

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."

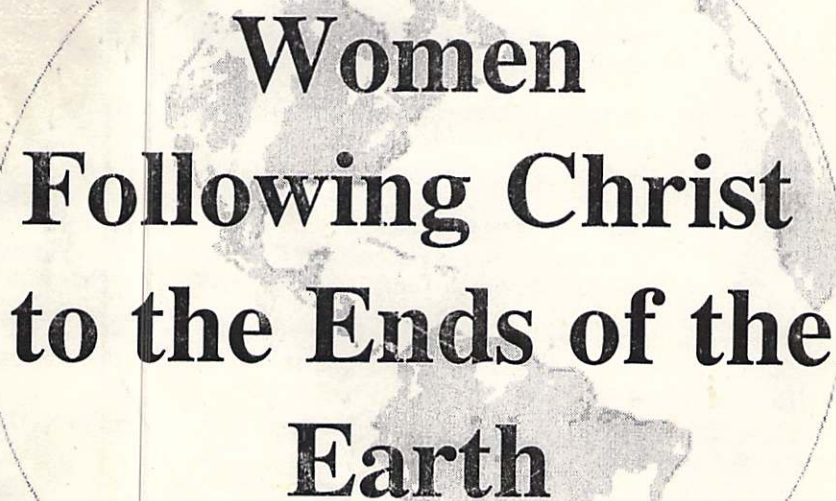


The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

June, 2005



**Women
Following Christ
to the Ends of the
Earth**

The 58th Annual Kentucky / Indiana Fellowship

August 1st - 4th, 2005

Theme: **INTENTIONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Monday Evening, August 1

7:00 - 7:20 pm Woodland Bible Camp Singers Concert

7:30 pm Weeds Grow, Fruit Requires Cultivation Sonny Childs

Tuesday, August 2 - Personal Spiritual Growth

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Enemies of Personal Growth David Tapp
10:20 Allies of Personal Growth Jerry Carmichael
11:20 Exposition: Jonah Mark Yarbrough
1:15 Repentant Confession: Pre-requisite of Growth Jim Girdley
7:30 Champions of Spiritual Growth Mark Yarbrough

Wednesday, August 3 - Family Spiritual Growth

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Enemies of Family Growth Earl C. Mullins, Jr.
10:20 Allies of Family Growth Tim Morrow
11:20 Exposition: Jonah Mark Yarbrough
1:15 Strategies & Resources for Family Growth Rubel Shelly
7:30 Intentional Growth for All God's Family Rubel Shelly

Thursday, August 4 - Congregational Spiritual Growth

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Enemies of Congregational Growth Rubel Shelly
10:20 Allies of Congregational Growth Mike Chapman
11:20 Exposition: Jonah Mark Yarbrough
1:15 Need and Resources for Numerical Growth Bud Ridgeway
7:30 Spiritual Growth in Today's Culture Nick Marsh

Children's classes (grades K-2, 3-4 & 5-6) will be held Mon.-Thurs. nights, 8:00-8:45. A class for youth grades 7-12 will be held Tues.-Thurs. nights 8:00-8:45.

There will be a missions offering Wed. Night; make checks to Ky/Ind Cn. Fellowship.

Housing Committee: Bud Ridgeway (502) 477-8255; Clint Dorman (812) 246-2600

DAY SESSIONS: Portland Church of Christ,
2500 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212

NIGHT SESSIONS: Sellersburg Church of Christ
211 South New Albany St., Sellersburg IN 47172

For audio cassettes of the messages, contact Don Stump (502) 477-2252

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, News & Notes

The Word and Work is published monthly except December by Portland Ave. Church of Christ, Inc., 2500 Portland Ave. Louisville, Ky. 40212. Subscription: \$14.00 per year; bundles of 10 or more to one address = \$13.00 per subscription. Address correspondence to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, KY 40212.

Periodicals Postage Paid at Louisville, Ky. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212.

Vol. XCIX

June, 2005

No. 6

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EDITORIAL:

Women in Missions

by Dennis L. Allen

One cannot go far in the history of missions without realizing that women have played an outstanding role, not only on the field in outreach, but also at home with prayer, encouragement and support. In this issue we feature three outstanding women in missions, but there are many more, e.g., Gladys Aylward, Rosalind Goforth, and Elizabeth Elliot, to name a few. Just this past week, I read *In the Presence of Mine Enemies* by Gracia Burnham. It gives the account of her and her husband's ordeal in the hands of the terrorists who captured them in the Philippines. It is just a reminder that today women are a vital part of what God is doing to bring about His great purpose.

There are so many ways that women can serve. Today the outreach to the Muslim world is in the limelight as it should be, considering our long neglect of this area. Women must play a key role in reaching Muslim women, since they are virtually cut off from contact with the outside world and isolated in their homes... Women are playing an outstanding role in Bible translation. This work is far from finished and still presents a great challenge... Women are reaching out in closed countries through the ministry of teaching in the classroom. There is a tremendous demand for English teachers in many areas of the world, even in countries that are closed to missionaries... Women are serving as doctors and nurses all over the world and finding through their ministry open doors for the gospel... Probably most importantly women are serving missions everywhere as wives and mothers, standing behind and with their husbands. Gracia Burnham said she did not have a specific call to the mission field, but she was fully committed to standing behind her husband to provide a home for him and help in every way she could his work as a missionary pilot. Every hour he was in the air, she was in radio contact giving logistical support.

In spite of all the work that women have done and are doing to further missionary outreach, women themselves often question just how far they should go. What is their scriptural place? How much leadership should they take? If a group of believers has no leadership, what should she do? Watchman Nee acknowledged the ministry of a woman missionary in preparing him for leadership. In the O. T. during the time of the judges there was a period where no male leader arose. "The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel." (Judges 5:7.) It was

Deborah who prodded Barak to rise up and pursue Sisera. God intended for men to lead, but if no man will rise up, then God will use a woman to lead. May the Lord enable us to be true to His word and yet sensitive to His leading in specific circumstances.

God has different roles for men and women, but each is equally important. Women played a significant role in the ministry of Christ (See Mt. 27:55; 28:5-8; Mk. 15:40-41; Lk. 8:2,3) and of Paul (Acts 16:13-15; 17:4-12; Acts 18:26; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19; Phil. 4:3).

[Note by Alex Wilson: Our readers should know that neither the Allens nor I knew ahead of time that last month's theme (Women, Woes and Writings) and this month's would overlap quite a bit. Both major on women and how the Lord has used them (as well as men) in wonderful ways. Both include Amy Carmichael, too—but there is much more about her this month than last. Maybe the dual emphasis shows the Lord is trying to tell us something. Rise up, O women of God! And men, let them! By the way, also be sure to note this month the observations and challenges by Ralph Winter, a leading student of the Word and observer of missionary work and churches around the world.]

Sigh... Can a Woman?

by Betty Allen

Gladys Aylward felt a call to China - but the Mission Board she approached rejected her. She was just a parlor maid; how could a parlor maid serve God in China? But the call was compelling; Gladys continued her work as a maid and saved her pennies until she could pay the fare on the Trans-Siberian Railway. She felt God was telling her to go -- and she went.

This is, perhaps, the mark of a true missionary -- simply hearing the call of God, and obeying it, whether it is a command to "go" afar - or to "go" next door.

