

FrontLine

BRINGING THE TRUTH HOME

March/April 2012 • \$3.95

ISLANDS OF THE SEA

Yap Island

Bob Whitmore

An Island on the Front Lines of Missions

Jared Baldwin

Culture: Conformity and Contextualization

Brian Collins

ISLANDS OF THE SEA



FEATURES

- 6** **Yap Island**
Bob Whitmore
Back in 1999 before we visited Yap, we never expected to be missionaries.
- 10** **Front-Row Seats**
Jerry Craven and Bob Condict
On their island, the Cravens have front-row seats to seeing the power of God in an entirely different way.
- 12** **Japan**
Tim Melton
Though there is much to overcome to win a Japanese person to Christ, "with God all things are possible."
- 14** **An Island on the Front Lines of Missions**
Jared Baldwin
Guam serves as a critical location for missionary endeavors throughout Micronesia and Asia.
- 18** **How Do You Reach Out to Four Billion People?**
Joel Arnold
The Philippines: a perfect sending station!
- 22** **Culture: Conformity and Contextualization**
Brian Collins
Christians must understand why culture is a mixture of good and evil.

Departments

- 5** **Mail Bag**
- 20** **On the Home Front**
- 25** **Wit & Wisdom**
David Atkinson
- 26** **National Report**
Doug Wright
- 27** **The Evangelist's Corner**
Samuel's Love for God's Truth
Jerry Sivonksty
- 28** **At a Glance**
Proverbs
Layton Talbert
- 31** **Newsworthy**
Robert Condict
- 35** **True Love, Faithful Lives**
Jenna Wright
- 37** **God Calls Even Island Boys**
Christian Bendo
- 39** **Hope in Downtown Greenville**
Alan Findley

IF YOU LOVE MISSIONARY PRESENTATIONS,

as this editor does, you would love to visit the Lord's servants, as he has, on many of the islands of the sea. Whether on the placid shores of Lake Taupo, New Zealand, for an open-air baptism with onlookers standing nearby in immodest fascination or in the confinement of the tight quarters and polite frenzy of Tokyo, Japan, faithful missionaries are fast at work. We have listened to island music in the Caribbean from the Dominican Republic to Curaçao. We have sat in the sweltering heat of a Quonset hut in Cebu City, Philippines, housing a hundred preachers singing with all their hearts; been charmed by the harmony of a ukulele choir on Guam; and seen a newly saved teen-aged boy who stood by a rutted road on Yap for two hours just to deliver a forgotten item that the missionary had left at the humble meeting house when he left for his late-night duties after church.

Anyone who has been privileged to visit the islands of the sea and has stepped behind the tree line that hides reality from the passing cruise ships will not wonder why *FrontLine* has been burdened to feature the great challenges and opportunities of island ministry. A brief visit to the missionaries does not afford the full experience of isolation, loneliness,

vulnerability, and even fear that often lurks on the islands. The visitor senses it in the joyous midnight greetings at the airport or the tearful goodbyes

when he returns to the comforts of home. He feels a parental affection as he watches the missionary children giggling over the too-few trinkets he brings, packed beside the critically needed repair parts that required the extra bag.

The extended work of the well-planned mission trip provides a better orientation—an opportunity for the fallow ground of the heart to be tilled and turned to the possibility of island ministry. Our prayer is that God will use this issue of *FrontLine* to germinate the seeds of interest that readers may discover here. Perhaps readers will pray more for the islands and for those who have heeded their call. Perhaps needed support will be sent. Perhaps someone will actually go.

The first article you will find here was written by Bob Whitmore, the former editor of *FrontLine*. He was in his office working on the magazine when Paul Zimmer stepped in to ask him, "How would you like to visit the island of Yap with me?" Eternity will tell the story of what the answer to that question has wrought. We have a hint in the articles to follow and recall it in the echo of God's great promise to Israel in Isaiah 11:11, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again . . . to recover the remnant of his people . . . from the islands of the sea."

Editor's Note: Imagine what the modern-day Paul and his team on Yap could do with the tools to reach the souls scattered among the far-reaching islands within reach of a small seaplane. Perhaps God would burden donors able to invest in such a tool, or would burden a pilot and/or A&P mechanic who would give his God-given skills back to the Lord for island ministry. Perhaps we should pray that the Lord would lay it on our hearts.

John C. Vaughn

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Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International
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Growing in Grace

***“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”***

|| Peter 3:18

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- Steve Pettit
- Marty Marriott
- Kevin Schaal
- Mark Minnick
- James Maxwell
- Jim Berg
- Mike Sproul

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480.245.7900
www.tricityministries.org

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You may request that your letter not be published or that your name be withheld, but anonymous letters will not be accepted.

Thanks so much for the *FrontLine* issue on "Protecting the Children." I read all the articles just a few minutes ago and prayed with a freshly broken heart that God will help us be better at helping those who have suffered so much. Would *FrontLine* be interested in taking the [primary articles] of this magazine and putting them into PDF format to get out to churches, Christian workers, and others?

I know there are costs involved in the magazine, but *FrontLine* could put this together as a reprint in PDF for free and let people pass it around. I would give the PDF to all my classes; we could get it to the ministerial students here and other Bible colleges could share it with theirs. There are other select topics covered recently that could be recast this same way.

Seminary Professor

Great idea! In fact we have been serializing these articles on our new blog, "Proclaim and Defend." They have also been formatted in a Special Edition of FrontLine now available

on PDF that is available to anyone without cost. Readers may obtain this PDF from either of our websites (addresses provided in the letter below from Dr. John Mincy). The PDF version is copyrighted by FrontLine. It may be printed for distribution or shared electronically, provided it is not altered in any way.—Editor

This past week I attended the Winter Board Meeting of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International—one of the best in remembrance. Over the past several years friends have asked me, "How is the FBFI doing?" They often agree with what the Fellowship is doing but do not think it important to be a part of it. For me, there is a theological imperative for separation and also for unity. It is important to establish as much unity as possible with like-minded brothers in Christ. I don't know of any other national or international group that I can work with to meet this goal better than the FBFI.

I encourage [readers] to join (if not members already) and participate

Continued on page 34

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Mission Statement: The Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International exists to provide a rallying point for Fundamental Baptists seeking personal revival and the opportunity to work with committed Bible-believers in glorifying God through the uncompromising fulfillment of the Great Commission.

As the journal of the FBFI, *FrontLine* Magazine provides a forum for God's people to reverently express a conservative Christian perspective on pertinent issues. In an effort to keep readers informed, quotes and references to many different individuals and organizations will appear. This does not imply the endorsement of the magazine or its board. Unsolicited manuscripts and artwork accepted for review.

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FBFI Chaplaincy Endorsing Agency

2801 Wade Hampton Blvd., Suite 115-165 • Taylors, SC 29687
(800) 376-6856 • (864) 268-0777
E-Mail: info@fbfi.org • www.fbfi.org

YAP ISLAND

OUR FIRST TEN YEARS

Bob Whitmore



“LET THEM
GIVE GLORY
UNTO THE
LORD, AND
DECLARE HIS
PRAISE IN
THE ISLANDS”

ISAIAH 42:12



In 1999, my wife, Polly, and I accompanied a young missionary couple, Paul and Sherry Zimmer, on a survey trip to the island of Yap in the western Pacific Ocean. Through that trip the Lord led us to team with the Zimmers, and we arrived on the field as missionaries with them in 2001. I was forty-nine years old.

Yap is the westernmost state of the Federated States of Micronesia, the others being Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. Yap proper consists of a little more than thirty-eight square miles of land, and the rest of Yap State is made up of smaller “outer islands” that stretch six hundred miles to the east. Roughly one-third of Yap State’s 12,000+ population lives on the outer islands. These outer islanders have a different language and culture from that of the Yapese.

Yap is a scuba diver’s paradise, known as the place divers can swim with manta rays. Tourists know Yap for its large stone money and unique culture. A single airline services Yap, and our two flights a week are not scheduled at times that enhance tourism—both arrive and depart in the wee hours after midnight.

Due to being under Spanish rule for a time in the 1800s, all of Yap State is culturally Roman Catholic. Each of the ten municipalities on Yap Proper has a Catholic church, and each outer island has one as well. However, the Liebenzell Mission has established “evangelical” churches here, and Yap has several Charismatic churches too. In addition, some major cults—Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and Seventh-Day Adventists—are here in force.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Upon our arrival in Yap, our challenges were many. The isolation and loneliness we first experienced would probably be common to all missionaries who serve in developing nations. Adjusting to a radically different and less technologically advanced culture was indeed a challenge. Power and water outages and shortages of such staples as flour, sugar, eggs, or milk were common obstacles for us. So many conveniences we once took for granted—Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and fast food—no longer existed for us. Throw in a couple of typhoons and the occasional earthquake plus lots of heat and humidity, and you can see that the climate too has been a challenge. The tropical climate means the presence of tropical diseases, such as dengue fever. (There are four types, and Polly has had two of them.) Medical and dental personnel do their best but are hampered by limited training and a lack of modern equipment. Alcohol abuse is common among the local people, along with all of its related social, health, and family problems.

Polly and I had done a little deputation while we both worked our regular jobs, but we were only partially supported and knew we would have to work in Yap. Polly immediately began teaching ninth-grade

science (she had been a business major!) at Yap High School while I worked various part-time jobs, including teaching English at the Yap branch of the College of Micronesia (COM), and assisted Paul in building a house. After a year our support increased so that I no longer worked, but Polly continued teaching for four years. On three occasions since then she has also taught a music class at COM.

Interpersonal relationships are all-important in this culture. Since the island is small and people must work together to survive, harmonious relationships are key. People tend to be wary until they know who you are and why you are here. American teachers are highly respected, and teaching opened many doors for ministry. Polly began every class with a verse from Proverbs and made gospel tracts available to her students. Many thousands of gospels tracts were distributed during her four years of teaching. I sometimes conducted lunchtime Bible studies with students, and Polly would have Paul come as a guest to teach the students about electricity (his undergrad major was electronics engineering). I can remember having my students answer questions from a reading assignment—John chapter 3! Paul and I got involved in coaching sports teams too, which allowed us to meet many more young people.

At first we worked through Yap Baptist Church with missionaries Joe and Carolyn Cannon. We held our first village Bible study with just two Yapese couples. Soon people were being saved, and we started holding our own regular services in the village toward the north end of the island where Paul built his house.

When our construction activities increased in 2002, we bought a portable sawmill from Australia. People then came to us wanting us to cut and mill trees for them. We split the lumber with them 50/50, and everyone was happy. But before we agreed to mill a tree, the owner of the tree had to agree to allow us to have a Bible study with him and his helpers. Many men have heard the gospel in the jungle sitting around our sawmill, and one whole family is in our church today because the father was saved as a result of our milling his lumber.

In 2003 Faith Baptist Church was incorporated as a Yap State nonprofit corporation. We did this primarily so that the church could own land. Only FSM citizens are allowed to own land, so all of the officers of the corporation are Yapese. The church got land, and we built a mission house along with the church building.

In 2004 the Cannons, after many years of faithful service, were forced to leave Yap due to health concerns. Paul’s brother Mark and his family came to Yap and took over the leadership at Yap Baptist Church. How do three missionaries get along working together on a small island? One visitor observed that our relationship is like a marriage—although we may sometimes disagree, our commitment to one another doesn’t waver.

BURDENS FOR OUTREACH

One of Paul's burdens was to start a Christian radio station. A church in Georgia became burdened to help us. They sent a team out to build the station, and Joy Family Radio was born. The station started with FM broadcasts and last year added AM able to reach Yap's outer islands. It sounds so simple to say, but the radio station was a huge project. We took down two one-hundred-foot towers on the south end of the island, hauled them up to the church property, and put them one on top of the other to make one two-hundred-foot tower. And no, we didn't have the services of a large crane! It's a miracle that no one has ever been seriously injured. (Once a rope broke and a twenty-foot section of tower fell sixty feet to the earth with a ground-shaking thud!)

The station broadcasts 24/7, and more and more people are telling us how they enjoy listening to Joy Family Radio's conservative Christian music and solid Bible teaching programs.

The Lord again used Paul's knowledge of electricity and electronics when people here became interested in alternative energy. As our electric power costs have escalated (reaching a high of \$.44 per kilowatt-hour), Paul installed solar panels and a small windmill at his house. He also installed systems for the mission house and the radio station. So many people saw these installations and contacted him for information that he decided to hold a seminar on alternative energy at the church. Word spread, and soon he was getting invitations to present information to groups of island chiefs, the island's political leaders, and even the electric power corporation. Along with the information about solar and wind power, Paul was also to clearly give the gospel.

Another burden we had was to take the gospel to Yap's outer islands. We made forays to a couple of them to distribute Bibles and tracts and show Christian films. Another time we used a medical team. Things finally opened up when the state Education Department asked Paul to help them install solar power generation systems at all the outer island schools. Paul made two three-week trips on the little inter-island ship, the first to assess the needs and the second to actually install equipment. He held Bible studies and saw several men come to Christ on the ship. The island chiefs appreciated all that he did to help them and all invited him to return any time. The door is open now for him to take the gospel to Yap's outer islands.

Over at Yap Baptist Church, Mark has had the privilege of mentoring some young men who are graduates of Harvest Baptist Bible Institute in Guam. He has seen one of these young men return to his island and plant a church. This is a truly historical event—the first non-Catholic church on any of Yap's outer islands.

THE FUTURE AND THE PAST

Later this year we anticipate the return of a Yapese young man who has been off-island earning his bachelor's degree in Bible. We hope to involve him and his wife

in the leadership of Faith Baptist Church. Currently there are more than twenty young people from Yap State studying at Harvest Baptist Bible College, and we pray that the Lord will lead them to return to their home islands to minister to their people.

