

EXALTING **CHRIST** • EQUIPPING **BELIEVERS** • EVANGELIZING **THE WORLD**

CORNERSTONE

MAR - APR 2024

Because He Lives! ²

Resurrection
Assurances ⁴

Christ
Rejected ¹²

...and more

...JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF **CORNERSTONE** • EPHESIANS 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20

Typically, many people around the world only think of Christ's resurrection at this time of year. For others, it becomes lost in chocolates, bunnies, and Easter eggs. Yet, for the faithful believer every day is resurrection day, and the Lord beseeches us to live in the truth of His glorious resurrection. Paul's declarative statement to the Galatians inspired by the Holy Spirit powerfully impacted me many years ago, and it immediately became my life verse.

Manifestation of Life

The exchanged life replaces self-glory for Christ's glory. The verse begins: *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."* Notice that we are not "being crucified" but "have been crucified." Positionally in Christ, we died and were buried with Him. It is our old man, born under the headship of Adam and enslaved to sin, that has died with Him. Positionally, the resurrected Christ has replaced that old life. We have been raised with Him in newness of life and He now lives in us through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1-14). A new creation in Christ, we have been placed under His headship, saved from the penalty and power of sin and eventually the presence of sin.

As we spend time in God's Word and prayer, the Lord gradually transforms us to be more like Him. It is through our words and actions that we increasingly testify in our lives to the beauty and glory of the resurrected Christ. We become shining lights that spotlight the risen Christ. Seeing Christ illuminated in us, reveals to the lost their blind and darkened hearts as seen by a holy God (2 Cor. 3:18-4:6). As John the Baptist receded into the background to present Christ, so we desire that people see less of us and more of the Savior.


J Sidlow Baxter illustrates this truth: "Some years ago a lady and her little daughter were staying at the home of a friend. On the bedroom wall, just over the head of the bed in which they slept, there was a picture of the Lord Jesus, which was reflected in the large mirror of the dresser... When the little girl woke on her first morning there, she saw the picture reflected in the mirror while she still lay in bed, and exclaimed, "Oh mommy, I can see Jesus!" Then she quickly got up on her knees to take a better look, but in doing so she brought her own body between the picture and the mirror, so that instead of seeing the picture of Jesus reflected she now saw herself. So, she lay down again, and then again saw the picture of Jesus. She was up and down several times after that, with her eye fixed on the mirror. Then she said, "Mommy, when I can't see myself, I can see Jesus; but every time I see myself, I don't see Him."

Manner of Life

The exchanged life replaces self-sufficiency with Christ's sufficiency. Galatians 2:20 continues: *"and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God."* Effectively manifesting Christ does not happen by our own wisdom and strength. We must live the life of faith. Hebrews 11:6 says: *"that without faith it is impossible to please God."* We were initially saved by grace through faith. But that is only the beginning. The Lord desires our spiritual prosperity and growth which can only be achieved through lives lived out by faith in Him. As the *Bible Knowledge Commentary* states: "It is...faith...that releases divine power to live a Christian life."

Faith signifies reliance, trust, or dependence upon Christ in every aspect of our lives - the little things and the big things, the momentous decisions, and the less consequential ones. Faithful believers continually look to Christ for guidance, yield to His will, and give Him free rein to live His life through them. Matthew 11:29-30 says: *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* A yoke enables two oxen to pull together on a load. At our conversion, we were yoked to Christ and thus practically in our life and service we must pull together with the Lord. It is His yoke; He has Lordship over our lives, and we must not get out ahead of or fall behind Him. We must listen to Him, learn from Him, and obey Him. Prayer demonstrates that dependence. Someone has said that "when we get to heaven and see how much God has answered our prayers, we will wish we would have prayed more." Let us continually seek His face.

Motivation for Life

The exchanged life replaces self-love for Christ's love. The verse ends: *"who loved me and gave Himself for me."* Christ's sacrificial love for us motivates us to live for Him. The underlying motivation behind Christ's death at Calvary was His love for God and for us. He was thinking of me. He bore my sins. He gave Himself for me. In response to that love, the British missionary CT Studd said: "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." Christ gave His very life for us. Can we do any less than return our lives to Him? When restoring and recommissioning Peter, the Lord asked him three times: *"Peter, do you love me?"* The underlying motivation in our service, yes, our very lives, must be loving the One who sacrificially loved us. Let us submit to Christ's lordship, living by faith out of love for Him, so we will bear witness to the resurrected Christ. 

by George Ferrier

Managing Editor:

George Ferrier, gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org

Editorial Committee:

George Ferrier, Ontario, Canada
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Fred Schwertfeger (USA)
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For address changes or new subscriptions:

subscriptions@cornerstonemagazine.org

For News Notices:

submit online at cornerstonemagazine.org/news or email:
news@cornerstonemagazine.org

Design and Layout:

Hosanna Milbrath

Website Design:

Matt Williams, Louise Street Marketing

Treasurer:

Eileen Lee (USA) • George Ferrier (Canada)

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Because HE LIVES

"Because I live, you will live also." John 14:19

The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Without it, *"we are of all men most miserable."* (1 Cor. 15:19). Without the truth of a risen Savior, there would be no empty tomb. If there is no empty tomb, there would be no hope for the future. If there is no hope for the future, there would be no joyful anticipation of seeing our friends and loved ones again who have passed from this scene. There would be no triumphant song as we stand over the grave of a fellow believer, singing the words of that great hymn: "When we all get to Heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be, when we all see Jesus, we will sing and shout the victory!"

Without the resurrection of Christ, it would not be worth the sacrifice and commitment of following Him. It would be a sad situation indeed if Christ had remained in the grave. Instead, as 1 Corinthians 15:20 declares: *"But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept."* He is risen, just as He said. He told His disciples, *"Because I live, you will live also"* (John 14:19). Consequently, we have hope and can sing the encouraging words of the familiar chorus, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow." And it is not just tomorrow, but the day after that, and the day after that. We have sure hope because we have a risen Savior!

The Reality of the Resurrection

But despite the clear proclamation of God's infallible Word and the hope that it provides, the truth of the resurrection continues to be attacked by the enemies of the cross. Though convinced that they will succeed, their futile arguments to

discredit the resurrection are like throwing pebbles at the rock of Gibraltar. It would be laughable if it were not so pitiful.

When Paul was preaching in Athens (Acts 17), he was mocked when he spoke on the resurrection to the crowd at Mars Hill. But that did not dissuade him. He knew by personal experience the life-changing effect it can have when someone genuinely encounters the living Christ. He was a prime example of that. He went from being an ardent persecutor of the church to an avid defender of the faith (Gal. 1). He was proof positive of the great things that God can do in someone's life when they believe in the truth of the resurrection. This is why Paul was so determined to preach about the empty tomb. By the time he left Athens, some had already trusted the Lord through his preaching (Acts 17:34).