What could she do in China? She linked up with an elderly single British woman who was operating an Inn to serve the caravans that traveled through North China. She did not have a lot of formal education that would impress a mission board, but she had a willing and a teachable spirit that impressed the Lord. She pitched in to help Jeannie Lawson, and began to learn by doing. Jeannie's strategy was to attract the camel drivers to stay at her Inn, to feed them well, and after the meal to entertain them by telling Bible stories. Quickly,

Gladys learned enough words to invite the drivers to stop at the Inn for the night...

When a little girl was abandoned nearby, Gladys wrapped her heart around her -- took her in, named her Sixpence. When an edict to end foot binding was proclaimed; the village leader assigned Gladys to bear this news to every town, and to unbind those who had been bound.

When a bloody riot was going on in the local prison, and all the guards were fearful, Gladys volunteered to go inside and talk to the irate inmates. The love and the authority of God in her commanded their respect; they stopped fighting and poured out their grievances to her. She listened with compassion, and used her leverage with the village leader to improve their situation.

Later, when the Japanese invaded, Gladys chose to share danger with her chosen people rather than to flee as ordered. She led a group of abandoned children through hostile territory over the Himalaya Mountains into India and safety.

We were privileged to meet this remarkable woman years later in Hong Kong. She was a strong-willed woman, unbendable in her conviction of her calling, independent, non-conformist. She tended to see things in black and white...the bane of some church leaders? Yet God had a use for such a woman.

What can a mere woman do to proclaim the Lord in "all the world"? Our honored brother R. H. Boll has said, "A woman can do anything a man can do except usurp his authority." Leadership authority in the church has been given to men. It was given to them to build up the body, as Paul explained to the Corinthians: "...Our authority (which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down." II Cor. 10:8) We women comprise about half of the Lord's body; and since we are engaged in a spiritual battle, all members need to be fully functional.

Many meetings have become a sacred ritual where women participate only by their presence. Tradition allows us to prepare the Lord's supper, wash the cups, teach the little children, exercise hospitality. Is there any doctrinal reason why sisters cannot serve the Lord's supper? Or pray? If the Lord has blessed a woman with a musical gift, would she be out of the Lord's will in exercising that gift in the meeting--so long as the brothers are willing for her to do this. To what extent are we--like the Pharisees--bound by tradition?

Women serve just by being women--wives to their husbands and mothers to their children, managing their households, maintaining their own spiritual life, showing hospitality to strangers, relating to

the local people, keeping in touch with family and friends. If they do no more than this, they will have an impact.

Some Single Women Are Serving; More Are Needed

Should there be reservations about single women launching out by faith to some foreign field? Besides Gladys Aylward, there are many single, brave women serving, and finding the Lord faithful to meet their needs. One woman established a sanitarium for tuberculosis patients in HK. Two single women opened a home for mentally deficient children--only the most hopeless ones. (Under their care one little fellow was so nourished and loved that he was able to attend normal school by the time he was ready for kindergarten.)

Another single British lady went to China to teach English, but was so touched by the numbers of baby girls who were unwanted, that she applied to adopt one. She was told the official policy was to not allow adoptions to foreigners. But she is a woman of prayer--and determination. She kept on applying and finally succeeded in changing government policy! She now has four beautiful little girls, and she hopes to adopt two more. Since her first adoption, 600 babies per year have been adopted to foreigners from that one orphanage!

Other women have volunteered to work in orphanages, just loving and caring for abandoned babies. We were taken to visit one of the better government orphanages--better because the care-givers were kind--where most of the children were deformed or handicapped in some way. About a dozen of them were in a totally bare room behind a metal gate, reaching hands through the bars to try to touch us. There was not a picture, nor a toy, nor a piece of furniture in the room... nothing to occupy their minds! ("A mind is a terrible thing to waste.") We were cordially received. Could a woman find ministry there: plan games or activities? teach English? teach singing? There are schools for the deaf in China, we were told, but the deaf mute we met there was slipping through the cracks. He looked to be about ten years old, and had not learned to sign; he was just shunted out of the way of others.

One talented woman is writing a curriculum for English classes for children, and has built relationships with many of their parents. In China each family in this generation is now raising its "only child." (The government only allows one per family.) The tendency is to idolize their one child and allow him to become a tyrant. Many seem grateful for counsel about parenting.

Many older people (some of them believers from the past) are in "retirement" homes. A volunteer who could plan activities for senior citizens could enrich their lives and open their hearts.

Once in Hong Kong, a person came to our door with a request for Dennis to come--a relative had died. But there was no way Dennis could go at the time indicated. He asked me to go and represent the family. The body was in a bare room at the back of the hospital where the man had died; the simple casket was set in the center on two chairs, and relatives were standing around. The people were friendly and appreciative. Then an official came around and, taking me by the elbow, led me to the head of the casket. "Please speak now," he said! I was stunned, and began to explain that women do not preach funerals; but suddenly I realized that those people needed to hear about the resurrection hope of the Christian. As I began to tell them, I felt that the Spirit put the words into my mouth.

Sigh... Can a woman...go alone? Does she need a seminary degree? Can a single woman adopt a needy child? Can she be bold like the early disciples? Can she endure hardship and danger? Can she be strong, and strongly committed? Does God raise up specific women for specific tasks? Does God give a vision and calling to some women? Is God calling you?

When all is said and done, the basic requirement for a woman in missions is: Is she willing to go wherever God would send her, and do whatever He gives her to do? He is faithful to His promise, "Go ye" and "Lo, I."

People who responded to God's call to overseas in old times, did not necessarily expect to come back. Mail and visitors were infrequent. Medical care was often unavailable. The picture has changed. Now transportation is convenient. Though it may be expensive, people can return home for family emergencies, or for medical care. Most places have telephones (though your line may be tapped) and email (though you may have to use it in a public computer bar). Consumer products are readily available in most places. In China, even squat toilets will soon be a thing of the past. (The sooner the better!!!) Missionaries can live in relative comfort in many places, and may even find more conveniences than they would have at home.

As David Ring--the preacher who rises above his condition of cerebral palsy to proclaim the Word--so aptly has said, "I have cerebral palsy. What's your problem?" Is God calling you?

[Even Hollywood was so impressed with Gladys Aylward's story that years ago someone there made a movie telling it! And Ingrid Bergman, of all people, played the part of Gladys! It's available on video, titled *The Inn of the 6th Happiness*. -avw]

Three Women Greatly Used By God

by Dennis L. Allen

Mary Slessor (1848-1915)

The newsboys and porters in Waverly Station, Edinburgh, were astonished one day in 1898 when they saw a small woman with a face like yellow parchment get off the train with four wide-eyed African girls. They would have been even more amazed had they known that in Africa she was known as the white queen of Calabar.

Born in 1848 in Dundee, Scotland, she was from her earliest years introduced to hardship. Her father was a drunkard, but her mother was a godly Christian. His death when she was just a girl made it necessary for her to toil in a textile factory at a weaving machine from six in the morning to six at night. She educated herself by reading good books a few sentences at a time while tending her machine. She had given her heart and life to Jesus as a young girl and due to the stories her mother told her, had formed a desire to be a missionary to Calabar. The news of the death of David Livingstone in 1874 stirred the hearts of many and caused a great wave of missionary enthusiasm. Many offered themselves for service. Mary Slessor was one of them. She was accepted by the Foreign Mission Board. On Aug. 5, 1876, she sailed for Africa from Liverpool on the steamer Ethiopia.

