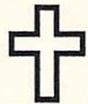
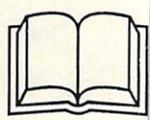


"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

August 2007

God *loves* to give good gifts to those who ask him.

* * *

Read about at least 45 of the Lord's gracious, and often amazing, **ANSWERS TO PRAYER.**

* * *

Imperfect--but Concerned about it, and Pressing On:

"I am not what I *ought* to be,
I am not what I *want* to be,
I am not what I *hope* to be in the life to come.
"But still I am not what I once *used* to be,
and by the grace of God I am what I am."

-- John Newton, ex-slavery captain, who later wrote "Amazing Grace" & many other hymns.

[Read some of those hymns inside]

33rd ANNUAL CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

November 12-15, 2007 at Glenmora Church of Christ

Night Theme: Unity in Christ As Seen In Ephesians Each night Dr. David Wead will present an exposition from the text.

There are two-daytime themes: 1) Joy in Christ; and 2) Signs of Christ's Coming

There will be no afternoon presentations.

MONDAY November 12

7:30 - 8:15 Unity in Christ, Part 1 Dr. David Wead

TUESDAY November 13

9:30 - 9:55 Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50 Joy in Suffering Bruce Runner
10:50 - 11:10 Break
11:10 - 12:00 Signs Relative to the Past Don McGee
12:00 - 1:15 Lunch
7:00 - 8:15 Unity in Christ, Part 2 Dr. David Wead

WEDNESDAY November 14

9:30 - 9:55 Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50 Joy in Sacrifice Robby Bacon
11:10 - 12:00 Signs Relative to the Present Don McGee
12:00 - 1:15 Lunch
7:00 - 8:15 Unity in Christ, Part 3 Dr. David Wead

THURSDAY November 15

9:30 - 9:55 Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50 Joy in Serving Bennie Hill
11:10 - 12:00 Signs Relative to the Future Don McGee
12:00 - 1:15 Lunch
7:00 - 8:15 Unity in Christ, Part 4 Dr. David Wead

Evening services for the youth will be held in the activity building conducted by Sonny Childs with Robin Gough leading the praise and worship.

Hospitality Chairman: Dennis LeDoux @ 318-748-4243

Recording by Don Stump.

On Monday evening at the beginning of the service a memorial tribute will be given for the preaching servants who have been called to their reward: Bro. Earl Mullins, Bro. Jerry Samples, Bro. Nathan Burks, and Bro. Antoine Valdetero.

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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Postal Changes, Editorial Limitations, and *Word and Work's* Future

Alex V. Wilson

I can't remember when it has taken me longer to write an editorial. Nor how many versions of this have been thrown into the waste-paper basket. Wondering what to do regarding the future of this magazine, I have been conferring with Sister Louise Wells (our office manager), and Ruth (she's "my missing rib"), and also personnel at the Post Office. But most of all with the Lord in prayer.

Finally this is the plan. We hope it will not have to be changed any more, so long as the Lord enables W&W to continue. (Though we might have to raise the subscription price sometime.) **Beginning with the September-October 2007 issue, there will be 6 issues a year, rather than 11.**

We will extend the subscriptions of all paid subscribers for one month, since you will not receive separate issues for September and October. If anyone wants some of your subscription-money back because you will receive 5 fewer issues next year, you may ask for it. We do not want anyone to feel you got cheated. On the other hand, **we plan to increase the size of each issue.** Probably we will add either 4 or 8 pages, depending on the effect that will have on postal costs.

Actually, the main reason for this change is *not* the increase in the cost of postage! That's what got the ball rolling in the first place. But after hearing differing reports and confusing ideas, it seems that our postal expenses *within the U.S.* will be about the same—so long as we send the magazine as a "letter" rather than a "flat." Don't ask me to explain what that means; ask Louise! It's related to how the magazine is "folded." (?) Please pray that she will be able to understand and follow the various new requirements. They sometimes seem very complicated—though we thank some Post Office personnel who have tried hard to help us cope with all the changes.

I still don't understand the changes in *foreign* postal costs. The reports have conflicted. But they definitely are higher than before. Thus for the past two months we did not send to most of our overseas readers, because it seemed it would wipe out all our cash on hand. Now we learn that probably it is not as bad as that, yet we are still waiting for the dust to clear. It seemed from first reports that such expenses would add up to an amount greater than what we charge for subscriptions. That is, it would cost more to mail you 11

copies per year than the amount you paid to subscribe! That would leave no funds for paying the printing expenses. Hmmm ... we wondered if we'd have to send you blank copies! (Some folks might consider that an improvement. I'm smiling; hope you are too.)

Believe it or not, things could be worse. What if we had no U.S. postal service at all? My friend Dick Lewis, who thinks outside the box, wondered to himself: Could there be other options to using the mail system to deliver *Word and Work* around the world? So he took 12 copies of the magazine to UPS and asked what they would charge to send them to Robert Garrett's address in Zimbabwe. The cost they gave him was \$150.00. (That's not a misprint.) Unbelievable! They told him it had to be sent through USPS. As Dick remarked, "I guess that answers that."

Meanwhile the Lord sends indications that He is using WW, and presumably wants it to continue. A minister of the Gospel from Washington state (not a current subscriber, so he knows nothing of our present predicament) writes, "Somewhere I acquired a March 2002 copy of W&W. I just ran across it again, and found it stimulating. That issue began a series of articles on 'God's Loving Law,' a series on the Ten Commandments, the first three commandments being addressed. Would you kindly send me the following issues with the rest of that study? We have a Bible Study group that would appreciate working their way through this study. Of course send me an invoice...." Other instances could be mentioned.

And in response to our new postal crunch, eight of you subscribers sent gracious donations, one of them extra-generous. We hope to use that last-mentioned gift to send the copies unsent so far of the past few months' issues—about 50 copies of each to Zimbabwe and 25 to the Philippines. Sometimes those readers need and hunger for the Bible teaching more than folks here do. Joy Garrett described to Louise Wells how various believers in Harare would gather around with excitement and eagerness to get their copies when they arrived. Thanks so much to each of our donors. We praise the Lord for supplying this need, and trust Him to continue.

Lastly, if "the main reason for this change is *not* the increase in the cost of postage," then why are we changing to the 6-issues-a-year plan? Mainly because the editor is slowing down and can't keep on top of things. We trust that fewer issues will help resolve that problem somewhat (maybe we'll even get on time again), and also bring some relief to our faithful office manager and those who help her during each mail-out time. Thanks, friends, for your consideration and prayers and gifts. The Lord has blessed for 99+ years, and will keep doing so as long as He sees fit.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT--

A - S - K:

aSK, sEEK, kNOCK

Have you ever been told something so thrilling that you could hardly believe your ears? You're about to read some of the most astonishing promises in all of God's Word. Dale Bruner writes, "Whenever this passage is read with simple faith it will take the breath away. Seven different times in seven different ways Jesus almost begs us to pray."

Notice: (1)"Ask and it will be given to you; (2)seek and you will find; (3)knock and the door will be opened to you." Then Jesus elaborates, almost becoming monotonous: (4)"For everyone who asks receives; (5)he who seeks finds; (6)and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (7)"... your Father in heaven [will] give good gifts to those who ask him! [Matt. 7:7-8, 11.]

Notice how our Lord emphasizes these Promises: First, by *repetition*: There are six promises plus one clear exclamatory statement. Second, by expressing the promises in the form of *direct commands*: Ask... Seek ... Knock. As though He says, If you don't take advantage of My incredible offers, you are not only *unbelieving*--refusing to trust My words--but you also are *disobedient*--refusing to obey My orders. That's serious!

