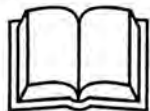


"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

September, 2005

*C r a z y ,  
M i x e d - U p  
W o r l d ! ! !*

# 31ST ANNUAL CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

November 14-17, 2005 at Glenmora Church of Christ

**Night Theme:** *A Call to Repentance*

**Daytime Themes:** 1. *Obedience*

2. *A review of "The Purpose Driven Life"*

**Exposition Theme:** *Hosea*

## MONDAY November 14

Chairman: Dennis LeDoux

7:00 p.m. Singing  
\*7:30 A Call to Repentance as in the Days of Noah David Eubanks

## TUESDAY November 15

Chairman: Charles Whittington

9:30 Prayer Time  
10:00 Obedience Unto Salvation Alex Wilson  
11:10 Hosea, Part I Jack Harris  
1:15 Review of "The Purpose Driven Life" - Part I Bob Ross  
7:00 p.m. Singing  
\*7:30 A Call to Repentance by the Prophets of Israel David Eubanks

## WEDNESDAY November 16

Chairman: Dillard Fontenot

9:30 Prayer Time  
10:00 Obedience Unto Sanctification Alex Wilson  
11:10 Hosea, Part II Jack Harris  
1:15 Review of "The Purpose Driven Life" - Part II Bob Ross  
7:00 p.m. Singing  
\*7:30 A Call to Repentance to the Church David Eubanks

## THURSDAY November 17

Chairman: Danny Broussard

9:30 Prayer Time  
10:00 Obedience Unto Soul-Winning Alex Wilson  
11:10 Hosea, Part III Jack Harris  
1:15 Review of "The Purpose Driven Life" - Part III Bob Ross  
7:00 p.m. Singing  
\*7:30 A Call to Repentance to Individuals David Eubanks

\* *Evening Services for the youth* will be conducted by Logan Heeke

**Hospitality Chairman:** Dennis LeDoux, Glenmora Church of Christ,  
P. O. Box 314, Glenmora, LA 71433 Phone: (318) 748-4243

Tapes for sale from:  
Donald R. Stump, 1720 Plum Creek Rd., Taylorsville, KY 40071

# THE WORD AND WORK

*"Declare the whole counsel of God"*

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, News & Notes

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# Crazy, Mixed-Up World!!!

Alex V. Wilson

Notice some statements from this month's articles, and you'll see why we named our theme *Crazy, Mixed-Up World!!!* (And we had gathered these articles before the destroyer Katrina swooped in, and raised more questions.)

1. "Americans spend more money on entertainment than education and healthcare combined." (And even that is not the real kicker.)

2. "Those who uttered those anguished words had been martyred for their faith. They are asking what suffering humanity has been asking throughout history -- *Will things be set right, and if so, when?*"

3. ". . . involved in some activity with the homosexual community . . . suffering from guilt and depression or possibly had some sexual disease."

4. "All men of the modern world exist in a continual and flagrant antagonism between their consciences and their way of life."

5. "Hannah became frightened as the children pressed in . . . and even tried to steal her blanket . . . . Joseph had nearly been assaulted by a deranged Muslim . . . ."

6. "How many times have I spoken harshly, then wished I could pull the words back . . . ?"

7. "What they don't tell us about 'long life' in the brochure is the burden of grief and the burden of pain."

But we also may praise our Lord for statements like these: "God still invites us to lament. We may ask him life's difficult questions." Yes, His ears are open. And there is future glory, too. Though "not yet" is our common experience, the rapturous **Yes!** lies ahead. And even now, though there is so much brokenness, there is also **hope** (for the homosexual and for us all). Read thoughtfully; there is much to digest.

# REGARDING KATRINA AND ITS DEVASTATION

We are heartsick at the suffering of vast multitudes in Louisiana and Mississippi. Prayers ascend and monetary aid has been given by many—yet the needs are overwhelming. The W&W editor is writing this section on Sept. 5. But we face a dilemma, for almost all of September's articles were sent several days ago to the printer. We can still get information into the Sept. issue regarding the desolation spawned by Katrina, but by the time it gets printed, mailed and into your hands, weeks will have passed and all the news will be old.

I will record some information received thus far, realizing most or all will become outdated by future reports.

**From David Ramsey in Hammond, LA., revised by him as of September 5 (condensed by avw):**

With respect to the needs brought on by Hurricane Katrina, you may want to consider:

- [http://www.disasterrelieffort.org/content.asp?C\\_ID=38554](http://www.disasterrelieffort.org/content.asp?C_ID=38554)  
--That web site describes a coordinated relief effort already in motion by the Churches of Christ Disaster Relief organization based in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Some churches are supporting a shelter effort at Ingallwood Park, Christian Youth Encampment, near DeRidder, Louisiana. It's not the Marriott, but the cabins are air-conditioned and all facilities including the cafeteria are modern---communicate with Mattie or David McReynolds at autumnwest100@juno.com.

The devastation is everywhere. I have never seen the like. The previous hurricanes do not compare. Most of the damage here in Hammond seems to be from fallen trees and downed power lines. Some trees missed houses but squashed nearby cars. To some of my friends in west Texas I have had to point out just how dangerous a falling tree is. What they call a "tree" out there would hardly qualify in Louisiana as a respectable bush. One of my friends wrote from West Texas to let me know that she moved out there after a tree fell through her house here; this is impossible in Abilene, where the houses are taller than the "trees."

The two usual ways to our house were blocked by fallen trees. There was another way out, but the police wanted people to stay in their homes. We were in virtual house arrest for three days. A large

limb bashed through the roof of my mother's house, bringing water damage. She is 84, [has severe memory loss] and is dying of cancer. Some 80% of Hammond is still without electricity. Ponchatoula may not regain electricity until five weeks to two months. The city water in Amite is contaminated.

Officials in Saint Tammany and Jefferson parishes have indicated that their schools may not go back into session until after Thanksgiving. In Orleans Parish (New Orleans) the uncertainty for some schools is whether there's enough of a school left to go back to. Seniors are fretting because they may not be able to finish high school on time. Some churches of various faiths have set up make-shift schools tailored to displaced pupils' course needs. Home-schooling is picking up a head of steam.

For several days we harbored a couple of Anna's friends while their homes were without electricity. There are thousands of refugees in Hammond. The National Guard has been handing out MREs (Meals Ready to Eat, also known in the military services as Meals Rejected by Everybody), and people are glad to get them. In one bizarre situation here in Hammond on Tuesday, a rumor spread that Walgreen's was open; so hundreds of people went over there and formed a queue which went around the building and far out into the parking lot. It became monkey-see monkey-do as others got in line--only to discover after a long wait that the store was not open!

You miss things you take for granted once they are taken from you. A big problem is how to buy things if you can find them. Without electricity and telephone connections and the internet, credit cards can do nothing. Cash is the only medium of exchange. Yet ATMs can't work either, and the banks were in fortress mode for days. Now they're open again and at first let one account holder in at a time. Cash was being rationed, even to well known customers.

Many have written to inquire about the historic old 7th and Camp church in New Orleans. So far as I have been able to learn, everyone is safe. I do not know whether the building has been damaged. You may know more about the situation in the rest of Louisiana and Mississippi because you can see it on t-v, which we don't have right now. Please pray for the good people of this area in these trying times. So many have lost everything.

Another Way to Help the Needy--avw: Send checks marked "Hurricane Relief " to Jennings Church of Christ, 1812 N. Cutting Ave., Jennings, LA 70546. They cooperate with other local churches to provide for refugees. Their days to feed them are Mondays and Fridays.