Once in Calabar she began to realize the seemingly impossible challenges she would face. Huge alligators were swimming in the streams and sunning themselves on the banks. Her canoe was attacked one day by a hippopotamus and she saved her life and those of the children with her by throwing a cooking pot into its gaping jaws. She saw Black Africans who had been captured and were penned up awaiting the arrival of the slave-ships. Wives of a dead chief were buried alive to accompany him to the spirit world. The magnitude of her task sent her to prayer. "Lord, the task is impossible for me but not for Thee. Lead the way and I will follow."

She plunged into the study of Efik, the language of the Calabar people. She so mastered it that the locals admitted she could use their tongue better than they could.

On her first "preaching" trip, two boys accompanied her with a drum, which they beat to gather the people. Hearing it was a white woman, they quickly gathered. Under the shade of a large tree be-

side a devil house built for a dead man's spirit, she delivered her message of hope and life.

Mary could not be satisfied to remain at the coast. She wanted to live in the interior in the midst of the cannibals and head hunters. In 1887 she set out with five native orphans whom she had rescued from death. The eldest was a boy of eleven, the youngest only a baby. When they arrived at night fall, they still had four miles to trek through the forest to the village of Ekenge. With the frightened children she set out leaving the men to follow with the bundles of food and clothing. They arrived wet, hungry, and exhausted, only to hear that the men had gone to sleep in the boat. She retraced her steps and brought them all to Expunge by midnight. The chief was impressed with her brave spirit and gave her permission to stay in the village.

Incredibly she went about in bare feet, lived on native food, drank unfiltered water and yet survived. Her life was full of challenges.

One day messengers came from a village eight hours away begging her to come as their chief was ill. If he died his wives would be killed to accompany him to the spirit world. She was warned not to go. "There are warriors and wild beasts in the forest. The rains have come and the streams are deep. You could never get there." All night she lay awake pondering, but after prayer she was assured the Lord would go with her. She set out at dawn walking all day through torrential rain. Weak, soaked, and sick with fever, she finally arrived. She went immediately to the chief. From her limited medicines she treated him. The next day, to the astonishment of the villagers, he regained consciousness and began to eat. Soon he was well again. The people rejoiced, knowing there would be no slaying. Their hearts were thus opened to receive the good news of salvation and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Mary labored forty years in Calabar and the white Ma was known far and wide. They could not understand why she was always rescuing twin babies--abandoned because they thought a curse rested on them.

She was often called on to decide quarrels and many times kept different tribes from going to war. She was often sick with diarrhea, fever, and other diseases but she still kept on.

Every time she moved, she supervised the building of a new house. At last she built a house with a cement floor. When an in-

credulous visitor asked her how she managed to mix the cement, she replied, "All I did was to stir it like porridge and pray."

One who knew Mary well said "It was for souls she was always hungering" She rescued hundreds of twin babies that had been thrown out into the forest to die. She was able to establish a number of churches and saw hundreds brought to new life in Christ.

A short time before her death, January 13, 1915, she said to her twins now grown to manhood and womanhood: "Never talk about the cold hand of death. It is the hand of Christ. For I am persuaded, with the Apostle Paul, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"

J. H. Morrison pays this tribute: "She is entitled to a place in the front ranks of the heroines of history."

Amy Carmichael

Amy Carmichael was born in northern Ireland in 1867 and was the oldest of seven children. Her father's early death when she was eighteen affected her profoundly, causing her to think seriously about her future and what God's plan was for her life.

One wintry Sunday morning the Lord gave her a glimpse of the work she would do one day. The family was returning home from worship when Amy and her brothers came upon a ragged old woman carrying a huge bundle. They felt an overwhelming urge to help her but at the same time a feeling of embarrassment. "This meant facing all the respectable people who were, like ourselves, on their way home. It was a horrid moment. We were only two boys and a girl, and not at all exalted Christians. We hated doing it. Crimson all over (at least we felt crimson, soul and body of us) we plodded on, a wet wind blowing about us, and blowing too the rags of that poor old woman, till she seemed like a bundle of feathers and we unhappily mixed up with them."

As they were passing a beautiful Victorian fountain, she heard the words of I Cor. 3:12-14 in her spirit: "Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble--every man's work shall be manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be declared by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide...."

She turned to see who was there, but it was no one--only the sound of the fountain and the laughter of a few who were passing by.

Before this she had been preoccupied with her social life. Now she realized God was dealing with her and asking her to make some decisions.

The family attended a Keswick Conference in England's Lake District in September 1886. There Amy felt God's hand on her life. The theme of the conference was the pursuit of holiness or the "higher Christian life." Carmichael writes: "The hall was full of a sort of gray mist, very dull and chilly. I came to that meeting half hoping, half fearing. Would there be anything for me? ...The fog in the Hall seemed to soak into me. My soul was in a fog. Then the chairman rose for the last prayer. 'O Lord, we know Thou art able to keep us from falling.' Those words found me. It was as if they were alight. And they shone for me." She realized afresh that Jesus Christ with nothing of worldly possessions had given His life for her. She knew that He was calling her to follow His steps and give herself to Him. She must become "dead to the world and its applause, to all its customs, fashions, laws."

In 1895 she went to Dohnavur, India, where she served fifty-six years as God's servant without a furlough. Most of her work there was devoted to rescuing children who had been dedicated by their families to be temple prostitutes. During those years she often remembered the old woman carrying her bundle alone, realized that through her God had given her a love for the outcast and those the world deems unlovely and unworthy. It was this love God used to start the Dohnavur Fellowship in India--a place of refuge and safety for the temple children.

During her lifetime more than a thousand children were rescued from neglect and abuse. The children called her "Amma," which means "mother" in the Tamil language.

Naturally, her work was not without opposition and stress, but her trust was in the promises of God. "There were days when the sky turned black for me because of what I heard and knew was true. Sometimes it was as if I saw the Lord Jesus Christ kneeling alone, as He knelt long ago under the olive trees. And the only thing that one who cared could do, was to go softly and kneel down beside Him so that He would not be alone in His sorrow over the little children."

Much of her life in Dohnavur was spent as a semi-invalid, but it did not hinder her ministry. She was a prolific writer and published thirty-five books. Her life was characterized by obedience, total commitment and selflessness. Millions have been blessed by her books and her life that was lived devoted to her Lord and Savior.

[Last month we shared 2 poems by Amy Carmichael. Here are some other gems from her heart.]

Not in Vain

Not in vain the tedious toil
On an unresponsive soil,
Travail, tears in secret shed
Over hopes that lay as dead.
All in vain, thy faint heart cries,
Not in vain, thy Lord replies;
Nothing is too good to be;
Then believe, believe to see.

Did thy labor turn to dust?
Suffering—did it eat like rust,
Till the blade that once was keen
As a blunted tool is seen?
Dust and rust thy life's reward?
Slay the thought: believe thy Lord,
When thy soul is in distress
Think upon His faithfulness.

My Lord Who Slept

Thou art my Lord Who slept upon the pillow,
Thou art my Lord Who soothed the furious sea.
What matter beating wind and tossing billow
If only we are in the boat with Thee?

Hold us in quiet through the age-long minute
While Thou art silent and the wind is shrill.
Can the boat sink while Thou, dear Lord, art in it?
Can the heart faint that waiteth on Thy will?