The Reason for the Resurrection

Why is the resurrection of Christ so important? First, it validates the claim that Christ conquered sin, death, and the grave. This is what makes the Christian faith so unique. The founders of the world's religions make no such claim and are still in their tombs. By contrast, Romans 1:4 states that Christ was *"declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead."* He was the Son of David in His humanity (v. 3), and the Son of God in His deity. He was God manifest in the flesh. As such, He can identify with fallen humanity and sympathize with us in our infirmities and yet remain sinless. Some even say that He did not actually die on the cross but that He was unconscious when taken down but that He revived afterwards. However, this would have been impossible given the sufferings He endured as detailed in the gospel accounts and prophetically revealed in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. He plainly said, *"I AM He who lives and was dead, and*

behold I am alive forevermore" (Rev. 1:18).

Make no mistake about it – the Lord physically died at a place called Calvary and He rose from the dead three days later. It was foreshadowed by Jonah's experience of being three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish. It was portrayed by Isaac when he figuratively laid down his life on the altar in submission to his father Abram and then figuratively received it back again (Gen. 22; Heb. 11:17-19).

It was the conclusion of a seven-step journey downward that started in glory and ended at the grave following His death on the cross (Phil. 2:5-8). But that death was followed by His resurrection and will culminate with a seven-step exaltation when every knee will bow to Him (vv. 9-11).

Secondly, the Lord's resurrection makes way for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Because Christ rose from the grave, He could then ascend to the Father. He said: *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."* (John 16:7). It was necessary for Him to rise from the grave and go to the Father so that He could send the Holy Spirit, another Comforter, to help and strengthen His people.

Before that happened, the Lord appeared ten times to His disciples in post-resurrection ministry to exhort, encourage, comfort, and restore them in their walk with Him. It took place at various times and in various places – in a garden, on a mountain, at the sea, on the road, in a room. It was to deal with a variety of issues like doubt, worry, fear, conflict, and confusion (Luke 24; John 20-21).

These are reminders to us that no matter what issues we are going through, and no matter where we are at the time, we have a Man in the glory interceding on our behalf, and we are aided by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When Paul felt forsaken by his friends, and was all alone in prison, the apostle affirmed *"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me"* (2 Tim. 4:17). All of this underscores the resurrection ministry of the Lord. Not only are we saved by His life (His resurrected life – Rom. 5:10), but we are also strengthened by His life, the ministry of the risen Savior to help us in our need.


The Result of the Resurrection

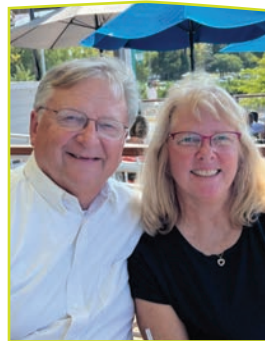
Living in the light of the resurrection can make a radical difference in the life of the Christian. It did with Peter, who was dramatically affected when the Lord restored Him in John 21. It made a difference to Thomas who declared, *"My Lord and my God!"* when he touched His wounds. There was never

again a "doubting Thomas." It changed the disciples on the road to Emmaus who made a "u" turn and went right back to Jerusalem with an exciting story to tell of a risen Lord. It is what Christians should be doing all the time – living in the light of His resurrection and setting their affections on things above (Col. 3:1-2). We have been *"buried with Him"* in His death and raised with Him in the likeness of His resurrection to walk in

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH HINGES ON THE TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Like Aaron's rod that budded, we are like the dead branch that came back to life, budded, blossomed, and bore fruit - a wonderful picture of Christ in His resurrection, and a picture of fruit-bearing Christians who walk in the likeness of their Savior.

The Christian faith hinges on the truth of the resurrection of Christ. When understood and lived out, it can have a powerful effect in the life of every Christian. May it be so for His glory. 



by Mark Kolchin

Mark and Cindy Kolchin were commended to the Lord's work in 1993 by the saints at Bethany Bible Chapel in Toms River, NJ. He is a Bible teacher and conference speaker and through the ministry of Know the Word conducts numerous Bible studies, conferences, webinars, and special events each year to help strengthen and encourage the Lord's people. The ministry maintains a website at knowtheword.com.

A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a blue sweater, is shown in profile from the chest up. She is looking out over a sunset or sunrise, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the woman and the sky.

Resurrection ASSURANCES

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is Christianity's essential doctrine, establishing and elucidating the rest of the Bible's teaching regarding God, man, salvation, and the future.¹ Its indispensable value is noted by a Scottish teacher: "Far too often we have been inclined to regard the Resurrection as an epilogue to the Gospel, an addendum to the scheme of salvation, a codicil to the divine last will and testament . . . This is no appendix to the faith. This is the faith. He is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. To preach this is your lifework: and there is no Gospel without it."²

Christ's resurrection roots the faith in history and gives tangible assurance in a world where relativity is asserted, and truth is constantly attacked. Because He has risen, believers face this uncertain scene with confidence, knowing that He is *"the way, the truth, and the life"* (John 14:6).

**Christ's resurrection roots
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The Assurance of Deity

The Lord Jesus used divine titles, possessed divine attributes, performed divine actions, and received divine, human, and angelic approbation. Despite these unmistakable evidences of deity, many denied His claims. The resurrection proves Christ's deity, saying that He was *"... declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"* (Rom. 1:4). The eternal God has provided eternal life through His Son's saving work. One of infinite worth paid the ultimate price to become the propitiation for our sins (Rom. 3:23-26). Only One who was God and man could accomplish this salvation, and the resurrection affirms it.

The Assurance of Veracity

It was not enough that the Lord should die on the Cross - many others were crucified. He must be raised to authenticate His person and work.

One writer points out: "While the first-century pagan might remain unimpressed by the announcement that Jesus had died on a Roman cross (had not thousands done so in addition to Christ?), he could not remain neutral regarding the announcement that God had raised Jesus from the dead. Either God had or he had not done so - there was no room for neutrality here! This aspect of the primitive gospel proclamation demanded the pagan's attention and response."³

If He remained entombed, His claims would be rejected as spurious. But the empty tomb verifies that everything He said about Himself and His mission was true (John 10:17-18). His bodily resurrection also fulfilled Old Testament prophecy, demonstrating their perfect accuracy (1 Cor. 15:3-11).

The Assurance of Redemption

Prior to the resurrection, Peter bitterly wept, recalling his bravado and the ensuing denial. But on the Day of Pentecost, his fellow-apostles and he were filled with the Holy Spirit so that they could boldly bear witness to Christ's physical resurrection. Referring to the prophetic Psalm

16:9-11, he said: “. . . His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption” (Acts 2:31). Unbelieving mankind’s verdict was rejected, and Jesus was irrefutably displayed to be “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). Coupled with His crucifixion, this historical occurrence assured them that the Lord’s propitiatory sacrifice was accomplished, giving them a gospel to preach.

Gooding explains: “It was not ethics or a message of being good that sent the apostles through the Roman world inflamed with zeal to convert their fellow human beings . . . They had found solid reasons for knowing that their sins were forgiven, and they had a story to tell their fellow men and women which would bring personal forgiveness and certainty of eternal life that could be known on earth here and now. It was not primarily a message of being good; they had found an answer to sin because Jesus had died and risen. The missionary movement didn’t start before; it didn’t even start in the days when Jesus was alive on earth. There was no gospel to preach then. It wasn’t until he had both died and risen that there was any message to preach.”⁴

The risen Christ sent the church with glad tidings for Israel and the nations - a work that continues to this day (Matt. 28:18-20).