Establishing a Christian school here on Yap has always been one of our long-term goals. Many of these young people are being trained in Guam could staff a Christian school. We are currently making plans to build a new, larger church building later this year. We are also helping an outer-island pastor build a house and start a church in the large outer-island community here on Yap proper. Another long-term goal we all share is to see a church started on the south end of the island.

Before we came to Yap I thought I might have twenty years to serve here. We wrote out a ministry plan of the things we wanted to accomplish, and it has been gratifying to see many of those things come to pass. We also thought about our exit strategy. Over the next few years we anticipate turning over the leadership of these various ministries to nationals and transitioning out.

Back in 1999 before we visited Yap, we never expected to be missionaries. But the Lord had other plans for us. There have been hard times, but the Lord has always gone through them with us. We have learned from experience that His promises are true. We count it an honor and privilege to work with the Zimmer families, and we praise the Lord and give Him the glory for all that He is doing way out here on a tiny island in the vast Pacific Ocean.

Bob and Polly Whitmore are long-time members of Faith Baptist Church in Taylors, South Carolina. They have two sons and six grandchildren.



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FRONT-ROW SEATS

Jerry Craven and Bob Condict



Lake Taupo, one of New Zealand's most popular tourist destinations, was the source of the largest known eruption in the world in recorded history.

It had a volcanic explosivity index of 8 and released over sixty cubic kilometers of magma. The 1980 Mount St. Helens eruption pales in comparison. That volcano expelled only one cubic kilometer of substance. The Taupo eruption felled great forests, burned trees thirty kilometers away, and covered 20,000 square kilometers with pumice. Yet the power of God is now being seen in the Taupo region in an entirely different way.

Jerry and Linda Craven live on the edge of a beautiful freshwater crater lake that stretches one hundred miles in circumference; it was a result of that powerful eruption. While living in a place that clearly demonstrates God's power in nature, the Cravens have front-row seats to the power of God in an entirely different way—the conversion of sinners and the growth of God's children. God is at work in New Zealand! Jerry and Linda minister as GFA missionaries at the Taupo Bible Church. Consider some of the blessings of ministry they have communicated:



In December three of our young people came forward with a desire to publicly testify of their faith and trust in Christ alone. Since we do not have a church building yet, we often use the private, indoor, heated swimming pool at one of our local hotels. However, when the weather is warm enough, our church families would rather be baptized in the lake. Their testimony is far more public as there are always other people at the lake enjoying a picnic or relaxing by the water's edge. Around ninety people witnessed the baptism, not counting those who were along the beach. We were also thrilled to see the dads wanting to assist me in baptizing their young person.

The following week, during Sunday school class, three other young people trusted Christ as their personal Savior. We are rejoicing in how the Lord is working among our young people. Please pray that their hearts would stay tender toward Him.

God is working powerfully in the lives of the teens as well.

The day after New Year's Day we packed the church van with all the kids' gear and sports equipment and headed off to teen camp. We were very thankful for the two other pastors and their wives who helped plan the program, run the games, and organize the music ministry. The men shared the preaching of the seven services. Two of our ladies did the cooking for approximately thirty-five people. As the week progressed, our attendance grew as more local teens from local churches also attended as day campers. Thankfully, our kitchen staff managed to stretch the food allowances to feed everyone. We had several teens that traveled five hours to come to camp for the week.

The second night of camp we discovered a teen boy, whom we nicknamed "Big D," sleeping in his van so he could attend our youth camp as he wasn't financially able to come as a full camper. With so many empty beds, we felt compelled to pay for this young man's food and accommodations for the week. He was very appreciative of our offer but also conscientious of expenses and chose to stay in his van. However, he did offer us what cash he had for the week and asked if he could have his meals with us.

Each morning the kids worked hard to pass room inspection. They seemed up to the challenge in making sure our room inspector's camera did not find the slightest lint ball caught in a wrong place. Our room inspection slideshow revealed teddy bears on beds posing to read an open Bible as well as mud on the rug! Even "Big D" participated in room inspection, showing a wrinkle-free sleeping bag, clothes neatly hung on a rack, and shoes lined up in a row all in the back of his van.

Many young people raised their hands in services indicating their personal spiritual decisions. Two other teens indicated a need to be saved. Since teen camp, those two young people have been back to visit our youth group. They were challenged once again about their salvation.

But ministry to the Kiwi people has its challenges as well.

Since our church property is located in a residential neighborhood, we must comply with the existing laws for a residential area, which allows for a maximum average of twenty-five traffic movements per day. Part of our resource consent application involves a request for the allowance of additional traffic movements. However, a new law is now under consideration such that doctors' offices, medical clinics, and churches would be allowed an average of one hundred traffic movements a day, thus allowing our church seven hundred traffic movements per week. Our District Council treats arrivals and departures as two separate movements on the street. Right now, we would exceed the traffic allowance; however, should the new law pass, we would be well within the maximum allowance.

Over a year ago we attended our neighborhood meeting in which the leading opponent to our church building boldly declared how everyone's property value would immediately fall twenty percent in value if our church were built on his street. This same man just sold his property, taking a twenty-percent loss on the sale. Our church has not yet been built; however, it seems the Lord allowed this man to predict his own judgment. We have met the new owners, who are now building a beautiful home on that section. They have been very friendly to us, and they look forward to seeing our church building built. Although we have been greatly delayed in securing our resource consent, we continue to see God at work in our delays.

One of the challenging aspects of missionary service is trying the fit a furlough period to communicate with supporting and sending churches, while building the flock given by God to that missionary's care. With the church in Taupo growing, with building and community plans advancing, with personal discipleship relationships continuing—this is a challenge!

Pray for the Lord's continued blessing on Jerry and Linda's ministry in New Zealand!

Jerry and Linda Craven are GFA missionary church planters in New Zealand.



JAPAN

Japan is a small island when measured in livable space.

Though the land mass of Japan is approximately 378,000 square kilometers¹ (roughly the size of California), it is 70% mountains and has a livable area of less than 20% of the entire land mass.

While the land mass is only 1/25th that of the USA, it has a population of 127 million people as compared to 300 million in the USA. As a result, Japan has a very high population density. When considering that almost 25% of the population of the entire country lives in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area, the maximum population density explodes to one of the highest in the world.

The combined population of the three largest metropolitan areas (totaling approximately 63 million people) is larger than over 90% of the countries in the world. That is, of all the countries in the world, only 22 have a greater population in their entire country than Japan does in its three largest metropolitan areas.

The population density of its largest metropolitan area, the Tokyo metropolitan area, is the highest in the world² with 4049 people per square kilometer (about 10,487 people per square mile).

While its geography and population density put Japan at great risk from natural disasters, epidemic diseases, economic vulnerability, etc., the greatest danger, by far, is its spiritual crisis.

Even if everyone in Japan who claims Christianity as his religion³ were a true Christian, over 98% of this country, with the world's tenth-highest population, is headed for

an eternity without Christ! Even with Japan's relatively low 1% annual mortality rate, and without considering the 18,000 who lost their lives in the 2011 earthquake/tsunami, approximately 12,700 people each year slip into an eternity without hope!

The Japanese people are blinded to the truth of the gospel by three major issues:

1. Their cultural demands
2. Their religious heritage
3. Their material prosperity.

Though outwardly an orderly, organized, and industrious people, Japan's cultural demands make freedom of choice very limited in many areas. Most Japanese people will freely admit to the oppression they feel, being trapped in a highly structured culture with few individual choices. Whether in family, work, or social relationships, their course has been plotted by their culture, and they find it very difficult and even impossible to escape their "destiny."

Equally stressful are their religious obligations. Though individually, many Japanese would choose the term "non-religious" to describe the convictions they personally hold, they feel nonetheless compelled to practice Buddhism and Shintoism. Many Japanese cultural practices are inextricably tied to their religion. One of their prime ministers once said, "To be Japanese is to be Buddhist." While this may not be technically true, it is practically true. Many times the cultural and religious lines are so blurred that most Japanese cannot distinguish between the two. When we object to participation in a particular Japanese cultural activity on the grounds of religious conviction, they will often say, "No, it is only a cultural activity," even though the activity may be held at



a temple, officiated by a priest, or use religious paraphernalia from the local temple.

Many, at least in part, attribute their economic prosperity to their cultural and religious practices and are very reluctant to part with these practices. Any new construction or opening of a new branch or office requires the blessing and ceremony of a Shinto priest. Most businesses will have a Shinto shrine somewhere on their premises and periodically participate in company-wide mandatory religious ceremonies. Any refusing to participate are deemed a risk and hazardous to the prosperity of the company and are often relegated to an obscure position in hopes that they will quit.

With these handcuffs of cultural demands, religious heritage, and material prosperity, most Japanese find it almost impossible to forsake all and trust Christ as their Savior.

Though there is much to overcome to win a Japanese to Christ, lest you think the task an impossibility, please remember Jesus' words in Mark 10:27: "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

Since most Japanese want as little to do with religion as possible, since they are forced by their culture to participate in religious activities more than they would choose, it is very difficult to appeal to them on religious grounds. We, therefore, must find a way to develop a relationship with them that they perceive as "non-religious." We teach English classes, join exercise groups, teach baking or cooking classes, start photography clubs, etc., in an effort to get an opportunity to influence them for Christ.

If we invite them to a church service, they will likely not come, but if we invite them to a sacred concert, barbecue, Christmas program, etc., they will be more likely to attend. We thus gain opportunities to develop a relationship and influence them for Christ.

While we do not forsake traditional methods of tract distribution, direct witness opportunities, and so on, we realize that we must do everything we can to reach as many as we can.

Tim Melton grew up in Japan as a missionary child and has served in various Japanese ministries in the US and Japan. Tim and Kim are currently serving as church-planting missionaries in Nagoya, Japan, with Baptist World Mission.

¹<http://www.facts-about-japan.com>

²http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_metropolitan_areas_by_population

³<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-facbook/index.html>



Jared Baldwin

AN ISLAND ON THE FRONT LINES OF MISSIONS



STRATEGIC GUAM

There is a place that is geographically the size of Chicago but with the population of Topeka. It is

a little island bursting with huge potential. For five centuries various empires have recognized the value of this seemingly insignificant mound of coral and have claimed it for their own purposes, using it as a strategic base of operation in the Pacific Rim region. Today it retains its significance, serving as a critical location for missionary endeavors throughout Micronesia and Asia. This is the island of Guam.

When Guamanians describe their home, it sounds like a travel brochure: beautiful sandy beaches, clear blue water, thriving coral reefs, fragrant tropical flowering trees, flavorful fiesta food, diverse cultures, and friendly people. However, there is much more to Guam than simply the scenic beauty. In order to truly understand Guam, one must understand a little of the variegated history that has shaped the island.

HISTORY AND PEOPLE

As a prime location for military and trade, Guam has seen many changes throughout the centuries. The local Chamorro people have lived on Guam for hundreds of years. Their peaceful isolation ended when Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan arrived in Umatac Bay in 1521. For over three hundred years the Spanish controlled Guam before ceding it to the United States in 1898. Another change of power came in 1941. On December 8, just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese invaded Guam and temporarily occupied the island until US military forces were able to liberate it in 1944. Since that time the United States has accepted Guam as a US territory, making the island the farthest place one can get from the States while still being on American soil.

The US military—both Navy and Air Force—regards Guam as a location of vital importance. Guam hosts almost 40,000 military members. The great number of military personnel adds yet another facet to the vast array of cultures represented by the almost 150,000 citizens. Although there are many local Chamorro people, numerous Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, and Micronesians also call Guam home. In addition to the resident population, Guam is annually visited by one million or more Japanese tourists who come to enjoy the sun and sand.

Because of the prime location and this unique mix of cultures, the ministry opportunities on Guam abound. But these opportunities do not come without a price. Living on Guam is not always easy.

Geographically disconnected from the United States, Guam faces a very high cost of living. But you won't hear people on Guam complain very much. Ironically, Guam boasts one of the world's largest Kmart's and one of the world's largest Home Depots, along with many other stateside retail options. The people on Guam seem to have everything they need. Yet Guam desperately needs the gospel.

A HARVEST IN GUAM

Three decades ago God uniquely and strategically planted Harvest Baptist Church on Guam. For over thirty years Harvest Baptist Church has ministered to the community on this island. The longevity of this ministry has created many opportunities for reaching the people of the Pacific. One of the most effective ministries has been Harvest Christian Academy. What began as a small Christian school has now grown to over one thousand students. Harvest Christian Academy exists to glorify God by helping students develop a heart for God through a quality education in a Christian environment. This school employs over one hundred staff members, many of whom are graduates of stateside Bible colleges and universities. The academy serves as an extension into the community, where regular contact is maintained with families who are seeking an excellent education for their children. The parents allow their students to be placed under the teaching and preaching of God's Word on a daily basis, thus providing a gateway into the homes and hearts of the Guam community. Every year Harvest Christian Academy witnesses the fruit of its labor in the changed lives of students and families.

Another educational outreach is Harvest Baptist Bible College. A small Bible institute was begun two decades ago and has now grown into a full Bible college with an enrollment of nearly ninety full-time Micronesian students. For years graduates of HBBC have been returning to their home islands in Micronesia and ministering by starting Bible studies, churches, and Christian schools. One of the driving passions at Harvest is to see these graduates go back to the islands



with a solid foundation of Bible training combined with a heart to serve the Lord and a willingness to work hard as they spread the gospel in their island communities. As HBBC continues to grow, the faculty and staff are working to see the college accredited and are seeking to offer comprehensive programs that will help the college graduates make an even greater impact throughout Micronesia.

Harvest Baptist Church also influences the Pacific through Harvest Family Radio, KHMG 88.1 FM, as they broadcast conservative Christian music, preaching, teaching, and programming twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Harvest Christian Radio has broadened its impact by means of audio online streaming, thus reaching people around the world.