Ask and Seek, Trusting Father's Power and Love

Third, Jesus expresses these promises in general statements, even universal ones: For **everyone** who asks receives, and **he who seeks** (not 'some' or 'most' who seek) finds, and **to him who knocks** (not just 'to really holy folks' or 'to good people' or 'to you when you've had a really righteous day') it will be opened.

Fourth, Jesus reinforces His promises by using an every-day illustration based on the nature of God, the disciples' Father: 9 "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

That is, if we who are often selfish and greedy nevertheless find joy in giving presents to our children, *how much more* will our Loving God and Father do so?

(Here's an important heads-up, though: If you are not Christ's disciple, then God is not your Father! Jesus spoke these promises to His followers.)

Those are wonderful promises, enhanced by wonderful incentives. Count on them.

B-u-t—They do not mean God always gives us what we seek Right Away. Even loving parents will turn down their 10-yr-old son's request to drive the car! Notice the three commands' *increasing order of effort and time required*.

Ask-- An example: "Please pass the rice." "Sure, here you are." That's quick and easy. Some answers to prayer are like that.
Seek-- "Don't we have any tartar sauce for the fish?" "Yep—in the fridge somewhere. See if you can find it." So you *get up and go search* through the fridge till you find it. Sometimes answers to prayer are like that. You ask, and then you need to seek for them—for at times we have a part to play in bringing the answer about.
Knock: "Oh, I need some honey for this recipe, and we're out. I'll hafta go next door and ask Betty for some...." Knock-knock! Knock-knock! "Betty, may I please" Sometimes answers to prayer are like that, requiring more time, more praying, and more perseverance. Don't give up.

Now if and when we keep on requesting other people to give us something we want, they may feel we're rude. If we ask repeatedly and persistently, insisting on their help, they will surely find us annoying, troublesome, even harassing.

They may say to us, "You're such a pest, you're disgusting." But William Barclay writes that some of the Jewish rabbis taught, "A *man* may get annoyed by the requests of his friends, but with *God*, all the time a man puts his needs and requests before him, God loves him all the more."

And John Chrysostom, a preacher from the fourth century, believed and taught that to come to *God* not expectantly asking for *large* blessings displeases Him! He may feel insulted!

Entering the Throne-Room of the Universe!

Our heavenly Father wants us to ask eagerly and boldly. He is honored and feels pleased when we make big requests and trust Him for them. John Newton wrote,

Thou art coming to a King;
Large petitions with you bring.

For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much.

Of course that's poetic exaggeration, for some prayers are unscripturally big: "God, Heal every sick person in the whole world today." [Well, Scripture says we reap what we sow, and many people sow a disease-inviting lifestyle. And some folks might need to learn lessons which can only be taught by a time of pain and weakness.] "God, Save everyone who's ever lived." [That same principle applies here: People reap what they sow, and those who refuse God's offer of His Son as their sin-offering have no other way to receive salvation.]

On the other hand, no doubt God often hears us praying and says, "Tsk, tsk—**what puny requests!** Such ordinary petitions. What small faith. How little they expect Me to do."

J. B. Phillips entitled one of his books, *Your God is Too Small*. That is, we *doubt His power*. Dr. Clyde Kilby, a professor of mine in college, told our class, "Almost all of you students say you believe the Bible, you believe in God, yet most of you can j-u-s-t b-a-r-e-l-y squeeze a miracle into your prayers and your expectations!" Yes, we often doubt God's power. How ashamed we should be.

But other times we *doubt His love*. Says John Stott: "I wish we would remember who God is when we come to Him in prayer. Sometimes we come to Him as if He were an ogre, a tyrant, a dictator; as if His will for our lives was paltry and mean, and He was going to squash us."

We are easily tempted to *distrust* God and His care for us. But when we do that we slander His loving character! Imagine a 15-year-old son who for the past year has grown intensely rebellious--defiant!—against his parents.

Time after time he's carelessly ignored their requests, deliberately disobeyed them, talked back to them, sometimes shouting and even cussing them out. He's run away from home several times, engaged in all kinds of harmful habits and violent behavior, and repeatedly done just the opposite of what they've commanded.

Then one glad day, like the prodigal run-away son, he says to them, "I know I've been wild and stubborn. I've gone against your desires and broken your rules. I've purposely displeased you and done everything you told me not to do. But now I'm really sorry for

all that! Please forgive me. I'm gonna be different. I really will obey you. I'll do whatever you tell me from now on."

How will Dad and Mom respond? "Hooray! Now he's promised to do everything we tell him. Ha!—how can we make his life miserable? We'll get even with him for all the misery he caused us. Oh, we'll teach him a lesson. Let's make him eat spinach every day... and quit playing ball... and give away his walkman and his 10-speed bike and his computer...." Hardly!

Why then do we sometimes think of God that way? Why feel, "If I really surrender my life to Him He will make me go to Africa or Asia as a missionary. Or make me break up with my boyfriend. Or...."

Hey, He just *might*! I can't absolutely guarantee He won't. But *only* if that's part of His wise and loving plans, knowing it is the best for you.

Let's repent of doubting God's Love... and His Power! Let's believe His promises.

Again Bruner puts it so pointedly: "Jesus is trying in every way he can—whether by repeating an open-ended promise six times or by appealing to the universal love of parents—to bring us by any means possible to the Father, hands out and mouths open. We are not supposed to have a dumb relation with God in which *he is so divine* that he shouldn't be bothered by our talk, or in which *we are so sinful* we shouldn't try. *Jesus wants us to ask....* The emphasis in the text is on the Father's breath-taking readiness to give his asking children what is good for them."

May I pester you for a moment with some questions? If that's true, should there not be more family prayer-times in our homes? More prayer-meetings among us? More people attending the prayer-meetings we have? The old song is true:

O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer."

Asking for the Inappropriate

9 "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your chil-

dren, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

We've been thinking of God's enormous promises, and in no way do we want to deflate them now. But they don't mean God gives us everything we ask for. For sometimes the situation pictured in verses 9-10 is reversed. Imagine you are wading in the lake with your little granddaughter, and she sees a bright colored stone. "Oh look at that pretty rock shining in the water! Get it for me, Granddad, 'cuz it looks so yummy I want to eat it!" What will you do?

Often children do ask for inappropriate gifts. Maybe "toys" which could be harmful and dangerous to others and themselves. The loving reply is "No, not that...but something else."

We don't see the big picture as God does. So don't insist! Here are some helpful quotes from three Bible teachers—all of them prayerful men: If answers to prayer were unconditional, "it would turn prayer into magic. It would turn man into a magician like Aladdin, and God into our servant like the genii, summoned to do our bidding whenever we rub our little prayer lamp." (John Stott.)

"If it were the case that whatever we ask, God was pledged to give, then I for one would never pray again, because I would not have sufficient confidence in my own wisdom to ask God for anything." (Alec Motyer) "I thank God that He is not prepared to do anything I may chance to ask Him. I am profoundly grateful that He did not grant me certain things for which I asked." (Martyn Lloyd-Jones.)

But having said all that, remember the clear main emphasis of this passage is, our Father wants us to ask Him and loves to answer us.

Keeping Tabs

We conclude with a testimony (and many others follow in this issue): In 1994 I found among an old stack of papers in my desk a prayer-list I'd written back in Spring 1989! It named some unconverted people, and folks fighting cancer, a few smokers who wanted (or needed) to quit, and several Christians who had grown cold. Also people struggling with bitter personal relationships, or vast financial needs. Plus a family whose house urgently needed to be sold--not too soon and not too late.