***Go, and search the tomb of Jesus,
Where the Lord of glory lay;
Jesus is not there, but risen,
And has borne our sins away,
It is finished! Captive led captivity.***

***Could not all our sins retain Him,
Prisoned in the guarded cave?
These He blotted out in dying,
By His cross He spoiled the grave:
Lo! He’s risen!
Yes, the Lord is risen indeed.***⁵

The Assurance of Victory


The two on the road to Emmaus’ downcast attitudes demonstrate the depressed mood just after Calvary. It seemed that Jesus was defeated. But He soon dispelled their doubts by pointing to the Old Testament’s prophetic declaration of Christ’s sufferings and subsequent glory (Luke 24:27). He triumphed over sin, Satan, and the grave. Further, the resurrection points to God’s ultimate removal of evil from the world, as Acts 17:31 declares: “. . . He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). The Lord Jesus shall reign until He has put all enemies

under His feet, and His Father is exalted as all in all (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The Assurance of Sustenance

Finally, the Lord’s resurrection provides believers with “the power of His resurrection” (Phil. 3:10). Positionally, the same power that raised Him from the dead, has raised them up to be seated in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:19; 2:6). Practically, they now live on earth in His power mediated through the Spirit and His Word. By this assurance, they walk and war in the valley of the shadow of death, sustained by His resurrection power.

A missionary observes: “Even though we must walk in the land of fear, there is no need to fear. The power of his resurrection comes before the fellowship of his sufferings.”⁶

Another agrees in these words: “What kept Paul going? What has strengthened the endurance of countless martyrs? What still sustains in days of disappointment and discouragement? . . . the glorious hope of the future resurrection is that which spurs us on to great things.”⁷ Because Christ lives, believers shall live also (John 14:19; 1 Cor. 15:20), and as the song says: “Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.”⁸ 

Endnotes:

¹ “The resurrection of our divine Lord from the dead is the cornerstone of Christian doctrine. Perhaps I might more accurately call it the keystone of the arch of Christianity, for if that fact could be disproved the whole fabric of the gospel would fall to the ground.” C. H. Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle* 26:193.

² James S. Stewart, *Heralds of God* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1946), 88. [Italics original.]

³ Robert Reymond, *Paul, Missionary Theologian* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2000), 44.

⁴ D. W. Gooding, *The Bible’s Answers To Four Vital Questions About Christianity*. (Coleraine: Myrtlefield House, 2016), 22.

⁵ R. C. Chapman.

⁶ Amy Carmichael, *Gold By Moonlight*. (Pickle Publ., 2016), electronic ed.

⁷ Alan Gamble, *Day by Day: Bible Promises*. (W. Glamorgan: PSP, 2004), 278.

⁸ Bill and Gloria Gaither.



by Keith Keyser

Keith Keyser has served the Lord full-time in Bible teaching and preaching throughout the USA, Canada, and other countries. Keith and his wife Naomi were commended to the Lord’s work in 1999 and fellowship with the saints who meet in the Lord’s name at Grace Gospel Chapel, Gilbertsville, PA.



COME & HEAR

"COME AND HEAR, ALL YOU WHO FEAR GOD, AND I
WILL DECLARE WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR MY SOUL."

PSALM 66:16

"Don't Be Afraid"

THE TESTIMONY OF PT TAN

Birmingham, AL, USA. 1985 – I was five years old. We had just read Psalm 91 and prayed as a family, asking for God's protection during my brother's heart surgery. The team raised the rails on Ernie's bed and proceeded to roll him out of the room and down the hall. As they left, my father Pheng Theng (PT) stepped into the hall, cupped his hands around his mouth and yelled for the entire ward to hear, "Don't be afraid, Ernie!"

I was not yet born when Ernie had his first heart valve transplant surgery at age six. But this time, Ernie was thirteen and was more aware of the procedure's risks. My Dad knew it was his job to lead our family in faith through this event. And the one thing Dad wanted Ernie to remember right before he went under was, "Don't be afraid!"

PT Tan was a self-described "skinny kid in form three (equivalent to 9th grade) in Malacca, Malaysia" who was floating through life as an indifferent student. He had good reason to be unsure of himself. His mother had died very young, and he had gone to live with his aunt when he was five. Although his family was very loving, it was an extremely confusing time – no one explained what had happened. He returned home after his father remarried, and PT was blessed with five siblings.

PT's childhood was characterized by unauthorized swimming in the Malacca Straits, digging holes in Coronation Park, illicit fruit consumption, etc. whereas my grandma always told him to return home right after school. It wasn't until my father saw a group of older schoolmates gather under a large tree in the Malacca High School yard and preach loudly about the saving grace of Jesus Christ that anything really caught my father's attention.

These students spoke with great enthusiasm and conviction. Daddy was drawn to the certainty in Christ his classmates

exuded – it naturally caught his attention because so much of his young life was fueled by fear and changeability.

An older student fully explained the gospel and now at the age of 14 or 15 my Dad accepted Christ as his personal Savior and started attending the Malacca Gospel Hall – a church with a vibrant group of young people and a commitment to spreading the gospel. Side note: It was here that he met my mom one night when he had volunteered to go pick up a group of girls for a gospel meeting.

My father's faith in Christ blossomed into a thriving relationship, and he transformed from a poor student into a top performer. He wanted to honor the Lord in all parts of his life, starting with academics. To emphasize the reason for studying hard, Dad always set aside his first hour of study for that of the Bible.



PT Tan's Baptism

Every other area of his life became characterized by Christ-driven personal discipline as he pursued his health, his studies, and the practices of prayer and the study of the Word. Eventually, my father became a Fullbright and a Ford Foundation scholar. He and my mom married in 1968 so that they could travel to Harvard University together. He already had a PhD in law from the University of Singapore – now he was going to pursue his Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD), Harvard Law School's most advanced law degree. I believe the Lord provided the Fullbright and Ford foundation scholarships so that he could pursue his studies with his lovely wife at his side.

After Harvard, my parents returned to Singapore where my father was a law professor and worked for the government. Their firstborn, my brother Ernie, was diagnosed with a complicated heart problem soon after he was born. The doctors predicted that Ernie would require his first valve transplant by the age of five. So, my parents were charged with managing the timeline for getting appropriate medical treatment for him. Meanwhile, my sister Ai Ai (pronounced “I, I”) joined the family a couple of years later.

I have no idea how my father found the right surgeon to take Ernie's case. Though at first, he thought it more likely that the Lord would lead our family to Australia for treatment, he just started calling people and the patterns he observed pointed to a doctor who had recently been recruited from the Mayo Clinic to a new heart center in Alabama. He now faced the daunting questions of employment and health insurance in another country, and the financial challenge of major medical treatment.

We moved to the Washington, D.C. area when Ernie was four, and Ai Ai was two. My father worked for the World Bank. As their little family settled into American life, my parents had the grief of watching the telltale signs unfold indicating that Ernie would soon need surgery. My brother was losing steam.