Recently, God has opened up new opportunities of ministry for Harvest. One of these is Harvest House, a foster care ministry. There are over 220 foster children on Guam and only approximately twenty licensed foster families. The goal of Harvest House is to help children and teens develop a heart for God by providing a physical, social, emotional, and spiritual safe haven where they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men. As Harvest continues to see that ministry grow, the hope is to have an even greater effect on the community by serving and loving the foster children of Guam.

OUTREACH INTO OCEANIA

Harvest Missions Oceania is a missions support organization focused on developing and implementing new ways to reach the region of Oceania for Christ. The concept behind HMO is to find ways to offer encouragement, training, support, and accountability to pastors and missionaries throughout Micronesia and the Pacific Rim. These forms of support come through the funding of a variety of projects such as the printing of Bibles, songbooks, and evangelistic literature. HMO also desires to be involved in the construction of churches, schools, and housing for ministers in the region. The current plan is to establish long-term partnerships with mission boards and agencies

working in the region of Oceania in an effort to accomplish the gospel ministry in more effective ways.

Yet another ministry of Harvest is directly related to its strategic location in the midst of the Pacific. Missionaries to Australia, the Philippines, Japan, China, and many other regional locations have been positively impacted by the proximity of Guam and Harvest Baptist Church to their field of service. Harvest hosts many missionaries and preachers who are on their way to or from these fields and has the unique privilege to demonstrate hospitality and be an encouragement to these servants.

These are just a few of the ministries of Harvest Baptist Church that God is using to reach the island of Guam. But Harvest does not exist to just “do” more. Pastor Marty Herron constantly reminds the staff of the ministry’s mission: Harvest exists to glorify God by helping people develop a heart for God, through evangelizing the unbeliever, edifying the saints, and employing the soldiers. “Existing to glorify God” has many different looks at Harvest. Regardless of the task, the heart behind Harvest is to see God glorified.

LIVING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION

From the little island of Guam the tasks of “going,” “teaching,” and “baptizing” the people of many nations are being accomplished (Matt. 28:18–20). It is truly a miracle what God has done and is continuing to do on Guam. He strategically chose to start a church in the middle of the Pacific. He is using multiple ministries of that church to affect the island and entire region for His glory.

God is doing great things in Micronesia and throughout the Pacific Rim. Harvest Baptist Church is grateful to be a little part of that work.

Jared Baldwin spent five years in the US Air Force, where he was first exposed to the Pacific Region while stationed for three years in Misawa, Japan. He served at Harvest Ministries from 2002 through 2009 and rejoined the Harvest staff in 2011. He and his wife, Tammy, have three children. You can discover more information about Harvest Baptist Church, Guam, and the other ministries of Harvest at www.hbcguam.net.



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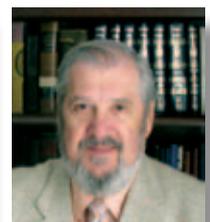
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HOW DO YOU REACH OUT TO



MORE THAN 150 YEARS AGO, the foreign missions movement burgeoned in the United States.

By the year 1900 American missionaries had established churches and other ministries in Africa, South America, Asia, and across the world. They faithfully reached out to the 1.6 billion people alive at that time, and the results of their ministry still bear fruit today.

Now there are more than twice as many people in just one region of the world alone. The 10/40 Window includes four billion people living in India, China, most of Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. Unfortunately, the world's most populous region is also its most unreached and home to the world's largest false religions.

The Philippines: A Perfect Sending Station

The Philippines is the easternmost country in the 10/40 Window. Of the 94 million people that live in the 7,107 islands of the Philippines, 13% are in one city—metro Manila. The Philippines is a developing nation, with shocking juxtapositions of poverty next to modern infrastructure. Culturally, Filipinos are very friendly, relational, and gregarious with a remarkable ability to adapt wherever they find themselves. Filipinos are overwhelmingly Catholic (77%), and many cults and perversions of Biblical Christianity abound.

But the Philippines also has increasing numbers of faithful churches who live Biblically and evangelize aggressively. Imagine, for example, four churches combining their

choirs and practicing for months to produce a Christmas cantata. Pooling their finances, they rent a large auditorium and invite hundreds of lost people. After a clear gospel presentation, the church members pinpoint and directly witness to every unsaved visitor present, leading to more than one hundred clear, evangelistic opportunities.

Or imagine a Filipino pastor whose vision stretches far beyond his own church and city. As his church grows he begins sending young men and faithful families to start new churches until his church reproduces itself six times and daughter churches reproduce themselves as well.

Or consider a pastor of twenty people in a house church. After years of faithful ministry, his church remains small—not because it isn't growing, but because through his influence young people consistently leave to serve in missions elsewhere. The ministry that visitors see is small, meeting in his living room. His true influence stretches across the Philippines and around the world.

With so much already happening in evangelism and church planting, what can the American church contribute? In many places faithful Filipino pastors are already rushing to plant churches. The most strategic role for the American church is to help train them. God has raised up several training centers that invest in national leadership for ministry. These schools have won the trust of Filipino churches, and young people from across the islands gather to learn how to preach Biblically, minister in music, and plant churches.

These training centers are also branching outward as missionaries teach short-term classes in places where no other training exists. As graduates work and minister

FOUR BILLION PEOPLE?

Joel Arnold



around the world, they establish churches in nations where Western missionaries are not welcome.

Joseph Biswas is one example. His story begins almost two hundred years ago, when William Carey evangelized and baptized his great-grandfather. Joseph trained for the ministry at Bob Jones Memorial Bible College in Manila and married a graduate before returning to minister in Bangladesh. There he is establishing a training institute for Bangladeshi pastors while planning a church-planting ministry targeting Muslims.

More Missionaries than the United States?

History records the critical role that 19th- and 20th-century American missions played in evangelizing the world. But in the next century, the role of nations such as China, South Korea, and the Philippines could be even greater in evangelizing the 10/40 Window.

Consider that more people live in the Philippines now than were alive in America at the peak of the missions movement. Because of unemployment in the islands, more than eight million Filipinos work in two hundred different nations, many of which are restricted-access countries in the 10/40 Window. At least 700,000 Filipinos living abroad profess to be born again and many of them are active in evangelism or church planting. Without plan or effort, Filipinos have become an army of self-supporting missionaries spread across the globe.*

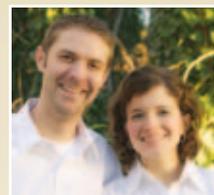
The needs of the 10/40 Window are inexhaustible, the barriers to ministry are nearly impenetrable, and the sheer number of people is overwhelming. But if someone could create the ideal way to spread the gospel across the 10/40

Window, what would it be? Perhaps he might idealistically imagine ten million people in one city with churches that are aggressively multiplying and reproducing. On that foundation, young men could be trained in Biblical preaching and ministry before they scatter to work and live in closed nations across the 10/40 Window. Ideally, they would be Asian in their cultural background, low in their financial expectations, willing to go anywhere, ready to adapt to anything, and deeply committed to serve the Lord.

God is doing that in the Philippines. Surpassing what any missions strategist would dare to imagine, Biblical churches are being planted in challenging places across the 10/40 Window as faithful Filipinos serve God wherever He scatters them. The history books have yet to be written, but as God scatters faithful men across the region, it is impossible that the Filipino church will not occupy a significant place in the record of His work.

God's plans are shocking in their simplicity and overwhelming in their grandeur. Will you pray for the dire needs in the 10/40 Window, and will you pray that God would bless the ongoing work in the Philippines to meet that need?

After graduating in May 2011 with a PhD in Theology from Bob Jones University, Joel Arnold began raising support through Gospel Fellowship Association to serve at Bob Jones Memorial Bible College in Manila, Philippines. He lives in Richmond, Virginia, with his wife, Sarah, and their son.



* Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, 7th ed., 951.

On the Home Front

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SOUND WORDS

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—2 TIMOTHY 1:13

First Partaker

My Top Ten

It's always encouraging to be asked for book recommendations. I find myself especially enthusiastic about giving them if the kinds of books in question are written more for the heart than the head. One category of heart books that I'm frequently asked about is biography.

Unfortunately, biography can be dry as a desert. That's generally the author's fault. Many a great saint's literary portrait has been marred almost irreparably by an unskillful biographer. My biography recommendations, therefore, tend to favor the authors as much as the subjects themselves. Good authors can turn even mediocre subjects into absorbing inspirations.

These are the ten biographies that have most influenced my own life and ministry. They will do any Christian immense good, but I would especially urge preachers who are just beginning their ministries to read them thoughtfully and prayerfully, asking as they go along, *Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?*

The stature of each of these men and women is so universally appreciated by Christians that I don't feel the need to write much to introduce the characters themselves. My objective is to recommend these particular accounts of them. In each case I'll stress the particular emphasis of the person's life that I've found has had the most impact on my own. I've attempted to arrange them in the order of their degree of influence upon me, beginning with those which I feel have been the greatest.

A Man of the Word by Jill Morgan

Like most teenagers of my generation, I'd heard preachers occasionally quote a minister named G. Campbell Morgan. But I knew almost nothing about him until my junior year in college when my homiletics

professor taught the class a method of Bible study that he called "G. Campbell Morgan's Method." The method's genius lay in its repeated readings of Bible books straight through at one sitting. Read Matthew right through at one time, all twenty-eight chapters. Next day read it again at one sitting. Next day, repeat the same. Do it for thirty days. Or forty days. Or fifty.

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits" (2 Tim. 2:6)

Morgan's approach inspired me, and that led to my going to the school library to see if I could find out something more about him. It was exciting to discover that one of his daughters-in-law (Morgan had four sons, all of whom entered the ministry) had written a full-length biography. The title itself, *A Man of the Word*, raised my hopes that the book would include a good bit about his Bible study habits and commitment to a Bible-teaching kind of preaching ministry. I wasn't disappointed. I know of no ministerial biography that is more inspirational along this line. Passages such as the following give me a spurt of inspiration even now. He's seventy-six and in his old age visiting the empty church building at Rugeley, where he was pastoring at twenty-eight.

This is the place, he remarked, where I had those two quiet years, when I did the spade work of all my Bible studies. He repeated this as he sat out in the car remembering the old days, and one felt that this place marked the real beginning of, "This one thing I do—" the study and teaching of the Bible to which he was to devote the rest of his life.

John Buchan has told us that, as a boy, he could imagine nothing better than the life of a country minister, "in some place where the winters were long and snowy, and a man was forced to spend much of his days and all of his evenings in a fire-lit library." He might have been describing the first winter at Rugeley, and the young minister absorbed in a study of Greek, finding a store house of fresh meaning for his New Testament.

Inside

Bring . . . the Books—Key books for the pastor's study 5
 Straight Cuts—An exegetical study 6
 Windows—Themed sermon illustrations 7

The late Wilbur Smith, widely regarded as one of the world's foremost authorities on Christian books, wrote, *I wish I could persuade every Bible-loving minister in the Western world to read this book through, behind a locked door, alone with God. . . . The fundamental reason for the shameful weakness and barrenness of much modern preaching is transparently clear when one discovers the reasons for the power of the ministry of Campbell Morgan.*

Bonar's pursuit of the practice of consistent, persistent prayer was the signature mark of his striving to be a holy man. Each time I've read his life I've experienced an unusual quickening of hunger for a deeper life of prayer.

Hudson Taylor in Early Years and Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission
by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor

These two volumes are subtitled *The Growth of a Soul* and *The Growth of a Work of God*. Together they amount to over eleven hundred pages of what is, as far as I'm concerned, the most *faith-building* biography in all of missionary literature.

Taylor's life of faith took root when he was nineteen and left his parents' home to assist a medical doctor in Hull. His meager remuneration included relatively comfortable lodgings. But feeling that he should tithe on the value of the lodging as well as the cash stipend, he was constrained to economize by moving to a cheaper two-room hovel along a narrow canal in which the locals threw their rubbish for the ebb and flow of the tide to wash away. The winter was hard. His rooms were cold and cheerless, and he subsisted on a plain, inexpensive diet, asking no help from his parents, family, or friends.

To me it was a very grave matter, *he wrote of that winter*, to contemplate going out to China, far from all human aid, there to depend upon the living God alone for protection, supplies, and help of every kind. I felt that one's spiritual muscles required strengthening for such an undertaking. There was no doubt that if faith did not fail, God would not fail. But what if one's faith should prove insufficient? I had not at that time learned that even "if we believe, not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself." It was consequently a very serious question to my mind, not whether He was faithful, but whether I had strong enough faith to warrant my embarking in the enterprise set before me. When I get out to China, I thought to myself, I shall have no claim on any one for anything. My only claim will be on God. How important to learn,

before leaving England, to move man through God by prayer alone.

Nearly every page of these two volumes is a testimony to Taylor's lifelong commitment to these ideals and to his incredible spiritual usefulness as a result.

Andrew Bonar: Diary and Life edited by Marjorie Bonar

Reading this diary is like enrolling in a spiritual clinic. It traces not merely the events in Bonar's life as a nineteenth-century Scottish pastor, but the spiritual disciplines of his fifty-seven years in the ministry. *God works most by holy instruments*, he wrote. *I am more than ever convinced that unholiness lies at the root of our little success.*

Bonar's pursuit of the practice of consistent, persistent prayer was the signature mark of his striving to be a holy man. Each time I've read his life I've experienced an unusual quickening of hunger for a deeper life of prayer. There are more references to it, underlined by my highlighter, than there are in the biography or dairy of any other minister whose life I have read.

In his latter years, when asked to tell a gathering of young ministers the secret of a consecrated life, his simple answer was, *I can only say to my young brethren that for forty years there has not been a day that I have not had access to the mercy seat.*

C. H. Spurgeon (2 vols.) by C. H. Spurgeon

This is the only autobiography among my top ten lives of preachers or missionaries. The great value of Spurgeon's telling of his own life lies in his anecdotes. Some are humorous, perhaps shockingly so!