I was intrigued. Five years had passed. How many of those requests had been granted? My calculations revealed a number which could only be called "I Don't Know"--because we'd lost track of the

people involved. Then there were 11 requests which had been answered No (at least so far). But there were 27 to which He answered Yes. (That was 71% if my math is correct.) Of the Yes answers, some had occurred "naturally," in ordinary ways, but a few were supernatural and dramatic.

I, along with others, had asked, and God gave. We had sought, and our Father helped us find. We had knocked, and He had opened doors for us.

Vice Versa--

OUR View of GOD

"I wish we would remember who God is when we come to Him in prayer. Sometimes we come to Him as if He were an ogre, a tyrant, a dictator; as if His will for our lives was paltry and mean, and He was going to cramp our style and squash us." (Stott.)

GOD's View of US

Matt. 7:10, "If you, then, *who are evil*..."

This is "an interesting reflection on Jesus' sober estimate of human nature, *and* of his own—he does not say, 'we who are evil.'" (Bruner.)

But to understand Jesus' *full* view of human depravity, notice the complete statement: "If you, then, who are evil, *know how to give good gifts to your children....*"

He takes it for granted that we are fallen, marred creatures, with hearts infected by sin. Yet even so, we retain enough of the Godlike nature in which we were created (Gen. 1: "made in His image") that we know and desire to do good to our children. That parents do good things does not mean they are not bad by nature—i.e. sinners. That parents are bad does not mean they will not do good things. (avw.)

Warped, Weird Beliefs about Prayer—And the Real McCoy

A.V.W.

There are lots of looney ideas out there about this subject. Here are some samples.

The Last Resort: A Christian doctor told a patient and the family, "I've done all I can to save you; now all we can do is pray." One of the relatives blurted out, "Oh no!—has it come to *that*?"

God is Very Reluctant: My dear dad-in-law, Jesse Wood, told of a sailor whose ship had been dive-bombed and was feared to be sinking. The sailor cried out, "O God, if you'll save me just this once, I promise never to bother you again!"

I Want It Now—I Can't Wait: A woman overheard Dad Wood (who worked in the same office), say he was going to prayer-meeting that night: "What do you-all do at prayer-meeting?" "We pray." "Hunh," she replied; "I tried that one time, and it didn't work!"

Well, lots of us can say "It *does* work"—or rather, *He* does work, as we pray!

Testimonies

A leading trial-lawyer once said: "When my case in court is not very strong, I talk, argue, reason, and debate. But **when I have a very strong case, I call the Witnesses!**" We are going to do that now.

1. George Washington Carver, the amazing and justly famous black scientist who as a youth had been a slave, publicly said: I went into the lab one day and prayed, "O Great Creator, tell me about the universe." But God replied, "George, you want to know too much."

So I said, "Then Lord, tell me about the world." But He said, "George, try something your own size."

Then I said, "O-k, Great Creator, tell me about the peanut." And He said, "O-K, George; I will."

And He did! In answer to the prayers of that humble believer, God enabled him to make over 300 products from peanuts--such as soap, coffee, and ink. He made the peanut a very profitable crop for

southern planters, especially small farmers, and thus helped bail out the South's economy.

2. C. S. Lewis was an outstanding professor at Oxford and Cambridge, and author of *Mere Christianity*, the *Narnia* series and many other outstanding books. Once he had an important appointment in London, so planned to get a haircut sooner than usual--the morning before his trip there. Then he was notified that his appointment was cancelled, so he decided not to get the haircut for a few more days.

But during the next hour he had a recurring, nagging feeling. It was as if a voice said, "Get it anyway, get it today, go on...." So finally he did. The barber was a Christian with many problems, whom Lewis had helped on previous occasions. As soon as Lewis walked in the door the man said, "Oh, I'm so glad to see you. I prayed you would come today!" He was facing a crisis which Lewis could help him with. But if that haircut had been postponed for just one day, it would have been too late.

In the Family

(Excuse the references to personal experiences, but that's the only kind we've had.)

3. During the 1950's, high-school student Ruth Wood began having strange and increasingly severe pains. Doctor after doctor was perplexed, till after a year or so it was finally diagnosed as a deadly cancer called Osteogenic Sarcoma. (She was not informed of that fact.) It was wrapped around her spinal cord. A neuro-surgeon in Dallas operated, but could remove only part of it, and informed her parents she would live maybe 6 months--a year at the very most. But many Christians had been praying, and kept it up. And soon her pain went away.

Ruth's great desire was to enroll at Southeastern Christian College in Winchester, Kentucky, so contrary to the Dallas doctor's urgent advice she and her parents moved there. The Dallas doctor insisted that at the very least she be examined by a world-renowned neurologist in Louisville, Dr. Glenn Spurling. (He had been flown to Europe after Gen. George Patton's accident, to try to save his life--though that was impossible.) When told that she still had some of that cancerous tumor in her backbone, he couldn't believe it until smear-slides were sent him from Baylor Hospital. Dumbfounded, he remarked, "I've never seen that before"--for she was not only still alive, but pain-free and active. And she is still alive and serving Christ over four decades later.

4. My sister Fran and her family moved to Edinburgh, Scotland, where her husband Dick Longenecker wished to study for his doctorate in theology. He had already been accepted by the registrar.

But after they moved there he was told, "We can't accept you because of a technicality regarding your enrollment." He hadn't turned in some paper on time—in fact, not at all, for they had never informed him about it! It was learned that the real cause behind his rejection was a power struggle within the university administration, making Dick a test case. ("Even our Registrar doesn't follow our rules. We'll show him he can't get away with that!") Dick appealed their decision, and learned that the final decision would be made at the next Board of Governors' meeting.

Knees bowed and prayer ascended. And two Board-members just happened to be absent from the meeting that day: the main opponent and his major ally! Dick went on to get his degree there.

5. Earlier, I went to kindergarten through grade 10 in public schools, rather than to our church's Portland Christian School. But while in grade 10 at Atherton, I began wanting very much to attend PCHS. That summer my parents and I thought, discussed, and prayed about it. (Dad later became PCS' #1 promotional-man, but—believe it or not—at that earlier time he feared I might not get a top-notch education there! He sure changed his mind later.)

One morning at breakfast Mom read a newspaper article saying that day was opening day for the public schools. None of us had realized that fact; we thought it was several days away. By the time we read the article it was already late, I was not yet dressed, I'd have to get a ride, etc.

We'd never ever done that before! (Or since.) We quickly concluded that our overlooking the date was not just a coincidence, but that the Lord really did want me to transfer to PCHS—which didn't open till 2 days later. I enjoyed and benefited from those two years very greatly, also got to take Brother Boll's after-school Bible classes that time, and after college I returned to teach there for 3 years.

At School

6. While teaching there, I heard this story from a Christian family. They had lived in another city but became greatly distressed because their daughter was being badly influenced by immoral friends in public school. Her attitude toward her parents and the Lord was getting bad. So the family moved to Louisville so she could attend PCHS.

But once here, she began running around with some trouble-makers, just as she'd formerly done. They had rotten attitudes, cut classes, smoked, and ran around with ungodly boys.

The girl's parents begged God: "Did we change jobs and move here for nothing? Lord, do something by next Friday or we'll hafta put her in public school or else move elsewhere."

On that next Friday the worst troublemakers were expelled, for serious rule-breaking. The daughter reformed outwardly, and later repented inwardly too and became a strong follower of Christ.

7. In 1961, PCS needed a replacement for a teacher named Lois Campbell, who was going to Dallas to help establish a new Christian school there. We had a small faculty then, and she had been our major teacher in grades 7-8.

