

BIBLE MESSAGES PUBLISHED GEE JO ONLINE - 2004

APPEARANCE

posted on 25th January 2004

Don't judge others by appearance. Remember that God looks beyond that. *It's in the Bible*, I Samuel 16:7, NIV. "The Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Our witness is tied with our appearance. *It's in the Bible*, I Timothy 2:9,10, NEB. "Woman again must dress in becoming manner, modestly and soberly, not with elaborate hairstyles, not decked out with gold or pearls, or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, as befits women who claim to be religious." I Peter 3:3,4, NIV says, "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

FINDING GOD

Posted on 25th January 2004:

'Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me' (Revelation 3:20).

God actively seeks to reveal Himself and His love for them to all people. It is easy to feel that God can't be reached or understood, since we can't grasp Him with our physical senses. We do understand things that can't be measured such as loyalty and love because we feel how they affect us on the inside. God can and does influence people with inner promptings, but has also revealed Himself and His purposes more directly.

God created the universe and all that is in it. A creation full of immeasurably complex design points to a creator or designer. The DNA strands in a single fertilized egg contain the coding for a complete creature. To accept that a sophisticated blueprint that goes on to build its design is a product of random chance is simply ignoring the evidence.

The inspired Word of God, the Bible, is a record of God's interaction with and plan for people. The history of the children of Israel recorded in the Old Testament is the history of God revealing Himself to people in a way which prepared for the ultimate revelation of God becoming man in Jesus Christ. The New Testament records the life of Jesus and explains why he came to die for us. God walked this earth as a man, and with his voice and by his actions told people how they could know God and receive eternal life.

In this life we will never fully understand God, but we can believe in Him and put our trust in Him. The most important thing we will ever do is respond to God's offer of eternal life with Him. This life is a passing moment that will decide an eternity.

Being truly sorry for your sins, and through the power of Christ forsaking them, go forth to live for Christ. He will give forgiveness, power, victory, purpose, the Holy Spirit, and life eternal!

THE SONGS WE SING

Posted on 25th January 2004

I have the privilege of being a member of The Salvation Army's Gold Coast Temple Band. It is a brass band that is used to accompany the singing in church and usually contributes at least one "musical meditation or selection" to each of our two Sunday meetings. We also program twice a month to have an open air meeting at Surfers Paradise Beach (weather permitting) and on one other Sunday to visit a nursing home or similar. Brass bands have a long history in The Salvation Army and our band dates back I believe to the early 1900s. It now has just over 30 players. The band plays hymn tunes and more contemporary songs and choruses. It also plays marches and other musical arrangements of these songs and choruses. All the band's men and women are Christians and all are unpaid volunteers. They provide their own uniforms but usually the band supplies the instruments and music.

Another privilege I have is to be the Chaplain of the band. Amongst other things I am responsible for the roster of bands people to take a ten minute devotional reading, thought and pray at the end of our rehearsal night. The guys are terrific in the way they share their faith and I am sure most look forward to their turn. However, I usually am prepared in case there is a

breakdown in arrangements. As I prepared my "cover" (which I did not use) for Wednesday night, I was mindful that this was a last rehearsal before the bands and the timbrel group's weekend visit to a smaller Corps (Salvation Army Church) in Warwick, a rural city about two hours drive from here. I thought about our Mission Statement, which is summed up in three words: Worship, Service and Fellowship. Our schedule will include a Saturday concert, playing at a nursing home, a Sunday morning meeting and a "concert in the park in Stanthorpe about a half hour drive further on. For some strange reason I also thought about the Founder of The Salvation Army William Booth writing about Salvation Army music in the preface to the 1899 Salvation Army Song Book. I collect Salvation Army books so I got out my copy.

General Booth who founded The Salvation Army in London in 1865 amongst other things says:

"...Let us persevere in our singing of the simple old truths in the simple old hearty way that god has already blessed so widely to the salvation of souls and the making and training of red-hot soldiers.

But, above all, let me urge all who possess this book to make the utmost use of it in 3 ways:-

1. Take in the meaning of every song. How thoughtlessly many sing familiar words! Yet here is a great treasury of truth, if you will but search its riches. Be determined that by God's grace you will never sing what you do not really mean, and that you will be fitted to sing all you find here.

2. Sing and read and teach these songs to your children, morning and evening, at birthday celebrations, and other family functions, as well as to the sick and to all whom you can influence. What a debt many of us owe to the songs we learnt in childhood! What clear-thinking, plain-speaking, God-knowing Salvationists will those be who have properly learned what these songs contain! Banish from your homes hymns and songs that are not straight and plain.