I have had some amusing experiences with deacons in search of a minister. The officers of a small church in the country applied to me for a minister; but the salary they were prepared to pay was so small that, in reply to their request, I wrote, "The only individual I know who could exist on such a stipend is the angel Gabriel. He would need neither cash nor clothes; and he could come down from heaven every Sunday morning, and go back at night, so I advise you to invite him."

But most are heartwarming due to their teller's consistent spiritual-mindedness. He saw something that reminded him of the Lord in nearly everything, no matter how homely.

There was a dog which was in the habit of coming through the fence, and scratching in my flower beds. Walking in the garden, one Saturday afternoon . . . I saw the four-footed creature—rather a scurvy specimen, by-the-by—and having a walking stick in my hand, I threw it at him with all my might, at the same time, giving him some good advice about going home. Now, what should my canine friend do but turn round, pick up the stick in his mouth,

bring it, and lay it down at my feet, wagging his tail all the while in expectation of my thanks and kind words! Of course, you do not suppose that I kicked him, or threw the stick at him any more. I felt quite ashamed of myself, and told him that he was welcome to stay as long as he liked, and to come as often as he pleased. There was an instance of the power of non-resistance, submission, patience, and trust, in overcoming even righteous anger. I used that illustration in preaching the next day, and I did not feel that I had at all degraded myself telling the story.

Hundreds of lively stories, amusing observations, inspirational anecdotes, delightful metaphors, witty sayings—all employed to warm one's heart to Christ. There's nothing else like it in ministerial biography.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (2 vols.) by Iain H. Murray

Confidence in the power of the gospel and earnestness in preaching it are the two themes that have most affected me out of the life of Lloyd-Jones. I came across the first volume of his biography in a bookstore in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1983 and almost literally devoured it. For seven years I waited impatiently for Murray to complete the second volume, even making so bold as to call him in Australia somewhere in the late 1980s to ask how long it would be!

No other biography has so inspired my seriousness about preaching and my understanding of a right philosophy of ministry. Where, for instance, does one hear preaching like this today?

We seem to have a real horror of being different. Hence all our attempts and endeavours to popularise the church and make it appeal to people. We seem to be trying to tell people that their joining a church will not make them so very different after all. . . . When the world persecutes the church, she is performing her real mission, but when the world laughs at her she has lost her soul. And the world today is laughing at the church, laughing at her attempts to be nice and to make people feel at home. My friends, if you feel at home in any church without believing in Christ as your personal Saviour, then that church is no church at all, but a place of entertainment or a social club. For the truth of Christianity and the preaching of the gospel should make a church intolerable and uncomfortable to all except those who believe, and even they should go away feeling chastened and humbled.

George Whitefield (2 vols.) by Arnold Dallimore

This last summer my wife and I and two of our daughters spent our family vacation happily visiting church history sites in New England. One of the places we visited was Old South Presbyterian Church in Newburyport, Massachusetts, where George Whitefield is buried. Whitefield traveled to America seven times and is estimated to have preached over 18,000 sermons

here and throughout Great Britain before his death in 1770. But unfortunately, less than a hundred of his sermons have survived, and even some of these were not recorded accurately. So if we want to know something about what made this unique preacher's mighty power, we're almost entirely dependent upon the biographers.

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones said of this particular biography of Whitefield, *This volume is something for which I have been waiting for over forty years.* Arnold Dallimore, pastor of a small Baptist church in Ontario, Canada, devoted much of his adult life to researching and writing this most definitive of all the biographies of the great eighteenth-century preacher. I've loved it ever since reading the first volume in 1975. It makes one want to know the Lord better and to want to preach Him with a thousand tongues.

We seem to have a real horror of being different. Hence all our attempts and endeavours to popularise the church and make it appeal to people. . . . When the world persecutes the church, she is performing her real mission, but when the world laughs at her she has lost her soul. And the world today is laughing at the church, laughing at her attempts to be nice and to make people feel at home. My friends, if you feel at home in any church without believing in Christ as your personal Saviour, then that church is no church at all, but a place of entertainment or a social club.

To the Golden Shore: The Life of Adoniram Judson
by Courtney Anderson

This is one of those rare biographies that reads like a novel that you can't put down. The last time I read it completely through took just a few days at a Christian camp. Even though I'd read it previously, I found myself sitting up late into those blessed nights simply because I couldn't stop turning the pages.

Perhaps the single greatest takeaway from this biography is Judson's example of faithfulness despite acute suffering. Not only did he suffer excruciatingly himself (imprisoned, starved, diseased, and during one period locked up during the nights in a lion's cage), but he buried two wives who succumbed to the hardships of missionary life in Burma. He dipped so low spiritually

that he wrote home to his sisters-in-law, *Have either of you learned the art of real communion with God, and can you teach me the first principles? God is to me the Great Unknown. I believe in him, but I find him not.*

If you can get through this book without crying, you're made of steel. But its value, of course, doesn't lie in its pathos but in its heartening accounts of triumph in the end. As he came to the close of his life he testified to his third wife, Emily,

I never was deeply interested in any subject, I never prayed earnestly and sincerely about anything, but it came. At some time—no matter how distant a day—somehow, in some shape—probably the last I should have devised—it came. And yet I have always had so little faith! May God forgive me, and, while He condescends to use me as His instrument, wipe the sin of unbelief from my heart.

Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography by Iain H. Murray

Murray's work on Edwards is superb. I highly value George Marsden's more recent and academic work, but Murray's biography is considerably more overtly sympathetic with Edwards's spiritual life and viewpoints. Murray writes because he believes that *all the truths exemplified in Edwards' life remain relevant today*. Among the foremost of these was Edwards's perspective on revival. His entire life and ministry lay within the context of the First Great Awakening, he himself being one of God's chief instruments in it. Some of his most important writings concerned the nature of revival and its unmistakable evidences. Murray's biography explains Edwards's era, family life, preaching, pastoring, and writing in light of this revival context in such a way that it makes one's heart hopeful that the Lord might yet be pleased to do something remarkable in our own day.

A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael by Elisabeth Elliot

This is a book I was nearly forced to read. The wife of one of our deacons urged me several times to do so. When I delayed, she purchased a copy for me, insisting sweetly that I would be blessed. Still I delayed. Then I found myself confined to bed for over two weeks by a strange kind of fever that would persist through the night, leave me wrung out in the mornings, but able to read in the afternoons and early evenings. And this book kept "calling" to me. I don't know any other way to put it. I simply felt almost irresistibly drawn to it. Once I began reading, I understood.

What I needed at that very time in my life was the exact example from Carmichael's life that Elisabeth Elliot captured in her title—ministry isn't necessarily glorious, it isn't always fulfilling, it's *A Chance to Die*. But what a liberating chance! It is *the very gateway to Life*, Elliot wrote in her preface.

Amy Carmichael testified in a letter in 1922,

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." How often I think of that ought. No sugary sentiment there. Just the stern, glorious trumpet call, OUGHT. But can words tell the joy buried deep within? Mine cannot. It laughs at words.

That was the emphasis that the Lord knew I needed in the summer of 1990 and ever since.

"But Now I See": The Life of John Newton by Josiah Bull

Josiah Bull, grandson of Rev. William Bull, one of John Newton's closest ministerial friends, published this work in 1868, many years after several other biographies of Newton had been done. The new contribution of Bull's work was that it made extensive use of Newton's own diary, kept for some fifty-seven years but unknown to previous biographers. In his preface Bull stated that one of his objectives was to let Newton himself *speak as much as possible in his own person, so that the memoir is in great part an Autobiography*.

The result is not merely interesting, but downright fascinating. To me, the great value of this biography is that it brings the reader into touch with Newton's genuine humanness as a minister of the gospel for over forty years. We all know about God's amazing grace in saving him. But it's actually his ministerial life, not as observed by others, but as reflected upon by himself, that is of most value to preachers. The biography is full of observations such as the following.

On Tuesday, 13th, he checks his complaint of daily interruptions, saying: "Why should I call them so when they are providences, and bring each of them a call of duty with them?"

August, 1773: "It is well that the worm of self-importance should sometimes get a blow on the head. If I had not met some cuttings both within and without I should be like a fly in the fable, which said, when posted upon the axletree of a carriage, 'What a dust do I raise!'"

Perhaps the best conclusion to this list is to quote something else by Newton. It gets to the heart of why these particular works have been such a blessing to me, for they all tend to shine in the way that Newton said that most biographies are weak.

If the lives of the two Henrys [Philip and his commentator son, Matthew], and of other good men, were written by inspired men, you would not be so much discouraged at reading them. Depend upon it, they saw as much reason to be ashamed of themselves as we do. To us they appear in their best clothes, and we are told more of what the Lord wrought for them, than of the effects of indwelling sin under which they groaned. ☞☞

Dr. Mark Minnick pastors Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina, and serves as adjunct professor of preaching and exposition at Bob Jones Seminary.

Bring . . . the Books

The Battle for the Resurrection
by Norman Geisler

Out in the churches they will not ask what you are teaching here but “Is the school having revival?” The revival mood has passed. The lack of sufficient theology remains. We are suffering from generations of inattention to systematic doctrinal instruction both in the lecture hall and in the pulpit.

Those words from the Foreword convey the concern of *The Battle for the Resurrection*. While evangelism and revival make orthodoxy “function,” without orthodoxy evangelism and revival are pointless, particularly when it comes to the resurrection of Jesus. As Paul put it, “If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” Accurate doctrinal instruction and thinking is crucial if the work of God is to continue as God intended. And nowhere is this more needful than with the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:13–16).

One of the first errors of doctrine to confront the early church was the denial of the true humanity of Christ. Scripture unambiguously denounces such teaching as that of a deceiver and an antichrist (1 John 4:1–3, 5; 2 John 7). Parallel to this error is the belief that Jesus’ resurrection was not a bodily resurrection—that His resurrection body was not material but instead a “spiritual” immaterial body. However, belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ is an essential part of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1–4) and a fundamental of the faith (1 Cor. 15:13–18). *The Battle for the Resurrection* helps solidify this essential Biblical truth in the minds of God’s people.

In the Introduction Geisler enunciates the current attempts to deny Jesus’ bodily resurrection.

Suppose you were in Jesus’ tomb on that first Easter morning. What would you have seen? Jesus’ dead body literally come to life and leave the tomb? No. According to this new departure from orthodoxy, you simply would have witnessed Jesus’ body vanish before your eyes! In short, you would have observed the annihilation of His material body, and not its resurrection. This book is an attempt to sound the trumpet of concern about this current trend in evangelical doctrine. It reveals alarming information about the latest attempts to redefine historic biblical truths to suit contemporary inclinations. It is an earnest plea to alert the body of Christ to one of the most significant doctrinal deviations of our time.

While the author’s defense of the resurrection is thorough, it is far from academic or “for-theologians-only.” Geisler’s style is accessible and readable. His personal interest in the subject creates an excitement in the reader and cultivates a desire for a better understanding of the subject. Both pastors and lay people will benefit from the Biblical explanations and studies.

The first two chapters outline the current debate

and the importance of this doctrine. Two more chapters cover the historical confessions of this doctrine by early church leaders and the denials of the physical resurrection of Christ by people within the “church.” Several chapters, however, provide valuable information for explaining the resurrection. For many preachers these four chapters will be worth the price of the book. Chapter 3, “The Bible on the Resurrection,” discusses the physical nature of the resurrection body of Jesus and covers the Scriptural evidence for a bodily resurrection. Chapter 8, “Evidence for the Physical Resurrection,” discusses each of the post-resurrection appearances of Christ and covers the evidence which each appearance provides for the bodily resurrection of Christ.

Any defense of the resurrection needs to address the denials offered against a bodily resurrection, and the author does this in two chapters. In Chapter 5 Geisler addresses arguments stemming from the denial of miracles and the unreliability of the New Testament documents as well as the false stories surrounding the disappearance of Christ’s body (the disciples stole the body, Joseph removed the body, the women went to the wrong tomb, etc.). Chapter 7, “Physical Resurrection vs. Immaterial Resurrection,” provides concise, clear evidence that Christ rose in the same, material body that was crucified and placed in the tomb.

Chapter 9, “Lessons to Be Learned,” is an insightful addition. Here’s a sampling of the thought-provoking discussions covered: doctrinal statements cannot be too explicit; meaning should be read out of, not into, a text; the need for theologically educated leadership; refutation, not condemnation, is the proper procedure; impugning motives of others is wrong; and the responsibility of the Christian media.

Norman Geisler is well qualified to address this subject. He has authored or coauthored over fifty books, many of which fall into the area of apologetics. Some of his more well-known titles include *A General Introduction to the Bible* and *When Skeptics Ask*.

Unfortunately, serious reading is not a very popular way to spend what spare time a Christian leader has. However, the purity of the church, the intensity of the battle, and the advancement of Christ’s cause demand doctrinal precision on the part of those who shepherd the Lord’s sheep. The careful reading of sound doctrinal books hones a pastor’s own thinking and provides fuel for Biblically accurate sermons. Here is a formidable work on a most essential doctrine—the resurrection of Jesus. ☞

“. . . when
thou comest,
bring with thee
. . . the books”
(2 Tim. 4:13)

Tracy Minnick is the pastor of Cardwell Baptist Church in Cardwell, Queensland, Australia, and the editor/publisher of *Wellsprings*, a magazine published six times a year for Australian pastors and Christian workers.

Near our home in Ohio there is an amazing factory that manufactures beautiful paintings embossed with Scripture passages. One passage often inscribed is based on Romans 8:28: “God causes all things to work together for good.” It has become fashionable for Americans to place this promise on the walls of their homes as decoration. Of course, the reason this passage is so beloved makes perfect sense—it gives hope that all the crooked events in life will eventually be given purpose and meaning. As Thomas Watson wrote in *A Divine Cordial* (1663), “To know that nothing hurts the godly, is a matter of comfort; but to be assured that all things which fall out shall co-operate for their good, that their crosses shall be turned into blessings, that showers of affliction water the withering root of their grace and make it flourish more; this may fill their hearts with joy till they run over.”