Because of my brother's condition, I grew up thinking it was completely normal to deal with medical complexity. Fast forward to Ernie's second surgery (performed by the same surgeon in Birmingham as the first one when Ernie was six) – I was five years old and my strongest memory from that period is my father calling down the hall at the top of his voice as they wheeled Ernie away, “Don't be afraid!”

I had no idea how much that impacted me until I got sick in 2011. I had an AVM rupture and a massive stroke and spent over a month “asleep” (see Cornerstone Magazine – March/April 2018). In my Valley of the Shadow experience, when I was somewhat conscious, scared and confused, the Holy Spirit comforted me by reminding me of the scripture I had hidden in my heart as I had followed my father's example of study and memorization as a young person.

My mother told me to memorize Psalm 23 when I was four years old so I could recite it for my Dad when he came home from a business trip, and that simple psalm was my bread and

butter in the Valley. It still is. When I became slightly more conscious, I just wanted my mom. But when I was fully asleep my mind reverted to my strongest childhood memory – “Don't be afraid!”

And in the most stressful and terrifying parts of my experience, I imagined that my Dad was coming to help me. Even after over a decade of recovery, I still retained that impression – that my father would fix everything since he knew the Word of the Lord. And he did – as I became a disabled person, my father advocated for me and protected me. Most importantly, he always pointed me to my Heavenly Father, my ultimate protector and defender.

When the prayer request was circulated to pray for my Dad during his final hospitalization, one dear sister wrote, “He is a father to many.” And of the many memories and tributes that flowed in after his homegoing, the sweetest stories were of how Daddy ministered as an under shepherd to families facing the challenges of child-rearing. But I was his daughter. I got to see how he lived every single day. And when it was time to say goodbye in the hospital, I couldn't do it in spoken English. I signed in American Sign Language (ASL). I just said, “Daddy – thank you. I love you.” 

by Ann T. Ning Tan

Ning has shared her personal journey of faith at ShreddedGrace.com and @shreddedgrace on social media. Although her health is increasingly difficult to manage, she enjoys the Lord's daily renewal. She is in fellowship at Believers Bible Chapel in Pineville, NC.

Home Calling of Pheng Theng Tan



Pheng Theng (PT) Tan, one of the five founding members of Cornerstone Magazine went to be with the Lord on November 16, 2023. He had resigned from the committee for health reasons two months prior to his home call. His service to Cornerstone Magazine was invaluable. His legal background, expertise, and tireless work were vital to incorporating the magazine and acquiring tax exempt status. His gentle wisdom and grace were a blessing to all at our board meetings. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife Juio, and the rest of the Tan family.

Report: Committing to Faithful Men

Guelph, ON, Canada

Committing To Faithful Men (CTFM) conferences are the gathering together of young men from various assemblies for the express purpose of helping them to serve the Lord more effectively within and from their local assemblies. This event also includes time for fellowship with like-minded older and younger men who are serious about the Christian life and ministry to others.

The Biblical Example

The Gospel of Mark tells us that the Lord *“ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach”* (Mark 3:14). He knew that it was essential to spend time with them for their growth. For three years, the “twelve” were with Him: morning, noon, and night. They walked, talked, and ate together.

In His first epistle, John says: *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.”* (1 John 1:1-2).

Paul, who was an avid shepherd, urged Timothy: *“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”* (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

The Burden

In earlier years before CTFM, the burden to help younger men learn to serve had been experienced by various brethren and attempted in several venues under different names. That great servant of the Lord, John Martin, ran a series in Tavistock, ON, for a while. For a few years, Willy Burnett, another faithful brother, also ran a series in Burlington, ON.

Though these series were no longer running, for many years several men who would later become the initial leaders

of CTFM had been involved in their own assemblies, shepherding, and seeking to help young men serve the Lord. Much of my time when I served at NTM of Canada had been spent training missionary candidates, for many years teaching New Testament Church Principles.

Various men now expressed a desire to help younger men serve in their local assemblies. There were many younger men who had a strong desire to learn biblical principles to become more effective servants and leaders in the respective assemblies. At the same time, Jamie Heffer from the Wingham, ON, assembly keenly advocated doing something to help the young men develop in the local assemblies.

In approximately 2017-2018, the Lord brought Brian Gunning and me together, and CTFM was born. Over time, the Lord exercised the hearts of a few more brethren who shared the same burden. There certainly was, and is, a genuine concern amongst the Lord’s people for some way of urging, equipping, and encouraging young men to become actively used by the Lord within and from their local assemblies. These men now form the organizing committee, which is comprised of both younger and older men. The men, some of whom are elders, are from and actively involved in assemblies in southern Ontario. As the Lord continued to lead, about five years ago we gathered at Guelph Bible Conference Centre in Guelph, ON, Canada, for the first CTFM conference.





The Purpose of CTFM

The purpose of CTFM is to follow the mandate of 2 Timothy 2:2 in both doctrinal content and practical areas of service, equipping men to serve in and from the local church. The Amplified Version elaborates: “The things [*the doctrine, the precepts, the admonitions, the sum of my ministry*] which you have heard me teach in the presence of many witnesses, entrust [*as a treasure*] to reliable *and* faithful men who will also be capable and qualified to teach others.”

The Sessions

Each conference begins on Friday evening and continues until noon on Saturday, ending with lunch. The Friday evenings begin around 7:00 p.m. with registration and an evening session that ends around 9:00 p.m. Saturday begins with a prayer meeting at 8:00 a.m., a breakfast buffet at 8:30, and sessions throughout the morning. Each conference has ample time for the obligatory, delicious meals for the men to benefit from spending time together.

The Topics

Some of the topics covered up to this point are: Calvinism; How to Study and Prepare a Message for Preaching from Study to Sermon; Characteristics of Good Preaching; Preaching from the Parables; Rules of Bible Study; How to Lead Singing; How to Start Hymns at the Remembrance Meeting; How to Prepare and Participate in the Remembrance Meeting; How to Read a Spiritual Book; Excerpts from Principles of Spiritual Growth by Miles Stanford; Participating in Evangelism; Music and the Local Church; The Non-Public Serving Gifts.

The Location

The sessions are held twice yearly at the Guelph Bible Conference Centre (GBCC) in Guelph, ON, Canada. It makes an excellent and central venue for the many participants to meet from various locations in Ontario. After CTFM met for several conferences, the GBCC board decided to make CTFM an official function.


The Teachers

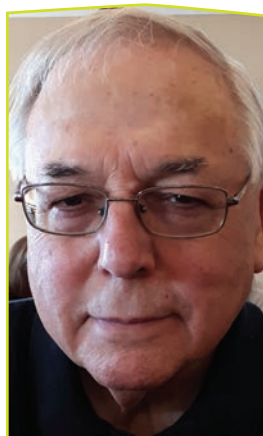
The teachers are capable men, taken from local assemblies, who willingly invest their time and efforts to equip the next generation of faithful men for service within and from their local assemblies. Presenters include a variety of experienced teachers, preachers, and elders.

The Cost

It is the desire of the CTFM committee that the cost never becomes a hindrance to anyone attending. Therefore, no fellowship gifts are given to the teachers and the only costs incurred are food and lodging. CTFM willingly accepts any gifts towards sponsoring participants to keep costs down and ensure that all who want to come can attend.