3. Sing as to make the world hear. The cannot be a greater force than for people to sing these songs at home and in our barracks (churches) amongst admiring listeners, unless they sing them also to the world. The highest value of our singing after all has not been the mere gladness we have felt because of our own salvation, but the joy of pouring out the praises of our God to those who have not known Him, or of arousing them by our singing to new thoughts and a new life.

And sing until your whole soul is lifted up to god, and then sing until you lift the eyes of those who do not know God to Him who is the fountain of our joy". (William Booth, "Salvation Army Songs", 1899, International Headquarters, London).

The language might be a little old fashioned but I believe the principles set out remain solid to this day. It was particularly the 3rd point I had in mind as the band goes on its visit to Warwick. As we go we go to entertain, to worship and to fellowship with the Christians there but we also go and pray that our music will be soul-winning music and ma cause people to confess their sin and turn their life over to God.

As you read these Thoughts and meditate on them, could I ask that you pray for our musicians as they go on this weekend "mission"?

Mr. Ray Reese and his wife Denice is my good friend, faithful Salvationist from Gold Coast Temple Corps in Queens land AUS Eastern. He is a member of the Gold Coast Temple Band. His wife Mrs. Denice and he have one daughter married who has 4 children and one son who is single. And he work as Regional PRO for SA Qld DHQ until May 2003. Thank You Mr. Ray Reese for your message:

BEAUTY

posted on 5th March 2004

What kind of beauty is really worth having? Real beauty is inside the person and affects others positively. It's in the Bible, I Peter 3:3-4, NIV. "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

Real beauty is not self-centered. It's in the Bible, I Timothy 2:9-10, NIV. "I also want women to

dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."

Real beauty is found in the Lord. It's in the Bible, Psalms 90:17, NKJV "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us..."

COMMITMENT

Posted on 5th April 2004

Christ has made a commitment to us. It's in the Bible, Romans 5:8, NIV. "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Commitment is the beginning of trusting God. It's in the Bible, Psalm 37:5, TLB. "Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him to help you do it and He will."

Our commitment to God must be consistent. It's in the Bible, Joshua 24:15, NIV. "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

CONSEQUENCES

The consequence of sin is death. It's in the Bible, Romans 6:23, NIV. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Men reap the consequences for their actions. It's in the Bible, Galatians 6:7-8, TLB. "Don't be misled; remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it: a man will always reap just the kind of crop he sows! If he sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil and he will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death; but if he plants the good things of the Spirit, he will reap the everlasting life which the Holy Spirit gives him."

You will be treated in the same way you treat others. It's in the Bible, Matthew 7:1-2, TLB. "Don't criticize, and then you won't be criticized. For others will treat you as you treat them."

Mr. Ray Reese (4th February 2004)

Posted on 5th March 2004

As I sat and pondered God this morning, I was aware it was a day of brilliant sunshine outside. It contrasted with the last two days which were cloudy and rainy. I thought to of many of the people who read this will be experiencing the cold and dark mornings of winter.

Every morning is a new experience as we open the door to the world. Each of us experiences a different day. It is the same day, same date, same God but a different plan for each of us. We can wonder what the day will bring. As we wonder, we know as God ordered the days, he has a plan for us. He has a plan for me! We can take hold of the day and use it according to God's plan or just laze our way through it waiting for another day.

Prayer:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love,
And do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with thee I will one will
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly thine.
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with thee the perfect life

Of thine eternity.
Edwin Hatch (1835-89) from The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 189

Message from Mr. Ray Reese, Australia

Posted on 5th April 2004.

One of the lovely things of this season is to get greetings from friends. The greetings come in so many ways but I am sure each is meaningful. It is good to remember those we have known in other places and to exchange the annual greetings for Christmas and the New Year. It is good to be remembered by them too.

So often the relationship changes: fellow workers become friend, people who belong to the same social or sporting clubs become friends. In our church life someone who shares a pew or a prayer becomes a friend. Another who shares a word of encouragement or of concern becomes a friend. How lovely that new relationship is!

The words of Jesus show a changed relationship: I'm no longer calling you servants because servants don't understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I've named you friends because I've let you in on everything I've heard from the Father. (John 15 :15 The Message).

PRAYER:

Thank you Heavenly Father for Jesus, the Christ of Christmas. Thank you that I can be called his friend. May that friendship continue and may I share that friend with others. Amen

AFFIRMATION:

A friend of Jesus! O what bliss
That one, so vile as I,
Should ever have a friend like this
To lead me to the sky

Chorus

Friendship with Jesus, fellowship divine,
O what blessed sweet communion,
Jesus is a friend of mine!

A friend when other friendships cease,
A friend when others fail,
A friend who gives me joy and peace,
A friend who will prevail.

A friend when sickness lays me low,
A friend when death draws near,
A friend as through the vale I go,
A friend to help and cheer.