In spite of the great promise of Romans 8:28, there are two common misunderstandings that arise in reference to its popular use. First, may this verse be claimed by all as a general promise? Certainly many do, but to whom is the promise made? Second, what precisely is meant by the “good” in the passage? Who defines what man’s greatest “good” truly is? This article will establish the context for this well-known verse and explain for whom it was intended. A careful study of the text will also provide a proper definition of the term “good.”

As Romans 8 comes to a close, Paul brings his readers to this grand mountain peak to view with wonder the lofty heights of divine revelation. The theme of this passage is that *God’s love for His people is eternally secure in Christ*. Security for the believer can be likened to a door merely hanging on the hinge versus a door that has been tightly closed and latched. Romans 8:28–30 latches the door of a believer’s soul by presenting God’s “golden chain of salvation”—foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. Yet God’s secure plan for His people not only encompasses ultimate redemption, but it also includes all the events—pleasant or difficult—that a believer might face along life’s journey. As two of Thomas Watson’s chapters on the subject indicate, not only do “The Best Things Work for the Good of the Godly” but also even “The Worst Things Work for the Good of the Godly.” Thus, the argument of Romans 8:28 is that *God providentially works in all of life’s circumstances in order to bring about His good and gracious intentions for His believing people*.

But is this great promise of God something that all people generally may claim? Although many have, Paul clarifies that it is actually an exclusive promise. It is

made only to believers in Christ, described as those “that love God” and those “called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28 ought never to be used to comfort someone who is without Christ—that “somehow things will just work out.” A person who lives according to his own terms can take no solace that all things will be fine one day; rather, he will face a certain expectation of divine judgment. Therefore, whatever “good” the Lord works out takes place only in the lives of His own people.

Keeping those factors in mind, what then is the “good” that God causes to work together for His believing people? Does each believer get to create his own meaning of “good”? Is the promise of Romans 8:28 relative to each person’s particular idea of what is “positive” for himself? Thankfully, when God wills “good” for His people, because of His infinite perfections, He always accomplishes that which is “best.” *God’s “good” may not always be what His people immediately like or enjoy, but it is what they ultimately need*. Understand, God’s “good” in Romans 8:28 is explained by a phrase in Romans 8:29—“to be conformed to the image of his Son.” The best that God can accomplish for believers is to make them like the Lord Jesus. If the Lord must use difficult things to accomplish such, then He is truly gracious and wise to do so. So says Psalm 119:71: “It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.”

The truth is, the “good” that people tend to chose for their life is often a lesser good. Yet, praise the Lord, His purposes are more perfect than man’s. He wills to accomplish what is spiritually best for believers. This means the Lord chips away the carnality in His people, replacing it with the infinitely-more-lovely image of His Son. Thus, whatever the Lord allows His children to experience in His “good” process of Christlike conformity, they should yield to in submissive, contented trust. The key is this: *be sure that one’s personal definition of good equals God’s—conformity to Christlikeness*.

In closing, consider Andrew Fuller’s words in “All Things Working Together for Good” (preached in London on March 26, 1800).

If the trials, the adverse events of life, make us more humble, is not that good? If they furnish us with matter for . . . prayer, is not that good? If they render the truths and promises of God more seasonable and precious to us, is not that good? If they increase our stock of Christian experience, is not that good? If they fit us for greater usefulness one to another, is not that good? Finally, if they “work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” is not that good? ☞

“Rightly dividing the Word of Truth”
(2 Tim. 2:15)

David Saxton has served as the founding pastor of Falls Berean Bible Church in the Akron, Ohio, area for the past ten years and teaches systematic and historical theology at the Great Lakes Bible Institute. He and his wife, Mary Beth, have four daughters.

A recent visit to a retinal specialist resulted in a diagnosis of my being at risk for Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) with current, possible symptoms.

My trip to the retinal doctor came after an annual eye checkup by our family optometrist, who is also a dear personal friend. Two years prior, he had noted some irregularities in his examination of my left eye and gently recommended that I see a retinal specialist. I heard what he said, but I didn't heed his counsel even though he inquired from time to time as to whether I had followed through on his advice. This year when I returned to his office for my annual visit, he again expressed his opinion that I needed a closer look by a recommended specialist who had more sophisticated medical equipment and regular exposure to patients with AMD.

Because AMD, in its worst-case scenario, can sometimes result in severely impaired vision or blindness, I made the suggested appointment. After a rigorous exam, my wife and I met with the doctor for a brief consultation. He suggested that I immediately begin a daily regimen of dietary supplements that contain essential vitamin and mineral elements that help slow the symptoms in approximately 25% of patients prone to AMD. In addition, he gave me an Amsler grid eye chart to help test for any vision distortion that might occur over time.

Shortly after these later events I did a personal assessment of my response to the wise counsel that was given me by my doctor during the initial visit. Why would a mature adult marginalize the words of a friend intended for my good and not my hurt? After considering the possible consequences of having the disease and the fact that not treating it if it were present could result in my being legally blind, I had to chasten myself for my lack of responsiveness. I saw in my own behavior that behavior which I had seen in others to whom I had given advice and who did not heed it in a timely fashion. On more than one occasion in my pastoral-counseling duties, I warned counselees of the danger of faulty spiritual vision resulting from not looking at life from a Biblical perspective, advice that was often ignored.

Peter on Spiritual Blindness

In 2 Peter 1:5–9 Peter uses the analogy of two other vision problems to address a concern he has for his readers. In his prognosis he cautions his readers about the strong possibility of their spiritual blindness and/or the developing inability to “see afar off.” He uses the word *myopia*, which means shortsightedness, to describe this spiritual condition. To be shortsighted is to be nearsighted. In the spiritual context, this term means to be very limited in one's spiritual understanding. Shortsighted individuals are able only to focus clearly on what is in front of them; they see only the temporal.

Because of the deficiency of their faith, they do not have the capacity to discern spiritual things. Medically, myopia means that the distant rays of light fall short of the retina of the eye. That light, instead of allowing for a crisp, clear look, results in a blurred image. Spiritually then, a person can have some spiritual sight, but it is marred. Such a spiritual state, when present, results in a person looking at life with a shortsighted perspective, giving no thought to that which is afar off, both in looking forward to what God has in store at his entrance into Heaven and in looking back at what God accomplished at his salvation. Jim Berg gives good insight on this portion of Scripture in his excellent work *Essential Virtues: Marks of a Christ-Centered Life* (pp. 8–9).

Believers who are not diligently cultivating these virtues of Christlikeness will be taking on the likeness of the world instead. They willingly focus only on the temporal things right in front of them. They are obsessed with the present—the latest recording hits, the summer's blockbuster movies, the fall's television lineup, the current superstars and celebrity fashions, the hottest electronic games, and the season's ball teams' standings. From an eternal perspective, these things are entirely irrelevant. Yet the near-sighted believer can't see anything beyond the present draw of the world—neither does he seem to want to.

Furthermore, when he faces a trial or temptation, he is focused only on the immediate situation and how he can get relief. He cannot see beyond the trial or temptation to what God wishes to do through it in perfecting Christ likeness—the essential virtues. All he sees is the immediate pain or misery in the trial or the enticing pleasure of the temptation. Consequently, he lives an earthbound and narrowly focused life. He is “blind and cannot see afar off” and has brought on the condition by turning away from the ways of Christ.

Peter's prescription for his readers is to immediately show diligence to add to their daily spiritual diet seven vital elements (spiritual “vitamins,” if you will) that have proven to deter spiritual blindness and myopia—specifically: virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. The consequence of not heeding Peter's counsel is that a person is barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, ‘A window shalt thou make in the ark.’”

Charles Spurgeon

Faith's Clear Vision

While there are those spiritually lacking believers who have unclear spiritual vision, we do read of those who have added to their faith, enabling them to look with clarity both to those events past and those yet to come. An example of such a people is recorded for us in the Book of Hebrews, where the writer describes those who

all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having **seen them afar off**, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city (Heb. 11:13–16).

Commenting on this passage under the stated theme of “faith’s clear vision,” Alexander McLaren writes,

Well, then, still further, there is suggested that this vision of faith, with all its blessed clearness and certitude and sufficiency, is not a direct perception of the things promised, but only a sight of them in the promise. And does that make it less blessed? Does the astronomer, who sits in his chamber, and when he would most carefully observe the heavens, looks downwards on to the mirror of the reflecting telescope that he uses, feel that he sees the starry lights less clearly and less really than when he gazes up into the abyss itself and sees them there? Is not the reflection a better and a more accurate source of knowledge for him than even the direct observation of the sky would be? And so, if we look down into the promise, we shall see, gleaming and glittering there, the starry points which are the true images adapted to our present sense and power of reception of the great invisible lights above. God be thanked that faith looks to the promises and not to the realities, else it were no more faith, and would lose some of its blessedness. . . .

My brother! do you see to it that this vision of faith is cultivated by you. It is hard to do. The pressure of the present is terribly strong; the chains of sense that hold us are very adamant and thick; but still it is possible for us to cultivate the faculty of beholding, and to train the eye to look into that telescope that pries into distant worlds, and brings eternal glories near.

One of our seventeenth-century prose writers says:—“Were the happiness of the next world as closely apprehended as felicities of this, it were a martyrdom to live.” It is true. If we see, we cannot

choose but love. Our vision will break into desire, and to behold is to yearn after. Oh, Christian men and women! do we know anything of that going out of the soul, in a calm transport of deliberate preference to the things that are unseen and eternal. It is a sharp test of the reality of our Christian profession; do not shrink from applying it to yourselves (*The Epistles to the Hebrews (Chapters 7–13) & James*, pp. 130–32).

Fanny Crosby's Spiritual Vision

Miss Fanny Crosby is an excellent example of a believer who had clear spiritual vision even though she was physically blind. She penned over 8000 hymns, each of them rich with spiritual truth that was seen with the spiritual eyes in her heart. One of my favorites is her hymn “Redeemed.” I am struck by her choice of words, which reflects her mature, spiritual insight even though she lacked physical sight.

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child, and forever, I am.

I think of my blessed Redeemer,
I think of Him all the day long;
I sing, for I cannot be silent!
His love is the theme of my song.

There are a number of other hymns that speak to the topic of clarity of spiritual vision. One was written by Clara H. Scott and titled “Open My Eyes That I May See,” and a favorite of many was written by Helen Howarth Lemmel and titled “Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus.”

It is my intention in the days before me to be faithful in following the advice of my doctors by taking my vitamins and supplements and regularly using the Amsler chart. I also intend to care for my spiritual sight, by God’s grace, to add to my faith those essential elements written of by Peter in his second epistle. My prayer for myself and for those that I serve in this matter is found in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion . . . (Eph. 1:15–23). ☞

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CULTURE:

Conformity and Contextualization

Pastors often warn their congregations about conformity to the culture. Missionaries are typically instructed to adapt to their new cultures. On the surface, the advice appears contradictory. The tension becomes greater because as American culture becomes more pluralistic, that is, as subcultures multiply, many are suggesting that churches must adapt to these subcultures to reach them. In other words, resolving this tension is necessary not only for a few specially trained Christians who minister far away; it is necessary for all Christians to gain wisdom in navigating these cultural waters.

In one sense resolving the seeming contradiction is easy. “Culture” is being used in two different ways in the two statements. In the first statement the pastor is using “culture” somewhat synonymously with the Biblical concept of the world. Like “world,” “culture” can have both broad and narrow meanings. “World” can mean all that God created or the created order in rebellion against God.¹ Likewise, a culture can refer to a group’s “shared understanding made manifest in act and artifact”² or to culture as it exists apart from or opposed to Christ.³ The missionary is being told to adapt to culture in the former sense and the pastor is warning the congregation about conformity to culture in the latter sense.

This clarification raises a problem which is much more difficult. How can a person tell if he is adapting to the culture in the good first sense or in the problematic second sense? This is a question that cannot be answered in the abstract, but a theological basis can be laid which aids us in answering these sorts of questions.

First, Christians must recognize the danger of a kind of cultural relativism.⁴ Not every culture is as good as every other culture. Every culture is a mixture of good and evil, and some are better or worse than others. And if every culture is mixed, any Christian’s own culture is also a mixture of good and bad. Christians must therefore be careful not to judge other cultures on the basis of their own. The Christian must first understand the other culture on its own terms—something that will take time and sympathetic understanding—and then he must evaluate it according to Scripture.

Next, Christians must understand why culture is a mixture of good and evil. Culture is infected with evil because cultures are simply manifestations of ways groups of humans have thought and acted. If sin has infected human affections, thoughts, and actions, then it will have infected human culture as well. But culture retains its goodness for theological reasons also. In the first place, culture is not just a human production. Culture results from humans doing things with the good creation that God made. We have music because God made the world to vibrate in certain ways. Farming techniques have developed the way they

**Particular cultural practices
must be understood
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hard work begins.**

have because God designed soils and plants to develop in particular ways (cf. Isa. 28:23–29). Humans form governments because God designed humans to relate in ordered ways (as is demonstrated by His ordering of the family). All of culture is an instance of human interaction with a creation that God designed to work in certain ways. Thus the very creational structures that God planned are going to shape, in part, the development of cultures. Second, God graciously restrains sinners from being as bad as they might be and thus preserves much cultural good.⁵ Third, in some societies the gospel has spread to such



a degree that Biblical ways of thinking have influenced even unbelievers.