Make Me Thy Fuel, Flame of God

From prayer that asks that I may be
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,
From fearing when I should aspire,
From faltering when I should climb higher,

From silken self, O Captain, free
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.

From subtle love of softening things,
From easy choices, weakenings,
Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not this way went the Crucified,
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay,
The hope no disappointments tire,
The passion that will burn like fire,
Let me not sink to be a clod:
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God

Isobel Kuhn

Isobel Kuhn served in China and Thailand from 1929 - 1954 working among the Lisu people, a minority group. She came to love them and the simplicity of their lives. "Lisuland is a place of physical hardness and spiritual luxury," she said, "But if you have ever tasted of that luxury all else will be tame for ever after."

Isobel's early years had pointed to a far different life. Although raised in a Christian home, when she went to a secular college in Vancouver, she was confronted by unbelieving and agnostic professors who ridiculed her beliefs and told her that no modern person believes the Bible. She determined to search for herself to find out if God was real. However, the round of youthful activities was taking its toll on her moral values and her health. Her heart was full of turmoil.

After graduating she felt lost without her college friends. At a convention in Seattle she stayed with a godly family who began to counsel and guide her. She became a Christian, found peace of heart and mind, and realized that God had a purpose for her life.

At a Christian conference that summer she found herself with a roommate who was a missionary from China. The retreat speaker was also a missionary from inland China. China became the focus of her interest. After hearing a missionary speak of the sin-oppressed Lisu tribe and the darkness in which they lived, she asked the Lord to allow her to go there as a missionary. "If you go to China it will

be over my dead body," her mother declared. Isobel was troubled and perplexed. Her mother had raised her in the Christian faith and was herself a leader in missionary support in her church, but she was not willing for her own daughter to go. Isobel felt she must obey her mother.

Sadly, her mother's rash declaration was fulfilled as she not long after died of cancer. On her death bed she confessed that her daughter had chosen the better part and that her own works were only wood, hay, and stubble.

The Lord opened the door for Isobel to attend Moody Bible Institute and miraculously provided the finances. While there she met and married John Kuhn. After graduation from Bible School, she went to Toronto to apply to the China Inland Mission. During this process the committee called a far-off reference on their own who told them that Isobel was proud, disobedient and a trouble-maker. This caused them to have doubts so they decided to accept Isobel conditionally. In the meantime she had to wait. Later she learned who had given the report and knew it was not true. However, she decided to say nothing. Later the mission board came to the same conclusion and she was accepted unconditionally and unanimously. Soon she was in China, and she and John began their work among the Lisu people.

After years of labor and few converts, one day a new idea came to Isobel. Why not set up a Bible school during the rainy season when people could not work their crops? On May 28, 1938, the first Rainy Season Bible School opened. The school was successful beyond their wildest hopes. About thirty students were trained and inspired to become evangelists and began to reach the distant villages for Christ.

Her books gave the thrilling story of how the Lord used them to bring salvation and hope to the Lisu.

"I would fall on my knees and weep before the Lord, asking for His help. And never did He spurn me. He was firm in correcting me, but always loving. I have never attained a place where one is beyond the temptations of self. But I want to testify to what God can do to change a human being, one that found she was, indeed—'scum.'"

Read her books and you will be blessed. Three I would especially recommend: *By Searching*, *Ascent to the Tribes*, and *Nests Above the Abyss*.

Chinese Peasant Song Writer

By Dennis L. Allen

Since 1990, Xiao Min (Shau Min), a humble lady has written 930 songs now sung all over China and the world in Chinese churches, and known as Canaan hymns. They are sung in home assemblies, often without instruments, and in 3-self churches as well. Xiao Min, born into the home of poor farmers, did not even finish junior high. Her mother was illiterate and her father could barely read. One day her aunt asked her to go to church with her. She went, hoping to be healed of a bad sinus infection. That night she gave her heart to the Lord. At first her family opposed her going to church, but she found such love that she continued. Soon after, songs began coming to her. When she sang them to others, she found they were blessed and began to sing them, too.

“O Lord, I praise you
Because you have chosen me...
In the midst of the crowd
It is you who found me.”

(Remember this is a translation from Chinese, so something is lost poetically.) As she would sing a new song to the congregation, one of the brothers or sisters would quickly write down the music. Later she was given a small tape recorder so that whenever she was given a song, she could record it. Then later the musical score could be written down.

Later when her hymns were being played and recorded by a professional orchestra they were guessing which master had written such beautiful music. They wouldn't believe it came from an uneducated peasant girl. A man at a music academy said “We have no one here who can write music like this” At first even her own family couldn't believe. Later her mother said, “We were going to give Xiao Min away when she was about 10 days old, but a big flood came the day she was to be taken away. It was God's blessing to our family.”

Ofentimes hymns would come to Xiao Min as she was out in the fields.

“Lord, you give me a heart
To live only for You.
To give up everything in the world without any hesitation.
Lord, You give me strength not to fall
To go on the rest of my journey.

Wherever I go, Lord, You are with me.”

The church where she worshipped had a lot of persecution. She, with others, was jailed with thieves, drug addicts, and prostitutes. The inmates asked why they were in prison. They said they had done no wrong. They sang to the prisoners and soon many believed. Meanwhile, some of Xiao Min's relatives said, “Just say you don't believe and they will let you go.” But they refused. When they were finally released, the inmates asked them to come back and visit them. Xiao Min's nose was messed up. Her uncle asked about it, and she said it was because she was beat up. He wanted to make a protest to the authorities, but she said, “Don't worry about it”.

Although Xiao Min later married and had a son, she often went to other places to share the gospel. Sometimes she was criticized for this. She had a deep burden for China, as is evidenced in many of her songs.

“Listen to the call coming over the ocean
Chinese are the children of God
China, China, come find peace
God has found you
You will never have to wander in the wilderness
China belongs to God.”

Xiao Min is currently living in northern China. She continues her life as a missionary and she continues to pour forth Canaan hymns.

“Lord, I am no one
But you have chosen me
Allow me to stand before you
To sing a song for you.”

House Churches to the Rescue

by Ralph Winter
(longtime missions leader and strategist)

The trend to house churches is a phenomenon which runs counter to the long and slow drift of American churches away from extended families. The American church today is strikingly more and more a place for family fragments, and even seeks to replace natural families!

The New Testament "church" was a worshipping household like that of Cornelius, Lydia, or Crispus, and was called an *ekklesia*, a word that does not mean what we understand "church" to mean.

What happened to us (slowly)? Modern age-stratified, highly specialized society has become Satan's Weapon of Mass Destruction of the family--precisely where worship and accountability are supposed to be primary! The church has mindlessly followed the world's pattern; a family driving up to a church door is instantly chopped into pieces.

Our lengthened school system also snatches our children away. Far worse, it isolates the generations. Over 300 years it has (slowly) gone from three years of schooling (as with Harvard in its first century--students without previous schooling) to 17 years of incarceration today. Whatever the merits of that long tunnel of isolation from adult responsibilities, such a system postpones marriage and in so doing pries apart the generations so that grandparents are really old. (We no longer see grandparents in their 30's!)

That means that little Johnny will never see his father obeying his own father. Three and four generation households, which once joined churches together, and had family-level worship, are now almost universally reduced to "nuclear" families (e.g. family fragments). The grandparent generation is no longer a stabilizing factor, divorce has skyrocketed, wives are abused, children go wrong, etc.

This happened slowly, over 300 years. Thus, today we are blind to what has happened--but must deal with the consequences.

