier to pray that a poor friend's needs may be supplied than to supply them. James' words burn with irony: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" And the mystical John sees also the incongruity involved in substituting religion for action: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."

A proper understanding of this whole thing will destroy the false and artificial either/or. Then we will have not less faith but more godly works; not less praying but more serving; not fewer words but more holy deeds; not weaker profession but more courageous possession; not a religion as a substitute for action but religion in faith-filled action.

And what is that but to say that we will have come again to the teaching of the New Testament?




Wanted -
*A Prophet To Preach
 To The Preachers!*
 Leonard Ravenhill


“Let me burn out for God. After all, whatever God may appoint, prayer is the great thing. Oh, that I may be a man of prayer!”
 —Henry Martyn

“Love is kindled in a flame, and ardency is its life. Flame is the air which true Christian experience breathes. It feeds on fire; it can withstand anything, rather than a feeble flame; but when the surrounding atmosphere is frigid or lukewarm, it dies, chilled and starved to its vitals. True prayer MUST be aflame.”
 —E. M. Bounds

*O for a passionate passion for souls,
 O for a pity that yearns!
 O for the love that loves unto death,
 O for the fire that burns!
 O for the pure prayer-power that prevails,
 That pours itself out for the lost!
 Victorious prayer in the Conqueror’s Name,
 O for a PENTECOST!*
 —Amy Wilson Carmichael

years of silence without a “Thus saith the Lord”—four hundred years of progressive deterioration in spiritual things. With a river of beasts’ blood for its atonement and with an overfed priesthood for its mediator, Israel, God’s favored nation, was lost in ceremony, sacrifice and circumcision.

But what an army of priests could not do in four hundred years, one man “sent of God,” John the Baptist, God-fashioned, God-filled and God-fired, did in six months!

I share the view of E. M. Bounds that it takes God twenty years to make a preacher. John the Baptist’s training was in God’s University of Silence. God takes all His great men there. Though to Paul, the proud, law-keeping Pharisee of colossal intellect and boasted pedigree, Christ made a challenge on the Damascus road, it needed his three years in Arabia for emptying and unlearning before he could say, “God revealed Himself in me.” God can fill in a moment what may take years to empty. Hallelujah!

Jesus said, “Go ye!” But He also said, “Tarry until!” Let any man shut himself up for a week with only bread and water, with no books except the Bible, with no visitor except the Holy Ghost, and I guarantee, my preacher brethren, that that man will either break up or break through and out. After that, like Paul, he will be known in hell!

John the Baptist was in God’s School of Silence, the wilderness, until the day of his showing forth. Who was better fitted for the task of stirring a torpid nation from its sensual slumber than this sun-scorched, fire-baptized, desert-bred prophet—sent of God with a face like the judgment morning? In his eyes was the light of God, in his voice was the authority of God and in his soul was the passion of God! Who, I ask, could be greater than John? Truly “he did no miracle,” that is, he never raised a dead man; but he did far more—he raised a dead nation!

This leathern-girdled prophet with a time-limit ministry so burned and shone that those who heard his hot-tongued, heart-burning message, went home to sleepless nights until their blistered souls were broken in repentance. Yet John the Baptist was strange in doctrine—no sacrifice, ceremony, or circumcision; strange in diet—no winebibbing nor banqueting; strange in dress—no phylacteries nor Pharisaic garments.

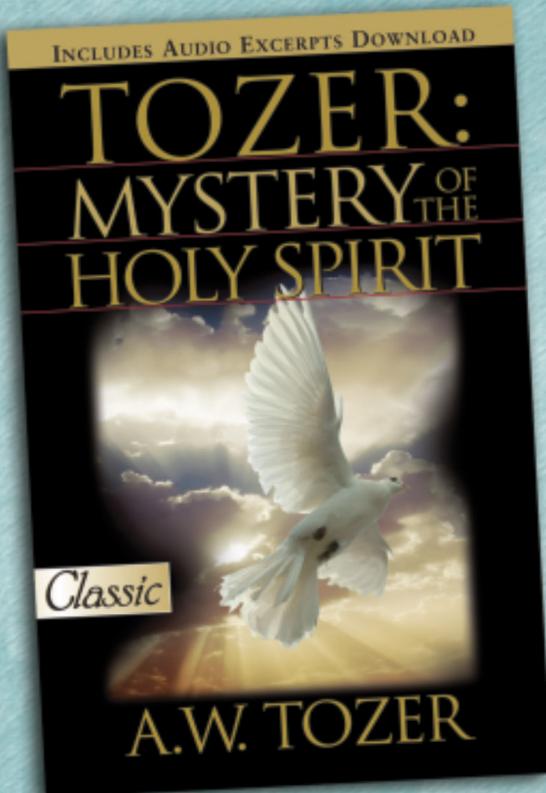
Yes, but John was great! Great eagles fly alone; great lions hunt alone; great souls walk alone—alone with God. Such loneliness is hard to endure and impossible to enjoy unless God-accompanied. Truly, John made the grade in greatness. He was great in three ways: great in his fidelity to the Father—training long years, preaching short months; great in his submission to the Spirit—he stepped and stopped as ordered; great in his statements of the Son—declaring Jesus, whom he had never seen before,