With these truths in mind, a Christian should therefore expect much to celebrate in the various cultures of the world. They are the creations of God's image bearers as they interact with the creational structures that God has built into His world. Even parts of culture tainted with evil may still have a beauty that results from this (think of the architecture of pagan temples). But this very fact can make the evil that has infected God's good creation even more seductive, so the Christian must continually guard himself against this seduction. A Christian must not naively assume that cultural practices are neutral and able to be filled with Christian significance or content if he chooses. A certain architecture or music or family structure or practice may in reality stand in contradiction to the Christian message.

As noted before, these issues cannot be decided in the abstract. Particular cultural practices must be understood and evaluated in light of Scripture. That is where the hard work begins. The goal of this article has been to provide some theological guidelines that will, hopefully, prevent an already difficult enterprise from beginning on the wrong foot.

Brian Collins has earned a PhD in theology from Bob Jones University Seminary and is a Bible integration assistant at BJU Press. He and his wife, Joy, are members of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina.

¹ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard de Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 92.

² Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), 132, cited in D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 2.

³ D. A. Carson believes this is implicit in H. Richard Niebuhr's influential paradigm. Carson, 12.

⁴ For a discussion of different ways of using the terminology "cultural relativism," see David J. Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 122–23.

⁵ For Biblical support on this point, see Roland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity: Volume 2: The Doctrines of Man, Sin, Christ, and the Holy Spirit* (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 297–303.

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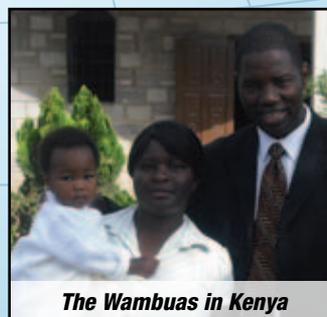


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WIT & WISDOM

The total of the first offering given in Kettering, England, on October 2, 1792, by twelve Baptist churches as a group for world missions amounted to probably \$50 in today's money.
—James Ray

The armchair critics, unwilling to believe in the heathen hatred of the Gospel, had to invent some reason out of their own brains to account for my being so persecuted and plundered.—John Paton, missionary to Vanuatu, New Hebrides Islands, 1859

Not to trust God betrays the pagan character of our hearts.
—D. A. Carson

No hell will frighten men away from sin; no dread of prospective misery; only goodness can cast hell out of any man, and set up the kingdom of heaven within.
—Hugh R. Haweis

If you are a child of God and you marry a child of the devil, you will have trouble with your father-in-law. —A Puritan

Religion is the best armor in the world, but the worst cloak.
—John Bunyan

When John Geddes landed here in 1848, there were no Christians; when he left in 1872, there were no heathen.
—Inscription on a memorial plaque to Dr. John Geddes, Canadian missionary, New Hebrides Islands

Foreign aid, (n.), when the poor people of a rich nation send their money to the rich people of a poor nation.
Does it not stir our hearts to go forth and help them? Does

it not make us long to leave our luxury, our exceeding abundant light, and go to them that sit in darkness?
—Amy Carmichael of Belfast, Japan, China, Ceylon, and India

It would give a wonderful shock, I suppose, to many namby-pamby Christians to whom the title "Mighty to Save" conveys no ideas of reality, to be told that nine or ten converted murderers were partaking with them the Holy Communion of Jesus! But the Lord who reads the heart, and weighs every motive and circumstance, has perhaps much more reason to be shocked by the presence of some of themselves.
—John Paton, 1868

Psychoanalysis is confession without absolution.
—G. K. Chesterton

Many would be cowards if they had courage enough.
—Thomas Fuller

In Fiji, 79,000 cannibals have been brought under the influence of the Gospel, and 13,000 members of the churches are professing to live and work for Jesus. On our own Aneityujm, 3,500 cannibals have been led to renounce their heathenism. In Samoa 34,000 cannibals have professed Christianity.
—John Paton

Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.
—Helen Keller

Compiled by Dr. David Atkinson, pastor of Dyer Baptist Church, Dyer, Indiana.



“To preach the gospel in the regions beyond...” 2 Cor. 10:16

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FBFI Winter Board Meeting Held in Atlanta

The FBFI Winter Board Meeting (February 14–16, 2012) in Atlanta was far more than just a “business” meeting. Sixty-eight people attended the opening banquet on Tuesday night, initiating three profitable days of presentations, reports, and committee meetings. Praying together and obtaining accurate information are two important purposes of our time together. This year the Fellowship invited qualified men to make presentations on critical issues currently affecting our movement. Dr. David Beale was one of our guests. Dr. Beale is writing a book on the history of doctrine, but we were particularly interested in an up-to-date report on the Southern Baptist Convention in relation to Fundamentalism. This information is vital to decisions about whether we should link our ministries with those aligned with the SBC.

Another special speaker was Jeff Musgrave. Jeff is traveling full time with *The Exchange*, a program he created while he was a pastor. *The Exchange* is more than just a soul-winning program; it seeks to make people aware of souls in their daily activities. In addition, *The Exchange* gives the soulwinner useable Bible-study material as a resource to explain salvation. This is a critical issue in Fundamentalism both because it is the foundation of our message and because it is sorely lacking in many of our ministries.

Protecting our children was the third critical issue, and it was addressed by Dave Shumate’s presentation. Media outlets are increasingly reporting accusations of abuse in religious circles. While there is a great deal of misinformation, it is true that we live in a perverse society. This corruption includes “religious” people and can even include the religious leaders. Providing a safe environment for young people needs to be a high priority in our ministries. Responding correctly to impropriety demands that a pastor be courageous and properly informed. Dr. Shumate’s well-researched presentation provided that vital information.

Other speakers addressed similar issues critical to making God-honoring decisions. The well-planned, informative, and beneficial topics have led many to comment that the Winter Board Meeting is one of our favorite meetings.

The Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International is strong in its resolve to be “a rallying point for Fundamental Baptists seeking personal revival and the opportunity to work with committed Bible-believers in glorifying God through the uncompromising fulfillment of the Great Commission.” We look forward to fellowshiping with those who will join us for either a regional meeting or the National Meeting in Phoenix, June 12–14, 2012, at Tri-City Baptist Church in Chandler, Arizona.



Samuel's Love for God's Truth

In the darkest hours of God's impending judgments, there were men of God who preceded the storm of God's wrath. These men of God knew the heart of God's love, the mouth of God's law, and the hand of God's longsuffering. They were men who pled for God's indignation to be stayed. Men such as Moses, who was willing to be blotted out of God's book so that the people of Israel would be spared. Or Jeremiah, weeping with a broken heart over the backslidden condition of Israel. These men manifested love, but it was not a soft, anemic love. Their love was characterized by boldness in defending God's truth. Samuel took a sword and killed Agag, the king of the Amalekites. Moses saw God open the earth and swallow Korah and his followers. Elijah prayed fire down from Heaven that consumed two companies of fifty men each. David killed a young man for touching God's anointed king. And Elisha cursed Gehazi with leprosy because of his deceitfulness. Then there was Phineas, who, in front of the people of Israel, took a spear and thrust it through a man and woman lying in immorality.

These men's actions today would be branded as hateful, unloving and cruel; however, their actions were motivated by a deep love for God's truth. It was not a love of convenience or a love of wanting to please men. What did God say about these men who performed such deeds? The Lord said of Moses that he was the meekest man upon the face of the earth. He said of David that he was a man after God's own heart. He said of Phineas that he was zealous for God's name's sake. Yet all of these men and their love for God's name and truth were misrepresented by the people of their day. For example, in 1 Kings 18:17 King Ahab said to Elijah, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Here was perversion of the truth: this wicked Ahab was calling this godly man Elijah a troublemaker.

Throughout history the same has been said of men of God whose love for God's truth was so fervent and loyal that they publicly denounced evil in whatever form it appeared. In the sixteenth century Martin Luther came upon the great truth from God's Word that "the just shall live by faith." This truth so changed Luther that he rose up like Samson in the midst of a false religious system and pushed over

the pillars of salvation through works and of ritualistic tradition. This caused great havoc in the Roman Catholic Church and laid the groundwork for the Reformation. But Luther was branded a heretic, a messenger of Satan, and an insane man because his love for God's truth was greater than his love for his own life or for man's approval.

John Bunyan was offered freedom from prison if he would keep silent concerning his convictions. He said, "I will tarry in prison till the moss grows on my eyebrows ere I make a slaughterhouse of my conscience or a butchery of my principles." Such boldness and conviction are rarely found today. Today, men's love for God's truth is coupled with a fear of man's disapproval, and God's truth is being sacrificed at the expense of love. This kind of love would have us keep our mouths shut, our spears by our side, our swords in our sheaths, and our arrows in our quiver. But this is not right! We do not need a love elevated above God's truth; we need a love that will be submissive and obedient to God's truth. In John 17:17 Jesus said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." In John 14:15 Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

This brings us to the great man of God, Samuel, and his love for God's truth.

First, Samuel's love for God's truth was portrayed by compassion. When Saul, the king of Israel, failed to do what the Lord had commanded him, the LORD said in 1 Samuel 15:11, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night." What is so touching in this passage is that Samuel had compassion on a man whom God was through with.

How do you respond when someone fails the Lord? Are you critical or compassionate? Samuel's love for God's truth was portrayed by compassion. This first point should be crucial in our lives. In the next issue I will continue on this point and then address two other important aspects of Samuel's love for God's truth that are to be paramount in our lives as well.

Evangelist Jerry Sivnksty may be contacted at PO Box 141, Starr, SC 29684 or via e-mail at evangjivn@aol.com.

Written and Compiled by Dr. Layton Talbert

PROVERBS: WHAT THEY ARE

In the previous issue, *At a Glance* explored the authorship, genre, structure, and audience of Proverbs—in short, how proverbs are made and how they work. This column zooms in to define proverbs more precisely, both positively and negatively.

Defining Proverbs

Proverbs are a form of poetry, and it is particularly “terseness” that distinguishes poetry from other forms of literature.

In Proverbs terseness becomes even more acute; it is the hallmark of its lines. . . . They [proverbs] concentrate or distill truth and so by their nature cannot express the whole truth about a topic. . . . A lack of recognition of the genre characteristic of terseness and its function to assert truth baldly has led to many errors in interpreting Proverbs. . . . To avoid overstating truth or teaching half-truths through isolated proverbs, sages call on their disciples to learn all of them (22:18) (Bruce Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs*, vol. 1, p. 38).

Proverbs vary widely from culture to culture. Proverbs that are sensible and understandable in one culture may be nonsensical in other cultures.

A proverb is

- a portable saying
- in poetic form
- expressing a general observation
- conditioned by a cultural worldview.

Here are some examples:

- Arabian: *A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.*
- Russian: *A dog is wiser than a woman; it does not bark at its master.*
- Irish: *A drink precedes a story.*
- Early American: *Necessity is a hard nurse, but she raises strong children.*

You can hear the echo of the culture from which each of these proverbs emerged. You’ll also notice that all of these are descriptive, not prescriptive. That is, they are observations of human behavior or human values. They may counsel, but they do not command. Are Biblical proverbs different? They cannot differ in nature or definition, or they wouldn’t be *proverbs*. One small clarification is necessary, however.

A Biblical proverb is

- a portable saying
- in poetic form
- expressing a general observation
- conditioned by a **Biblical** worldview.

Biblical proverbs do reflect a particular cultural worldview (ancient Middle Eastern); but beyond that, they are also shaped by a particular *religious* or *theological* worldview—namely, a Biblical worldview. Or, to be even more precise, a *Pentateuchal* or *Deuteronomic* worldview. A Biblical worldview is one informed by revelation; and in this case, it is the revelation of the Pentateuch in general and of Deuteronomy in particular. Much confusion stems from a misunderstanding of the literary dynamic of inspiration—particularly, in this case, the inspired use of the literary genre of “proverb.” Proverbial literature, *by definition*, requires these several characteristics.

Proverbs are portable.

Portable means *short*—a proverb is usually one sentence, sometimes two; but a paragraph is not a proverb.

Portable means *concise*—no drawn-out explanation is involved.

- *Where no wood is, there the fire goes out; so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth* (26:20)—or more succinctly, *Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.*

Portable means *memorable*—couched in an arresting or clever way. Proverbs use “imagery, metaphor, tighter-than-normal syntax. . . . Their aim is to make an insight permanent . . . by stripping it down to its essence and cutting away all that is irrelevant” or distracting—such as qualifications or exceptions (Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*).

- *Eagles may soar, but turtles don’t get sucked into jet engines.*
- *As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion* (11:22)—or more bluntly, *A gold jewel is wasted in a pig’s snout, and beauty is wasted on a woman with bad judgment.*

Proverbs are poetic.

“Poetic” may mean rhymed and/or metered syntax.

AND WHAT THEY'RE NOT (PART 2)

- *Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.*
- *Truth that is told with bad intent may beat any lie that you can invent.*

A Biblical example is 16:3, "Commit thy works unto the LORD and thy thoughts shall be established." In Hebrew "your works" and "your thoughts" actually rhyme. To reflect this in English we might translate it this way:

- *Commit to the LORD all you have wrought,
and He will establish your every thought.*

There is often more of this kind of poetic device in the Hebrew—consonance, assonance, and alliteration—than English translations show.

"Poetic" may refer to a balanced structure.

- *To be humble to Superiors is duty;
to Equals, courtesy;
to Inferiors, nobleness.*

In Biblical proverbs, this usually takes the form of *parallelism* (see the Jan/Feb 2012 *At a Glance*).

"Poetic" means condensed, compact; after all, *brevity is the soul of wit!*

- *Character is what you are in the dark.*
- *Open rebuke is better than secret love (27:5).*

"Poetic" means simultaneously simple yet insightful. It means particularity combined with universality.

Proverbs are general observations.