Next Conference

There is a real need for this kind of opportunity to be available over a wide area. Please pray that the Lord will use these efforts to raise up mature, active workers for His glory. The next CTFM conferences will be held on March 22-23, 2024, and October 25-26, 2024. For more information, visit www.guelphbiblecc.com/family-and-adult-conferences/ctfm/ or contact Ray Jones at raycaroljones@gmail.com or 1-519-716-1405. 



by Ray Jones

Ray and Carol Jones lived for many years in England and were involved with youth work, beach missions, and establishing a local assembly. Serving with New Tribes Mission for 35 years, they taught New Testament Church principles to prospective missionaries preparing to reach remote people groups with the Gospel. They were commended by Wallenstein Bible Chapel in 1981. Ray serves as Vice Chairman of Guelph Bible Conference Center, and is currently engaged in itinerant ministry, shepherding, Bible studies, and conferences.

FOUNDATIONS *of the faith*



BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

This article looks at the significance of baptism for those who have trusted Christ as their Lord and Savior. There are several baptisms in Scripture, among others John's baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There are specific characteristics related to each one. Yet sadly I feel that often the only time we hear believer's baptism mentioned is at a baptismal service. While it is always good to witness a public baptism, it has far more meaning than just a one-off experience. It surely affects believers as they go on to live their lives for the Lord. Let us consider what believer's baptism is.

A Divine Command to be Obeyed

In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus said: *"All authority is given to me in heaven and on the earth, Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen."* Far too often those who get saved are left

to eventually seek baptism. Yet, every time it is mentioned in Scripture it follows immediately after conversion. The responsibility given to the disciples was to teach that baptism is not an option but a command to be obeyed. Have you been obedient to it?

An Example to be Followed

Acts 2:41-42 says: *"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."* The vast majority of those who heard Peter's first gospel address rejected his message; however, what an outcome when 3000 responded. They immediately baptized each one and all who subsequently believed the gospel were to follow their example. These new believers were putting their lives on the line as it meant instant opposition, persecution, and possible martyrdom. Each one baptized was making a definite choice, understanding they were committing to follow the Lord. Too often parents or friends

push it, but this is a very personal decision one must make on their own. Have you followed the example given?

A Public Testimony of Faith

As the gospel was publicly preached and shared privately it was having a tremendous effect on those who heard it. As the minister of finance to the Ethiopian queen was reading Isaiah 53 while traveling home from Jerusalem, Philip the evangelist used that very Scripture to point him to Jesus (Acts 8:26-39). When they came to some water the eunuch asked: *"What hinders me from being baptized?"* Philip said: *"if you believe with all your heart, you may."* He said: *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* So, they both went down into the water, and he was baptized. You will notice the mode of baptism was by immersion based on a personal confession of faith. Read Acts 9:18, for another case in point. Have you publicly confessed your faith by being baptized?

A Personal Commitment to Christ as Lord

In Acts 16:16-34, we find one of those outstanding conversions for us to consider. The apostle Paul and Silas were taken by an angry mob to the magistrates who placed them in a Roman prison. The magistrates commanded the jailor who was in charge to beat them. He used rods inflicting many stripes, putting them in the inner prison with their feet in stocks. Can you imagine how they must have felt and yet they began at midnight to sing praises to God and the prisoners heard them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, and all the doors were opened. The chains that bound the prisoners were broken, yet not one tried to escape. What a miracle! The jailer was about to take his own life but came to Paul and said, *"What must I do to be saved?"* The answer was simple: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved."* No doubt listening to them sing he would have heard of Jesus for they were singing about Him. He took them home and washed their wounds. What a transformation! Then Paul spoke the Word of the Lord to those in the jailor's house and they all believed. Immediately they were baptized, committing themselves to live for the Lord who saved them. Have you?

A Powerful Challenge

Romans 6:1-8 gives a serious challenge to those who are already baptized. Paul says: *"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"* He goes on to answer his own question: *"Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with*

Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."


He brings it to a conclusion by saying: *"Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts"* (vv. 11-12).

The great truth presented here is that baptism is a symbol of death, burial, and resurrection. In it we state that we are no longer living the old life but are embarking on an entirely new life altogether. Throughout the epistles we are constantly challenged as to which life, the old or the new, we are living. May the Lord help us to be true to our baptism. While it is a one-time experience, its truth must be lived out every day until our Lord comes again.

The Answer of a Good Conscience

Finally in 1 Peter 3:21, when speaking of the flood waters in the days of Noah the apostle says: *"that water is a picture of baptism . . . not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ."* (NLT) How is your conscience today? Are you convicted about baptism? Why not yield your heart and soul today and obey God's Word by being baptized. Then you will have a good conscience, and hopefully a desire to be a daily witness for the Lord.

What Baptism Does Not Do

Baptism does not make us a child of God. Instead, we are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism does not make you a member of the Church. That also occurs when we receive Christ as our Savior, with the Holy Spirit immediately baptizing us into the Body of Christ, the true Church of God. Baptism does not take away our sins. That was done by the Lord Jesus on the cross. Baptism does not add to or take away from our salvation. Baptism does not bring us into a covenant with God. It is by faith we enter a new eternal covenant which the Lord gives to us through His death on Calvary. Baptism does not fit us for heaven; this is secured for us when we are saved. Finally, the water in which we are baptized is not holy nor has it been blessed. All it will do is make you wet. However, the principles it symbolizes are for a lifetime. 



by Jim Paul

Jim was commended to the work of the Lord by his assembly in Broxburn, Scotland in 1981 and by the Bridlewood assembly in Ottawa, Ontario in 1991. Jim has been involved in prison ministry, camp work, volunteer on call hospital chaplaincy, and has preached the Word throughout Canada and the US. He presently lives in Port Colborne, Ontario with his wife, Elizabeth.

CHRIST REJECTED



In the book of Hosea and the Gospel of John the love of God was manifested in the face of rejection by His own people. The prophet Hosea, as directed by the voice of God, uses an analogy of unfaithfulness in a marriage relationship – literally between Hosea and an immoral woman – to illustrate the idolatry of Israel and their rejection of the LORD God. Yet the God of Israel never gives up loving His people.

Similarly, the Apostle writes about Christ's rejection at the end of the first century: *"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"* (John 1:10-11). John will further address this rejection as an analytical study of the Gospel of John reveals a progression that builds to a climax in the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In chapters 5 through 6 we see a period of controversy emerging. Questions and criticism regarding the works of Jesus are introduced by John: the healing of the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day (5:16); the Lord's statement that *"I am the bread which came down from heaven"* (6:41-42); and the withdrawal of many of His disciples who were offended at His teaching about feeding on His flesh and His blood (6:53-56, 60).

These two chapters set the stage for chapters 7 through 11, the period of conflict. This is the longest single section of the 4th Gospel, depicting in parallel, belief and unbelief, as two opposing forces. The Jews were seeking to catch Him in some unguarded moment to kill him. Yet to Jesus, it was the pathway of destiny appointed by His Father. In this context, Judas, the betrayer, is identified as one having a devil.