To attempt to measure the sun with an inch tape could hardly be more difficult than attempting to measure John the Baptist by our modern standards of spirituality. At Jordan, the anxious crowd asked concerning the newborn child, “What manner of child shall this be?” They were told, “He shall be great in the sight of the Lord.”

Today we are prodigal with the use of this word “great,” for we mistake prominence for eminence. In those days, God wanted not a priest nor a preacher, but men. There were plenty of men then, as now; but all were too small. God wanted a great man for a great task!

John the Baptist probably had not one qualification for the priesthood, but he had every quality to become a prophet. Immediately before his coming there had been four hundred years of darkness without one ray of prophetic light—four hundred

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as “the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.”

John was a “Voice.” Most preachers are only echoes, for if you listen hard, you will be able to tell what latest book they have read and how little of the Book they quote. To reach the masses we need a Voice—a heaven-sent prophet to preach to preachers! It takes broken men to break men. Brethren, we have equipment but not enduement; commotion but not creation; action but not unction; rattle but not revival. We are dogmatic but not dynamic!

Every epoch has been initiated by fire; every life, whether of preacher or prostitute will end with fire—judgment fire for some, hell-fire for others! Wesley sang, “Save poor souls out of the fire and quench their brands in Jesus’ blood.” Brethren, we have only one mission—to save souls; and yet they perish! Oh! think of them! Millions, hundreds of millions, maybe over one thousand million eternal souls, need Christ. Without Eternal Life, they perish! Oh! the shame of it! the horror of it! the tragedy of it! “Christ was not willing that any should perish.” Preachers, people go by the millions to hell-fire today because we have lost Holy Ghost fire!

This generation of preachers is responsible for this generation of sinners. At the very doors of our churches are the masses—unwon because they are unreached, unreached because they are unloved. Thank God for all that is being done for missions overseas. Yet it is strangely true that we can get more “apparent” concern for people across the world than for our perishing neighbors across the street! With all our mass-evangelism, souls are won only in hundreds. Let an atom bomb come and they will fall by the thousands into hell.

To say that the sin of today has no parallel is without foundation. Jesus said, “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” We find a graphic picture of Noah’s time in Genesis 6:5, “God saw...the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination...of his heart was only evil continually.” So it was, evil without exception, every imagination; evil without mixture, only evil; evil without intermission, evil continually. As it was, so it is! Sin today is both glamorized and popularized, thrown into the ear by radio, thrown into the eye by television and splashed on popular magazine covers. Church-goers, sermon-sick and teaching-tired, leave the meeting as they entered it—visionless and passionless! Oh God, give this perishing generation ten thousand John the Baptists—to tear away the bandages put over our national and international sins by politicians and moralists!

Just as Moses could not mistake the sight of the burning bush, so a nation could not mistake the sight of a burning man! God meets fire with fire. The more fire in the pulpit the less burning in hell-fire.

John the Baptist was a new man with a new message. As a man accused of murder hears the dread cry of the judge, “Guilty!” and pales at it, so the crowd heard John’s cry, “Repent!” until it rang down the corridors of their minds, stirred memory, bowed the conscience and brought them terror-stricken to repentance and baptism! After Pentecost, the onslaught of Peter, fresh from his fiery baptism of the Spirit, shook the crowd until as one man they cried out: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Imagine someone telling these sin-stricken men, “Just sign a card! Attend church regularly! Pay your tithes!” No! A thousand times NO!

Unctionized by the Spirit’s might, John cried, “Repent!” And they did! Repentance is not a few hot tears at the penitent form. It is not emotion, remorse or reformation. Repentance is a change of mind about God, about sin and about hell!

Nature’s two greatest forces are fire and wind, and these two were wedded on the Day of Pentecost. Thus, just like wind and fire, that blessed “upper room” company were irresistible, uncontrollable, unpredictable—Then their fire started missionary fires, quenched the violence of fire, lit martyr fires and started revival fires!