Proverbs are more *descriptive* and *instructive* than directive; they often counsel but rarely command. A proverb may *occasionally* be expressed in the form of a command, but it is conspicuously rare. "General truths are the stock in trade in Proverbs" (Garrett). In Proverbs 1–9 commands leap out all over; but remember (from the previous column), this section is *wisdom discourse*, not *proverbs* in the technical sense. To see the difference, begin reading in Proverbs 10 and see how many commands you can find. Out of the 375 proverbs proper from chapters 10–22, less than ten (2%) are phrased as a directives (16:3; 19:27; 20:13, 16, 22; 22:6, 10, 28). More on this below.

Proverbs *admit exceptions*. Like the exceptions that we instinctively understand when it comes to non-Biblical proverbs, even Biblical proverbs admit exceptions, not because they are *fallible* but because they are *proverbs*. "Like

father like son" is a generally reliable observation, but it certainly does not hold true in every case. The phrase "except after c" does not negate the general validity of the rule "i before e," but it does prevent the general rule from being an absolute rule in all cases. Likewise, exceptions prevent a proverb from being an absolute, but exceptions do not negate the general rule or the validity of the general observation. More on this later as well.

Proverbs are conditioned by culture and reflect a worldview.

The worldview of Proverbs is firmly rooted in the Pentateuch. For example, note Proverbs' echo of these foundational theological truths from Genesis.

Genesis Truth	Proverbs Echo
God created the world.	3:19, 20; 8:27–29
God made man.	14:31
God is man's Judge.	5:21, 22

But the wisdom of Proverbs reflects, even more specifically, the worldview of Deuteronomy. For example, compare the passages in the following chart.

Proverbs	Deuteronomy
19:17	15:7, 8, 10
20:10, 23	25:13, 16
20:22	32:35

This feature alone underscores the superlative reliability of Biblical proverbs over secular proverbs, because they are consistent with an infallible worldview.

Portable, poetic, general, and culturally conditioned—a proverb is a truth in capsule form, validity combined with portability.

Not Everything in Proverbs Is a Proverb

Not everything in the Book of Proverbs is a "proverb." In discussing "proverbs" I am speaking of technical proverbs as defined above, and so limiting the focus to the most common form of wisdom literature—the brief, pithy saying that goes by several names (maxim, aphorism, adage, truism). Proverbial literature is, of course, much broader than this.

Continued on next page

Proverbs 1:1 presents the “title” of the book, but chapters 1–9 form an extended introductory discourse to Solomon’s collection of “proverbs” themselves. Kidner offers a helpful analogy:

To be faced abruptly with the hundreds of individual sayings that make up the final two-thirds of this book, like a great stretch of pebble beach to make one’s way along, would be more than daunting: it could be disorienting. What kind of wisdom, at bottom, and what kind of folly, are pictured in those terse . . . remarks? What overriding motives? . . . So we can be grateful to encounter this readable stretch of nine chapters before arriving at the “beach” (*Proverbs*, 18–19).

Proverbs 1–9, then, is not *proverb* but *discourse*. The definitions and rules that govern the *proverb* genre do not apply to chapters 1–9. So the counsel contained in Proverbs 1–9 is *absolute* and not intended to function as “proverb.” The “proverbs” proper appear in Proverbs 10:1–22:16 and chapters 25–29. (Proverbs 22:17–24:34 comprise some additional modified forms of proverbial literature, and Proverbs 30, 31 are described as “the words,” not “the proverbs,” of Agur and Lemuel.) Proverbs 10:1 (cf. also 25:1) underscores this distinction, as do the stark literary differences that immediately distinguish chapters 1–9 from what follows.

Limitations of Proverbs

Compactness (or terseness) is what defines a proverb and makes it memorable. But compactness also defines a proverb’s limitations. It leaves no room for variables and exceptions. That’s by design. We understand instinctively that proverbs are universals but not absolutes. Derek Kidner has observed, “We need no telling that a maxim like ‘*many hands make light work*’ is not the final word on the subject, since ‘*too many cooks spoil the broth*’” (*Proverbs*, 26).

So there are times when proverbs seem to contradict each other, precisely because they are not absolutes; their applicability ebbs and flows with the variables

of life. The classic example is 26:4, 5—“Answer not a fool according to his folly. . . . Answer a fool according to his folly.” Only a literary imbecile would label this a contradiction. “Proverbs is not afraid to put two clashing counsels side by side,” explains Kidner. “Naturally they generalize, as a proverb must, and may therefore be charged with making life too tidy to be true. But nobody objects to this in secular sayings, for the very form demands a sweeping statement and looks for a hearer with his wits about him” (*ibid.*). That is what makes them *proverbs*, after all.

Proverbs are more descriptive and instructive than directive; they often counsel but rarely command. A proverb may occasionally be expressed in the form of a command, but it is conspicuously rare.

So we recognize exceptions to proverbs generally. And we can see that we have to acknowledge such exceptions even in Biblical proverbs, or 26:4 and 5 really do hopelessly contradict. All this raises an important question. If proverbs, by definition, are general observations, not ironclad absolutes or infallible promises, what is the value of Biblical proverbs over any other proverbs? And how are we to interpret and apply them? We will explore these questions in the next issue.

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Censored Homeschool Education

Canadian homeschooling families in Alberta are facing a new intrusion to confront. Legislation known as Bill 2 has been introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta that requires all schools (including religious and home educators) to “reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Alberta Human Rights Act.” In other words, it may soon become illegal to teach that homosexuality is a sin in the context of one’s homeschooling environment.

It has been reported by many news agencies that the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta have been working hard to normalize homosexuality in the schools.

LifeSite News reports from their interview with the office of Alberta Education Minister Thomas Lukaszuk, “Whatever the nature of schooling—homeschool, private school, Catholic school—we do not tolerate disrespect for differences. . . . You can affirm the family’s ideology in your family life, you just cannot do it as part of your educational study and instruction.”

This bill appears to have all the votes necessary for a successful passage.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.wnd.com/2012/02/homeschoolers-cant-be-taught-gay-sex-sinful/print/>.

Muslim-Friendly Bibles

While this is admittedly nothing new, there has been a recent resurgence in translating and disseminating a “Muslim-friendly Bible.” Three organizations are at the forefront of this effort: Wycliffe Bible Translators, Frontiers, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Their stated purpose is to remove or modify Scripture terms that are deemed offensive to Muslims.

This missional approach to Bible translation is deceptive and shows an inordinate amount of disrespect to the inspired text. A text such as Matthew 28:19 would be changed from “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” to “cleanse them by water in the name of Allah, his Messiah, and his Holy Spirit.”

Other such translations replace the word “Father” with “Lord,” “Guardian,” “Most High,” and “God.” In another translation “Son of God” is replaced with “Messiah of God.”

Genuine converts from Islam to Christianity are sensibly outraged. Turkish pastor Fikret Bocek commented that such translations are “an all-American idea with absolutely no respect for the sacredness of the Scripture, or even of the growing Turkish church.”

Proponents of this culture-sensitive deception believe that their efforts have produced an “insider movement” within Islam. They label them as converts, but they continue to attend mosques, pray as Muslims do, acknowledge Mohammed as a prophet, believe the Qur’an to be inspired, and confess the *shahada*.

Muslims have often opined that Christians keep changing the Scriptures to deceive Muslims.

It appears the only deception that has been effective is that of certain Bible translators.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.wnd.com/2012/01/new-bible-yanks-father-jesus-son-of-god/>.

Darwinism Rejected

Professors at the University College London are raising public concern over the number of students who are walking out of biology lectures that are supportive of Darwinian theory. Steve Jones, emeritus professor of human genetics at University College London, voices incredulity over students who would want to study biology when it conflicts with their beliefs.

Who are these bold students? They are not Christians, as one might assume; they are Muslims. These Muslims reject, according to Jones, “that there is a random process out there which is not directed by God.”

When Usama Hasan, the

imam of the Masjid al-Tawhid mosque in Leyton, suggested that Darwinianism and Islam may be compatible, he received death threats. Islam has a growing number of teachers who insist that it is a Muslim duty to uphold the Qur’an’s teaching that Allah created the world.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2066795/Muslim-students-walking-lectures-Darwinism-clashes-Koran.html?printingPage=true>.

The Bible Is Living?

“Don’t treat the Bible as a thing to be dissected. It is not a thing. It is the living word of God.” These are the words of Eugene Peterson, pastor and author of *The Message*, a modern English “translation” of the Scriptures. Peterson’s “translation” techniques are very broad, from paraphrase to dynamic equivalence. He says his passion is to get the Word of God into the world today.

His own words reveal his translational philosophy. “If you ask the meaning of a parable, you’ve ruined it. . . . The parables require an act—a life—a participation.” Hence the original meaning of any text becomes irrelevant. For those who feel lost while reading the Scriptures, he states, “Stay lost, and you will find your way. You cannot read the Bible by yourself, you have to let God speak. . . . If you have doubts, let God answer them.” Perhaps Peterson is

more concerned with getting the world to the text than he is with getting the text to the world.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-message-translator-the-bible-is-not-a-thing-its-the-living-word-of-god-70568/>.

Persecution Intensifies in Kazakhstan

In October of 2011 new regulatory laws were passed to govern the existence and meeting of religious organizations in Kazakhstan. The new regulations require at least fifty active adult members be signed to the charter papers. Due to the new regulations, 579 churches and organizations were ordered to turn in their registrations and to immediately desist from meeting. Many of these small churches have continued to meet; as of this writing, no arrests have been made.

Kulyan Seydahmentova, head of the Bulandy District Policy Department, has communicated publicly that he regularly inspects these communities and checks up on their activities. Deregistered churches have until October 25 to assemble the necessary fifty members. Many are unwilling to give out such information to the government, even if it means that their group cannot be registered. The reregistration procedures are yet to be formed. It seems unlikely that any of the deregistered churches will have the chance to register legally.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue15683.html>.

NOTABLE QUOTES

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.—Oliver Wendell Holmes

But self-knowledge consists in this, first, when reflecting on what God gave us at our creation, and still graciously continues to give, we perceive how great the excellence of our nature would have been had its integrity remained, and, at the same time, remember that we have nothing of our own, but depend entirely on God, from whom we hold at pleasure whatever He has seen it meet to bestow; secondly, when viewing our miserable condition since Adam's fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble.—John Calvin

Pride is the beginning of all evil, because, had not man's ambition carried him higher than he was permitted, he might have continued in his first estate.—Augustine of Hippo

I see nothing in a good work, which we can call our own, without trenching upon what is due God.—John Calvin

A person will easily say, "Oh yes, I know that I am a sinner," but when he comes into the presence of God, he cannot get away with such a broad and indefinite statement. Our conviction is focused on our specific sin, and we realize, as Isaiah did, what we really are. This is always the sign that a person is in the presence of God. There is never any vague sense of sin, but the focusing on the concentration of sin in some specific personal area of life.—Oswald Chambers

Lord, I am willing
To receive what You give;
To lack what You withhold;
To relinquish what You take;
To suffer what You inflict;
To be what You require.

—Unknown

It is a vain thing to talk about going to Heaven if thou let thy heart be encumbered with those things that would hinder.—John Bunyan

Carbon Fast

For many, Lent is an opportunity to give up something for a personal benefit. In this spirit some are promoting a "carbon fast" to "save the planet."

This idea finds its roots in Europe, where a Liverpool bishop created the carbon fast concept under the auspices of Tearfund (a "Christian development organization" in the UK) in the year 2008. The concept has migrated to Canada, the Netherlands, India, Hong Kong, Australia, and Brazil.

Tom Baker of Tearfund has stated, "We have found it to be a great resource for introducing Christians to the issue of climate change and how we can respond. . . . It provides people with ideas of how they can respond to the injustice of climate change." Their central mantra is "Do no harm." Emitting CO₂ is in their view, doing people harm.

In the US other similar groups are at work as well. Interfaith Power and Light has created a daily calendar giving practical advice on reducing CO₂ emissions. The Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) has partnered with Tearfund to create a devotional for "green" Christians.

In the end, Tearfund believes its influence through Christians will allow us to save seven tons of CO₂ per participant each year.

This article can be referenced at http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2012/03/carbon_fast.html.

Compiled by Robert Conduct, FBFI Executive Board member and pastor of Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church, Baldwin, Maryland.

Newsworthy is presented to inform believers. The people or sources mentioned do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the FBFI.

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in the worthy goals of the FBFI. You can get the details to join at <http://www.fbfi.org/membership>.

By the way, sometimes people think that you have to be [a pastor or] in a Baptist church to be in the FBFI. To be a member you must agree with the statement of faith, which is baptistic, but you do not have to be in a Baptist church. Also, the FBFI is not just for pastors or other "full-time" workers. It is open to "laymen" as well. One of the exciting and helpful things that the FBFI is doing is the new blog. You can locate it at <http://www.proclaimanddefend.org/about>.

*John Mincy
Retired pastor*

Thank you for preparing articles and information vital to the church! In preparation for our deacon retreat, our pastor did not want to just try and relay the information. He felt the issue important enough to put a copy in their hands. Thanks to Malinda [Duvall, FBFI Managing Editor], who accommodated us on such short notice!

*Kellie Gray
Colonial Hills Baptist Church
Taylors, SC*

We got the [January/February *FrontLine*] magazine and showed it around at the jail this morning. First, we took it to the Major's office, [who] thought it was great. He said we should be very proud. Ha! Then we showed it to the captain, then to the lieutenant in charge of administration. The deputy who is in the picture with us just happened to walk in. He was really excited and made a copy of it. The lieutenant who took the pictures for us really liked it too. I told the Major that I would get him a copy. The layout really looks good especially when you think of what you had to work with.

*Fred and Marie Henzler
FBFI Police Chaplain
Perry, GA*

I was given a copy of the Jan/Feb 2012 issue of *FrontLine*. Never before has a magazine hit home more. I am currently in a battle with my church leadership about developing a child protection policy. We have [a man] who is a convicted sex offender coming to our church and our leadership does not see this as a problem. Is there any way I could get extra copies of this issue for the deacons at my church?