A diligent search turned up nobody available. Thus many prayed, "S-O-S, Lord!" Now Alice Crowder was an experienced middle-school teacher, and chorus director to boot. But she lived in Sellersburg, 14 miles from PCS (and there was no I-65 then). Her preacher-husband, Hall Crowder, needed the family car for visitation (and there were few 2-car families in those days). Nobody near them could give her a lift to PCS. Again the cry arose, "S-O-S, Lord."

Now it "just so happened" that soon Hall's uncle (not Alice's) in St. Louis, who knew nothing of this need, wrote to Alice (not Hall), saying, "I'm too old to drive anymore, and don't know what to do with my car. Would you like it, Alice?" Hmmm. Well, Alice also had a 2-year old, with no grand-momma nearby. But Karen was a very compliant child who played contentedly in the church nursery next to the classroom—the door between them remaining open. Thank You, Father.

We Pray—God Guides and Provides

8. When Ruth and I were engaged but not yet married, we knew the Lord had called us to be missionaries. But we were uncertain if He wanted us to go to the Philippines or Hong Kong. Our spiritual-gifts seemed to fit in more with Central Bible Institute in the Philippines, so we believed that probably that was the place. But we were not 100% sure, so we prayed earnestly for the Lord to definitely confirm His guidance one way or the other.

One morning while shaving I remembered hearing a testimony of a Christian who "put out a fleece" (remember Gideon?) in order to discern God's will. A thought came to my mind: "We fairly recently wrote our missionary friends both in Hong Kong and in the Philip-

pires. Those in the Philippines have answered already, but the Al-lens not yet. It would seem more likely that we'd hear next from them than from the Philippines twice in a row. So I'll suggest to Ruth tonight that we ask God that if, as we feel is probable, He wants us in Manila, He will certify that call by having us get a letter from there before we get one from Hong Kong."

In the next few minutes three things happened. I finished shaving, the day's mail came, and there was a letter to us from—guess where?

9. One time co-missionary Harold Preston's monthly check from his treasurer in the U.S. didn't come. (Much later he discovered it was because the plane with that mail had crashed.) Before long he with his wife and six children were running out of money. Of course they took their need to the Throne of Grace, for God is able to over-rule even the postal service!

When their funds were nearly exhausted, one day Harold walked (not rode) to the downtown post office and there was a letter plus a check from a lady who *never before nor afterwards sent funds direct* to Manila (but always to their treasurer). Of course she'd known nothing of their crisis. But if she'd sent it to the treasurer *that time* it would have been part of the check that was lying on the floor of the Pacific! Her gift tided them over till the problem was resolved

10. Later, due to Vena Preston's poor health, she and Harold with their six children needed to move back to the U.S. But the need had arisen very suddenly and they had no travel funds saved up. That time God provided by means of an insurance policy which, unknown to Harold, his dad years before had designated to him. It came due just at that time! Just a coincidence, of course.

Well, we've heard ten testimonies of God's amazing answers to His children's cries in time of need. Let's join David in Psalm 34 as he exalted his Shepherd and Provider:

I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.

My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles....

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

More Heart-Searchers About Prayer—and Obedience

“The power for *doing* the Sermon on the Mount is put in (1) *the Beatitudes* at its *beginning* [Blessed are the poor in spirit, and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness—knowing they lack it], (2) in *the Lord’s Prayer* in the *middle* and (3) in the ‘*ask, seek, knock*’ *promises* near the *end* of the sermon. Like three deep springs beside a trail these three texts empower those who walk the high mountain of this sermon.” (Dale Bruner.)

Do We Use Our Knees?

The late Bakht Singh of India was the planter of scores of new churches there during the mid-1900s, and the leader of a movement of many 100s of churches. During a visit to the U.S. (including a chapel talk at Portland Christian School) he said,

“In India we don’t have the money, buildings, equipment, education or training you in the U.S. have . . . but **God gave everybody two knees! We have learned how to use our knees.**”

“In almost every U.S. church, the prayer-meetings are the poorest-attended meetings, and often they seem dead or unreal. In India we love to pray, and God answers. In one of the poorest countries in the world, we have never lacked what we need.”

Gems by John Newton regarding Prayer

“Amazing Grace” wasn’t his only hymn ;

If we can get beyond some of the outmoded terminology of hymns from former times, we will find many treasures in them. When John Newton wrote the following hymn, to “prepare a suit” could mean to arrange and put in order your *lawsuit*, your case in court. Or it might mean a *suitor*’s planned appeal when he asked his beloved to marry him. --avw

Come, My Soul, Thy Suit Prepare

Come, my soul, thy suit prepare:
Jesus loves to answer prayer;
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not say thee nay.

Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much.

With my burden I begin:
Lord, remove this load of sin;
Let Thy blood, for sinners spilt,
Set my conscience free from guilt.

Lord, I come to Thee for rest,
Take possession of my breast;
There Thy blood-bought right maintain,
And without a rival reign.

While I am a pilgrim here,
Let Thy love my spirit cheer;
As my Guide, my Guard, my Friend,
Lead me to my journey’s end.

Show me what I have to do,
Every hour my strength renew:
Let me live a life of faith,
Let me die Thy people's death. [Numbers 23:10b]

Approach, My Soul, the Mercy-Seat

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before His feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea,
With this I venture nigh;
Thou callest burdened souls to Thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin,
By Satan sorely pressed
By war without, and fears within,
I come to Thee for rest.

Be Thou my Shield and Hiding Place,
That, sheltered near Thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him Thou hast died.

O wondrous love, to bleed and die,
To bear the Cross and shame,
That guilty sinners such as I
Might plead Thy gracious Name!

MORE ANSWERS to Prayer

A. Physical Healings:

The Lord does not promise us we will never be sick, nor that He will always heal us if we do get sick. Paul got sick: "As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you" (Gal. 4:13). At times Timothy was frequently sick; Paul mentions his "frequent illnesses"—some sort of stomach problems. (1 Tim. 5:23.)

On the other hand, our Father still works miracles when and as He chooses (see earlier articles if you skipped them). He hasn't retired or grown feeble with age! It is surely fitting to pray for good health. Doubtless God would gladly heal us oftener if with submission and trust we prayed more. ("You have not because you ask not." Jam. 4:2) Yet there is also the other extreme: Often in church meetings when prayer-requests are asked for, 10 or 15 or more sick persons' names may be mentioned . . . but *hardly anything else!* What about the unsaved? And workers needed to evangelize and teach God's Word? And needs on the mission fields? Plus real revival; healing for broken homes; persecuted Christians; world leaders; the wars and bereaved and wounded, etc.? May God enlarge our scope of prayer.

The main point of this article is to show again some of His amazing answers to various kinds of prayers. Some are more spectacular than others, but all clearly show *God at work*.

1. **A friend of mine**, while in college, once got a job as a hospital orderly. But he had a problem (one that I too have experienced sometimes): he sometimes got queasy and felt faint at the sight of blood. He knew that at any time he might be required to convey bleeding patients to the Emergency Room, etc. So he prayed fervently about this, but God didn't answer—the problem remained and he feared he would lose his job.

Then he thought, "Though I have prayed privately about this, I haven't asked others to pray with me because I didn't want them know this weakness of mine." He shared his need with other Christians who joined him in intercession. And God immediately delivered him, at least for the whole time he had that job!

Note two points: God answers prayers. But sometimes he wants us to communicate our needs, struggles or weaknesses to other believers and get them to pray for us—in order to deepen our fellowship. This is the church's important "body-life" or teamwork.