Two hundred years ago, Charles Wesley sang

**“O that in me the sacred fire
Might now begin to glow,
Burn up the dross of base desire,
And make the mountains flow!”**

Dr. Edwin Hatch cried,
**“Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with Thy fire divine.”
Holy Ghost fire destroys, purifies,
warms, attracts and empowers.**

Some Christians cannot say when they were saved. But I never knew a man yet who was baptized with the Holy Ghost and Fire and was unable to say when it happened. Such Spirit-filled men shake nations for God, like Wesley who was born of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, and lived and walked in the Spirit.

An automobile will never move until it has ignition—fire; so some men are neither moved nor moving because they have everything except fire.

Beloved brethren, there is to be a special judgment for preachers; they shall receive the greater condemnation (James 3:1). Can it be possible that as they stand condemned before the bar of God, men will turn on some and say, “Preacher, if you had had Holy Ghost fire, I should not now be going to hell-fire.” Like Wesley, I believe in the need for repentance in the believer. The promise of the Father is for you. Just now, on your knees in that lonely mission station, or by your chair in that comfortable home, or in the pastor’s study crushed and almost ready to give up, make this your prayer:

**To make my weak heart strong and
brave,
Send the fire.**

**To live a dying world to save,
Send the fire.**

**Oh, see me on Thy altar lay
My life, my all, this very day;
To crown the offering now, I pray:
Send the fire!**

—F. de L. Booth-Tucker

We have a cold church in a cold world because the preachers are cold. Therefore, “Lord, send the Fire!”



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The Fourfold Gospel or the fullness of Jesus

A. B. Simpson

Based on Simpson's religious experiences four points were crystallized and publicly conveyed as the distinctive doctrinal convictions of his movement. These four points were focused on Christ as the Savior, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King.

Jesus our Savior

Concerning Christ as the Savior, the simple way of faith was emphasized along with the experience of regeneration and the joyful assurance of the forgiveness of sins. All the believers were then encouraged to live a life of commitment to evangelism both at home and overseas. The emblem of the cross was used to signify their burden for the gospel on the group's logo.

Jesus our Sanctifier

The second emphasis of knowing Christ as the Sanctifier initiated out of a dissatisfaction with the inner spiritual condition of many at the time. Simpson himself sensed a lack of personal experience of the deeper things of the Spirit about which he spoke. He was influenced by book, *The Higher Christian Life* by Boardman. The Lord began to reveal Himself as a living and all sufficient presence who justified, but was waiting to also to sanctify. Simpson and others entered into the mystery, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." They identified with the deeper life movement and also with the British Keswick movement.

Simpson had a restorationist view of church history. He was committed to recover the lost message and vitality of the New Testament church. They saw themselves standing near the end of two millennia of church history. They desired to return to the apostolic beginnings of Christianity. They realized that the church had a present need for renewal and purification. They called for the restoration of the supernaturally

empowered church authenticated by "signs and wonders anddiverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit." At that time they fought against the evils of the age, such as Darwinian evolution, higher criticism of the Bible, theological liberalism, philosophical moralism, and socialism.

Simpson saw many doctrinal deficiencies within the Protestant Reformation. He viewed the established churches as ignorant and negligent of apostolic power. Knowing the Sanctifier included an emphasis on Spirit baptism or "second conversion." Simpson taught that the Spirit filled life was an issue of both a crisis experience and an ongoing experience. They practiced a discipline of "holy stillness" in their quest for increased personal holiness. They repudiated the teaching of "perfectionism." They enjoyed the writings of the mystics like Madam Guyon and Fenelon, as well as being drawn to the Quietest literature. They also appreciated the discipline of listening prayer and felt that the knowledge of the Sanctifier was the turning point to the experience of the Sabbath rest of the soul, the sweetest blessing known to believers. This experience resulted in newfound spiritual power for personal holiness and public ministry as well as commitment to aggressive evangelism to the lost. Many were encouraged into a life of deeper dependence on the Holy Spirit. The emblem of the laver was used to signify the need of the sanctifying grace of God for this second aspect of the fourfold gospel.

Jesus our Healer

The third aspect of this fourfold gospel was to know Christ as the Healer. Simpson initially was influenced by the teachings of Charles Cullis, the physician from Boston who propagated holiness and healing doctrines alongside medical relief. Simpson

embraced the doctrine that physical healing could be received by faith as a benefit of salvation. He said that "deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers based on Isaiah 53:45, Matthew 8:1617, and James 5:1416."

Simpson was miraculously healed of a chronic heart disorder. Divine healing became an essential part of Simpson's private life and public ministry. He began meetings for consecration and healing, involving himself with the American faith healing movement. He later became a spokesperson for the faith healing movement.