# More TVs than Toilets???

Angel Nelson

Did you know that there are more televisions than toilets in the United States, or that Americans spend more money on entertainment than education and healthcare combined? This one is the real kicker: the average American Christian spends six times more money on entertainment than on all forms of Christian giving combined.

We all know why we waste our money, but the question that remains unanswered is what do we really gain from profuse entertainment, and are we really influenced by what we see and hear? Seventy-two percent of teenagers say they copy what they see in sexually explicit or violent films, and 22% of teenage crime is directly related to what teens see in violent movies and television programs. "Film and television tell us the way we conduct our lives, what is right and wrong," states George Lucas.\* Tom Hanks hit the nail on the head when he said, "The film industry can capture an idea and make it glamorous and gorgeous so that the audience isn't even aware that they're embracing something they never would have embraced before."\*

This can be seen especially in *That 70s Show*, a catered-to-teens program which depicts sex out of marriage and drugs, not only as the norm, but also as chic. One episode even demonstrated the justification of looking at pornography.

*Will and Grace* is another example of a program whose sole purpose is to show that gay life is just as fun and loving as the heterosexual lifestyle and to allay any prejudices that may occur. However, the event of two main male characters kissing on national television surely causes eyebrows to rise. Even shows such as *Seinfeld*, *King of Queens*, and *Everybody Loves Raymond* disguise their sexual remarks and actions under the illusion of humor.

"If movies can sell a style of dress or a career choice, aren't we being naive to think that they can't affect our beliefs concerning deeper issues like sexuality, violence, rebellion, or religion?" Despite what we think, we are influenced by the daily programs we watch, whether it be a little more tolerance of homosexuality, laughing at sexual humor or deciding it is acceptable to engage in sexual behaviors. But don't blame Hollywood. Hollywood doesn't make us watch television; we decide on our own. However, the more we tolerate the liberal gay programs or programs focused on sex or vio-

lence, the more producers are encouraged to do more programs of that sort and worse. A lot of situations and words we hear today on television would not have been heard in polite company 20 years ago. That fact alone should show that not enough is being done to regulate what is broadcast on national television. So how can we filter what we see and hear? Cut the cord! Crazy as it sounds, it may be what we need to hear, especially if we find ourselves stuck in the grasp of our nation's number one bad influence--television.

--Editorial in the Portland Christian School (Louisville)  
*Broadcaster* [April 2005]

\* Source of the above quotes is *Moral Issues* (2001), edited by David Noebel, published by Summit Ministries.

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*Why? How long?*

## God Still Invites Us To Lament

By Mark LaValley

"Why have I never heard that we can talk to God like this?" Adam, a student in Psalms and Wisdom Literature, was reacting to that day's material on the lament psalms. His reaction is similar to those I've heard when presenting in other forums. Lament psalms ask God raw, messy questions. By contrast, our places of worship seldom, if ever, do. Churches attempt to do Bible things in Bible ways, and yet this is not always true of our prayer life together.

Biblical prayer sometimes asks God difficult questions, like "Why?" (Psalm 74:1) and "How long?" (Psalm 13:1). Such prayer, often labeled "lament," implies that God is patient with--and even invites--our tearful questions. Some think of such questioning as a lower form of faith, an outmoded Old Testament weakness. We find, however, lament on the lips of Jesus (Mark 15:34) and the martyrs in heaven (Revelation 6:10). God's fundamental character does not change from the Old Testament to the New. Since God has not changed, we may still ask him life's difficult questions.

I'm intrigued by what some people say about their experience with lament. They feel free to interrogate God in the privacy of personal prayer. They tell of pouring out their heart to a God who receives them with mercy. As they voice their questions, God comes tenderly to comfort and console. When they finish, they have few if any theoretical answers for suffering. They do have, however, an experience of God's tender mercy that is its own answer.



Church culture, however, does not easily tolerate public expressions of anger or confusion. We customarily praise God when we're together. We ask him for deliverance. We sometimes even express sadness. But we do not often ask God to explain himself ("Why?") nor do we ask him to reevaluate his timing ("How long?"). Still, there are people in our church that can teach us to lament if we will seek their wisdom.

We need to lament in the corporate assembly. The absence of lament is dangerous, for it can create a skewed view of faith. A lament-less faith is a question-free, always-got-it-together faith. Sadly, though, we sometimes teach Christians that they should not question. And yet questions are the very things believers (and seekers) intuitively understand. Many more seekers, for example, could choose to believe if faith did not require suppressing honest questions. We need to return to the Bible's approach to prayer, for it teaches that God is patient with our anger and confusion. And we need to create opportunities for believers and seekers to experience this God in corporate lament.

For example, the church I serve has experienced lament in the assembly. It was a powerful, God-led happening I will never forget. Using an informal retreat environment, we spent Saturday examining the lament psalms and thinking about God's patience to welcome such complaints. We invited people to write anonymous questions on index cards, instructing them to begin with either "Why?" or "How long?"

The Sunday assembly, then, became an embodiment of the many experiences of faith in three movements. First, we spent time singing songs of God's constancy and provision. Second, we expressed lament. Unlike the first movement, it was difficult to find songs to express this mood. Abruptly the melodies ended. We reviewed the previous day's lament material. Together we read aloud Psalm 88: the only lament psalm that ends without an expression of praise. A member gave a prepared testimony regarding her inability to have children and her questions about that. We read aloud other anonymous laments individuals had written. "Why won't you heal Curtis?" one asked. "How long until I experience true love and intimacy in my marriage?" another questioned. Like waves crashing one after another, these questions had a powerful, cumulative effect. The heartache and despair were, for most, crushing.

We still had the third movement ahead: thanking God for his healing touch. But would anyone experience this? "I feel your arms around me as the power of your healing begins," the final song said. Would this merely be a cover-up of our real feelings? God, however,

brought us out of the pit. We sang slowly at first of our need for healing, but then somehow we transitioned to celebrating that the healing had begun. With tears rolling down our cheeks we worshipped a God of infinite power and love who did not have to give us a theory to explain our suffering. He had given us something much better. He had given us a vision of his tender mercy, in part because we had been willing to lament.

--From *New Wineskins* May/June 2003, by permission

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## YES, But NOT YET!

Leroy Garrett

*And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth!" -- Rev. 6:10*

Those who uttered those anguished words had been martyred for their faith. They are asking what suffering humanity has been asking throughout history -- *Will things be set right, and if so, when?*

The question is asked in different ways. The prophet to the exiles in Babylon -- puzzled by God's apparent inaction during troubling times -- cried out, "Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!" (Isa. 64:1) He goes on to complain, "You have hidden Your face from us." (v. 7). The psalmists often complain in like manner: "Lord, why do You cast off my soul? Why do You hide Your face from me" (Ps. 88:14).

The prophet Habakkuk was another who asked that gnawing question: "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? He pointed to all the injustice and violence in the world -- "even the law is powerless" -- and wanted to know if and when the Lord was going to do something about it.

Psalms 137 is a lament of the exiles in Babylon waiting impatiently for God to deliver them: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." When they were taunted by their captives to sing one of the songs of Zion, they responded, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" And then: "If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill!"

The exiles had been waiting a long time. New generations had been born in Babylon. They had been promised in letters from Jere-

miah the prophet that their bondage would one day end -- "I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first, says the Lord" (Jer. 33:11). -- but the years rolled by and they were still in bondage.