Chapter 7 brings the rejection of Christ to a new level. The Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. Note that John chose to call it "the Jews feast" rather than the Feast of Jehovah, as presented in Leviticus 23. The Jews had planned to seize Christ at this feast in Jerusalem and kill Him (7:1, 11, 25). God had ordered this feast to be a time of great joy and thanksgiving for the faithfulness and blessings of God through the end of their sacred calendar year. Now over 1000 years later, it had become a feast of conspiracy and violence. Well might we hear the voice of Isaiah speaking: *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"* (Isa. 53:3a).

Yet within the setting of this special feast, John reveals a fact that is very hard to understand. Very little is known about the Lord's earthly life prior to His time of public ministry at the age of 30. We have likely imagined some family scenarios involving a young Jesus that may have occurred during these years from childhood to adolescence. But in Chapter 7 John reveals a shocking truth: *"For neither did His brethren believe in Him"* (vs. 5). How puzzling that siblings, raised together in the family with a sinless human being, could be blinded to who Jesus really was.

Consider in summary all the rejection Jesus is facing:

- Some of his early followers were offended at His teaching and had left Him.
- Jesus questions if the 12 disciples want to go away also.
- His mind goes to Judas, the one who will betray Him to the Jews.
- Jesus elects to stay in Galilee, for the Jews in Judea sought to kill Him.
- His own family encourages Him to go up to the feast in Jerusalem at His own risk.
- His brethren criticize His reservations about His no show at the feast.
- John states "Even his brethren did not believe in Him."
- Christ later goes to the feast in secret, knowing it was not His time to be killed.
- Christ tells His brethren, that the world hates Him, because He testifies of its evil.
- Later, while at the feast (v. 20), they accuse Him of being demon-possessed.
- This is the condition that he would face as Isaiah prophesied.

As believers in Christ, the world will hate us as well, especially if we are living as His disciples. Hebrews 13:12-13 says: *"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."*

Continued on page 14

Christ's *Imminent* Return

A Glance at Current Events

As we look at the world around us, many believers feel that the return of the Lord Jesus is near at hand. Only the Father knows the day of Christ's return and we have no way of predicting when it may occur. We refer to the "imminent return" which means "any time" as in there are no signs or prophecies to be fulfilled before the rapture of the Church. However, there are some changes that are evident in our time which were not visible or even possible in the 1900's.

Militarily and Politically

The world is changing quickly, and some things are starting to strikingly align with prophetic passages. By way of example consider Ezekiel 38 and 39, the war against Israel involving armies from the north. There is debate as to when this battle takes place. Some put it before the Tribulation period, some at the start, some in the middle, while others equate it with the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation. Still others see it as the final battle at the end of the Millennial Kingdom.

The context and content suggest it occurs during the Tribulation period and is one of the events that cause the Jewish people to look to God as described in Ezekiel 39:21-29. The setting indicates that the Jewish people must be in the land and prospering with great wealth. This is certainly true today in a remarkable way, with agriculture, oil and gas, and other assets. Humanly speaking, this is one of the greatest achievements of all time. The fact that the Jewish people were out of Israel for 1800 years and are now back and prospering in the land is a modern miracle.

However, the situation in Ezekiel 38:8, where Israel is said to "dwell safely" is not true today. Depending on the outcome of the current conflict, this may become even more evident. The nations mentioned in Ezekiel 38:5 and that are known to us today, are aligned against her. The first on the list is Persia (Iran). Before the revolution this would not have been considered possible but today Iran is committed to the destruction of Israel. Ethiopia is likely today's South Sudan, and Libya we know. All are militant Muslim states.

It is possible that the house of Togarmah in verse 6 includes Turkey and the Muslim states to the east that came out of Soviet Russia. Turkey is presently part of NATO but the current events in Israel and Gaza seem to be moving that country toward Iran. The moderate Arab states have had dialogue with Israel and are not antagonistic. In Ezekiel 39:2, Gog is said to be from the far

north which would be indicative of Russia's position. After the war with Ukraine, Russia may indeed be in dire economic straits and in need of plunder. In Ezekiel 38:13, the Western nations make a statement but remain on the sidelines. This would have been inconceivable prior to the current conflict in Ukraine.

James Allen in his commentary on Daniel, "Daniel Reconsidered," suggests a distinctive view of Daniel 7. Most commentators see this chapter containing the same message as chapter 2 – the progression of Empires. However, chapter 7 has a couple of distinctive differences, one being that in verse 2 the four beasts come out of the sea at the same time. Also, in verse 12, three of the beasts are still there after the fourth beast is destroyed. Considering these three beasts, the lion with eagle's wings reminds us of a British and American union, the Bear of Russia, and the Leopard of China. The fourth beast would depict Europe and the rise of a world leader we refer to as the Antichrist. Never has the world been divided as it is today with a division so visible as it is in our time.

Morally and Spiritually

Our world is changing fast regarding standards and the issues of right and wrong. Second Timothy 3 describes the moral state of the "last days." Characteristics such as *proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy*, are certainly now visible all around us. Jude describes men and women as ones who walk according to their own ungodly lusts. One of the hallmarks of the Tribulation period will be a mass apostasy or falling away from anything to do with Christianity. Even today this is strikingly visible with the secularization of Christmas and Easter. It is not hard to imagine these holidays disappearing altogether.

Technology

One of the Lord's statements about the end of the Tribulation is that the "*gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world*" (Matt. 24:13). Even today in this present age, the gospel is going around the world thanks to the internet as well as television and radio broadcasts. In Revelation 11 the death of two witnesses who function during the Tribulation is described. The text indicates that people all around the world will view this and rejoice, a scenario that is possible in our days but would have been impossible a generation ago. Also, in Revelation 7 there is a great multitude that comes out of the Tribulation from "*all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues*," which is certainly a possibility with the availability of the internet.

Continued on page 14

When considering the unbelief of His brethren, it is almost an unbelievable situation. The obvious answer is that like Israel, they were blinded. Similarly, the world today is blinded to the gospel by the influence of Satan. Knowing their hearts of disbelief, Christ did not attempt to promote Himself, but only to carefully follow the plan of His heavenly Father. Even as Christians, in this world of opportunism, we are often influenced to follow the plans and strategies of earthly logic, as good as it may appear, for certain success. May we learn to accept and be content with the Father's will. May our prayer be: *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* During the times of national and local elections, Christians can get caught up in secular opportunism. Should we not be more fervent in prayer for the Father's will to be done?

Through the strange but divine arrangement of Hosea's marriage to Gomer, an immoral woman of the street living in adultery, three children were raised. Each one was a prophetic symbol of Israel's unfaithfulness to God, and God's persistent love for His people. Their names, given by God, reflect not only God's relationship with Israel as His unfaithful people in Hosea's day, but later forecasts the restoration of Israel to their Messiah:


- Jezreel - "the Lord scatters"
and later "the Lord sows"
- Lo-Ruhamah "not pitied, no mercy"
and later "I will have mercy upon her"
- Lo-Ammi "not my people"
and later "Thou art My people"

Yes, by God's loving care and grace for His people, Hosea records a change in the above names, reflecting a restored relationship with their God (Hos. 2:23).