Thank you for a wonderful and timely magazine. It is truly a gift from the Lord. My wife and I have spent many sleepless nights worrying and praying about this situation; we truly thought we were all alone. Thank you for being obedient to God, even with the hard-to-talk-about issues.

*Name withheld
by the Editor*

Praise the LORD for the article by Pastor Mark Minnick regarding the book *In the Secret of His Presence* by G. H. Knight. God knew it was just what this church planter needed. One of my favorite quotes from this article is "that exemption from suffering is not what He ever promised us, but only victory over it, and sanctification by it, and peace along with it." *FrontLine* magazine is always filled with encouraging and helpful articles that every pastor can benefit from. All of the contributing writers do such a fine job month after month. Thank you for serving the Lord Jesus in this selfless way. Please continue to press on by the grace of God!

*David Neal, Pastor
Faith Baptist Church
Harvard, IL
www.fbcharvard.com*

Dear Brother Vaughn, I'm delighted about your great works in the vineyard of our Lord. And it my profound delight to invite you to come and facilitate some of our Bible conferences in Liberia, West Africa. I was not too long [ago] accepted as one of the members of

FBFI and hope to meet you at Tri-City Baptist Church. . . . Please . . . pray for my lodging, feeding, and transportation costs during the conference.

Remember I am coming from thousands of miles away from Africa to attend the conference. I love Biblical Fundamentalism.

I love you in Christ, Brother. Keep up the good works, for you have lots of crowns on Payday.

*Rev. Jesse W. Quapourlee Sr.
Pastor, New Testament
Baptist Church
Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa*

We have communicated with Bro. Quapourlee about our Annual Fellowship in June. Perhaps a reader would be burdened to help this dear brother as he will be making the trip by faith.—Editor

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True Love, Faithful Lives

Jenna Wright

Every heart craves true love. Children seek their parents' favor or their friends' approval. Young people try to be like one another, and most desire a relationship that will lead to marriage. Within marriage husbands and wives must learn together how to love each other. It is precious to see a marriage in which true love endures through the years.

What is true love? True love often means choosing to sacrificially give. Sometimes giving of oneself is the hardest form of giving. Giving of my own time, energy, and emotions can be so much more difficult than giving an object or money. True love gives up one's own interests in the interest of someone else.

When my grandmother was almost ninety years old, she underwent extensive surgery. My family and I were able to visit my grandparents, and we witnessed the devoted love of my grandfather as he cared for her every need. He not only helped her with the constant daily physical needs of an aging body, but he also looked into her in the eyes, smiled, and said, "I love you," as only Papa can.

David and Elwanda Fields, or "Papa" and "Mama," as they are affectionately known, are missionaries in Kenya, East Africa. They first left American soil in 1952 and began their African missionary legacy in Zambia. Neither had been overseas before, yet they gave up their families and familiar homes to share the gospel with people they had never met before. True love is giving up my comfort for the benefit of another.

Papa and Mama have faced many challenges: learning new languages, experiencing close calls with death in their family, sending their children off to boarding school, dealing with difficulties of a medical work, and planting churches. They have served God in Zambia, Togo, Mauritius, and Kenya. Now they face the new dilemma of earthly departure. Time does not stop, and age takes its toll. True love is obediently following wherever God leads and submissively trusting through whatever trials He takes me.

Papa and Mama do not fear death. They look forward to eternity with Jesus, who saved them from their sins. Yet the thought of temporary separation from each other is agonizing, if one moves to Heaven before the other. Papa has doted on Mama as a newlywed all through their sixty-three years of marriage. I saw firsthand how Papa cares for his bride even in the unpleasant tasks. I thanked him for taking such good care of Mama. His simple yet emotional reply was, "Well . . . I promised." True love is keeping your promises until death parts your earthly relationship.

Sometimes the most difficult people to love are those

whom we know best. We know our family members' idiosyncrasies, weaknesses, and failures. Yet we can choose to highlight godly character traits, strengths, and victories. We can recognize that we also miss the mark many times; others suffer long with our struggles. We can remember God's love for us "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." True love is choosing to see others as better than myself.

In March 2011 the hospital staff in Nairobi, Kenya, witnessed Papa and Mama's true love. Mama was hospitalized about a month. Knowledgeable nurses and doctors relied heavily on Papa to know how to best care for Mama. The doctor's wife noticed Papa and Mama's unusual relationship and knew that their story must be published. Kenya's national newspaper sent their journalists to interview David and Elwanda

Fields. When the world sees true love, they want to know more. The *Daily Nation* newspaper published an article focusing on Papa and Mama's love for each other. Countries surrounding Kenya also buy this paper, and many have now read about this elderly, godly, loving couple. True love was displayed to the world, and the world saw true disciples of Christ. "By this shall

all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Papa and Mama have loved God through a personal relationship with Him and by giving their lives in missionary service. They have loved others by giving up the familiar to share the gospel in other lands. They have loved each other devotedly, faithfully. They have given us a godly and good heritage of truly loving and faithful lives.

God desires our true love. He wants us to love Him with our entire being, and Jesus states that we cannot be His disciples if we love something or someone more than Him. God's two greatest commands for us as His children are simple and all-encompassing: love God and love others! If I can only focus my life to fulfill these two commands, then maybe I will hear what most believers desire more than anything to one day hear our Lord Jesus say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Jenna Wright, her husband, Jim, and their three children serve as missionaries in Cameroon, West Africa, with Gospel Fellowship Association. For more information on David and Elwanda Fields, see their biography, *Sonlight Shines on Bufuku*, authored by their daughter, Sandy Fields Washer. You may inquire about a copy by emailing sfields@ellijay.com. The *Daily Nation* Kenyan newspaper article link is as follows: <http://www.nation.co.ke/Features/Living/He+still+does+my+hair+63+years+later+/1218/1139294/-/2u8ne8z/-/index.html>.



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God Calls Even Island Boys

Christian Bendo

As a United States territory located in the western Pacific, Guam is a melting pot of peoples and cultures. The native people of Guam are called Chamorros. Having been born on Guam, I am Guamanian, but ethnically I am a Filipino. Nationally, I am a citizen of the United States. In other words, I am an “island boy.”

My parents moved to Guam a few years before I was born, and it was on Guam that they came to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Newly saved, my parents attended Harvest Baptist Church. There, they grew in faith and love for the Lord. Not long after their salvation, their first child was born—me. Naming me “Christian” was a testimony of all that the Lord had been doing in their lives. They sent me to Harvest Christian Academy beginning in K3 and

me as I prepared to go from the tropical island of Guam to the freezing tundra of northern Wisconsin. When I got on the plane, I was wearing jeans, a long-sleeve t-shirt, and a big, puffy winter coat. Looking around the airplane, I realized I was the only one so bundled up. Everyone else was wearing a simple t-shirt and knee-length shorts. I soon realized that it doesn't snow year-round in Wisconsin. In fact, August is as hot in Wisconsin as it is on Guam.

Bible college was exactly what I needed. Surrounded by godly teachers and students, and through the preaching and teaching of God's Word during my college years, my spiritual apathy was replaced by a growing love for the Lord. I realized that God had given me a heart for ministry which was further developed on a college ministry team. On that team, Melissa Thacker and I developed a close friendship. After our team ministry was completed, we dated and became engaged for a year, getting married two weeks after graduation.

After moving from the (occasionally) frozen tundra of Wisconsin, we settled in for seminary in the far east . . . that is, in Pennsylvania. Now, nearing the end of the final semester in my pursuit of a Master of Divinity degree, we are preparing to return to the warmth and familiarity of Guam for full-time ministry. Melissa will be teaching first grade for Harvest Christian Academy, and I will teach Bible courses at Harvest Baptist Bible College as well as at Harvest Christian Academy. What began for me on an island is no doubt beginning for others on that same island.

Harvest has grown dramatically since my parents first attended. Today there are hundreds of members from many nationalities. There are over a thousand students in the Academy, many from unsaved families. The Bible Institute trains students from the outer islands. They come to learn about God's Word, so that, like me, they can return to their islands to train others. Through its radio ministry, Harvest broadcasts godly music and Bible truth every hour of every day, available to everyone on Guam and nearby islands.

I count it a joy and privilege that God would call me and use me to work in His service on the little island of Guam. During my ministry preparation, I have been increasingly burdened for Guam. But, like Moses, I have experienced times when I questioned my ability to be effective. When those questions have come, I have been reminded of God's faithfulness and character. Clearly, God is doing a work on the island of Guam. Could the founding pastors of Harvest Ministries have imagined where that work would be today? Could my parents have imagined it when they first stepped into Harvest? Could they have known then that someday their son would return to teach in the ministry where they were taught? Probably not, but God saw it. God put it all together. Praise be to God who calls His servants to reach the islands. In fact, He even calls island boys themselves.



continuing through my senior year in high school. Being born and raised on Guam, I have always enjoyed the island life—a laid-back life with the nearby beach, warm weather, friendly people, and tasty food. However, like many teens, my laid-back lifestyle mirrored the spiritual apathy of my teen years. I had no intention to serve the Lord in full-time ministry, but the Lord had other plans.

Because my parents did not have much money, I was limited in options for college. But with the help of Pastor Marty Herron, I was offered a two-year scholarship to a Bible college on the mainland. With only one real opportunity before me, going to Bible college was an easy decision to make. Little did I know what the Lord had in store for

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Hope in Downtown Greenville

Pastor Alan Findley, as told to *FrontLine Magazine*

Alan Findley was born and reared in Chicago. Due to drugs and alcohol in the home, his little brother died and his mom faced a twenty-year prison sentence. While out on bond, she received Jesus Christ's gift of salvation, which led to Alan's being brought up in church—though he never heard the gospel while there.

Even as a twelve-year-old Alan wanted to be in the Air Force. So after high school he joined, and his first duty assignment was at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Upon invitation from a fellow airman, he attended Victory Baptist Church—quite a culture shock from what he had previously known in a church setting. Yet that is where for the first time he heard the news of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection for him. He left with a heart heavy with conviction and later accepted God's gift of salvation through His Son. Within the next three years a near-death accident and his mother's homegoing got his life focused on God's purpose for him.

Because of shift work he was not able to attend church Sunday mornings, but the pastor's teaching through Romans on Sunday night and James on Wednesday evenings affected his heart and led to baptism, discipleship, and actively serving the Lord.

In 1996 the Lord called Alan to preach and the following year gave him a wife, a widow with three sons. Together they came to Greenville, South Carolina, for Alan to begin his undergraduate training at Bob Jones University. When they arrived with their belongings and themselves in a U-Haul, they had no job or housing. School opening was two weeks away. The Lord provided both, and by December 2001 Alan had completed his coursework while at the same time working forty hours a week. When he finished school, his wife, La Wanda, started school while he

worked full time, homeschooled, and started planting a church—Hope Baptist—in Greenville's inner city in January of 2003, where they continue to minister. Their home has been additionally blessed with three daughters.

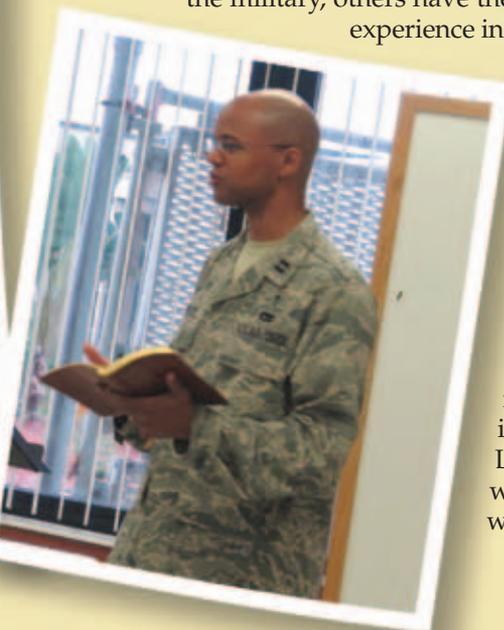
Alan still had a longing to be back in the Air Force, so he joined the Reserves, performing duty at a local unit in Greenville, and then went to Warner Robbins (Georgia) Air Force Base, where his career field was reduced in size, necessitating a change. While praying about the matter, a gentleman invited him to lunch, looked him in the eye, and said, "You need to be a military chaplain." Alan's heart sank. He knew he never wanted to do that, nor stay in Greenville. Yet as he and his wife committed all to the Lord, that is the direction the Lord led after graduate school. Alan had known Dr. John Vaughn years earlier and came to join the FBFI.

His firm decisions not to be a chaplain and not to stay in Greenville have been changed through God's direct leading. Because many African Americans attend "traditional" black churches where a social gospel and liberation theology are emphasized, they often do not have an opportunity to hear the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Alan notes that drugs, addictions, and broken homes make the ministry challenging, along with the fact that many in his congregation don't read, making discipleship a slow process. As his members mature slowly and get their lives back together, they are able to hold down a job, which sometimes requires them to work on Sundays, making it difficult to disciple consistently. Some are transient, attending church for only a few weeks at a time.

Along with this ministry, Alan is a missionary to the military as an FBFI reserve chaplain in the Air Force, stationed at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Being in the military has relieved the financial burden for his small church so that they don't carry the full load of his salary. It has also taught him much about being a leader, developing teamwork, and solving problems and mentoring. While he is on duty in the military, others have the opportunity to fill in and gain experience in the pulpit. Alan says he always

comes back from times with his unit refreshed in spirit from more time with the Lord and a bigger desire to do His work.

So, what does Alan say to all God's dealings with him and his family? "The blessings always outweigh the burdens, but the burdens are never few." When visible results are minimal and the work hard, there is the constant reminder, "The Lord called us to be faithful to the work at hand, and He is the One who makes the work fruitful."



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