A friend when life's short race is o'er,
A friend when earth is past,
A friend to meet on Heaven's shore,
A friend when home at last. >>[Joseph C. Ludgate (d 1947) [The Salvation Army Song Book: Song 709]

ALL FOR MUM (MOTHERS DAY)

Posted on 15th May 2004

Kayt was about eight. One afternoon she arrived in the kitchen with her hands behind her back. "Mum" she said beaming one of her beautiful smiles, "I have got something for you!" She immediately thrust out her hand towards her mother. Held tightly in her closed fist was a flower. It was a bright pink phlox. It was a single flat flower about the size of a medium sized coin. She beamed. She knew her mother's love of flowers and having found this one she had spontaneously picked it and brought it to her mum as a gift. Mum took the flower and gave Kayt a hug of love and thanks. It was then that Mum looked at the flower. The flower came attached to the whole plant and there hanging below the plant were the roots.

Yes, the gift was not only the flower but the complete plant including the roots! We knew

exactly where the plant had been found. It was one of a circle of plants each about 10cm high and spaced evenly around a palm tree in the centre of our front lawn. It was a new garden and daily as we watered the plants we watched the development and knew this one would be the first to flower. How great it would look when they all flowered, not only with one flower per plant but many, many flowers covering each plant.

The beautiful thing about this gift was that it was pure love that motivated it. Of course, there was a lot behind that love including her Mum's love of flowers. It was the type of gift that can never be surpassed. On the other hand the flower was already her Mum's. Her Mum had planned the garden. I had turned then new ground to make the garden in the lawn around the palm tree. We had fertilised more than once and as I said earlier watered it and its companions daily.

But it was still a gift of love. As far as flowers go a single phlox is a very ordinary flower. It has no interesting perfume. Its colour is brilliant but the real effect comes when it is massed with others. Phlox are planted for their mass effect. But that single flower was a most welcome gift. It was a gift of love from a daughter to her mother. That day was a real Mother's Day.

I see it like that when we bring ourselves to God. We can give Him gifts. In doing that, there is often much behind the gift. AS John puts it so well (1 John4:19). We love him because He first loves us. Also when it comes to giving God anything David the Psalmist helps us remember (Psalm 24: 1&2) "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.

However our gifts to God are an acknowledgement of our relationship with Him. It is a relationship which he initiated. In the same way, we, in many countries, acknowledge our mothers this weekend. The gifts, the messages, the telephone calls and the various acts of kindness all acknowledge a caring relationship of love.

O Lord of Heaven and earth and sea,
To thee all praise and glory be;
How shall we show our love to thee,
Who givest all?

For peaceful homes and healthful days,
For all the blessings earth displays,
We owe thee thankfulness and praise,
Who givest all.

Thou didst not spare thine only Son,
But gav'st him for a world undone,
And freely with that blessed one
Thou givest all.

Thou giv'st the Spirit's blessed dower,
Spirit of life and love and power,
And dost his sevenfold graces shower
Upon us all.

For souls redeemed, for sins forgiven,
For means of grace and hopes of heaven,
Father, all praise to thee be given,
Who givest all.

Author: Christopher Wordsworth (1807-85) The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 15

Micah 6 (New International Version)

6) With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7) Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8) He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6 (The Message)

6) How can I stand up before GOD and show proper respect to the high God? Should I bring an armload of offerings topped off with yearling calves? 7) Would GOD be impressed with thousands of rams, with buckets and barrels of olive oil? Would he be moved if I sacrificed my firstborn child, my precious baby, to cancel my sin? 8) But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what GOD is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously-- take God seriously.

DEBTS

Posted on 15th September 2004

What debts should we be concerned about? It's in the Bible, Romans 13:8, TLB. "Pay all your debts except the debt of love for others--never finish paying that!"

Pay your bills on time. It's in the Bible, Proverbs 3:27-28, TLB. "Don't withhold repayment of your debts. Don't say 'some other time,' if you can pay now."

You are not really free when you are in debt. It's in the Bible, Proverbs 22:7, NIV. "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

AN UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM

Posted on 15 Sept 2004,

What does God want of us? We can see a great crowd of examples of God's interaction with people in the Bible. God had individual missions for many. Some he had tests he put them to first.

Abraham was a good example. In such a long life we do not see many incidents and his story in Genesis is certainly not a biography. We do see the key points of his interaction with God. One of these surely is God commanding him to take his son, Isaac and offer him as a burnt sacrifice on an altar (Genesis 22). The passing of the test and God providing a ram for sacrifice comes as a challenge to us to explore our commitment to God.