It is often the case in Scripture that *How long?* or *When?* is answered with -- at least by implication -- *Not yet!* In Gal. 3:17 Paul counts 430 years that God took in fulfilling a promise to Abraham! Faith is often a matter of believing that God's will is, *Yes, but not yet!*

There is the promise of Christ's second coming -- "Behold, I come quickly!" is the language of the Bible (Rev. 22:7). Time has taught us that "quickly" or "soon" might run into centuries, leading scoffers to say, "Where is the promise of His coming: For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 Pet. 3:8). But the same Scripture reminds us that "quickly" and "soon" are to be measured against a daunting truth: *With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

So, "*Yes, but not yet*" may mean only another day or so -- but that could be thousands of years by our time!!

The prophets and the apostles were not remiss in naming the promises. And they are overwhelming in their import, especially in reference to a future peace on earth. Such as:

There will be new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (Isa. 65:17; 2 Pet. 3:13).

Swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither will they study war anymore (Isa. 2:4).

There will be no end to the rule of peace on earth (Isa. 9:7).

The will of God will be done on earth as it is done in heaven (Mt. 6:10).

Neighbors will be at peace with each other (Zech. 3:10).

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14).

No more fear, no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow or pain (Micah 4:4, Isa. 25:8, Rev. 21:4).

No more high birth mortality rate; everyone will live in good health a hundred years or more (Isa, 65:20).

Justice will roll down like water, righteousness like a mighty stream (Amos 5:24).

No more terror or destruction (Isa. 65:25).

Now for a few facts about conditions in the world at the present time:

Violence, terrorism, and destruction are rampant around the world.

Diseases like AIDS and cancer are of near epidemic proportions - - cases of AIDS may soon number 100 million, and in the poorest of countries.

There is gross economic inequality, with upwards of half the world in poverty, with an income of less than \$2 a day; hundreds of millions go to bed hungry.

Corruption, greed, bribery are in high places of government and business, and it is of global proportions, oppressing the innocent.

Multiplied millions suffer from injustice, racism, intolerance, denial of civil rights, and persecution -- including widespread persecution of Christians.

The list could go on, but it is enough to show that the world is far from being the way we think it should be. It is not what the Bible promises. It is not what the prophets dreamed of in terms of peace on earth and goodwill toward men. It is not descriptive of a long-expected Messianic age -- not even 2,000 years after the Messiah came to planet earth announcing the kingdom of God.

What is the Christian response to this? What do we say to the cynic -- such as the philosopher Albert Camus -- who sees it all as absurd, a world that makes no sense. The dreams of the prophets are just that, empty dreams. The only answer is to accept the reality of the meaninglessness of it all, Camus would say, and make the best of an impossible situation. Then there is the response of the hedonist: *Get all the pleasure you can out of life and let it go at that.*

Part of the answer may be that the promises of God in the Bible *are* being realized, little by little. The kingdom -- like the mustard seed that Jesus talked about -- will eventually grow into the likeness of a mighty tree, but it will be gradual. Look at all the good in the world. Consider what the community of faith has done through the centuries for peace and justice. The amelioration of society is partly

realized -- which is evident when comparing the modern world to the ancient -- and it is ongoing.

To put it another way, what *would be* the condition of the world had not God given Christ and the church to the world? Yes, the AIDS epidemic is not reflective of the promise of a kingdom of peace and joy, but there are multitudes of noble souls rising up with technical and financial resources to attack the problem. Perhaps that is what the coming kingdom of God is about -- "the kingdom within us" -- the will and the commitment to alleviate human suffering. It is a fact that in every evil situation listed above there are monumental and heroic efforts on the part of many caring people to deal with the problem.

Why is that not part of the coming kingdom of God -- casting out the demons of poverty, disease, ignorance, discrimination, racism, sectarianism, legalism, and all the rest? To paraphrase Jesus: "If we by the finger of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon us" (Lk. 11:20).

There is another answer to the problem of unfilled promises of peace and justice. An important dimension of faith is "not-yetness." Faith accepts the fact that promises are often long delayed in being realized. A family has no less faith in the father simply because his promise of a new home is delayed in coming. Faith says, "Yes, I believe the promises, but I realize that -- due to God's sovereign will -- they may be 'not yet.' That they *will* come -- in God's own tomorrow -- is beyond question." Not-yetness is one of faith's virtues.

An example of this is Alexander Campbell's view of slavery, which was an explosive issue in his day -- dividing the nation and churches alike. While he made it clear that he was "institutionally, religiously, and economically anti-slavery," he called for sympathy and brotherly kindness toward those in the South caught up in the evil institution. He advised that the issue of freeing the slaves be left to "the opening of Divine Providence" and to "the developments of time," which he described as the greatest of teachers and the most successful of revolutionists.

Campbell granted that slavery was, of course, inimical to the kingdom of God -- and certainly contrary to the promises of the prophets. But liberation of the slaves did not have to be *now* -- which might incur other social evils. Give the leaven of righteousness time to work. Time -- our great teacher -- will find a way. Time -- both an innovator and a revolutionist -- will eventually bring victory. God uses both men and time to effect change. Yes, but not yet. Give God time! While we are impatient, God is not.

If Campbell's view had prevailed -- a view also held by Jefferson and other leaders of that day -- 600,000 men would not have had to die in the Civil War, and half of the nation would not have suffered devastation.

Will nations one day study war no more? Will the lamb and the wolf one day lie down together -- symbolic of peace and goodwill among men? Will there one day be new heavens and a new earth -- where God's will is done as it is done in heaven? YES! But not yet.

---

## ***How to Help a Homosexual***

Dick Marcear of Amarillo, Texas

The young man who sat in front of me was thin, had long hair, and was visibly upset. He pleaded, "Can you help me?"

By just looking at him I had an idea of what his problem might be. I'm the senior minister at a large, downtown church near a park where homosexuals are known to gather. I figured he had been involved in some activity with the homosexual community and was suffering from guilt and depression or possibly had some sexual disease.

I asked him if he'd like some coffee or a coke to drink. He seemed a little uneasy that I was "friendly," but declined the offer politely. He did not get into what he wanted to say gently ~ but rather plunged in like one might dive into a swimming pool, knowing it was going to be cold. He said, "I'm known as the 'Queen of the Park,' and I'm sick of it and want to change but I don't know how."

From past talks with homosexuals who would come by the church for help, I had learned some of their vocabulary, but I didn't know what it meant to be the "Queen of the Park." He explained that he was considered the most desirable of the "prostitutes" and that he sold himself to men. (This was what Paul meant when he referred to "male prostitutes" in 1 Corinthians 6:9.)

Can one like this be helped? Is it true that once one is in this state he cannot change?

### ***Thesis***

Believing that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God, I must believe that homosexuality is a sin and that continuing to live this way will result in the damnation of the person's soul (Rom.

1:26-27). But as with anyone who repents of a sin, the homosexual can be forgiven.

### *Scripture*

As one reads 1 Corinthians 6, he is made aware of the fact that some of the Corinthians had at one time been homosexuals. But they were "washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11). People who are homosexuals can change. They can experience the same freedom and joy that any other sinner knows when they become Christians.

### **How Do You Start?**

*Determine the attitude of the homosexual.* You cannot force anyone to change. It must come from within the person. When the young man told me, "I'm sick of it and want to change," I knew that he had taken the first step.

The mother was shocked to learn of the relationship that had developed. One letter said, ". . . just remember I love you and I'll always want you." I talked to the girl, and she had no intentions of breaking up with her "lover" or changing her lifestyle. The beginning place to help a homosexual must be in his attitude of wanting to change.