Those of us who have lived overseas, where most societies have not yet been "Westernized" and stacked against normal marriage age, may be among the only ones who can even perceive--much less unravel--the reality of this tragedy.

Unfortunately, many congregations today have the idea that getting people into small groups is all that is necessary. However, extended families can be small groups, but small groups cannot readily become extended families.

Pastors, frantic to do more than preach generalities to crowds on Sunday, may hope to get most of their congregations into small groups. Sure, those family fragments out there in the pews desperately need to rise above their individualism and isolation. Thus, a non-family, artificial small group is better than nothing.

In such churches you may never hear a word about what could and should go on at the family level. I myself, in Evangelical churches all my life, have never heard a sermon on how or why families ought to have family devotions.

But it is clearly better--as well as more important--to make every real family a small group than to try to make small groups into artificial families.

All over the world it is gradually becoming clear that you can build a big church out of small groups, but big churches without families remaining intact aren't worth much.

Last I heard, the most famous large church (in Korea) had 800,000 members meeting in 21 auditoriums and 15 identical services a week. But the secret was that behind all this once-a-week celebration were 52,000(!) neighborhood fellowships mainly based on extended families.

The house church phenomenon could be revolutionary. It just may be that the most valuable gift missions can give back to the American church is a renewed sense of the family as God intended it to be.

--*Missions Frontiers*, March-April 2005

Fifty Years of Smuggling!

Many of you have read *God's Smuggler*, by Brother Andrew. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of his first trip to eastern Europe in 1955 to attend a communist youth conference. This proved to be the beginning of his ministry to the church behind the iron curtain to "strengthen the things that remain." Since that time the work of Open Doors has grown to include countries all over the world that endeavor to shut out the Gospel. Millions of Bibles have been taken to believers behind those closed doors. At the beginning of those trips Brother Andrew prayed "Lord, when you were here you made blind eyes to see. Now I'm asking you to make seeing eyes blind." Countless times he and other couriers have experienced the answer to that prayer as Bibles were passed through customs. At present Brother Andrew is still going strong. In recent years the ministry of Open Doors has expanded to the Muslim world. Thank God for the vision and passion of Brother Andrew. --D. L. A.

Christians Boldly Petition Communist Government

In an unprecedented move, representatives of Vietnam's house churches traveled to that nation's capital to deliver a petition to the communist government. Signed by leaders from over 50 house church groups, the petition asked the government to repeal a new law adding even more restrictions on worship in Vietnam. The document states that Christians want to obey the government and live as loyal citizens. However, the signers make it clear they "must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). They also explain why they do not wish to register as "official churches." The petition closes with a blessing upon the communist party officials and their families. Please pray for the brave leaders who signed this document and for greater religious freedom to come to Vietnam. --*Frontline Faith*, Dec. 2004

China Cracks Down Harder on the House Churches

2004 also brought a harsh crackdown on the house churches in China. New restrictions from the communist government brought a wave of mass arrests - including 100 leaders arrested in one day. Two days later the authorities detained and interrogated Samuel Lamb, a world-renowned house church pastor. Other reports tell of kidnappings, imprisonment, and heavy fines. In spite of the increased opposition, Christians in China boldly continue to evangelize! The house churches are growing rapidly, and Bibles and other supplies are urgently needed. --*Frontline Faith*, Dec. 2004

Being A Missionary In Ukraine

Grady Bryan, in *Good Tidings Magazine*

In my eight years in Ukraine as a "missionary," I have struggled to define what I am supposed to be doing here. Do I stand on the street corner declaring God's Word? Do I secure a hall and offer lectures on Biblical Evidences or Christian Ethics? Do I go door-to-door sharing Christ's Good News? Do I get involved with a ministry to orphans? Do I offer free English lessons using the Bible as a textbook? Do I devote my energy to the Christians I know, helping them become evangelists? Do I conduct home Bible studies? How can I best share Jesus Christ where I live?

In raising all of these questions, several stories come to mind:

A grandmother waiting with us at the stoplight read the invitation we handed her. She immediately turned, speaking emotionally in Russian. "Why do you think we in Ukraine do not know God? We believe in God. We have been following God for a long time." Many people do have a belief in God. They have stories passed down to them through grandmothers--such as this one--about how God has been their helper through all the years of struggle as wars and various powers held sway over the their lives. We have not stepped into a void here. God has been working in Ukraine despite the political agenda of the Communist party.

Yaroslav, one of my first students and a friend, usually walked the forty five minute route home with me after classes (where I teach at the university), mainly wanting to practice English. I began praying that God would help me to share the Good News with him. One cold winter evening walking along the slippery sidewalks, Yaroslav confessed, "Grady, I know that you are a person who has faith in God. I would like to talk to you about that but I don't even know enough to talk about Jesus in Russian, let alone English." Though God has been present in Ukraine, many people like Yaroslav have no real knowledge of Jesus. They have heard the name and know bits and pieces, but they need to hear the story of Jesus.

Kostya agreed to attend worship services with me one Sunday morning. Following our meeting, he said, "That was weird." What? "Well, talking to someone who isn't there seems a little weird to me." (He spoke of prayer.) Many seekers do not have the Christian culture that we have grown up with. Prayer is something that must be taught--not assumed--as people grow in their relationship with Christ. (Kostya and his wife are now strong Christians living in St.

Petersburg, Russia; and I am sure their little girl is learning how to pray to a God who IS present.)

Valeriy's usual response was "I understand but I cannot believe it. My father and mother were Party members. I was a young communist. I cannot believe in God." Many people, who grew up under the dictates of the Soviet regime, find it difficult to reject what they have believed in for so many years. It would be like my becoming an atheist--rejection of ALL that has shaped my life up to this point. The truth must be spoken in love and patience. (Valeriy is now beginning PhD work at Kansas State University. He accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior several years ago and is married to Inna, a Ukrainian Christian, and has two young children.)

Two women working in the furniture store claimed to be Orthodox believers. Emphasizing a point in answer to my inquiry about their reading the Scriptures, one of the women pointed to the gold cross on a chain around her neck. "See this, it has been in our family for almost 200 years. I will give it to my daughter and her daughter." These women are not part of a Christian fellowship. They claim a faith in God, but like so many in Ukraine, faith is more in keeping of religious festivals and wearing the correct cross. Following rituals is more important than believing in Jesus and his saving power.

THE ANSWER:

Peter and John were arrested, threatened not to speak in the name of Jesus, and released. Joining the gathering of believers, they prayed: "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that your bond servants may speak your word with all confidence, while you extend your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of your Holy Servant Jesus" (Acts 4:29-30 NASB). I believe strongly that this prayer holds the key to carrying out Jesus' instructions. Knowing the language and the culture, forming relationships and wrestling in prayer enable us to speak the message of Jesus with bold confidence as God "extends His hand."

(Grady Bryan is a graduate of Abilene Christian U. and Texas Tech. He and his wife Lena (a Ukranian) have three boys. This article is reprinted from *Good Tidings Magazine*.)

A Sign of the Times—That we feel a need to run such items as these next 2 You may not agree with all that is said, but at least think about it.:

Abduction Precautions for Women

Sent by a friend via email

We can now add to the list of victims the retired 77 year old TCU professor from Ft. Worth whose body was found several weeks ago in Oklahoma--and the 11 year old in Sarasota, Florida. Because of these recent abductions in daylight hours, consider carefully what to do in an emergency situation.