Jesus challenged many to look at their relationship. I think of the rich young man who came. Jesus told him to sort out his priorities. He need to sell the things he trusted in and give the money to the poor then come and follow him (Mark 10.22). I think of Nicodemus, a leader of the community, Jesus told him he must begin again (be born again) with a new faith in God that was conceived by God not man (John 3). To the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well, Jesus told her that there was more to life than the daily ritual of drawing water and seeking a fulfilment in human relationships and cultural spiritual comforts. Jesus told her to worship in spirit and in truth and she did ! (John 4).

PRAYER:

Heavenly father, may I know that I am in a right and truthful relationship with you. Help me to see today more clearly the path you would have me walk with you. Amen.

MEDITATION:

Come, Holy Spirit, thou guest of the soul,
Make thine abode in me;
Bring in the calm thy sweet presence bestows,
Let me thy temple be.
Come to my heart today,
Come to my heart today,
Rekindle the glow and the glory bestow,
Come to my heart today.

2.
Come, Holy Spirit, companion divine,
Walk with me in life's way;
By thy rich fellowship confidence give,
Walk thou with me today.
Walk thou with me today,
Walk thou with me today,
Rekindle the glow and the glory bestow,
Walk thou with me today.

3.

Come, Holy Spirit, thy guidance we crave;
Speak out thy will we pray;
We would be sensitive to thy control;
Speak to our hearts today.
Speak to our hearts today,
Speak to our hearts today,
Rekindle the glow and the glory bestow,
Speak to our hearts today.

Author: Albert E. Mingay The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 209

Hebrews 12 (The Message – Selected verses)

1Do you see what this means--all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running--and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. 2Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed--that exhilarating finish in and with God--he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God.3When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls! 4In this all-out match against sin, others have suffered far worse than you, to say nothing of what Jesus went through--all that bloodshed! 5So don't feel sorry for yourselves. Or have you forgotten how good parents treat children, and that God regards you as his children? My dear child, don't shrug off God's discipline, but don't be crushed by it either. 6It's the child he loves that he disciplines; the child he embraces, he also corrects. 7God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you're in isn't punishment; it's training,

.....
12So don't sit around on your hands! No more dragging your feet!

13Clear the path for long-distance runners so no one will trip and fall, so no one will step in a hole and sprain an ankle. Help each other out. And run for it! 14Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you'll never get so much as a glimpse of God. 15Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time. 16Watch out for the Esau syndrome: trading away God's lifelong gift in order to satisfy a short-term appetite. 17You well know how Esau later regretted that impulsive act and wanted God's blessing--but by then it was too late, tears or no tears.

An Unshakable Kingdom

18Unlike your ancestors, you didn't come to Mount Sinai--all that volcanic blaze and earthshaking rumble-- 19to hear God speak. The earsplitting words and soul-shaking message terrified them and they begged him to stop.

.....
22No, that's not your experience at all. You've come to Mount Zion, the city where the living God resides. The invisible Jerusalem is populated by throngs of festive angels 23and Christian citizens. It is the city where God is Judge, with judgments that make us just. 24You've come to Jesus, who presents us with a new covenant, a fresh charter from God. He is the Mediator of this covenant. The murder of Jesus, unlike Abel's--a homicide that cried out for vengeance--became a proclamation of grace. 25So don't turn a deaf ear to these gracious words. If those who ignored earthly warnings didn't get away with it, what will happen to us if we turn our backs on heavenly warnings? 26His voice that time shook the earth to its foundations; this time--he's told us this quite plainly--he'll also rock the heavens: "One last shaking, from top to bottom, stem to stern." 27The phrase "one last shaking" means a thorough housecleaning, getting rid of all the historical and religious junk so that the unshakable essentials stand clear and uncluttered. 28Do you see what we've got? An unshakable kingdom! And do you see how thankful we must be? Not only thankful, but brimming with worship, deeply reverent before God. For God is not an indifferent bystander. 29He's actively cleaning house, torching all that needs to burn, and he won't quit until it's all cleansed. God himself is Fire!

ON SHOW

posted on 15 Oct 2004

For work purposes this last week I visited a Senior and Retirement Expo that was being held in our State Capital City, Brisbane. I went along to assess whether it would be a good opportunity

to market our organisation and to promote the possibility of doing something significant by leaving a Bequest for the work of the organisation. I found it most interesting to see a big crowd of people my age and older wandering around the various displays and engaging in conversation with the various representatives.

There were more than seventy organisations that we represented. The displays were hugely varied. Displays included many crafts, travel and holidays including airlines and railways, police, various other Government departments, retirement villages, food and health, invalid aids and fitness schemes. I guess if all else fails there was a funeral home company there too. I imagine many of you have been to this time of exhibition.