*Establish what the Scriptures teach.* There must be a foundation on which you can build, To merely say to a person that this is not normal or good for you or that your mother does not like it is not enough. I have found that it is best to get a Bible and let the person read for himself what the Scriptures say.

You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination (Lev. 18:22).

If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall be put to death. Their blood guiltiness is upon them. (Lev. 20:13).

They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight! Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them." So God destroyed the cities of the plain and brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived (Gen. 19:5,29)

Romans 1:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 are additional Scriptures for reference.

I have found that when a person reads for himself what the Lord has said, the word begins to convict him if he is really seeking to do what is right. You do not need to preach or push a person--just let him know what the Scriptures say. Paul said that the Word is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). Most homosexuals I have dealt with had heard someone tell them that this behavior was wrong, but they had never seen it in the Scriptures for themselves.

*Develop a Christ-like attitude within yourself* (Phil. 2:5). Like the homosexual, I too am a sinner. In God's eyes, my sins may be worse than the homosexual's. (It is our society that has put homosexuality at the top of the list. Note in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that homosexuality is just one of the sins listed. It is not referred to as being any worse than greed, drunkenness, etc.). It's important that the homosexual not see me as keeping him at arm's length and saying (in attitude, if not verbally), "You're dirty," or "How could anyone do this?" or "Just don't touch me."

The lepers in Jesus' day needed someone to touch them. In Jesus' approach he did not make them feel like he was saying, "I cannot touch you because you are too dirty." When a man with leprosy came to Jesus, he "reached out his hand and touched the man... 'Be clean!' Immediately he was cured" (Matt. 8:3).

It's okay to put your arm around a man or woman struggling with homosexuality. Let them know that you care for them. Your touch will often communicate more than your words.

*Allow time for growth.* A person must not be rushed. Let him have time for the seeds planted in his mind/heart from the Scriptures to grow. As a child I planted seeds and then impatiently dug them up to see how they were doing only to discover they had been growing. I had killed them with my impatience.

### **"I Want to Change, but How?"**

*Change of heart.* Now is the time to teach. The young man who had come to me asking for help had reached this point. As I fed him the Word, he came to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and was baptized into Christ. His change of heart and life had now begun.

*Change of Action.* Changes in addition to those of the heart are necessary if one is to get out of this lifestyle.

*Clothes.* This young man knew what clothes would attract other homosexuals to him. I told him, "Get rid of all your old clothes that



will mark you in any way as a homosexual." With some help, he changed his wardrobe.

- *Friends.* In the past, he had tried to change, but his homosexual friends would not let him. They would hang around and entice him, and eventually he'd be back in their world. This time, he was committed to do whatever was necessary to sever those friendships.
- *Location.* Because of the strong pull of his past relationships, it was necessary for him to move. He had to cut the ties with his past.
- *Change of direction.* My advice for the young man was for him to learn the source of our strength, the Lord. He would need to find a church home and continue to study and pray fervently for God's help.

### What About Results?

At last report, the young man was married and doing fine. He and his wife have a baby and are active in a Church. Not all stories have this happy ending. But this is true of all sinners who are converted. Not all make it. However, homosexuals, just like any other sinners, can make it.

If you are interested in helping someone, you might want to read the section on a formula Dr. Tim LaHaye has used in his book *The Act of Marriage*, page 264.

With the rise of AIDS, many homosexuals are more receptive to change than ever before. Let's not just shut the door on them. Be prepared so you can be God's instrument to help a homosexual.

--From *IMAGE Magazine* by permission

# THE CALL TO RADICAL HOLINESS

Rubel Shelly

God alone is holy, yet we are both called and commanded to be holy. "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: Be holy, because I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16). How shall we solve this spiritual paradox?

A person, place, thing, or event becomes holy when God is conspicuous in it. Thus the holiness a pious observer sensed at the Jerusalem temple or the holiness of the ground where Moses was commanded to remove his shoes was not that of a building or the soil; it was the presence of God that imparted holiness to them.

The holiness of the church or an individual believer is due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16). "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? (I Corinthians 6:19). And the way an observer sees the holiness of the divine Spirit in Christians is through his continual fruit-bearing in our lives. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are markers of radical holiness in the people of God in any generation (Galatians 5:22-23).

The spirit of our time has Christians aiming too low. We are unkind and lay it to stress. We are joyless and explain how bleak and difficult things are in politics, economics, or church. We are unloving and out of control and dare anyone else to cast the first stone. We sense that something is wrong with the scenario, but we have no clear idea of how things could be different.

In *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, Leo Tolstoy wrote that "all men of the modern world exist in a continual and flagrant antagonism between their consciences and their way of life." If this sounds familiar, it should also feel uncomfortable. Christians should not live in "flagrant antagonism" between our beliefs and our behaviors. What a burdensome, heavy existence that would be. It is the path of resisting and quenching God's Spirit. "God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life," Paul said. "Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 4:7-8).

Too many church leaders have fallen to affairs. Too many hate-filled and venom-tongued preachers have been permitted to intimidate godly people and drive them into other fellowships. The lifestyle of the "average church member" seems to be little different from that of the "average person." These things happen when people see God's way as a confining and difficult one.

I know a man who models holiness. The presence of God is evident in his life to all of us who are his friends, who see him in public places, and who spend private time with him. His mind and body were once Satan's playground, but he was decisively and dramatically saved.

It isn't simply that he no longer gets drunk and parties. It isn't just that his mouth is no longer foul. It is his tender love for his wife, his anonymous generosity to many good works, and his powerful leadership in a local church. There is no strident legalism in his manner. He laughs a lot. He has friends galore. Everyone who has any contact with him respects him. He is holy — radically holy.

In his life, there is no tension between his conscience and his way of life. The commandments of God are not "burdensome," and righteousness is not a series of painful concessions by a grudging, resentful will. His lifestyle reflects the confident manner of his Savior. No one would ever get the idea of a holier-than-thou spirit in him. "Self-righteous" is not a description anyone would use of him. His life reflects the radiance of the God he knows through intimate, transforming friendship. Yes, he knows Scripture; he also knows the author of Scripture. His life says that Christ's yoke is easy and his burden is light.

My impression is that my friend is living as someone would who has received a gift he knew he had not earned or who has been treated with a kindness he knew he did not remotely deserve.

Because he lives with this in his consciousness at all times, he never has to figure out how to live as Christ would when he is "on the spot." He lives as Christ did constantly, and his on-the-spot reaction to crisis situations is no different at all from his routine manner of dealing with all of his life.

Following Jesus is not a matter of turning the other cheek, staying out of trouble, and not getting a divorce--while living the routine aspects of your life as the world does. That approach to holiness is destined to fail, for it commits to obeying key commandments in the context of an otherwise this-worldly life. To be a Christian is to follow the way of Christ in all things, seeking the kingdom of God and

his righteousness first in the most routine as well as the most spectacular of settings.

Until God's presence is real with us in every situation, the desire to honor him in the crisis times will remain an elusive frustration. His yoke will never get easier nor his burden lighter.

--Reprinted by permission from *Wineskins*, July/August, 1997

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## 9-11, Katrina, and the Book of Job

Nick Boone

After New York and Washington were terrorized on September 11, 2001, well-known evangelist Jerry Falwell stated that the attacks may have come from God as a punishment and warning against America's problem with homosexuality. Just before hurricane Katrina hit the gulf coast, I heard a lady, in church, say that the storm may be God's judgment on the wickedness of New Orleans. Several more remarks of that kind have been made after the hurricane struck the area, though none by prominent Christian ministers.