2. Lesley Lyon's miraculous healing by the Lord, told by her mother, Joyce Lyon, in Sept. '04 W&W: A freak accident in 1996, when Lesley was a teenager, dislocated bones in her head, spine and the left side of her body. Of four serious results I'll mention only two now: (1) "The flow rate of her spinal fluid was cut in half, leaving her barely enough energy to walk. She fell asleep almost every time she sat for longer than 10 minutes." (2) "For the first 2 years, she was in constant severe pain." Then osteopathic treatments made her pain less severe, "but it has always remained constant. She had an 8-yr headache without one second of relief [yet was] never allowed to use pain killers on a regular basis because the only ones that gave her relief were narcotics."

During those years she "knew about James 5:14 where God promises to heal those who have the elders of the church pray over them in faith and anoint them with oil. She believed the verse but felt that for some reason God was using this period in her life for a special purpose." Then in Aug. 2004 she felt God was saying it was time to be healed. On Aug. 15 "she had the elders anoint her and pray. Her headache was gone immediately and it has not returned" [even until now, 2007]

Six days later she went for a pre-arranged doctor's appointment, but she did not tell him what had happened. She wanted to see what he would say on his own. "His first words were, 'Something has changed dramatically. What we have been working on for years, has happened.'" And the healing involved bones he'd never started working on as well as those he had. She told him her full story, and he refused to charge them for that appointment, saying, "*I cannot charge you for something God did.*"

Lesley's mother, Joyce, wrote: "I am thrilled that God chose to work a miracle in Lesley's life. But I do not praise Him just for the healing. God was good to us every minute of those eight years. He was the One who held us, cried with us, and gave us the strength we needed. Through those years, we got to see into the very heart of God."

B. Amazing "Coincidences":

3. George Verwer, founder and longtime director of Operation Mobilization: Once he was in Katmandu, Nepal, and after a meeting rushed to the airport to catch a plane for London—half a world away. He forgot to get his shoulder bag from the trunk of the taxi. It contained his Bible, and very important papers needed for O.M. After getting in the plane he discovered it was gone. As the plane took off he did the only thing he could—he prayed!

It was an impossible situation. He knew there are huge numbers of cabs in Katmandu; how could his missionary friends in Nepal track it down? And many cabbies are dishonest when it comes to finding stuff.

The very next day, O.M. missionary Ron Penny left Katmandu for India, via bus. But it had three break-downs during the first few miles. So Ron and two others got off and hitched a ride back to Katmandu. A truck took them to the city's edge, then they had to catch a cab.

Because there were three of them, they had to put suitcases in the cab's trunk—and what should be there but their director's bag! Katmandu has a population of half-a-million people, and thousands of cabs! Just "luck, chance, a twist of fate"?

4. Missionary **Robert K. Smith** in Equatorial East Africa camped with 3 members of his family plus another missionary, en route to an unreached tribe. That area is infested with wild animals. Nightfall came, so they set up camp, and slept.

Around midnight, he heard a noise and felt the ground shaking. Fearing a Rhino, Smith grabbed his rifle and slipped quietly from his tent. Ahead of him he saw no rhino; but when he looked to one side there were 15 elephants! (When he measured later he found they were only 23 steps away.) They put their trunks up, and trumpeted—their usual sign before charging.

To fire at 15 elephants would be totally useless. As his mind raced, he took a step back—and knocked over the table with their tin cooking and eating utensils. They *clattered*, and the elephants *scattered*—leaving the vicinity!

The next day the Smiths went on to their tribal destination. Days later, a visiting ivory-hunter heard the story and said, "Smith, you did the only thing known that will scare elephants away. Shoot and they'll charge; bang and clang tin and they'll run." G-o-d had known that!

But what about prayer? On Smith's next furlough in the U.S. he stayed with a lady while preaching at a church. She told him how, "while washing windows at home one day, I got a sudden heavy burden in my spirit: *Pray for the Smiths.*" She went to her knees immediately praying for deliverance from whatever danger they might be facing. After some time the burden lifted.

It was such a vivid experience she wrote it down on her calendar. Smith's diary showed that when allowance was made for 9 time

zones, her burden came the day and hour that those elephants came—that mid-night! They were 12,000 miles apart, but Holy Spirit-inspired prayer brought deliverance from the Lord, who could have done it without her but chose to do it through her!

5. George Muller of Bristol, England, during the middle and late 1800s:

You probably know his story; every Christian ought to. For 60 years he operated an orphanage, serving over 10,000 orphans. But beyond helping such children—who were tragically neglected in those days—Muller’s main purpose was to honor God by letting Him demonstrate His promise-keeping faithfulness. He told the Lord, “I’ll rely on Thee only, Father, and spend time in prayer which other such institutions spend on publicity, promotions and fund-raising. I believe Thou wilt demonstrate Thy faithfulness, love and power.” And he did. And He also did! Without any government subsidies (unknown in those days) and never publicizing their needs, in answer to prayer Muller received 7.2 million dollars (worth 10 times as much as that now). By his death he had built five buildings capable of holding 2,000 children.

They were provided with good clothes and housing. And they never missed a meal, though they had some close calls: Once 200 children were at the breakfast table, with no food or milk. None was available, but they thanked God as usual for His provisions. There was nothing usual about how those provisions came, however.

Knock-knock—a baker was at the door. He’d not known of their crisis, but said: “I was awakened at 2:00 this morning, possessed with the thought of baking enough bread for you-all. So here it is.”

Knock-knock—a milk delivery-man was there now: “I was delivering my milk when my wagon wheel broke. I can’t deliver it now, and it’ll spoil soon, and it’s right here. So if you want any milk, I’ll give you my entire wagon load.” Yes! Some people might say, “What luck!” Are such people blind?

Muller was an exceedingly thorough record-keeper. For decades he kept an itemized journal of prayers and answers. When he died at 93, it was 3,000 pages long with almost a million words. It records over 50,000 specific answers to prayer! Coincidences?—ha!

Raising Up Workers to Serve the Lord:

6. Over 50 years ago, when I was a senior at Portland Christian High School, a few of us students began a voluntary pre-school

prayer-meeting. Almost daily we would meet for 10-20 minutes before the opening chapel or Bible class. We saw some good results.

Especially during senior year, one thing we often prayed for was that God would raise up disciples who would witness for Christ and teach His word *world-wide*. We were motivated first by Jesus' command, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt 9:37-38). We were also stirred when our teacher, Paul Knecht, said, "To really pray that prayer is one of the most important things any Christian can do!" Our senior class had only about 10 members that year, but three of us were later privileged to serve as overseas missionaries for longer or shorter periods. (Not that missionaries are better or greater Christians than others; but cross-cultural work *is* very important, and more workers are still needed.)

Conversions and/or Restorations:

7. We can only give brief mention of Monica, a Christian mother in North Africa during the 400s A.D. Year after year after year she prayed for her son Augustine, who was brilliant in mind but wild and immoral in conduct—and enmeshed in a weird false cult!

Finally he was converted, and then went on to become an outstanding church-leader, and a teacher whose influence brought many great benefits to many people (though he had some warped ideas too). One of his many great sayings was, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."

8. There was a Filipino Christian who loved the Lord and had great abilities, especially in working with youth. He was a staff member of a fine Christian ministry on whose board of directors I served for a while. But one year he had to be *fired in disgrace* due to committing tragic sin. Yet, though we had to fire him, we also provided him counsel, encouragement and much prayer.