This new emphasis alienated Simpson from the more conservative evangelicals. Some accused him of devaluing the importance of the future redemption of the body. Some further accused him of the tragic deaths of three young missionaries by indoctrinating them with anti-medicine beliefs. Through this trial, Simpson maintained his convictions regarding divine healing, however, with some modifications.

Simpson would not allow any undue elevation of healing above his foremost concerns of evangelizing lost souls and promoting the Spirit filled life. The emblem of a pitcher of oil was used to symbolize the emphasis on divine healing.

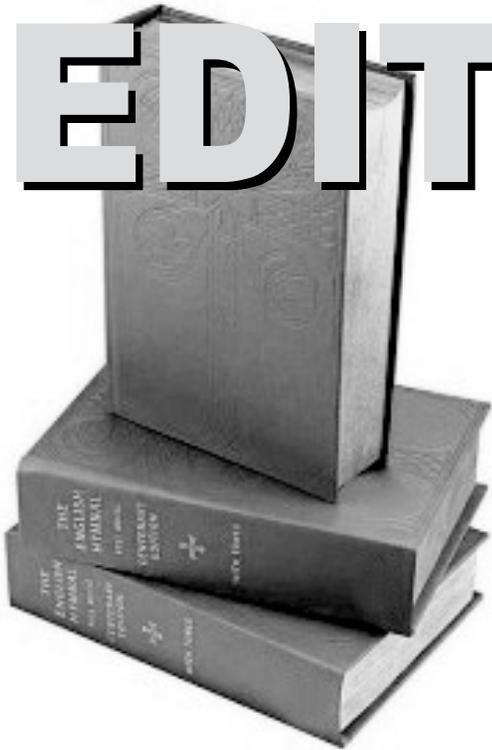
Jesus our Coming King

The fourth aspect of this gospel was that of knowing Christ as the coming King. This came about as a result of a prophecy conference movement of Bible teachers and evangelists. They felt that the greatest unfulfilled prophecy and condition for the Lord's return was the evangelization of the world. They considered the time of WWI to be climax of human history. The emblem of the crown was used to signify their desire for the coming King.



The Fourfold
gospel Witness

EDITORIAL:



Editorial - Sometimes God calls us just to be LIGHT

As I settled into my pastorate in Danville, Pennsylvania, I was delighted to have as one of our parishioners a retired missionary by the name of Charles F. Stamm. It is always wonderful to have a missionary in the congregation to remind us of what we are all about.

As I became acquainted with Charlie, as he wanted to be called, I grew a little disappointed. This missionary was probably the most depressed and discouraged person I had ever seen. It was hard for me to understand why a man who had committed his life to serving the Lord should come to the end of his life a discouraged and depressed old man. I did whatever I could to try to cheer him up, but to no avail.

It took a while for me to come to the center of Charlie's discouragement and depression. To put it simply, he and his wife had served as missionaries in Mali, West Africa for many years. According to Charlie, his entire ministry was a failure. Several years before I arrived in Danville, Charlie's wife, Sadie, had died of cancer. That brought more depression upon this dear old brother.

In a rare moment of confidence, Charlie told me that in all his years in Africa, he had never led one soul to Jesus Christ. When he told me that, his eyes overflowed with tears of sorrow and regret. "What has my life really meant?" he sobbed. Unfortunately, I had no words of encouragement for my dear brother.

In doing a little research, I found an article in the Alliance Witness dated June 5, 1991. One sentence in that article jumped out at me. "Thirty-three years later there were still no Fulbe churches. The Stamms had succeeded only in sowing the gospel seed among these people." According to the record, there was nothing to show for Charlie and his wife's ministry in Africa.

After getting to know Charlie a little bit he shared with me his testimony.

"One night my brother and I heard a young man preach the gospel on the street corner. I do not remember just what he said but he put me under conviction. I was self-righteous and thought I was saved because I thought I was doing the best possible for one to be saved.

"Billy Sunday came to Pittsburgh and as I was hungering after God I gladly attended one of his meetings. After one meeting, one of the

Christian workers asked me if I was saved. I told him I thought so. He then gave me two tracts, 'What it means to be a Christian,' and, 'How to make a success of the Christian life.'

"I used to read those tracts, then read my Bible and compare my life with what I was reading. One of the first things I saw was that I was lost and undone and that Christ had borne my sins and it was necessary for me to accept Him and live for Him. I tried my best to accept the Lord at home but something seemed to say that I needed to accept Christ publicly. I wondered where I could do such a thing.