It seems we have a nearly unquenchable desire to make sense of tragedy, and Christians often feel the need to plug God into their cause-effect equations. The book of *Job*, however, warns us against presuming to know the judgments of God when it comes to disasters and human suffering.\* Reading only the beginning and the ending of the book, as I have been prone to do in the past, one gets the plot, but one also loses the complicated nature of Job and his friends' situation.

Without reading the bulk of the text, it is easy to view the friends as absolutely wicked and their arguments as totally wrongheaded. But the text complicates such easy readings. I find it intriguing, for instance, that much of what the friends say is theologically correct. The question then becomes, "Why does God express his anger against the friends at the end of the story?"

Interestingly, Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, each make claims about Job's situation that God validates by his own words and actions. Each of them tells Job that God is faithful and will restore him to happiness in the end. Zophar even says that if Job repents God will restore his happiness and safety (see 11:14-20). This, indeed, is what happens. Job does repent for his questioning of God (see 42:6), and his riches are restored to double what they were originally.

Also, Zophar indicts Job for failing to recognize the vast reaches of God's wisdom. He says, "Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than the heavens—what can you do? They are deeper than the depths of the grave—what can you know? Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea" (12:7-9). Interestingly, God makes the same indictment against Job, and even uses language similar to Zophar's: "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?" (38:4-5).

The similarities between the friends' speeches and the words and actions of God are stunning, especially given the fact that God says he is angry with the friends "because you have not spoken of me what is right" (42:7). It seems the friends were right, at least on some levels. They knew a lot about God. They could speak correctly to Job about God's faithfulness to the righteous, and of his ultimate redemption of suffering. This allowed them to correctly predict the restoration of Job's fortunes. They also knew that God's wisdom is infinite, and they correctly chastised Job, as God did, for pretending that he could face God with his questions about justice. But though the friends were theologically correct, they were dead wrong when it came to their basic presumptions about how God expects us to relate to one another.

The friends presume to know things only God can know, like the state of Job's heart in relation to God (they accuse him of sin), and of how God has chosen to judge Job. God alone is judge of men's hearts. God alone can say whether or not a disaster is natural or supernatural. To presume to know God's judgments of these matters is far beyond the reach of our minds. God is angry with Job's friends because they place themselves in God's seat of judgment. God refers to himself as "jealous" in the context of idol worship, but he is also jealous of his place as judge of the earth. No one should even pretend to take his place in that position. Thus, like Job's friends, we too can be theologically correct, and yet still remain far from the heart of God.

In the midst of the disasters that occur throughout the world, secular society is watching, perhaps even waiting, for a Christian to respond in a judgmental fashion. Satan will use any opportunity to distort the truth of the inherent mercy and grace of Christianity so that the outside world sees it as fundamentally judgmental instead of fundamentally charitable. We need to learn, not only from the book of Job, but also from the very words of our Lord himself, that it is not our place to judge the hearts of others, or to presume to know

the workings of God when it comes to disasters and human suffering.

Finally, another lesson we can learn from Job about responding to suffering will surely be a hard teaching for our media-saturated society: Job says to his friends, "If only you would be silent! For you, that would be wisdom" (13:5).

\* I must admit that I could not help but think of God's judgment when seeing the casinos so utterly destroyed. I also thought of how shameful it was to hear governors speak of how vital it is to get those casinos back in business as quickly as possible. But no matter how bad I think it may be for a state to rely so heavily upon such a wicked industry for its revenue, I still must not presume to know the mind and judgments of God in this situation.

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## The Paradox of Death

Don Haymes

Rabbi Emanuel Feldman used to tell about the man who went to a physician for a thorough physical examination. At the end of a grueling day, he was ushered into the consulting room. "I have good news and bad news," said the doctor. "The good news is, you're going to live to 120." "And so what's the bad news?" asked the patient. The doctor sighed. "You're going to live to 120."

God in his infinite mercy did not consign us to live forever in this flesh. What they don't tell us about "long life" in the brochure is the burden of grief and the burden of pain. Both pain and grief are inevitable if we are sentient [conscious and alert] -- and if we are not, we inevitably inflict pain and grief on others. Death comes to all, to the just and the unjust. It is God's mercy. In the first forty years we may be said to have more physical energy than sense; in the second forty years, we have more sense than energy; in the third forty years, most often we have neither energy nor sense. In [our congregation], Betty and I are, at 64 and 62, among "the young people." The prayer list is longer than the sermon. I have seen nothing in the twenty-first century that compels me to linger. Death is our enemy, but the time inevitably comes when the death of this flesh is our friend. "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain." May we all learn to live so. I think of what the great Erasmus said of the study of Scripture. "Other studies we may regret having undertaken, but happy is the one to whom death comes, when he is engaged in these." (don\_haymes@cts.edu .)

# Bill Smallwood Goes Home

“Bill Smallwood, 72, of Louisville, went to be with the Lord August 13, 2005.” So began his obituary in the local paper. A huge crowd at his funeral testified to the love held for this good brother. And Earl Mullins Sr., who led at that occasion, told how deeply Brother Smallwood influenced many people in many ways.

Brother Smallwood grew up in a home where the Bible and Christ were absent. But he became greatly influenced by Portland Christian School, and decided to follow the Lord. He served in the Air Force during the Korean War, then worked for the OK Trucking Company--becoming a dispatcher. Later, taking a big cut in salary, he left there to become business manager at P.C.S. for about 9 years. He also was chairman of the school's board for some time. While holding those jobs, and afterwards, he also was a minister of the Gospel for 45 years at three congregations--18<sup>th</sup> Street, Shawnee, and Ralph Avenue Churches of Christ. He also was very active at Woodland Bible Camp in Linton, Indiana. For years he and Harry Coultas co-directed a week of camp there.

He is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Rita Napier Smallwood, also two daughters and one son (another son preceded him to heaven), and many grandchildren. One grandson, Jamie Moreland, gave a touching testimony at the funeral. A slightly condensed version of it follows here.

## A Grandson's Tribute to His Grandfather

By Jamie Moreland

My grandfather, Bill Smallwood, was a teacher. I sat down, figured it up and during my life I sat through well over 2,000 of his sermons. Like most kids I didn't pay attention and the only thing I remember was that he would close his Bible, turn off the light on the stand and then give the invitation--“Won't you please come forward as we stand and sing.” That meant it was over and we could go home.

Looking back now, I realize that what he said wasn't as important as the things he did. So I'd like to tell you a few of the ways my grandpa taught me.

My grandfather grew some of the most beautiful rose bushes that you've ever seen, and he kept his lawn in great shape. When I was a teenager, I used to go over and cut his grass for him. I'd get fin-

ished mowing and be hot and sweaty and ready to go sit down--and he'd say, "The weed eater is in the garage." So I'd go get the trimmer and do all the edges. I'd get done with that and he'd say, "The leaf blower is in there; blow all the grass off the sidewalks." So I'd do that too.

Grandpa and grandma used to dress up each year as a certain jolly old couple, who had a preference for fuzzy red clothes. I think every kid he knew called him grandpa. They would run up and give him a hug; he never failed to smile and give them a hug right back. It wasn't uncommon for them to receive a quarter or a dollar or whatever else he might have in his pocket. His real grandchildren of course were never jealous, because the kindness he showed to those kids was multiplied by 10 when it came to them.