That brother truly repented, and the Lord restored his soul inwardly. Gradually his testimony was rebuilt and a few years later he was even restored to public ministry. He became a fruitful pastor and evangelist, and later spearheaded a movement of over 300 congregations in the Philippines.

O brothers and sisters, isn't our Lord great and gracious! Let's commune with Him more, intercede with Him more, worship Him more, serve Him more. And honor Him too for His answers. *Why don't You write out some testimonies* which you or others have experienced, and send them to us? We can't promise to publish them all, but we'll use what we can as God provides the workers,

strength, wisdom and means to continue this magazine. Which reminds me, please pray for *Word and Work*, and we'll see what God will do! *He is still alive!*

HEALING IN PERSPECTIVE

GracEmail, by Edward Fudge

Someone has said that error is truth out of proportion. Balanced truth takes into account the great biblical doctrines of Creation, the Fall, Redemption, the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the End. In such perspective, biblical revelation resembles a polished diamond which sparkles in all directions. To that end, and after four decades of adult reflection on the topic and praying for the sick, I offer seven biblical perspectives on divine healing -- charting a scriptural course, I believe, between some extremes often heard today.

* * *

1. We may affirm that God's will for his creation is health and wholeness. We may deny that God is the author of sin, disease or death. (Gen. 1:27, 31.)

2. We may affirm that sickness, like all the world's brokenness, is an ultimate result of human sin. We may deny that specific sickness or trouble is necessarily related to any specific sin, or to the sin of any particular individual. (Rom. 5:12; 8:20-22; John 9:1-3; Book of Job.)

3. We may affirm that God, by Christ's redemptive work, will finally restore to its intended wholeness the creation he has made. This includes our bodies and whole selves. We may deny that God is interested only in our "soul" or "spirit," or that redemption excludes from its final benefits complete wholeness for the entire person. (Isa. 53:4-5; Phil. 3:20-21.)

4. We may affirm that this full redemption will not come until the resurrection at the End. Until then, even God's believing people continue to share in elements of the Fall. We may deny that even mature believers can always expect perfect health and wholeness now, or that their sicknesses necessarily reflect any personal fault or lack of faith. (1 Cor 15:42-49; 2 Cor. 4:16-5:4.)

5. We may affirm that, because of Christ's atonement and resurrection and the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost, we may begin even now to share in God's victory over sin and its consequences.

This victory at times includes the healing of the body, mind and relationships, in ways that exceed human prediction, understanding or ability to produce. We may deny that God has stopped working in the world and in our lives, or that we must wait until the End to see any signs of our redemption. (Eph. 1:18-21; 3:16; 3:20; Heb. 6:4-5.)

6. We may affirm that all health and healing is God's gift, regardless of the means by which it comes or the speed with which it occurs. For all health and healing we should give God thanks and praise. We may deny that health or healing ever occur apart from God's sovereign grace, or that so-called "natural" processes are any less the supernatural work of God. (Ps. 103:1-3.)

7. We may affirm that God gives us many means of wellness. These include, but are not limited to, the body's "natural" processes, healthy physical, mental and emotional habits and lifestyles, the special ministry of those who practice the healing arts, the loving attention of family and friends, and also effective, believing prayer. In times of illness, we should gratefully apply all appropriate means, asking for God's healing according to our needs and his glory. We may deny that Christians ought to spurn or neglect any appropriate means of good health or healing, since to do so violates both Scripture-revelation and common sense. (Phil. 4:3-7; 1 Tim. 5:23; Col. 4:14; see also Sirach 38.)

VOICES From The FIELDS

Robert and Joy Garrett
(on "home leave" from Zimbabwe)

August 17, 2007

Arrival, and after: It hardly seems possible but we have been three months in the U.S. already! It was a delight to be met on our arrival at the airport by family and friends whom we had not seen for over three years.

Our time has been taken up with eye and dental and doctor's appointments. For the time being we are staying with our daughter and son-in-law Brenda and Bob Heid at 2808 Montgomery Street, Louisville, Ky. 40212 (phone: 502-776-8437). The Lord enabling, we plan to return to Zimbabwe April 7 next year.

The Lord enabled us to buy a 7-year-old, low mileage Buick which fits our old bones very nicely. We then stayed with our son Robert, in North Carolina for two weeks while visiting his optome-

trist. I only needed a new prescription while Joy needed something more. Four years ago she had a cataract operation on both eyes. Now they had become cloudy and needed a laser operation to clear that up. The same eye surgeon who had performed the cataract op in 2003--without charge--also did the laser op to remove the cloudiness and again did not charge us. The Lord is good and provides for His servants, even as He has promised.

Family Reunion: The first week of July at CYE down in DeRidder, LA was truly a wonderful time. There were 40 of us in all, our entire family--our six children with their spouses, 25 grandchildren and one grandson-in-law. Many of our grandchildren had grown almost beyond recognition--a good number exceeding the six foot mark! Each morning Joy had a Bible study with all the grandchildren. Then, each evening after supper we had a wonderful time of worship together. I taught a short lesson each evening and all the older boys gave talks, led singing and prayer. The girls and mothers made up lovely choirs; and I also had the little boys to stand up together to sing and make a "joyful noise" unto the Lord. The Lord has made us rich in family beyond our dreams (Matt. 19:29; Mk 10:29-30).

Ky-In Fellowship Week July 30-Aug 2: I was privileged to give an exposition on Matthew 24 over three days. We were greatly encouraged and built up by all the messages and the fellowship. The singing at the evening services was gloriously inspiring.

We have visited six congregations so far and I am also scheduled to hold meetings at three congregations--Ross Point, Waterford, and Belmont. We want to make a "report back" visit to all the congregations that have had fellowship with us in the Zimbabwe work. Bro. Robert Gill is handling my appointments. He can be contacted at jackiegill@juno.com. My personal e-mail is garrettzimbabwe@gmail.com.

Gracious Gifts: When we were in Louisiana we were overwhelmed when Joyce and Doug Broyles presented us with a laptop computer and projector. The projector is strong enough for large auditoriums and will be a great help in showing our pictures of what the Lord has done.

Zimbabwe: Inflation over 5000% continues to ravage the economy, making life difficult especially for the lower income groups. Much of the country experienced a drought again this year causing a failure of food crops in some areas. Pray for this and especially for believers who are experiencing such.

The churches continue to grow as some carry on evangelistic work. They continue to hold the youth and adult camps in spite of the tremendous difficulties.

Hymns and Praise: By God's grace, I managed to finish the editing and printing of the 2nd edition of the Shona Hymnal; and Joy valiantly folded them all, about 225,000 sheets of paper, to make 2500 books. The final assembling and binding was done after we departed and the long-awaited book is now on sale to all the churches.

Elders & Deacons: After a long and intensive teaching program in the churches, and I believe being guided by the Lord, we now have Elders and Deacons in six of our congregations in the City of Harare. It is encouraging to see these men take their responsibilities seriously. Pray for them and their wives as they try to lead and also engage in prayer and ministry of the Word.

Mark (and Candy) Garrett Missionaries in Senegal, W. Africa

August

We see God's hand and provision in a hundred ways over the past few months just in the way that He is bringing us through one of the most challenging times in the life of our family.

A few months ago, an orthopedic surgeon diagnosed our daughter Kathryn with scoliosis and strongly urged us to take her Stateside for other opinions and possible surgery. So, Candy and Kathryn set out right after school ended and did a whirl-wind of appointments and travel in the US for 2 months. God provided in many, many ways! Two of three surgeons said that surgery should wait. Meanwhile God opened the way for them to pursue some alternative methods and we actually saw a slight reversal in Kathryn's scoliosis. X-rays were taken before and after which show the difference. One of their trips was to Wisconsin where Kathryn went through training in special exercises that she can do daily to help strengthen the muscles that are weak. God allowed them to get a slot in a group session and provided them with a wonderful host family to stay with there. Many generous friends helped us with some of the extra costs which weren't covered by insurance. I think God just wanted us to know that He cares!