"One day on my way to a Lutheran church I saw a small sign on an old building that said, 'Gospel Mission' and something seemed to say that this is the place to accept Christ publicly. On August 1, 1915, I accepted Jesus as my Savior and my burdens rolled away. A few years later in another mission I surrendered to Christ as my Lord and the verse, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" became a reality to me.

"Since I found Christ as my Savior I knew that there were many heathen have never heard about him and my heart went out to them. I wanted them to have a chance to accept Christ as their Savior as I did. I believe those in America can find the Lord as their Savior easily enough if they seek and there are many who know the gospel and will give out the gospel. I believe there are many poor heathen souls who are really seeking the light and they need someone to tell them the simple gospel story. I offered, if need be, my life to serve Christ and felt certain I should offer at least as much to my Lord who bought me with his precious blood. I know I am a failure in myself, but I also know that 'I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.'"

I was delighted when Charlie shared his personal testimony with me. As he talked I was convinced he really had a sense of God's calling upon his life to be a missionary. The problem he had was, he believed he was an absolute failure as a missionary. After all, the results did not show him to be very successful.

Several years after coming to Danville we had a missionary conference and one of the missionaries was from Africa. After he settled in, he asked me, "Does Charles F. Stamm come to the church here?" When I answered in the affirmative, he said he really needed to go and see

Charlie.

When we got to Charlie's apartment, I introduced the two men, one an old seasoned missionary and the other a vibrant young missionary. I could see the curiosity in Charlie's eyes as he looked over this young missionary.

"Rev. Stamm," and he stood in front of Charlie as Charlie sat in his easy chair, "I want to bring you Christian greetings from..." He then rattled off the names of leaders of the church in Mali who were converted from the Muslim religion. As it turned out, these men all remembered Charlie and contributed their conversion to Christ to good old Charlie's ministry in Africa.

As the missionary told the story of how these young Africans were converted to Jesus Christ and became the leadership of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Mali, good old Charlie's eyes filled with tears and they ran down his cheeks almost unstoppable. Charlie began sobbing. Then, I began sobbing. I was not quite sure why I was sobbing, but I knew exactly why good old Charlie was sobbing. For so many years, he felt his ministry was a failure. Now, almost 20 years after he left the field, he is witnessing the fruit of what he thought was a barren ministry. The missionary gave Charlie pictures of the leaders of the church in Mali and until the day he died, Charlie cherished those photographs.

About two years later, I had the honor of officiating at Charlie's funeral. It was my privilege at that funeral to share Charlie's story.

I have had a long time to think about Charlie's story and I have come to a very serious conclusion. Sometimes, for whatever purpose, God calls us to be light in a dark place. What we might be doing at the time may not appear to be very successful from a human standpoint. After all, were not working for a man but rather for God views our life, work and ministry from a divine perspective.

Today we are worshipping at the altar of "Results." If we do not get the results we want or are expecting, we close up shop and go somewhere else. The sense of "the call," has somehow been watered down to a "vocation." This vocation is guided and evaluated by the measurements of the world. How we can bring the world's values to bear upon the work of the ministry is one of the neatest tricks the devil has ever played upon the church of Christ. How many people, like my friend good old Charlie, feel that their life and ministry is a failure because they do not match up to the results the world considers important?

The great commission is simply "Go Ye," without any mention at all of earthly results. If a person were to study the early missionary efforts under that grand missionary statesman, A. B. Simpson, we would have to conclude that he was an absolute failure in many regards. More missionaries died on their way to Africa than actually arrived in Africa. Along the way were trials, tribulations, heartaches and disappointments. Establishing God's work in Africa was paved with the blood of the martyrs.

We have forgotten our history. We look to the world for some kind of paradigm to judge what we are doing for the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Charlie's story taught me one thing if anything, that is, I am serving Jesus Christ and not man. I am to honor and please Christ, not me.

Where are those who are willing to be, for the cause of Christ, a light in a dark place?

CHILD EVANGELISM FELLOWSHIP® PARTNERS WITH CMA CHURCHES FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

Child Evangelism Fellowship® (CEF®) exists for the threefold purpose of “evangelizing boys and girls, discipling them in the Word of God, and establishing them in the local church.” CEF has existed since 1937 and is the largest evangelistic children’s ministry in the world. Last year, CEF served in 180 nations around the globe and had the joy of sharing the Gospel with over 12 million children.