Through the prophet Hosea, and the apostle John, we learn that the Lord suffered great rejection from His people, yet He never casts them away. Israel is God's covenant people, bound by

His oath and promises to them by cords of love. Hosea chapter 3 is a beautiful scene of God's restoration and eternal love for His people Israel: *"Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days"* (Hos. 3:5).

The Bible contains many reassuring verses like this one that confirm God's eternal love and care for Israel. Zechariah picks up the finishing touches in His prophecy: *"And I will bring the third part through the fire, (His spiritual remnant through the Tribulation) and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God"* (Zech. 13:9).

Yes, our Lord is now rejected by His people Israel, the Gentile nations, and mankind, in their rebellious spirit. But, for us, the apostle John records the Lord's prayer; *"O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them"* (John 17:25-26). Suffering comes first; a glorious restoration follows. The suffering, rejection, and sorrow that He bore for us opened the door to such a great and eternal glory, soon to come. God is faithful. His promises are sure. His love is everlasting. 



by Sam Thorpe

Sam Thorpe is a commended itinerant Bible teacher with ministry in the USA and abroad. He is in fellowship at Washington Bible Chapel, Washington, Georgia. He, and his wife Barbara have four children, and now enjoy twelve grandchildren.


Conclusion

As stated, no one knows the day or hour of the Lord's return, but if in fact current events point to the Tribulation period, we should surely take note. Philippians 3:20 speaks to the fact that regardless of the conditions around us, we should be eagerly waiting for the return of Christ. 1 John 2:28 tells us to abide in Him, *"that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."* The dominant thought for believers should be, *"even so come, Lord Jesus."*

Challenge

Are you and I living in the hope and expectation of His return? Am I abiding in fellowship with my Savior and anticipating being with Him in glory? May our desire match those of the hymn writer H. L. Turner:

It may be at morn, when the day is awaking, when sunlight through darkness and shadow is breaking, that Jesus will come in the fullness of glory, to receive from the world His own.

O Lord Jesus, how long, how long ere we shout the glad song? Christ returneth! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen. Hallelujah! Amen. 



by Gary McBride

Gary and his wife Gloria were commended in 1980 to the Lord's work. They spent two years in Zambia followed by 27 years in Northern Ontario ministering in the north and working at Northland Bible Camp. After time in Southern Ontario, they moved back to Kirkland Lake, ON for six years. Recently they have moved to Pembroke, ON.

ISSUES *and* ANSWERS

*“Search the
Scriptures...”*

John 5:39

Is There An Indeterminate Expanse of Time Between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2?

The so called “Gap Theory” attempts to accommodate and explain what popular geology has proposed as the age of our planet. Having read arguments from both sides by several dozen adherents and opponents of the Gap Theory, and having conversed with a number more, I am convinced that there is not a gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 for at least ten reasons:

- 1)** A literal reading of Genesis 1 would not lead a person to this conclusion. Many are surprised (as I was) that some see a gap here at all. The natural sense is to take the entire chapter as a continuous narrative of sequential events.
- 2)** Proper Hebrew exegesis based on the contextual usage of the words chosen by the Holy Spirit describes a continuous timeline in the reading of the creation account. The Hebrew word for “was” in Genesis 1:2 is never translated “became” anywhere else in the Old Testament, or it would create a nonsensical reading.
- 3)** Several verses which Gap proponents use to support their interpretation of Genesis 1:2 (Jer. 4:23; Isa. 24:1; 45:18) all speak of the land of Israel in their context, not the entire earth.
- 4)** According to Genesis 2:1-3 and Exodus 20:11, the heavens and the earth were made in six days, with the duration defined in Genesis 1:5. The heavens were established on the second day (Gen. 1:8). Since Genesis 1:1 mentions the creation of the heavens as well as the earth, it is necessary to conclude that this verse is part of the six-day creation period.
- 5)** The phrase “the world that then was” (2 Pet. 3:6 contextually refers to the earth prior to Noah’s flood which was overflowed with water, not a primeval chaotic earth (see also 2 Pet. 2:5). Peter points to a future judgment of the heavens and the earth, which is as certain as the past judgment of the earth only. Just as the flood had God’s forewarning, ample time for people to repent, and scoffers of the warning, so does the future judgment have these elements in our time.


6) The words “without form and void” are not “chaos and evil” as most Gap adherents say. The Earth was still unshaped and empty at the end of the second day (Gen. 1:8), with life not appearing until the earth’s systems were in place to sustain it (Gen. 1:11). It was simply incomplete as yet.

7) The assumptions used to explain the Gap Theory which relate to Satan’s fall, a subsequent global judgment, and the earth becoming something it was not before Genesis 1:3 have no scriptural mention.

8) According to Romans 5:12, 6:23, and 1 Corinthians 15:21, death did not exist prior to Adam’s fall. No fossil evidence predates Adam, and animals prior to the Fall were vegetarian (Gen. 1:29-30).

9) Geological columns are more scientifically explained by the flood of Noah’s day. The visible layers of strata throughout the earth are readily explained by the onslaught of a worldwide flood of water, and the subsequent layers of sediment left behind when those waters receded. This condition is often reproduced today in areas of flooding, and the resulting layers are easily observable.

10) Every biblical account of creation literally speaks of it as six successive days. The immense gap of time proposed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 are not mentioned anywhere. Although this universal negative is not a conclusive point in itself, it is worthy of consideration.

The Bible never needs to be altered or allegorized to accommodate the whims of men. We can always read and rely on it in its usual and literal sense. It is unbelieving men and women who need to repent and alter their thinking to conform to the Word of God. 

by Rick Morse



Rick lives in Berwick, Nova Scotia with Janie, his beloved wife for over 40 years. They are in fellowship with the saints at Bethany Gospel Chapel in Dartmouth, NS. Saved at age 21. Rick is active in his home assembly, and has ministered at a number of assemblies in Atlantic Canada. He contributes to Choice Gleanings calendar and has authored several books, with his speaking and written ministry centering on a love for apologetics and expository teaching.

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Stand Fast Men's Conference

► **March 16, 2024**

*Woodside Chapel,
5 Morse Ave, Fanwood, NJ 07023*

George Ferrier (Canada) and Warren Henderson (Montana) are the expected speakers at the annual Know the Word Men's conference scheduled Lord willing, for Saturday, March 16, 2024. It will take place at Woodside Chapel in Fanwood, NJ from 10:00 AM to 3 PM. Men of all ages are invited to this uplifting event which will focus on rekindling our passion for the Lord. Lunch will be included. For more information or to notify of your plans to attend, please email knowtheword@gmail.com.

Feeding the Flock Conference

► **March 18-21, 2024**

*America's Keswick Christian Retreat
and Conference Center,
601 Route 530, Whiting, NJ 08759*

America's Keswick in Whiting, NJ will again be the site for Know the Word's annual Feeding the Flock conference. The dates are Monday, March 18th to Thursday, 21st, 2024. Speakers include George Ferrier, Warren Henderson, Bruce Hulshizer, Gary McBride, and others, both in person and online. The theme is: "Follow Thou Me" with challenging messages and uplifting music to encourage, edify, and enrich all who attend. Keswick is a top-notch conference facility offering the best in accommodations, meals, and indoor and outdoor activities (americakeswick.org). Come to be refreshed and renewed in your walk with the Lord at a place where "God speaks to hearts and transforms lives." The entire four-day conference is only \$335 per person and is open to both men and women of all ages. Email Mark Kolchin at knowtheword@gmail.com for more information or to register.