I was reflecting on the wide range of companies, organisations and club which presented a very wide range of opportunities for the seniors and retired people, and whether the organisation I am involved with could be there when I suddenly thought "where is the church in all this?" In all the displays not one was a church or church organisation.

I was reminded of an exhibition, I attended some years ago. It was in an Anglican (Church of England/Episcopal) Church and the church hall. The minister of the Church in welcoming everyone explained how the occasion had come about. He said a Bible study group were discussing how important it was that the church be involved in the community and the idea was born to have a display of all the involvements of the people of the church in the community.

So there were displays from organisations like Scouts and Girl Guides, Red Cross, Lions and Rotary Clubs, sporting groups, craft groups, seniors clubs, and displays by dance and musical groups. There were many groups which showed how the people of the church in developing their own interests and leisure time interacted with others for mutual benefit and the betterment of the community. Of course the activities of the various groups within the Church were displayed too. It was a great demonstration of the way people were sharing within the Church and the community.

I remember a Senior Salvation Army Officer suggesting to a group of younger Officers that they should cultivate friends outside the Army. He was saying that it is so easy to get caught up in the round of Army activities with Army people that outside activities with non-Salvationists are excluded. He suggested that early converts of the Army had only non-Salvationist family and friends and so carried their witness to them with their conversion as a result.

The example of Jesus is that he got out amongst the people. In fact, it is one of the criticisms levelled against Jesus that he mixed with sinners and cultivated friends among them. For example, when he went to Jericho where lots of the Priests and other religious leaders associated with the Temple in Jerusalem lived, he did not go to there home for tea. Instead, he chose to go to the home of the Tax Collector, Zacchaeus. Many considered Zacchaeus a sinner and thief because of his occupation. Jesus accepted him as an honest man or so it seems to me.

The early church had no building, so it was out there. The first leaders such as Peter and Paul the Acts of the Apostles show us clearly took Jesus and His message of salvation to the market place. Sometimes I wonder if we should examine again the ways we, the Church, are marketing the message of Jesus to a needy world.

MEDITATION:

We are witnesses for Jesus
In the haunts of sin and shame,
In the underworld of sorrow
Where men seldom hear his name;
For to bind the brokenhearted
And their liberty proclaim,
We are witnesses for Jesus
In the haunts of sin and shame.

Chorus
Tell the world, O tell the world!
Make salvation's story heard
In the highways, in the byways,
And in lands beyond the sea,
Do some witnessing for Jesus
Wheresoever you may be.

2.

We are witnesses for Jesus
In the lands beyond the sea,
Where the millions bound by evil
Have no hope of liberty;
As we tell the gospel tidings,
Lo! the captives are set free;
We are witnesses for Jesus
In the lands beyond the sea.

3.

We are witnesses for Jesus
In the home and in the mart,
Where the cares of life and fashion
Crowd the Saviour from the heart;
When we urge his claims with wisdom
Many choose the better part;
We are witnesses for Jesus
In the home and in the mart.

Author: William Drake Pennick (1884-1944) The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 832

Message from Mr. Ray Reese, Australia your comments to rayreese@hotmail.com posted on 5th November 2004, taken from Australian thoughts on 28, Thursday, Oct 2004.



Place Your Life Before God

In the early verses of Chapter 12 of Romans Paul tells us how different our lives as Christians are or at least should be. Paul has outlined in the early Chapters we are all sinners but Jesus through the cross has paid the penalty for us and set us free.

He says we are what we are in God's sight because of God's love for us and warns us, as we considered yesterday, not to live as the world wants us to. He says when we live as God wants then our life will prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

It is clear that we may know what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is, but you can't prove it in your life apart from the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

So it is through that constant communion with the Holy Spirit that our life comes into line with what God requires of us. Brother Lawrence actually referred to that constant communion as "Practicing the Presence of God." He stated he felt as close to god doing the chores of the kitchen, and the garden and in the marketplace as he did in the holiest moment of the Lord's Supper. That's the type of communion God makes himself available to us for.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, thank you for your love and your plan for my life. May I know your constant presence through your Holy Spirit with me in everything I do. Amen.

Spirit of eternal love
Guide me, or I blindly rove;
Set my heart on things above,
Draw me after thee.
Earthly things are paltry show,
Phantom charms, they come and go;
Give me constantly to know
Fellowship with thee.

Chorus

Fellowship with thee,
Fellowship with thee,
Give me constantly to know
Fellowship with thee.

2.

Come, O Spirit, take control
Where the fires of passion roll;
Let the yearnings of my soul
Center all in thee.
Call into thy fold of peace
Thoughts that seek forbidden ways;
Calm and order all my days,
Hide my life in thee.

3.