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH ALLIANCE CHURCHES IN THE TWIN CITIES

In the summer of 2012, CEF also conducted its Good News Across America® campaign in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Eleven Christian and Missionary Alliance churches participated in the effort which included 30 evangelical churches. The partnering churches conducted 5-Day Clubs in 90 locations across the city and had the opportunity to share the Gospel with thousands of children. Each partnering church did three 5-Day Clubs in their community designed to reach children and families who live in neighborhoods around their church. A 5-Day Club® is similar to vacation Bible school with a very important twist – it is “VBS on the road” going to where unchurched children and families gather. Clubs include games, an exciting Bible lesson, a missions story, snacks, songs

and memory verses. Each church also hosts a rally on Friday night to which they invite the children and families of their community. The rallies are effective in connecting hundreds of unchurched people to the local churches in their community. Pastor Charles Amoh of Faith Alliance Church said, “Last year we had 20 kids in our VBS, this year we ministered to over 100 and 38 of them decided to follow Christ.”

The second phase of Good News Across America involves launching a Good News Club® in a local elementary school near the church. The Good News Club allows the church to have ongoing outreach in their community working with the same children and families reached in the summer. Dr. Marv Parker, Director of Disciple Making Ministries for the North Central District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches, remarked, “The Lord provided 11 of our churches with the blessing of partnering with you, and I have just begun to hear the phenomenal testimonies of what God has done.”

AN OPEN DOOR FOR EVANGELISM IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On June 11, 2001 the United States Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision in *Milford, NY vs. Good News Club*. The case clarified existing law and granted CEF “equal access” to the public

schools on the same basis as any other organization. The ruling opened the doors to take the Bible back into public schools. Since that time, CEF has launched thousands of Good News Clubs in public schools all across this country. Last year, church volunteers presented the Gospel to more than 145,000 children. Thousands of children trusted Christ, and families have been impacted and become part of the local churches sponsoring the clubs.

HOW IT WORKS

CEF provides the training and the tools needed to do a Good News Club in the public schools, and the church must provide the team of volunteers. CEF staff in your local area can help you select a school in your area and help you launch the outreach. CEF has developed five years of curriculum for the clubs; they also take care of interface with the public school system, and provide the training and coaching you will need to be successful. The clubs invite children to attend after school with their parents’ permission. Volunteers from the local churches conduct the clubs, build relationships with the children and parents, and work toward the CEF mission statement of evangelizing, discipling and establishing in the local church.

The Good News Club in the school year coupled with the 5-Day Club during the summer, provides an effective and viable means for the

church to strategically impact their community for Christ. One church in Virginia has seen about 25% of the students in the elementary school come to the Good News Club. They have also had the joy of seeing over 100 visitors in their services as a result of the outreach in the public schools and seeing some of those families come to Christ and become an integral part of their local church.

DISCIPLESHIP TOOLS

In addition to the tools needed for effective evangelism, CEF has developed a “discipleship safety net” to assist in follow up with those reached in the schools and in the community. The safety net is made up of three key elements:

■ Truth Chasers Club – The Truth Chasers ClubSM provides a Bible correspondence course for children through the mail. Age appropriate lessons are available. Children mail the lessons to the CEF International Headquarters in Warrenton, Missouri where they are graded by volunteers and each child is prayed for by volunteers. The Truth Chasers Club recently celebrated sending out over six million lessons to children across the country. Visit www.truthchasersclub.com to learn more.

■ Devotional Books – CEF has developed a series of devotional books for children. Each 60-day book focuses on a theme such as “What a God” which helps children understand God’s character. Warren Wiersbe said the CEF devotional books are “systematic theology for children.”

■ Wonderzone® – Visit www.wonderzone.com to experience online adventures for children which help them learn about God and give them opportunity to grow in their faith. Children can go on an adventure with Daniel to the lion’s den or on a missionary journey with Hudson Taylor to China. It’s a great tool for use in children’s ministry at the church and in outreach efforts.

THE TIME MAY BE SHORT CEF wants to help you reach children and families while there is still time. According to George Barna, children are most open to the Gospel between the ages of 4 and 14, but with each passing year more and more children are becoming less open to the message of salvation. It is also possible that the doors to the public schools will not remain open forever. We urge you to take advantage of the open door God has provided.

YOUR CHURCH CAN BE INVOLVED

To learn more about how CEF can help you impact your community for Christ, visit www.CEFonline.com and browse the many ministries designed to help you reach children and families for Christ. Your local CEF representative stands ready to help.

*Share the Good News in Public Schools?
Yes, It's Legal!**

*Last year over 156,000 children in over
4,000 public elementary schools in the USA
attended a Good News Club.**

Child Evangelism Fellowship®

Visit www.goodnewsclub.com to learn more about how CEF can partner with your church to impact your community for Christ. Together we can reach children and families right around your church. Call 1-800-300-4033 or visit us on the web at www.cefonline.com/locations to get started today!