One time not so long ago, I was studying the Bible with some people who had a different view than the one I was taught growing up. They pointed out a scripture that really caused me to think. I wanted to call grandpa and ask him what he thought about it but I was too scared of what he might think. After several days, I finally broke down and called him. He never flinched, he just explained it from his point of view. He never judged me or told me what to think, he just gave me gentle guidance.

When I was a junior in high school, grandpa gave me a ride downtown after the junior-senior banquet. I made the mistake of trying to get in the van before my date. He quickly told me to wait, and then he told me to help her in. He pulled me aside and said, "Now when we get there you get out first and then you help her out."

This year his health really started to fail him. He had spent a lot of time in the hospital. Shortly after he got out of the hospital he went with the men in my family on our annual baseball trip. He could barely speak above a whisper and I think he watched most of the game with his eyes closed, but he was with his family.

Although I'm sure it happened I don't remember seeing grandpa get angry or raise his voice to grandma. He always spoke to her with love and respect. When he preached at Shawnee he and grandma used to sit in the second row, and I would sit several rows back. I used to watch him put his arm around grandma and lovingly rub her back. I could really tell how much he cared about her from the way he touched her.

His entire life was a lesson plan that was modeled after his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

So, if you don't remember what grandpa said then remember what he did. Remember how he loved his God and his God's crea-



tion. Remember how he showed kindness to everyone he met. Remember how he loved his family. And remember how he loved his wife. I promise that I'll remember and I'm proud to say that I had Bill Smallwood as my teacher.

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## VOICES From The FIELDS

You may notice that in this issue we include two letters from Martin Brooks. This is unusual, but there was little communication from others this month till the very last minute. And Martin's first letter (email, actually) tells of interesting experiences in one city, while the other more or less summarizes his family's ministry over a 3-month period.

We encourage overseas workers to send letters for W&W, especially if you have not done so for some time. Obviously we have space limitations, so cannot publish everything. But we'll do what we can. Usually communications sent only to W&W will be given priority over letters mailed to a wide mailing list, since many of our readers will receive the latter. **Please use *Voices* as fuel for prayer!** By the way, in case you missed it in our Aug. issue, our missionary editor Dennis Allen and Betty are now in China. They plan to stay 6 months in the same location and work as during their preceding time there.

### **Mark & Candy Garrett On furlough from Senegal, West Africa Aug. 31, 2005**

Greetings from Winchester, KY!! We hope this email finds you well and encouraged in your faith!

It may come as a surprise to you that we are back in the USA. Time flies as they say and so we have come to the end of our third term of service in Senegal. We arrived a couple of weeks ago and plan to stay stateside for up to 11 months of Home Assignment.

It seems there's never an ideal time to take a home assignment but this option better coordinates the children's schooling and avoids our taking a home assignment at the same time as the Senegal director. So we're back on American soil in time for the new school year and also to say a brief "hello" and "farewell" to Mark's parents [Cecil and Betsy Garrett] who left last week for a 9 month ministry in Russia.

Our current plan is to be stateside until late June 2006. Please pray for us as we readjust to life in America, find dependable

wheels, and set up our itinerary for the upcoming months. We are eager to see and reconnect with as many of you as possible in the upcoming months after getting the family settled.

We're excited about the team God has brought together in Senegal and are encouraged as we plan for our next term. Two new couples have joined our team in the last 8 months and are currently in Thies. They add even more international flavor to our team as one family is Korean (3 children) and the other couple is a South African man and his Chinese wife from Malaysia. They have already blessed us with their great attitudes and we anticipate that God will do great things through them in the years to come.

So praise God with us and we hope to see you soon!

Contact us at 399 College St., Winchester, KY 40391. 859-744-5233. [Mark.garrett@sim.org](mailto:Mark.garrett@sim.org);

## **Martin Brooks                      Ghana, Africa                      August, 2005**

As Joseph [Martin's son] and I walked through the village with Karim, dark clouds were rolling into the area, and it looked like it could rain any moment. Honestly, I did not want to be doing this. I was tired. We had spent the last several days teaching from house to house in Yeji, just across the Volta River. I had preached in the local church and in an open air crusade in the city. I am guessing 400-600 people came out each night and filled the city streets to hear about Jesus. It stretched this introvert to the end of my comfort zone, plus a little. Six responded, but one was drunk, so I'm not sure if we should count him. Hannah became frightened as the children pressed in to touch her blond hair and even tried to steal her blanket.

This particular morning had been hot and sticky. At one point as I was walking along, I thought about how Joseph had nearly been assaulted by a deranged Muslim on the ferry coming across the Volta. As the man charged Joseph, four other Muslim men tackled the madman and physically carried him off. I was a little bit intimidated at the thought of house to house evangelism in this Muslim village. I wondered what I should do if I encountered the crazy guy again.

We greeted an old man and his two sons sitting under a mango tree on a wooden bench. Several women quickly gathered around to hear what this white person was doing at their house. Karim explained that we wanted to tell them about Isa (Jesus). Karim was a Muslim that came to Christ several years ago. I was eager to see how he would approach evangelism to other Muslims. His approach was incredibly simple. After he had received permission to tell them

about Jesus, he turned to me and said, "Begin." So much for learning from this Muslim background believer.

I told how God had created everything perfect, but sin had broken the friendship between God and man. I told how God found a righteous man in Noah and provided one way to be saved from the flood. About then a white bearded Muslim in his robes and little hat, entered the small gathering to see what we were doing. It was fairly distracting to have someone enter in the middle of the story, especially someone I perceived to be antagonistic. Soon it began to sprinkle, and he was on his way. As the rains increased, it was more than the mango tree could stop. The women scattered and the old man invited us with his two sons into his small hut to continue the story.

Here huts are used for storage and sleeping. In the villages, people don't have living rooms. The yard is the place of social gatherings. This hut was made of reeds with mud packed in between the reeds. The roof was thatch, and the small dark room smelled of smoke from many cooking fires. The door was a piece of well-worn cloth. There was no furniture, not even a table or chair. Just a dirt floor, the wooden bench they had carried in from the yard, and a couple of wooden step stools.

I continued the story of how God had sent Jesus to restore the friendship with man. I noted that God had sent us a long way to this particular home to tell him and his boys this good news. I explained that in the Bible Jesus was described as one who came to the door and knocked, asking to come in. Today, Jesus had come to his door, and I asked if he would let Jesus in, or would he leave Jesus standing outside in the rain.

Both culturally and from a Muslim perspective, hospitality is highly valued and expected. It would be unthinkable to leave Jesus outside. I prayed with him that Jesus would confirm the message that he had heard through dreams and circumstances, and encouraged him to come to the church in the village. The old man told me that he knew that I was from God because I had brought rain, which the area desperately needed.

As we left the sun was again shining. The women that had earlier left our little meeting under the mango tree apologized for having left and said they wanted to hear more of the story I had started. They too were sure we were from God because we had brought rain. Karim invited them to a crusade the church had planned for the following evening. (I got to preach another crusade.) After that crusade sixteen people responded to be baptized. I did not count the number that responded for prayer. We took ten of them that night,

including these women, to be baptized in the Volta River under a bright moon. And to think, I was tired and did not want to go out that afternoon.

Please pray that the local church will be able to take care of these new believers. These former Muslims will come under intense pressure to turn back to Islam. Possibly they will be put out of their homes or the other local Muslims will refuse to buy their goods or employ them. The church needs to be able to help them both financially and spiritually until they get settled again. Unless they receive practical help, the statistics indicate that most will turn back to Islam. We, as the western church, have not done a good job of helping Muslim background believers to integrate into the Christian community. "Be warm and well fed," is not sufficient for the Muslim woman we baptized whose husband had left her to fend on her own.