2024 Dallas Area Bible Conference

► **March 23-24, 2024**

*Wheatland Bible Chapel,
1303 W. Wheatland Rd, Duncanville, TX 75116*

Christians gathered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ at Wheatland and Garland Bible Chapels invite you to join them for a time of ministry from God's Word and Christian fellowship at the Annual Dallas Area Bible Conference. The speakers will be Alan Parks and George Ferrier. Contact Doug Rice for further information at 469-387-5535.

17th Annual Ladies Conference

► **April 6, 2024** | *Central Bible Chapel,
3270 Main Street, Millbrook, AL 36054*

A cordial welcome is extended to all ladies desiring to be encouraged from the Scriptures. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 6, 2024 - there will be light morning refreshments served at 9:30AM with the conference commencing at 10:00AM. Susie Sullivan of Yonkers, NY is the scheduled speaker. Come be encouraged! For more information, or queries about accommodations, please contact Kathy Leach at (334) 868-3060, or BekaMomDaisy@yahoo.com.

Missions Conference

► **April 12-14, 2024** | *Living Waters Bible Camp,
E8932 Reo Ave, Westby WI*

Come join them as they seek to enlighten, inspire, and encourage participation in missions. This conference convened by Grace & Truth Bible Chapel (Westby, WI) has invited Phil Parsons, former missionary to the Philippines and currently serving at CMML; John Loudon who served 34 years in Africa in missionary aviation and teaching, and is currently teaching at The Ezekiel Project School of Evangelism (TEPSE); and Ian Taylor who served in Colombia for 20 years and now speaks at conferences and assemblies while serving on the Board of Trustees of Emmaus Bible College and as Chairman of the Board of Emmaus Worldwide. Meetings will begin Friday night looking at "What God is Doing" and will conclude after lunch Sunday with a round table discussion of the Great Commission. Lunch will be provided both Saturday and Sunday and an evening meal on Saturday. Housing will be available with the saints or at camp for a fee. For registration, use the form on the website or contact Eric directly at ericaranea@mwt.net. For more information contact livethebible@gmail.com or work4thisglory@gmail.com or 608-769-6904 or 563-271-1265.

North American Week of Prayer

► **April 15-19, 2024** | *Boulevard Bible Chapel,
Pembroke Pines FL*
Theme: "Launch Out" Luke 5:4

The 10th annual North American Week of Prayer will be held in south Florida. In addition to the in-person gathering, the messages will be live streamed for people to pray together in groups throughout North America. Please visit www.naweekofprayer.com for more information and to register to join them. They encourage many to attend in person to seek the Lord together.

Augusta Counseling Ministry Conference

► **April 25-28, 2024** | Fairhaven Ministries,
2198 Ripshin Mountain Rd, Roan Mountain, TN

Featured speakers are Paul Rabideau, an elder and New Jersey Licensed Professional Counselor who supports CMML missionaries and Tammy Hollingsworth, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and the Executive Director of Augusta Counseling Ministry. Paul and Tammy will be offering guidance to interested elders, their wives, and other church and ministry leaders on how to recognize mental health problems, the need and opportunity for counseling ministry in the assembly, and how to best respond. Seminars will range from an Introduction to Counseling Ministry to practical advice and aids for dealing with a range of counseling issues including addictions, depression, anxiety, child abuse, family/childhood trauma. The cost for the weekend will be \$100 per person. Details and registration can be found at augustacounselingministry.com. If interested, please contact Tammy Hollingsworth via the website or by telephone at 706-872-1717 with any questions.

79th Annual Bible Conference

► **May 4-5, 2024** | Lake Park Chapel, 201 Schlieff Drive,
Belle Chasse, LA 70037

Come join them for a spiritually refreshing weekend in God's Word from May 4-5, 2024. The meetings will begin on Saturday May 4 at 3:30 p.m. Dale Gleason from Omaha, NE will be the speaker, DV. For more information, please contact Ray Cummings at 103 Dickson Drive, Belle Chasse, LA 70037, (504-239-7068 or 504-393-7083), or lakeparkchapel@att.net.

InTents ~ Intensive Discipleship for Young Women

► **May 31 - June 8, 2024** | Grand Rapids, MI

InTents Discipleship is an eight-day discipleship training program for young women ages 16 and up who desire to serve the Lord. Their vision is to inspire and equip young women to serve the Lord in their homes, churches, and communities using the spiritual gifts that He has given them. The program focuses on five Biblical disciplines - Scripture, Hospitality, Evangelism, Discipleship, and Spiritual Gifts. These disciplines are first taught and then put into practice in a variety of hands-on experiences during the course of the program. Please visit their Facebook page, InTents Discipleship, for more information, a video introducing the program, and photos from previous years. Registration deadline is May 1. You may also email Becky at rbwagner3@yahoo.com.

Holy Scriptures and Israel Bible Society Tours

► **Footsteps of the Apostle Paul Tour | September 16 - 28, 2024:**
Journey to Greece & Turkey, visiting several ports that reflect the history of Paul's missionary journeys.

► **Israel - The Land of the Bible Tour | November 2 - 11, 2024:**
Experience Israel on this 10-day tour to Israel.

► **Israel - The Land of the Bible Tour | November 2 - 13, 2024:**
Experience Israel plus Petra, Jordan on this 12-day tour.

To receive a brochure, booking form, or to check availability please contact:
Sid Bhatt (US) at 704-930-8179 or sidbhatt0718@gmail.com or
Dave Smith (CAN) at 905-641-3053 or beyondadream@travelonly.com.



New Demand Note Program: An Opportunity to Enhance the Health Care Assistance Program

For decades, Stewards Foundation has assisted full-time commended workers with healthcare expense through the Health Care Assistance Program (HCAP).

Member Assemblies now have the opportunity to invest in a new Demand Note Program to boost the revenue going into HCAP and at the same time, receive a return on their investment. The objective is to increase available funds for HCAP with the ultimate goal of assisting more full-time commended workers through HCAP.

Please contact us if your assembly has an interest in this new program.



www.stewardsfoundation.org



doug@stewardsfoundation.org



972-726-6550

The EASTER Prayer

*Oh, let me know
The power of Thy resurrection;
Oh, let me show
Thy risen life in calm and clear reflection:
Oh, let me soar
Where Thou, my Savior Christ, art gone before;
In mind and heart
Let me dwell always, only, where Thou art.*

*Oh, let me give
Out of the gifts Thou freely givest;
Oh, let me live
With life abundantly because Thou livest;
Oh, make me shine
In darkest places, for Thy light is mine;
Oh, let me be
A faithful witness for Thy truth and Thee.*

*Oh, let me show
The strong reality of gospel story;
Oh, let me go
From strength to strength, from glory unto glory;
Oh, let me sing
For very joy, because Thou art my King;
Oh, let me praise
Thy love and faithfulness through all my days.*

BY FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