*U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Good News Club v. Milford Central School District*, June 11, 2001.

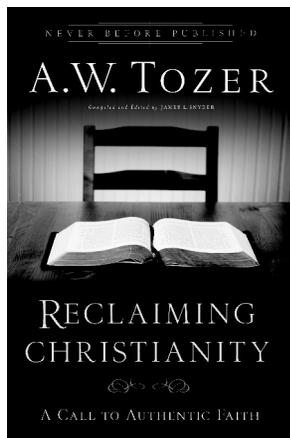
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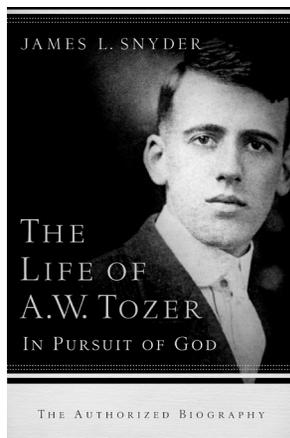
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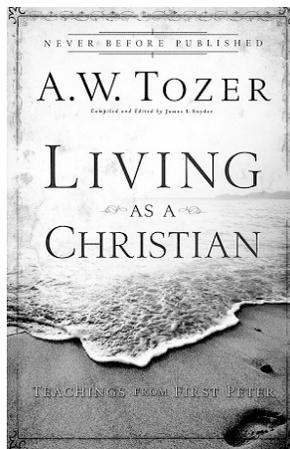
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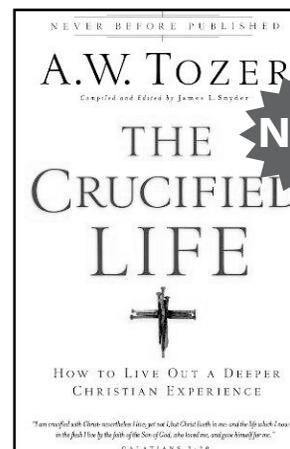
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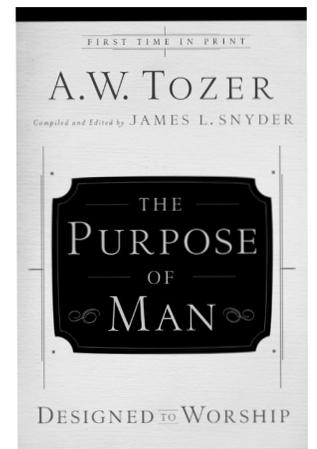
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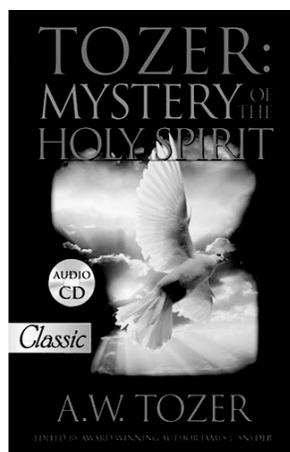