Thus supported, even I,
Knowing thee forever nigh,
Shall attain that deepest joy,
Living unto thee.
No distracting thoughts within,
No surviving hidden sin,
Thus shall Heaven indeed begin
Here and now in me.

Author: Albert Orsborn (1886-1967) The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 630

Romans 12 (The Message ®)

Place Your Life Before God

1 - So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life--your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life--and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

2 - Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

3 - I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him.

ZEAL

Posted on 5th November 2004

Zeal must be based on intelligent understanding. It's in the Bible, Romans 10:2, NIV. "For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge." Zeal should be a characteristic of our life. It's in the Bible, Romans 12:11, NIV. "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."

REMEMBERING

Posted on 1st December 2004

Remember how God has led us in the past. It's in the Bible, Deuteronomy 8:2, NIV. "Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commands."

Remember to make God a priority while you are young. It's in the Bible, Ecclesiastes 12:1, NIV. "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them.'"

Remember God's holy day. It's in the Bible, Exodus 20:8-10, NIV. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God."

2004 Christmas thoughts

posted on 16th December 2004,

"CHRISTMAS SIGNS"

Christmas Message, from Major Janet Munn

Associate Divisional Commander, Northern New England Division USA Eastern Territory. Date: Wed, 15 Dec 2004 01:58:57 IST

To the shepherds the sign was the choir of angels singing.
To the wisemen from the east, the sign was the bright star in the heavens.
To Mary, the visit by the angel Gabriel was her sign.
To Joseph, his dreams were the signs.

The name of the baby is Immanuel, which means "God With Us".
The baby was the sign that God's name is Immanuel.
Through Jesus Christ come into the world, God sent a sign that He is with us.

Now, the Body of Christ on the earth is a sign to the world, at Christmas and always, that God is still with us.
Jesus said, "Look, I am with you always, even to the very end of the age."
The Church, the Body, the Bride of Jesus Christ on the earth, in the daily routines, in the ordinariness of life, we are a sign of God's presence in the world. God with us.

You are a sign. God is with us. God did not describe Himself as "God with you". It is not so much that God is with me, although He is. But the point is, that God is with US, together, corporately, in unity. God is with US. Halleluia!

Jesus also said that certain signs would follow those who believe (Mark 16:16-18)

Christians are a sign and Christians demonstrate signs of God's presence with us.

These signs will follow us, as evidence that God is with us –

Our hands will bring healing.
We will be victorious in driving out evil.
We will speak in ways that are beyond our natural ability.
We will be protected from many dangers.

Are these signs following you believer?
Are you a healer?
Are you victorious over evil?
Are your words powerful and life-giving?
Are you experiencing the protection of God in your life?
These signs will follow those who believe.
You and I are signs to the world that God has not left us alone.
We are not orphans, but God is with us through Jesus Christ, even to the very end of the age.
This is a sign, first revealed at the birth of Christ -- God is with us! Glory to God in the highest!



DISCOVERING JESUS

Date: Monday, 29 Nov 2004 17:05:25 IST

2004 Christmas thoughts from Commissioner Paul du Plessis
International Headquarters, Commissioner for World Evangelization
<http://www1.salvationarmy.org/worldangelisation>



For many of us life is a journey in quest of the Jesus of today.

It is a journey as far as the wise men had to travel; it is a journey as important as theirs; it is a journey with as satisfying an end. Yet they had only the briefest of glimpses of the new born king. Then they had to return home - another way.

In Matthew 25 Jesus reminds his disciples that he will



be found in future days in those who are hungry, in the stranger who comes to our door, in those who need to be clothed, in those who are sick, in those who are in prison.

If we encounter any such this Christmas we could find that it's Jesus.

May the joy of that discovery be equal to that of the wise men. They were overjoyed!

Every blessing.

2004 Christmas thoughts from

Date: Monday, 29 Nov 2004 21:56:11 IST

Major Chick and Margaret Yuill

Divisional Commander
[The Salvation Army Central North DHQ](#)
85 Blackcarr Road, Baguley Manchester
M23 1PW : 0161 998 9075

Christmas,

is it everything you ever wanted, wrapped in pretty paper, lying under the Christmas tree, given by Santa?

or

everything you ever needed, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, given by God?

Christmas blessings.

A Christmas Thought... 2004 Sunday, November 21, 2004 7:24:46 AM

Message from Major Don Grad, [Metrotown Corps](#), Burnaby, BC, Canada

As we celebrate for yet another time the birth of our wonderful Lord Jesus, may we each take time to pause and consider what the Incarnation really meant. Jesus who is God, left His heavenly glory to live among us for a period of time. May we be encouraged to know that Jesus came to earth for each one of us. Yes, He came to teach us, but **He also came to die for MY sins and your sins.**



MAJOR. DON GRAD

In many parts of the world, the word 'Christmas' is often more associated with **Santa Claus** and tinsel than with the eternal **Son of God** who came to earth. This is further compounded by the tendency in many situations to use short forms for Christmas such as Xmas. We all know from our days of mathematics that 'X' stands for the unknown, and indeed Jesus is sadly unknown to many people in our world.