Back in Senegal, I, Mark, was playing Mr. Mom and overseeing the move of not only our family's house but also the office and guesthouse and help with another colleague's move as well. When strength was gone God provided co-workers who came and helped

with every aspect of the move from renting a couple of trucks to putting things in cartons.

Our son Ethan endured 2 more bouts of his recurring fever which seems to come back about every 5 weeks. A blood test showed that he has a kind of parasite spread by ticks. So we made some progress in finding the source of his fevers, but until 5 weeks is past with no returning fever we won't know if the last treatment that we gave him really did the job. The 2nd week in September will show us if we have beat this thing or not.

Meanwhile, back in KY, Candy's stressful summer took its toll on her health. Just as she was getting ready to return here with Kathryn she began hemorrhaging and was hospitalized. It was really serious and the medical personnel had to give her 2 units of blood. We praise God for the way He orchestrated protection for her! One of our friends, a nurse, came and examined Candy at home and recommended that she go to the hospital that night. Being in Winchester was good also, as there are many friends and family members there who gave comfort and support during and after her short stay in the hospital. The doctor advised that she stay in the US for 2-3 months to be sure that her body has returned to normal.

So, Kathryn flew back to Senegal by herself in order to start school at Dakar Academy on time. Even here God provided. The airline was supposed to provide her with assistance at each step of the journey, but for some reason it never happened. She did fine through her change of planes in Atlanta but when she got off the plane in Dakar one suitcase was missing. She didn't know where to go to claim a lost bag. But God sent a missionary family to her rescue. Their flight landed just after Kathryn's and so they showed her where to go and helped fill out the paperwork. 3 days later we got the bag with everything intact. PTL!

I cannot begin to list all the ways that our co-workers have helped us in our move here. Being 'Mr. Mom' has been less than fatal :) because they helped in so many practical ways.

Kathryn, Bryan, and Ethan all started school with enthusiasm and are getting in the groove of the rhythm of the school week. But our home is missing Mom in a great way. We are learning patience again as we wait on Him to reunite our family. Our mission leaders are recommending that some of us visit Candy in KY before she comes back. So the plan is for Ethan, Anne and me to leave the middle of September and visit with Candy for 3 weeks. Anne just needs to see her Mom after so long a separation and she will stay with Candy until they both return together. Ethan has the potential

of the recurring fever coming back and so we would like to pursue some medical help for that if needed.

God provided in other ways with this travel plan as well. Our sister-in-law Renae Anderson, has offered to come and stay with our older two children while I am gone to visit Candy. And a few supporters have offered some help with our unexpected airfares. God is showing His grace to our family in so many ways. It builds up our faith in Him! We know that God has been working through your prayers because we see His hand at work. We are learning to praise Him when the pressure's on!

Sonny Childs

Missionaries for America Program

Excerpts from his summer report. (To get on the MAP mailing list: P.O. Box 131, Paragould, AR 72451-0131. Or sonny@sonny-childs.com or www.mapsters.net)

Throughout the entire month of June, Cindy and I were surrounded by dozens of laughing, crying, studying, playing, praying, singing young people. They lived with us, traveled with us, and occasionally, when someone got sick, they even slept in the same room with us. At times the drama was straight out of Hollywood. At other times, their sincere longing for God's will drove me to tears.

During that month the Missionaries for America Program was blessed to provide weeks of hands-on experience and over 40 hours of concentrated Bible training to more than 25 outstanding young people. The highlight was witnessing the 19 public responses to the Lord's invitation (11 for prayer, 8 for baptism). 12 of those were at Woodland Bible Camp in Dugger, IN. From there we traveled back to Paragould, AR for the Homemade Roles Retreat. Young ladies learned to sew, bake bread and prepare a children's Bible class. Young men dug a 100 yard ditch, laid water pipe, re-shingled a pump house and learned how to be spiritual leaders in the home. Over 30 people participated. In all, June presented opportunities for me to speak 41 times.

Lost and Found

Janis Preston Spicer

As my dad got older, he would say that he often wondered about the hereafter – he went into a room and then wondered, “Now what am I here after?” I’m beginning to know about that myself. I will go to the store because I have run out of something and then, when I get there, I will buy ten different things, realize I have forgotten something important I needed, wander around the store for 15 minutes hoping it will come to me, eventually give up and go home – and remember what it was I went after as soon as I pull into the driveway.

I think sometimes that I would forget my head if it wasn’t attached. One recent Sunday morning, we got into the car to go to church and I realized I had forgotten to lock the front door, so I went back inside the house, locked up and got back into the car. Then I realized I had forgotten the bulletins – back into the house, get the bulletins, back into the car. We were backing out of the driveway when I remembered that our Sunday offering money was still sitting on my desk – back into the house, grab the money, back into the car. We got a block away from home before I remembered the anniversary present for our preacher and his wife – back to the house, get the present, back into the car. We were halfway out of town when it occurred to me that I forgotten the anniversary card, too – back to the house, get the card, back into the car. About a mile from the church, my husband asked to borrow my comb – all that door flapping had mussed his hair, I guess – but I had, of course, forgotten the comb and I wasn’t about to turn around yet again!

This forgetfulness causes me to lose things, too, and I spend inordinate amounts of time retracing my steps in order to find whatever it is I’ve lost. These days it’s often my glasses – I can’t see anything far away without them, but I can’t see anything up close with them, so I will take them off and lay them down while I’m working on something and then I can’t remember where I’ve laid them down. Of course, once they’re off my face, they become a part of the far away stuff I can’t see without my glasses, so I’m in big trouble. Once when I couldn’t find them, I called my son to come help me because he can see just fine. As soon as he walked into the room, he gave me an exasperated look and said, “They’re on the top of your head.” That was embarrassing.

But my keys are the worst. I was late to work one morning because I could not find my keys anywhere. I turned the house upside

down and finally found them – in the refrigerator. I had brought groceries in the night before and I guess I laid the keys down on the shelf in there while I put something away. The front door on our old house had a lock that needed a key from the outside but locked with a knob on the inside and I cannot tell you how many times a key search would end with the discovery of my keys hanging from the outside lock. Our new house doesn't need a key to lock from the outside at all – I don't suppose I have to tell you what happens now.

Like the bumper sticker says, "Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most."

So I take particular comfort from the words of Jesus in John 6:38-39. "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." He so understands my own forgetfulness that he reminds me three more times in Verses 40, 44 and 54 – "I will raise him up on the last day." I may forget the bulletins, the comb, the money – but Jesus will never forget me. I may lose my shopping list, my glasses, even my mind – but Jesus loses nothing.

And when the last day comes and He raises me up, I will be so grateful to hear Him say, "Never mind the keys, Janis. I've got the door."

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill, BHill40482@aol.com

5th Sunday Singspirations (September 30, 2007) announced in the following areas:

Summerville Church of Christ (IND) 6:00 p.m.

Ralph Ave. Church of Christ (Louisville) 6:00 p.m.

Mackville Church of Christ (Central KY) 6:30 p.m.

Woodland Bible Camp (IND) season winds down with two remaining weeks:

Senior Citizen Week – September 10-14, 2007 Directors are Dick and Janell Lewis and J.R. and Pie Satterfield. The week begins on Monday afternoon and ends on Friday at 12:00 noon.