1. The elbow is the strongest point on your body. If you are close enough to use it, do!

2. I learned this from a tourist guide in New Orleans. If a robber asks for your wallet and/or purse, **Do not hand it to him.** Toss it away from you. Chances are that he is more interested in your wallet and/or purse than you, and he will go for the wallet or purse. **Run like mad in the other direction!**

3. If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you, but everybody else will. This has saved lives.

4. Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc. **Don't do this!** The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go. **As soon as you get into your car, lock the doors and leave.**

5. A few notes about getting into your car in a parking lot, or parking garage:

A.) Be aware: look around you, look into your car, at the passenger side floor, and in the back seat.

B.) If you are parked next to a big van, enter your car from the passenger door. Most serial killers attack their victims by pulling them into their vans while the women are attempting to get into their cars.

C.) Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest

your car, you may want to walk back into the mall, or work, and get a guard/policeman to walk you back out. **It is always better to be safe than sorry.** (And better paranoid than dead.)

6. Always take the elevator instead of the stairs. (Stairwells are horrible places to be alone, and the perfect crime spot).

7. If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, **always run!** The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times; And even then, it most likely will not be a vital organ. Run!

8. As women, we are always trying to be sympathetic: Stop. It may get you raped, or killed. Ted Bundy, the serial killer, was a good-looking, well educated man, who always played on the sympathies of unsuspecting women. He walked with a cane, or a limp, and often asked "for help" into his vehicle or with his vehicle, which is when he abducted his next victim.

9. Another Safety Point: Someone just told me that her friend heard a crying baby on her porch the night before last, and she called the police because it was late and she thought it was weird. The police told her "Whatever you do, **Do Not** open the door." The lady then said that it sounded like the baby had crawled near a window, and she was worried that it would crawl to the street and get run over. The policeman said, "We already have a unit on the way, whatever you do, **Do Not** open the door." He told her that they think a serial killer has a baby's cry recorded, and uses it to coax women out of their homes thinking that someone dropped off a baby. He said they have not verified it, but have had several calls by women saying that they hear baby crying outside their doors, when they're home alone at night.

Please pass this on and **Do Not** open the door for a crying baby. This e-mail should probably be taken seriously because the Crying Baby theory was mentioned on "America's Most Wanted" this past Saturday when they profiled the serial killer in Louisiana.

I was going to send this to the ladies only, but guys, if you love your mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, etc., you may want to pass it onto them, as well. A candle is not dimmed by lighting another candle. Tell this to any woman you know that may need to be reminded that the world we live in has a lot of crazies in it, and it's better to be safe than sorry.

Through a Rapist's eyes

Paula Shay

A group of rapists and date rapists in prison were interviewed on what they look for in a potential victim, and here are some interesting facts:

1) The first thing men look for in a potential victim is hairstyle. They are most likely to go after a woman with a ponytail, bun, braid or other hairstyle that can easily be grabbed. They are also likely to go after a woman with long hair. Women with short hair are not common targets.

2) The second thing men look for is women whose clothing is easy to remove quickly. Many of them carry scissors around to cut clothing.

3) They also look for women talking on their cell phone, searching through their purse, or doing other activities while walking because they are off guard and can be easily overpowered.

4) The time of day men are most likely to attack and rape a woman is in the early morning, between 5 and 8:30 a.m.

5) The number one place women are abducted from/attacked at is grocery store parking lots. Number two is office parking lots/garages. Number three is public restrooms.

6) The thing about these men is that they are looking to grab a woman and quickly move her to a second location where they don't have to worry about getting caught.

7) Only 2% said they carried weapons because rape carries a 3-5 year sentence, but rape with a weapon is 15-20 years.

8) If you put up any kind of a fight at all, they get discouraged because it only takes a minute or two for them to realize that going after you isn't worth it because it will be time-consuming.

9) These men said they would not pick on women who have umbrellas (or other similar objects that can be used from a distance) in their hands. Keys are not a deterrent because you have to get really close to the attacker to use them as a weapon. So, the idea is to convince these guys you're not worth it.

10) Several defense mechanisms were taught: If someone is following behind you on a street or in a garage, or with you in an elevator or stairwell, look him in the face and ask him a question, like,

"What time is it?", or make general small talk, like "I can't believe it is so cold out here, we're in for a bad winter." Now that you've seen his face and could identify him in a lineup, you lose appeal as a target.

11) If someone is coming toward you, hold out your hands in front of you and YELL "Stop" or "Stay back!" Most of the rapists this man talked to said they'd leave a woman alone if she yelled or showed that she would not be afraid to fight back. Again, they are looking for an EASY target.

12) If you carry pepper spray (this instructor was a huge advocate of it and carries it with him wherever he goes), yelling "I HAVE PEPPER SPRAY" and holding it out will be a deterrent.

13) If someone grabs you, you can't beat him with strength but you can by outsmarting him. If you are grabbed around the waist from behind, pinch the attacker either under the arm between the elbow and armpit or in the upper inner thigh -- HARD.

14) After the initial hit, always go for the groin. I know from a particularly unfortunate experience that if you slap a guy's parts it is extremely painful. You might think that you'll anger the guy and make him want to hurt you more but the thing these rapists told our instructor is that they want a woman who will not cause a lot of trouble. Start causing trouble, and he's out of there.

15) Of course the things we always hear still apply. Be aware of your surroundings, take someone with you if you can, and if you see any odd behavior, don't dismiss it--go with your instincts. You may feel a little silly at the time, but you'd feel much worse if the guy really was trouble.

Real Sex: The Naked Truth about Chastity

by Lauren F. Winner (Brazos, 2005)

Reviewed by James Robert Ross, Ph.D., LMFT

Although premarital sex used to be considered a moral issue, a solid majority of Americans are apparently now convinced that sex before or outside of marriage is not a big deal. In a May 2003 Gallup poll 58% of us reported that premarital sex is morally o-k. That is perhaps the most obvious result of the sexual revolution, since in 1969 only 21% of our parents felt that premarital sex was not a moral issue.

Lauren Winner, a young Jewish woman, has already made her mark as an author worth reading in *Girl Meets God*, the story of her encounter with Christ and her conversion as his disciple. In *Real Sex* she undertakes the task of rethinking her assumptions about sex which she absorbed and incorporated into her own lifestyle during the sexual revolution. She has produced a book of unusual clarity, wit and substance.

This is an honest, courageous book. The author is brutally honest with herself about herself, about the state of her soul, about her own sexual choices and about the difficulties in the exercise of chastity. If the reader learns nothing from this book except the need for honest self-examination, it will be well worth the price.

This is a Biblically informed, theologically sound book. It is not a jeremiad against the joys of a little sexual hanky panky. Rather, it describes the meaning of sex in the context of what it means to be human, especially to be a human being who has been called by God into a covenant relationship of which marriage is the most profound and significant symbol. Ms. Winner has demonstrated how sex is intricately tied up with our personal identity and with our relationship not only with the warm body in bed beside us but with our neighbors, the church and ultimately with the God who invented sex.

This is a helpful book. When the author describes many of the church's moralistic truisms and observes how unhelpful they are, she strikes a chord with all who live and breathe in a sexually saturated atmosphere and have struggled with lust, pornography, and infidelity. In contrast she offers concrete, meaningful suggestions about Christian sexual discipline and formation. In so doing she presents a compelling critique of our ultra individualistic culture and how it has infected and controlled the way Christians see their responsibility for each other. She reminds us that the prevailing view that "no one has permission to utter a word about a little thing like premarital sex," is, "put simply, a lie."