As you greet people this Incarnation season, could I encourage you to think of ways to extend warm wishes without using the standard Christmas phrases. Let us seek to use words that might call people to stop and think about the real celebration. How about "**Have a blessed Incarnation celebration**", or "**May God bless you as we remember the birth of Jesus**". Perhaps you can think of others.

Let God Bless you real good this year, as we celebrate the Incarnation!

2004 Christmas thoughts from: Mr. Ray Reese Date: Thu, 16 Dec 2004

6 Dalton Street, Southport, Australia 4215. -

Mail your comments to rayreese@hotmail.com

"Baby of Bethlehem"

As we think about the message of Christmas and how we receive it, our attention must come to bear on the Baby of Bethlehem. As we considered yesterday, the beginning of John's Gospel sets



out a statement of faith as to who Jesus is and his existence as God at creation. John goes on to make the statement that "The word became flesh and dwelt amongst us."

Matthew in his story of Jesus tells something more of the one who became flesh and dwelt amongst us. The angel messenger told Matthew in a dream two names that Mary's son would bear. The first name was Jesus, which sets out in its meaning the mission of Jesus: "for he shall save his people from their sins". The second name was "Emmanuel" which sets out the reminder of the fact that "God is with us".

We see more clearly a part of the message of Christmas, the Baby of Bethlehem is God with us who is to be the Saviour from our sins.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, I thank you again for the Babe of Bethlehem. There is so much I do not understand but I thank you for your holy Word which reminds me of your message to men through Jesus. I see a message of your presence and your salvation. I pray that the holy spirit may continue to reveal the fullness of this truth to me. Amen.

MEDITATION:

Who is he in yonder stall,
At whose feet the shepherds fall?

Chorus

'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story,
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At his feet we humbly fall,
Crown him, crown him Lord of all!

Who is he in deep distress,
Fasting in the wilderness?

Who is he to whom they bring
All the sick and sorrowing?

Who is he on yonder tree
Dies in grief and agony?

Who is he who from the grave
Comes to succor, help and save?

Who is he whom from his throne
Rules through all the worlds alone?

Author: Benjamin Russell Hanby (1833-97) The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 104

Matthew 1 (New International Version©)

21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. **22.** Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, **23.** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. **24.** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. **25.** But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Matthew 1 (The Message©)

21. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus--"God saves"--because he will save his people from their sins." **22.** This would bring the prophet's embryonic sermon to full term: **23.** Watch for this--a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son; They will name him Emmanuel (Hebrew for "God is with us"). **24.** Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God's angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. **25.** But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.

"EASTER PLANNED CHRISTMAS"
2004 Christmas thoughts from

Date: Sun, 12 Dec 2004 05:05:59 IST

by MR. Karl Clifton

Soul Harbour Ministries

Dear Gee Jo Sam, as you have asked here is a talk for Christmas.

Now I have never been to a theological college and do not profess to know everything, with regards to the bible or Christ Jesus. However, I believe and others do also, that went God sent His Son Jesus into the world as a humble child He had already decided that there would be an Easter.

There are several reasons Jesus was born, 1- Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem this was to show to us that God humbles himself for us. 2- Herod was prepared to kill the new born King, this was to show us that we will be persecuted as Jesus was a target for persecution, people are frightened of His power. 3- Jesus came to pay the price for a world in sin.

So as Christmas comes nearer this year are you ready to celebrate the birth of Christ and are you prepared to thank Jesus for giving his life for you and for me, for our sins.

May you be blessed with gifts from family and friends but may you also be blessed with gifts from the Holy Spirit.

God bless you

Karl Clifton - (Founder and principal) Soul Harbour Ministries
A safe haven for weary souls to rest.

BIBLE MESSAGES PUBLISHED GEE JO ONLINE - 2005

400 CHRISTIANS SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION TSUNAMI IN ACEH

Testimony from: Alex Wong

Alex.Wong@sanmina-sci.com

on 7th February 2005 07:39:29 - This message posted this site on 23rd February 2005.

God Protects His own!

We know that 80% of the town of Meulabohin Aceh was destroyed by the Tsunami waves and 80% of the people also died. This is one of the towns that was hit the hardest.

But there is a fantastic testimony from Meulaboh. In that town are about 400 Christians.