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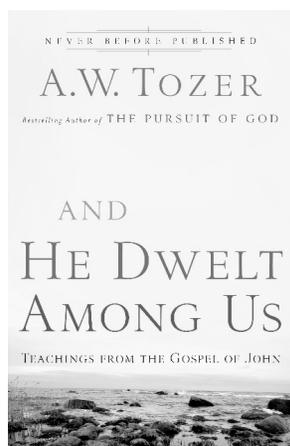
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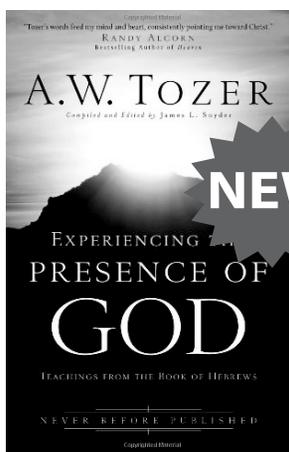
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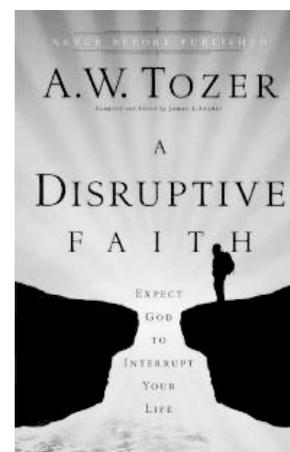
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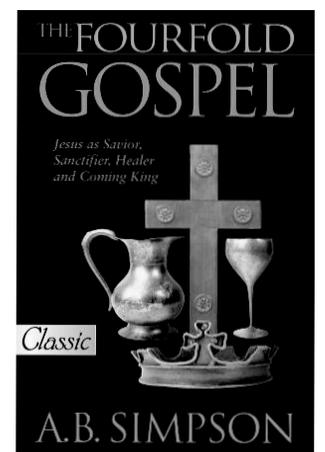
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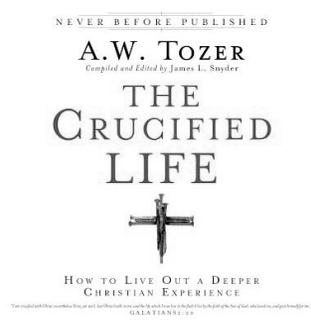
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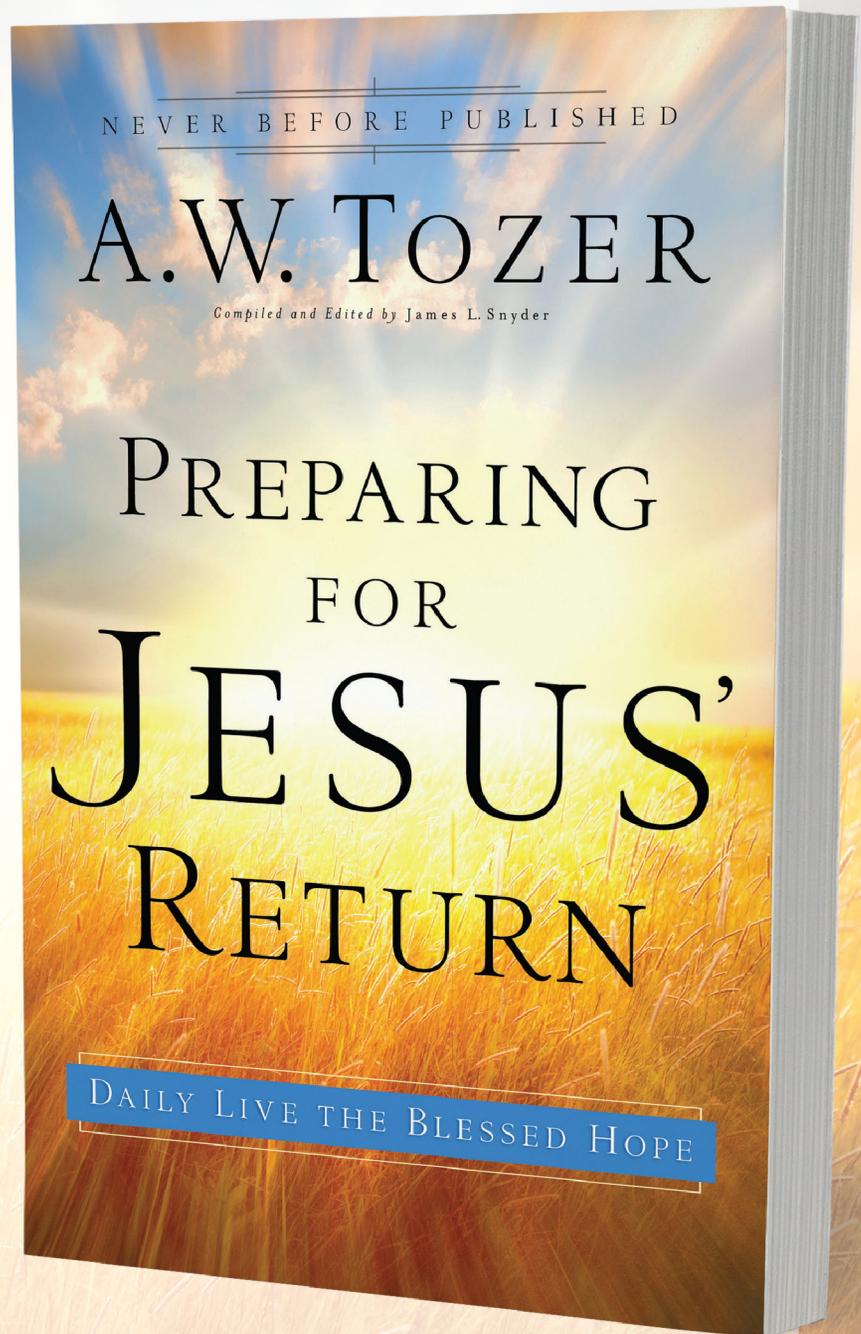
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