Finally, this book is a joy to read. The author is gifted with the use of the English language. Although she has chosen to walk where angels might have feared to tread, she proves a capable, informative and wonderfully compassionate guide for anyone who wishes to enjoy real sex.

[The reviewer may be contacted at his office at 106 Dennis Drive, Lexington, KY 40503. Phone 278-3290; email JRRoss@AnchorCounseling.com.]

S.C.C. Lives On through S.C.E.C.

The Southeastern Christian Education Corporation was founded in 1983, following the closing of Southeastern Christian College a few years earlier. After all debts and obligations of the college were met, and the property sold, there was \$159,779 remaining. This was invested, and every year the SCEC Board uses a percentage of the total assets for scholarships for worthy students in specified Christian schools or for education projects or mission projects.

With two or three later bequests and careful management the fund reached its highest point of \$530,753 in the year 2000. When the market fell that amount decreased. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004 the fund was at \$339,188. Interest from this fund will be used this year to provide scholarships to students attending 13 different Christian colleges or universities and to fund two mission projects.

Since 1984, when the first grant of \$2,620 was made to the School of Biblical Studies, the SCEC fund has provided \$415,875 in scholarships, church grants and mission projects. At present the Board consists of 12 members. Members of churches that supported S.C.C. (or its predecessor, Kentucky Bible College) are eligible for and invited to be members of the Corporation. Those wanting more information or interested in membership may contact the current chairman, J. Richard Lewis (423: 477-3707), or the treasurer, Terry Morrison (476 Sparrow Lane, Harrodsburg, KY 40330; or tmorrison@ultraincorp.com).

--Information supplied by Julius Hovan and Terry Morrison

Few Follow Jesus to the Cross

Many crowd the Savior's Kingdom,

Few receive His Cross,

Many seek His consolation,

Few will suffer loss

For the dear sake of the Master,

Counting all but dross.

Many sit at Jesus' table,

Few will fast with Him

When the sorrow-cup of anguish

Trembles to the brim--
Few watch with Him in the garden
Who have sung the hymn.

Many will confess His wisdom,
Few embrace His shame,
Many, should He smile upon them,
Will His praise proclaim;
Then, if for a while He leave them,
They desert His Name.

But the souls who love Him truly
Both for woe or bliss,
These will count their truest heart's blood
Not their own, but His;
Savior, Thou Who thus hast loved me,
Give me love like this.

[The writer of this poem is unknown. But it is a paraphrase of a passage from the classic devotional book written centuries ago, *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas A. Kempis. Why don't you turn off the t-v and computer for awhile and read that book? You can get it at Christian bookstores, or maybe even a public library.]

If you're not sure of God's existence, tell him so.

“Have We Taught You How to Doubt?”

Dear Elizabeth,

Now that you are away from us, your Daddy and I keep thinking of things we should have talked to you about while you were home. We think that you have absorbed some of these things by growing up with us, but we can't be sure. Right now we are wondering if we have taught you how to doubt. The secular, sophisticated college which will be your world for the next years will have an effect on your faith; in fact, we would be surprised if you didn't have doubts about Christian doctrine and your relationship to God. So, there are some things we want to say to help you deal with doubt in a healthy way.

1. *The first thing to do about doubt is to admit it--to yourself, and to God and, if possible, to other Christians. Just as you can't solve an equation without setting it up properly, you cannot find the*

answer for a doubt you have not acknowledged. If the virgin birth has become a stumbling block to you, admit it. If you are not even sure of God's existence, tell him so. It is a contradiction, of course, to talk to someone you don't believe in, but by doing this you refuse to deny God and allow him to answer you.

If you can discuss your doubts with a good Christian friend or counselor, do so. Don't share your questions with anyone who condemns you for doubting. That kind of judgmental attitude is immature and will only frustrate and confuse you more. Our Lord often answers through one of his people, but sometimes finding supportive friends is more important than having our questions answered.

2. *Do not fear doubt will end your relationship with Jesus.* Doubt does not have to be the end of commitment; it certainly is not the end of God. His existence is not dependent on your belief; neither is his love for you dependent on what you feel. He helped Daddy find work when both Daddy and I were discouraged about it. He did not insist that we feel optimistic first. Doubt is only what we think or feel, but commitment is what we *will*. You can pray, "Lord, I can't see you, I can't feel you, I'm not even sure I believe in you any more, but I will still base my actions on the premise that you are not only out there but right here, and I *will* follow you." Remember that he sometimes draws us closer to himself by seeming to withdraw for a while so we can learn to trust him more deeply.

3. *Remind yourself of the things you do not doubt.* You can say, "I don't understand how you, God, could become human, but I see the stars and know something of your creative power," or "I don't know what purpose you have for my life, but I do know that your love called me to commit myself to you in baptism." Build your confidence with positive statements.

4. *Be patient.* If you do not expect to know everything about the chemistry of the body, how can you expect to know much about God? If you spend twelve years learning to be a doctor, shouldn't you spend even longer learning to be the person your heavenly Father wants you to be? Look at his long-term creative work: his building of mountains and carving of rivers; his Word from Genesis to Revelation; his plan for your development from infancy to adulthood. He will be patient with you as long as you are seeking him. He demands that you obey, not that you understand everything he does and is.

5. *Learn from other people's experiences with doubt.* And don't make the mistake of assuming that real saints live without doubt. Moses doubted that God could use him to speak to Pharaoh; David

wondered whether God had forgotten him; John the Baptist had to ask Jesus if he was the Messiah; Thomas wanted proof of the resurrection; in his own life, John Bunyan met the Giant Despair; Corrie ten Boom relied on Betsie's faith in the concentration camp.

We have also doubted. In the past few months you watched us put our house up for sale, knowing our Lord wanted us to move, but sometimes we panicked because we did not know where he was leading us. We have discussed Christian doctrine with you enough so you know belief has not always come easily to us, but that we have learned to live with doubts even while we live for our Lord. You can do the same.

6. *Let doubt be the beginning of growth and not the end of it.* Some college students decide, "I have grown up and I know that the religion of my youth is a fairy tale. Because I no longer believe, I am mature," You know better. We have not fed you any fairy tales. Some of your classmates will lose their faith because they toss out grains of truth along with the mythological baggage. It is tragic when the resurrection is confused with Easter baskets. Any learning is a process of replacing imperfect knowledge with more correct and complete understanding, and growth in faith is no different. For example if you find, when you study atomic physics, that what you had believed about atoms was incorrect, you won't (you'd better not) just drop out and claim that atoms aren't real. Instead you will study the text and talk with your professor until your misconceptions are cleared up. Discovering that God does not answer all prayer with immediately satisfying miracles should not lead you to stop praying, but instead to discover how he wants you to respond to him, and what prayers he wants you to offer. Growth comes not by saying, "Lord, I quit," but by asking, "Lord, what's next?"

7. *Maintain a regular routine of prayer, Bible study and fellowship.* If you don't, you won't hear God because you are not listening. Just as a doctor reads medical journals to grow in medical knowledge, a Christian needs regular Bible reading to grow in his or her faith.