**Martin Brooks**

**Ghana, Africa**

**Aug. 30, 2005**

After three months of traveling around Ghana, Burkina Faso and Niger, it is now time to return to the States. This puts me back in the States in time for our Team Leaders Summit that Team Expansion holds every other year and in time for the National Missionary Convention, which is a great networking opportunity.

The Lord has allowed us to establish an application and screening process for West Africans who want to serve as missionaries with Team Expansion. We have taught in many churches and conferences in Ghana to let the churches know of our desire to create partnerships. We have researched several possible new fields in West Africa. We have researched and helped write a proposal to be submitted to IDES for famine relief in Niger. We have built good relationships with many missions partners here. The Lord used us to call many Muslims and idol worshippers to Himself, and we were able to host a group of college interns as they explored a missions calling on their lives.

I'm sure I'm leaving things out, but the point is, it has been a very busy few months with little time to even tell you what has been happening. I have neglected communication with many of you. For that, I apologize. Now the tasks here are at a manageable stage that I feel I can handle from the States. It is time to transition to Louisville to work on the U.S. component of this project which includes finding U.S. churches that will partner with Ghanaian churches to send and sustain African missionaries.

Thanks for your many prayers. Just yesterday Joseph [their son] fell out of a tree landing on a huge anthill covered with thorns. He is a little scratched up, but at least no bones were broken. So please

keep praying. We will leave here on Saturday, September 3 and arrive in Louisville Sunday, September 4.

**Moto Nomura, Japan (motofish@eps4.comlink.ne.jp)  
Sept. 3, 2005**

Currently I am trying to get some food stuff from our Japanese believers and from some parents whose children have gone to PCS. It will be sent to the friends in Louisiana suffering from hurricane Katrina. The appeal has gone to most of the Church of Christ folks in Japan. Wait and see.

Months ago my biography of Barton W. Stone was published here in Japan (in the Japanese language, of course), at my own cost. The believers here need to know the beliefs, practices and experiences of various church leaders who served the Lord long ago. Now I am working on the biography of Thomas Campbell. I guess it will be at least a book of several hundred pages. Again it will be the very first such endeavor in Japan. I know only a few people are interested in knowing our glorious historical heritage, but as a student of LaVern Houtz at Southeast Christian College I must get it completed.

Ministry here among the centuries old stubborn Buddhist mountain community is rewarding. We enjoy serving Him in serving His people, both the believing ones as well as not-yet-believing ones. Not many people come on Sundays to partake the Lord's Table, but always between several to 15 or 16 on Sundays.

Yoriko still feeds those who come our way both on Sundays as well as week days, while I serve them with His Word of comfort and hope. We do whatever we can do, but never even try to imitate what city churches are doing.

Those who come our way, often from big cities, enjoy our simple non-ritual worship service, something they do not enjoy at their own churches of various denominations where clergy controls everything. During August we saw some thirty guests. Some of them were our students at Tokyo YMCA English School thirty some years ago. We appreciate their love toward us.

Yoriko is doing relatively OK. Her heart is weak, so she takes medicine thrice a day. Her blood pressure is lower, too. But she is always quiet, thoughtful and smiling to serve His people. She is now 71.

As for me, my hepatitis is getting hardened each day slowly due to many, many blood transfusions. I got it back in 1962 when I lost

my left kidney by a strange traffic accident. Twice a week I go to a 86 year old family doctor of ours for a shot for hepatitis type C. I realize that my graduation day is slowly progressing each day. The Lord is giving us enough slow time to get myself as well as my family ready for the departure day in His time and grace. Each day I do my utmost for His highest. We are happy to be a servant for His Family on this planet earth. I owe much to the pre-mill churches and their members in America, for which we are always grateful.

Mother has been officially selected to be one of the 999 woman nominees of the world for the Nobel Women Peace Prize of the year for her contribution for the woman's cause in Japan.

**Robert and Joy Garrett**  
**September, 2005**

**Ruwa, Harare, Zimbabwe**

God has blessed our remaining camps despite the inflation and shortages of food and fuel. The Men's Camp held in holidays in August was attended by 114 men. One of our members had some dead trees in his yard and that provided the scarce item of firewood that our cooks like in cooking these big meals and heating water for washing. Many men expressed appreciation for the lessons given this time by our ministers. The cooks were taught on prayer by Joy. One man was baptized. Most of the men were Christians and lessons were directed to them.

**Junior Camp:** The week of August 14-20 was our Junior camp Grades 3-7. However, many grade 7 had to go to school during the holidays because of the approaching exams to qualify them to get into high school. Not everyone gets into high school these days. We had 69 pupils. Again God enabled us to feed them well despite shortages of bread and sugar. Inflation here is out of control. Prices on many goods seem to double from month to month.

**Binga:** Two of our preachers and wives went on up to Binga to deliver a boat and to hold a three day youth camp. There were 11 baptisms. On their return journey they loaded the big truck with our concrete mixer at Bulawayo and brought it back to Ruwa.

**Rockwood:** Bob had drawn plans for a house for our long time worker. They are now marking off the site to build it. Unfortunately building material in one month along with most everything else has doubled in price.

**Gospel Week:** Our ministers held a gospel meeting in Banket, an hours journey north, resulted in 14 baptisms. They canvassed all around this small town for a week. Thank God that despite the many economic problems God is giving us these blessings.

**Famine Relief:** The church in WuyuWuyu sent a request for food. Their crops failed this year and many families are on the verge of starvation. In years past some of the Christians there had sent gifts of grain for the camp meetings here at Rockwood. This last week we sent them 16 bags of maize. We also sent money for food to assist the church in Lupane which is in the far west and churches in Binga, far northwest.

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## Fishing Rods and Wounding Words

JOYce Broyles

Fishing experiences I recall included bamboo poles, string, hooks, and cans of brown, wiggly worms.

Very soon, I knew I was not cut out to be an avid fisherman. Mom and Tooger enjoyed fishing. I accompanied them a few times to the Mermentau River, but ended up reading my library books while they fished.

Today's fishermen are more sophisticated. Special kinds of fishing require special equipment and supplies. One kind is called fly-fishing. I was not sure what that entailed until Phil Ware explained it in "Pull it Back Before it Lands." He said that trying to drop the fly right into the perfect spot without noise and commotion takes practice. Even experts sometime mess up a cast.

The great thing about fly-fishing is that when a cast is not good, Ware says, a quick flick of the wrist makes the rod silently snap the fly back from the surface of the water before it lands. No matter how many false starts or false casts, finally the fly can be gently dropped into the intended destination. The water is not disturbed, so the fish are not spooked. No sloppy mistake spoils the perfect fishing hole.

Then, Ware writes his clincher. "Ah! If only we could do that with our words!"

How many times have I spoken harshly, then wished I could pull the words back and recast the sentence! Too bad words are not sent out by fly rod. They cannot be snapped back. Like water poured out onto the ground, they cannot be retrieved.

"If only" usually begins sentences that tell of wishing to undo something in the past. Prevention is the best solution, but many

times I speak before I think. My mouth go into action before my mind goes into gear.

James 1:19 tells me to be quick to listen and slow to speak. To do that, I must fill my head with good thoughts before I leave home every morning. My plan should be to say only good things to others. If I listen first, I might know better what others need to hear from me as encouragement. Beginning each day with God certainly helps. Reading scriptures gives me good thoughts to share. Asking God to help me as I touch others throughout the day is great assistance.