Woodland Homecoming & Annual Meeting – Saturday, September 15, 2007. Check out the website for woodlandbiblecamp.org A good opportunity to visit the camp and see many improvements made during the past year!

Ebenezer Church of Christ (KY) announces its Homecoming Revival

Services with Dr. David Reagan (Lamb & Lion Ministries) October 5-7 (Friday-Sunday), nightly at 7:00 p.m., Sun. morning at 10:00.

Westminster Church of Christ (Gary Pearson) writes: "Continue to pray for Jean, Curtis, Kristen and Allie as they deal with the consequences of losing their home in a fire June 26. They are long time subscribers of the Word & Work. Curtis serves as an elder of the congregation and his wife, Jean serves as church secretary, responsible for producing the church bulletin."

The 60th Annual Ky.-Ind. Fellowship Week was a time of rich blessing to many. Attendance at the day sessions was up considerably from the past few years. The theme, topics, messages and singing were good, and it is always encouraging to see believers from many different places. Special thanks goes to the planning committee, headed by J. R. Satterfield, for all their time and efforts; also the cooks, headed by Betty Ridgeway; also to Clinton Dorman who every year types up the valuable address-list of Fellowship-Week attenders (those who sign up).

At the Goin' Fishing Missions Dinner during the Kentuckiana Fellowship Week, pamphlets were distributed about "the Bethlehem project—Feeding the Future of North Korea." Crystal Hardin had sent them for distribution. It tells heartrending facts about the intense famine there over the past decade: about 2.5 million have died; on average a 14 year old boy there is 16 centimeters shorter than his genetically identical S. Korean counterpart; etc. The pamphlets told how material/spiritual help could be provided. But shortly afterwards Crystal was informed of a change

of address. Anyone wanting more information or to donate should send to this new address: Asia Reach Ministries, P.O. Box 12, Sanford, MI 48657. Make check out to ARM with Bethlehem Project in the "for" line. 100% of the funds will go to feed the children.

Church of Christ Worldwide (Lexington, KY) continues to forward funds to designated missionaries and various works around the world. Many have remained faithful in their giving to the various works. David & Betsy Harding, and Sis. Stanna Page continue to serve in this great work of faith and labor of love. The office looks forward to receiving updated material and the publication of our Prayer/Praise Booklet to be distributed by Thanksgiving. If your church is not receiving a monthly financial statement, please contact us at: Church of Christ Worldwide, P.O. Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555. Bhill40482@aol.com

Canoe Trip on the Whiskey Chitto The LeCompte church in Louisiana sent to News & Notes a very interesting account of the 64 folks from Jennings, Turkey Creek, Cypress Creek, Pine Prairie and LeCompte churches who on August 4 had a blessed day canoeing down the Whiskey Chitto. The paddling began about 10:00 with some getting stuck on logs, tipping over, and just about everyone getting splashed. Lunch was had on the sand bar. Back into their canoes, their afternoon was interrupted by about four stops for swimming, lying down, and a cold drink. One canoer even found a man's wedding band in the water. Though tired, sore, and sun burned, the day ended with thanksgiving for a safe trip and no one getting injured and beautiful

weather. Christian fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Pepperdine University (Malibu, California) will be hosting their annual Pepperdine Bible Lectures April 29-May 2, 2008 and have invited Moto & Yoriko Nomura to attend and speak. As many of you know, Moto is quite a historian and has a collection of literature, records, photographs, memorabilia, etc of the Stone-Campbell Movement from all countries around the Pacific Rim. He is considering placing his collection of materials related to Churches of Christ in Japan in the Churches of Christ Heritage Center at Pepperdine University.

Solomon Islands (James & Karen Ashley): We certainly felt that recent earthquake (6.7) and even ran out of the house until it was over, but there was no damage. Many houses here are built on poles, so they sway a bit but don't fall. Folks down on the shore were more disrupted, as there was quite a bit of hysteria with people running for high ground in fear of a tsunami, and the aftershocks were enough to keep them there for the rest of the evening and into the night. A couple of people were injured in the rush, but that's it. The quake's center was on the other side of Guadalcanal from us in a very rural area, but if they had damages, the reports haven't reached town yet.

I feel very blessed when I look at casualty numbers for quakes here compared to other places in the world. We just don't have many buildings of the sort that fall down when shaken. The damage caused last April was mostly from the tsunami. Unfortunately, bureaucracy has taken over the recovery efforts, and the disaster council has meeting after meeting trying to decide how to be fair, while the stricken live

under emergency tarps that are rotting away after months in the sun and rain. There is plenty of money to help, but they are so worried about giving the same type of new house to everyone that nobody is getting anything. We have friends in the aid agencies who are doing the best they can to get help to people in spite of the regulatory bodies, and they are pretty frustrated. So do please keep the Solomons in your prayers.

Mackville Church of Christ in central Kentucky is looking to the Lord to provide a preacher. Anyone interested in more information may contact Norman Darland, 195 Hwy 433, Mackville, KY 40040. (859) 262-5530.

Helping Others in Practical Ways for Jesus' Sake: Well drilling programs in Vietnam are moving forward under the leadership of John Dean with funding from the Churches of Christ in Australia and U.S. Disciples Week of Compassion. The goal is to provide ten wells in Dong Tien and Dong Tam Minority villages as well as construct cement tanks for each well. Elsewhere, U.S. Churches of Christ have provided funding for a well project in Kptonou, Togo, digging 45 feet to find a source of clean water. A worship service was recently held to officially open the well. Christian Churches New Zealand is providing the funding for 15 new boreholes (wells) in Zimbabwe, where inflation, at last report, was over 5,000 percent.

-- Christianet@worldconvention.org

A Good Quote: "It's not so much that you have to be baptized but that you get to.... We could compare baptism to endorsing a check given to us as a gift. Endorsing the check is *not* a 'work' that earns the

gift; it's simply the means by which we accept the gift." —Carl Bridges, Jr.

Tell City Church of Christ (IN) announced that Bro. Logan Heeke is moving on. His last Sunday will be September 23, 2007. He and Elizabeth have accepted a position with Potter Children's Home and Family Ministries in Bowling

Green, KY. He has served as pulpit minister for 2 years at Tell City and we will greatly miss him and his family. Tell City also requests names of a minister to fill the pulpit position now available. Contact can be made through one of the elders: Michael Elaman (812)547-7096, Francis Heeke (812) 547-6191, or Larry Bryant (812) 547-2533.

Jesus' Agape Love—and it wasn't easy!

Max Lucado in *A Love Worth Giving*

Agape love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:7 NKJV). This is the type of love that Paul prescribes for the church in Corinth. Such love isn't easy. Not for you. Not for me. Not even for Jesus. Want proof? Listen to his frustration: "You people have no faith. How long must I stay with you? How long must I put up with you?" (Mark 9:19). To know Jesus asked such a question reassures us. But to hear how he answered it will change us.

How long must I put up with you?

"Long enough to be called crazy by my brothers and a liar by my neighbors. Long enough to be run out of my town and my Temple. Long enough to be laughed at, cursed, slapped, hit, blindfolded, and mocked. Long enough to feel warm spit and sharp whips and see my own blood puddle at my feet." *How long?* "Until the rooster sings and the sweat stings and the mallet rings and a hillside of demons smirk at a dying God."

How long?

"Long enough for every sin to so soak my sinless soul that heaven will turn in horror until my swollen lips pronounce the final transaction: 'It is finished.'" *How long?* "Until it kills me."

—via bulletin of Highland Community Church

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05/2008