Meet with other Christians in informal fellowship and regular church attendance. Don't, however, confuse good habits with rigidity. You can refresh your faith by changing your patterns of Bible reading, prayer, worship and fellowship. Try reading and pondering one verse instead of an entire chapter; find an open chapel for private prayer away from your dormitory room; visit another denomination for a more or less formal worship service; explore different fellowship groups to find one that meets your current need, whether

a social group, an intimate prayer group or an intellectual Bible study. A large college community offers plenty of options.

8. *Check your physical condition.* Satan makes use of the physical and mental exhaustion caused by a rigorous schedule and the barrage of new ideas to breed doubt and despair. If you are losing sleep, drinking too much coffee, fretting over difficult assignments or fighting off a sore throat, then doubt will be more a condition of body than of mind. You need to take care of the physical problem first. Remember that Jesus became tired and discouraged, too. Exhaustion is not sin, it is simply part of being human.

We let you go into the world knowing that there will be doubts, expecting that Jesus will lead you through them and hoping that we have taught you how to doubt so that you will not be overwhelmed. Remember that what you don't know or can't be sure about is not so important as following Jesus, believing that he does have the answers.

You are precious to us both as the daughter God gave us to rear for him, and as a sister who follows Jesus along with us. As long as we travel together in his care, you are not far from us.

Love, Mom

DEBORAH DETERING has had more than one hundred foster children in her house over the past six years. She also has a husband, three daughters and one son.

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill, BHill40482@aol.com

Email from News & Notes Editor: I'm leaving Sun. for Florida (#7 grandbaby) and returning Thurs. via. Tennessee (Bryan College) for #8 grandbaby. Next due date in August / Sept. We never knew having 4 daughters could be so much fun!!!

Buechel Church of Christ (Louisville, KY) will be hosting a Youth Rally July 30, 2005. A youth group from Ocala, FL will be coming to Louisville July 25-31. They will help us knock on doors - conduct a three day VBS and then a youth rally on Saturday, July 30 from 9:30 -2:30. Lunch will be provided. Richard "Hoss" Ridgeway will be the speaker. He is the youth minister in Ocala.

The 1-eyed Monsters in Our Homes—

The Highland Community Church bulletin quotes the following sobering facts from an article in the April 21 Southeast *Outlook*:

*Americans watch an average of more than 4 hours of TV a day, or two full months of TV a year.

*40% of families always or often watch TV while eating dinner.

*Only 14% of 12th-graders who watch TV 6 or more hours a day achieve proficiency on reading tests, while 52% of students who watch an hour or less do.

*By age 18, American children will have seen an average of more than 200,000 acts of violence, including 16,000 murders on TV.

*Virtually all 3,500 research studies over 40 years show a link between watching media violence and committing acts of real violence.

"We Are Teenagers" A recent ad for a Christian youth conference made these claims: "We are teenagers—the 1st generation to grow up with point-&-click pornography [i.e., on the web]. 90% of us have viewed porn online...most while doing homework. In fact we view more internet porn than any other age group. (It's not just the dirty old men.) But that shouldn't shock you. Not when you consider that we see nearly 14,000 sexual scenes and references each year on TV. That's more than 38 a day." Are we training our youth (& ourselves) in purity?

Change of Location Dan Wilson has moved from Louisville to Colorado Springs. He continues his ministry as coordinator of short-term missions with ACSI, the Association of Christian Schools International. He may be reached at 5570 Saddle Rock Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80918.

Ross Point Church of Christ (Baxter, KY) Harry Coultas announces a baptism (Bradley Thomas) age 13 on Easter Sunday (3/27/2005) Harry assumed full-time responsibilities as minister the first of the year.

Ladies Inspiration Day was held on Saturday April 2nd at the Sellersburg Church of Christ and

hosted by the Southern Indiana Churches of Christ. Over 120 ladies attended the meeting and enjoyed a time of fellowship with "Spring Cleaning for Heart and Soul" as the theme. Several ladies caught the spirit by dressing in bluejeans and everyday clothes as they went about their various responsibilities for the day.

The various talks were well received as each speaker gave personal insights in their respective lessons. The singing was extra special and in particular the Southern Indiana Ladies Chorus directed by Phyllis Mullins. A special thanks to the ladies committee for making the day so special.

Cherry St. Church of Christ (New Albany, IN) announces their summer revival meeting July 10-15 with evangelist Julius Hovan.

How Large & Influential is the Orthodox Church in Russia?

Some researchers in Russia believe that the Russian Orthodox Church "in almost every case exaggerates the number of Orthodox believers and the relative size of the Orthodox Church" compared

to the numbers of other religions – including Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam. Many Russian experts on religion believe, on the basis of an extensive range of polling data, that while something more than half of the Russian population claims to be Orthodox, only 2-4% attend church regularly or faithfully follow any of the rules of the church. And many religious leaders point out that many of those who do go to church may be doing so less out of a sense of religious obligation than for other reasons including maintaining appearances or appealing to one or another saint when they find themselves in difficulty.

In Moscow, the approximate number of people attending Orthodox services on Easter was *180,000* in the years 1992-94 (just a few years after the fall of the Soviet Union and the increase in religious freedom in Russia). But the approximate number of Orthodox attenders on Easter in Moscow was only *120,000* in 2000; *63,000* in 2003; *75,000* in 2004. Moscow's total population is around 12 million.

ALL SUBSCRIBERS To W&W PLEASE TAKE NOTE

In case you did not notice in our April and May issues, Word and Work's subscription price had to be raised to \$14 yearly, effective last month. As before, a bundle of 10 magazines sent to any one address will cost \$1 less per subscription per year (i.e. @ \$13 yearly, not \$14).

Please remember the new price, so our busy office manager (Sister Louise Wells) won't have to spend time and money sending you a reminder. And please pray for Word and Work. Only if the Lord works in and through this ministry will it bear good fruit. Many thanks to those who do pray regularly for us, and to loving workers and donors also.

A-L-L SUBSCRIBERS to our SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY, PLEASE REMEMBER:

As announced in our April and May magazines, at the end of 2005 we shall not publish our Sunday School Quarterly any more. Our last quarterly will be for the months of September through November.

There are various other good quarterlies available. Perhaps you who read Word and Work can suggest to our subscribers (by writing to us) which quarterlies you have found (or heard from others) to be truly profitable—true to God's word and written both capably and practically. Let us know your recommendations and we will pass them on to all our readers.

Z: 2 (Qty: 1)
Harry K. Coultas
33 McGlamery Lane
Baxter, KY 40806

09/2005

SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

S.B.S. announces its fall schedule beginning August, 2005

Life & Work of the Preacher	Mon. 9 am-12	Mike Abbott
Christian Doctrines	Mon. 1-4 pm	Jerry Carmichael
Intro. to Greek	Mon. 6:30-8:30 pm	Jim Girdley
Principles of Christian Ed	Tues. 10 am-12	Ervin Denkins
Homiletics	Tues. 1-3 pm	Bennie Hill
Prison Epistles	Tues. 6:30-9:30 pm	Julius Hovan

If you live in the Louisville-Southern Indiana area or near the Buechel Church of Christ and want to enhance your service to the Lord, why not consider attending SBS this fall? Now is the time to sign up and start making plans. For availability of classes contact: Jerry Carmichael, 390 C St. NW, Linton, IN 47441 (812) 847-4571; or Bud Ridgeway, 121 Arbor Place, Fisherville, KY 40023 (502) 477-8255.