Ware's conclusion maintains "Since there are no simple ways to snap back our words before they sloppily hit their target and do lasting damage, we must apologize when we misuse our speech." Sometimes our words are misunderstood, and sometimes we are unaware of it. We cannot erase words, so we must ask for the forgiveness of those we wound. If we show daily that we want to speak kindly, it will affect how those we wound consider our apology.

No one enjoys being wounded by words, although we have heard "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That little verse is absolutely wrong!

We must try to prevent our poor word casts by taking special care of our thoughts. This world will be a much better place when we can learn to bless rather than wound through our personal expressions.

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## Pursuing God Himself

A. W. Tozer

There is today no lack of Bible teachers to set forth correctly the principles of the doctrines of Christ, but too many of these seem satisfied to teach the fundamentals of the faith year after year, strangely unaware that there is in their ministry no manifest Presence, nor anything unusual in their personal lives. They minister constantly to believers who feel within their breasts a longing which their teaching simply does not satisfy. I trust I speak in charity, but the lack in our pulpits is real. Milton's terrible sentence applies to our day as accurately as it did to his: 'The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.'

It is a solemn thing, and no small scandal in the Kingdom, to see God's children starving while actually seated at the Father's table.



The truth of Wesley's words is established before our eyes: 'Orthodoxy, or right opinion, is, at best, a very slender part of religion. Though right tempers cannot subsist without right opinions, yet right opinions may subsist without right tempers. There may be a right opinion of God without either love or one right temper toward Him. Satan is proof of this.'

Thanks to our splendid Bible societies and to other effective agencies for the dissemination of the Word, there are today many millions of people who hold 'right opinions,' probably more than ever before in the history of the Church. Yet I wonder if there was ever a time when true spiritual worship was at a lower ebb. **To great sections of the Church the art of worship has been lost entirely, and in its place has come that strange and foreign thing called the 'program.'** This word has been borrowed from the stage and applied with sad wisdom to the type of public service which now passes for worship among us.

Sound Bible exposition is an imperative *must* in the Church of the living God. Without it no church can be a New Testament church in any strict meaning of that term. But exposition may be carried on in such way as to leave the hearers devoid of any true spiritual nourishment whatever. For it is **not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience, they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts.** [We added the emphasis. --avw]

[From *The Pursuit of God*. Available online, along with a number of other good books, @ [www.ccel.us](http://www.ccel.us) ]

# NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill, BHill40482@aol.com

**Re: KATRINA:** It is likely that whatever we write here will be out of date by the time this magazine gets to your hands. But the following might continue for weeks or months. An email from A. J. Istre of Jennings provided the following information.

A number of people from out of state have called about helping the hurricane victims. Please contact as many of the churches in your area and let them know this: If they want to help they may send their check to the Jennings Church of Christ, 1812 N. Cutting Ave., Jennings, LA 70546. Mark the check *Hurricane Relief*. The money will be used to feed people from the New Orleans area. Our church will feed them on Mondays and Fridays.

No doubt there will be many other needs, and also outreaches to minister to them. We suggest that as time passes you phone or email various church leaders in Louisiana to learn current needs.

## **END OF THE SPEAR In THEATERS by JANUARY.**

[Condensed "preview" available now: see the following news item.] January 1956: a culture on the brink of extinction saw the gospel lived in men who were willing to die. January 2006: our culture will experience the same story.

"5 Missionaries Trying to Evangelize Primitive Tribe in Ecuador are Speared to Death!" By next January 50 years will have passed since those headlines and the cover article in *Life* maga-

zine. But those lives and deaths continue to challenge and inspire us all. (Maybe you remember the books *Through Gates of Splendor*, *Shadow of the Almighty*, *The Dayuma Story*, *The Savage My Kinsman*, and others.) Soon you can see the new movie about those events and what's happened since then. Lord willing, "End Of The Spear" will open on the weekend of Fri., Jan. 20 in USA and Canada theaters. A preview teaser can be viewed at [www.endofthespear.com](http://www.endofthespear.com). Take others with you! Lives will be impacted!

**Limited Edition Documentary Screening Kits** Over 3,000 requests have been received for information on the Limited Edition Screening Kits for the DVD, *Beyond the Gates of Splendor*. The kit includes an abridged version of the documentary for churches, colleges, and other interested organizations. Do your part to make sure your group is participating! Contact:

[www.beyondthegatesthemovie.com](http://www.beyondthegatesthemovie.com).

**Thank You from Rita Smallwood:** "I would like to thank everyone who ministered to me and our family during the illness and death of my husband. The cards, letters, e-mails, visits to the hospital were so much appreciated. I covet your prayers as we continue to serve the Lord with the desire to remain faithful until that glad reunion with Bill."

**Athens, Greece: Emie (Galanis) Paschos,** daughter of the late

George Galanis writes: My mother (Sophia) has not been doing well lately. She continues to suffer many health problems but thanks to the Lord for raising up a wonderful Greek lady who can communicate with her in their native language. Thanks to many of you who have continued to support her by showing interest through prayer and financial support since my father passed away.

**Crete, Greece: Nick Tsagarakis** writes: "Rejoice in the Lord always..." I thank each of you for your continued prayers and financial support in the Lord's work in Crete. I also thank you for the prayers offered up on our behalf here. I will continue the good struggle of faith and the annunciation of souls in Crete that the Lord entrusts to me through the ongoing ministry of Bro. George Galanis. It is true: "their works continue to follow after them."

**Amite Church of Christ (LA)**  
John Fulda writes: We are about

ready to start a day-care center in the church while waiting for our Class A License. I am really enjoying church work again and seeing the community excited about providing day-care for their children.

**Prayer/Praise Booklets.** Material from various missions around the world is being gathered and will be ready for distribution by Thanksgiving. Mission works will include both foreign and home with updated information provided to churches. The booklets are made available at NO CHARGE by the Church of ChristWorldwide in Lexington. We are happy to see them being used in promoting missions in the various churches.

**Marriage Enrichment Seminar** is being planned for the last weekend in September (9/30-10/1) at Woodland Bible Camp. Contact Mike Abbott for information. 812: 967-4280. Married couples only!!

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James Ashley  
Sept. 10, 2005

Wycliffe Translators, Solomon Islands

I've been up early this morning, and as I was reading a year-old copy [9/04] of *Word & Work* here on the end table, I was struck by Dale Jorgenson's comment in his article "God or Caesar." He says there,

"There is one problem which makes the decisions of Americans about their relationship to the political life and military responses asked of them even more difficult than the options faced by Paul and Peter. It is the fact that, unlike those men ruled by Nero or other tyrants of the New Testament era, the American system does not allow for an I-Thou difference between the governors and the governed. While Paul may teach us to obey "the powers that be," thinking of those rulers and agents "out there" who require our obedience, in the American arrangement we who are governed *are* the governors as well."

This has a lot of implications, and I think it is at the core of a number of principles that people like Chuck Colson talk about. I'm sure it's not a new thought for many, but to me it brought some assumptions out into the open where I can look at them more realistically. And I appreciate that. [Note by a.v.w.: This proves that we can learn important lessons even from old W&Ws!]

I just wanted to thank you for the work you put into the *Word and Work*. I do value it.

And while I'm writing, I should let you know that the Sa'a New Testaments have arrived from the printers. They look great (in my prejudiced eye!) and we look forward to the dedication service the Sa'a community is planning for December 11.