They wanted to celebrate Christmas on December 25th but were not allowed to do so by the Muslims of Meulaboh. They were told if they wanted to celebrate Christmas they needed to go outside the city of Meulaboh on a high hill and there celebrate Christmas.

Because the Christians desired to celebrate Christmas the 400 believers left the city on December 25th and after they celebrated Christmas they stayed overnight on the hill.

As we all know the morning of December 26 there was the earthquake followed by the Tsunami waves destroying most of the city of Meulaboh and thousands were killed. The 400 believers were on the mountain and were all saved from destruction.

Now the Muslims of Meulaboh are saying that the God of the Christians punished us for forbidding the Christians from celebrating Christmas in the city. Others are questioning why so many Muslims died while not even one of the Christians died there.

Had the Christians insisted on their rights to celebrate Christmas in the city, they would have all

died. But because they humbled themselves and followed the advice of the Muslims they all were spared destruction and can now testify of God's marvelous protection.

This is a testimony of the grace of God and the fact that as believers we have no rights in the world. Our right is come before God and commit our lives to Him. Our right is kneeling down before the Lord almighty and commit our ways to Him. He is our Father and is very capable to care for His children. Praise the Name of the Lord.

Bill Hekman
Pastor
Calvary Life Fellowship in Indonesia.

"HE NEVER MAKES A MISTAKE"

Message from **Captain Mark**, Berkeley Corps Officer, Australia. on Tuesday, 23 Mar 2004.

Mail your comments about this articles to: berkeley.corps@ae.salvationarmy.orgThis message posted on 9th February 2005,

Somebody obeys God at tremendous cost and leaves for the Mission Field, only to later discover that alternative plans would have involved them in a war-torn society in the homeland, instead of being overseas in battle with God against evil. The subsequent decision involving unexpected sickness and bereavement eventually leaves a trail of glory, and a wake of blessing, in an expanding outreach that brings many to Christ God has woven some beautiful patterns in a ministry that stemmed from an initial act of obedience costing everything at the time, but which holds all the compensations and blessings of true discipleship. This has been our thankful lot, and we would not have it otherwise. May God's purposes be worked out in each of our lives today creating exquisite patterns in the wake of our dedication and devotion to him.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE

Message from Colonel Henry Gariepy
The Salvation Army USA Eastern Territory
Sent : Monday, February 28, 2005 11:29:44 PM



We know that we have passed from death unto life (1 John 3:14). These words reverse the usual order of things. Conventional thinking says that we pass from life unto death. But John, who had heard the immortal words of the One who is the Resurrection and the Life, declares that the believer goes "from death unto life."

The Fact of Death: Death is an inescapable fact of life. Euripides the poet called death "the debt we all must pay." George Bernard Shaw wryly wrote, "The statistics on death are quite impressive. One out of one people die." Death is the most democratic of all experiences. Longfellow, in his Psalm of Life reminds us, Time is fleeting,/And our hearts, though stout and brave,/Still, like muffled drums, are beating/Funeral marches to the grave.

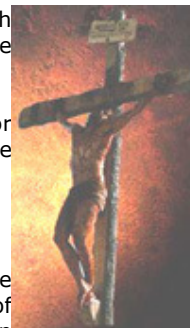
No matter how we diet, how much we exercise, how many vitamins or health foods we eat, how low our cholesterol, some day, some way, we will die. The invincible reaper knocks ultimately at every door.

The Bible deals seriously with the topic of death, where we find the word die or its equivalent more than 1300 times. It tells us that sin brought death into the world, but that is not its last word on death.

The Fear of Death

For many, death is the supreme terror. It has been called "the bully on the block of life." Hamlet describes that terrifying unknown as "that dread of something after death." Death to many seems to be a grotesque contradiction to life. For such the cosmetic art of the mortician cannot disguise the odious face of death.

An epitaph on a gravestone reads, "It is a fearful thing to love what death can touch." The death



of a child, a parent, a spouse, a cherished friend, severs tender human ties and brings an incalculable impoverishment. "The milestones into headstones turn, and under each a friend," is an agony all too well known. At some point each of us have felt the trauma of death in one way or another.

The Fate of Death

The little girl whose path from school led through a graveyard was asked if she were afraid. She replied, "No, I just cross it to reach home." Because of Easter, death becomes a stepping from the shadows of time into the substance and sunlight of eternity.

"Death, be not proud, though some have called thee mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so," preached John Donne over three centuries ago in St. Paul's Cathedral. He added, "One short sleep past, we wake eternally, and Death shall be no more. Death, thou shalt die."

This Easter we again celebrate our Lord's victory over death. His triumph over the grave vaporized all doubts among the believers in His day. The seismic significance of what took place on Easter Sunday is the epicenter of our faith. It is not a belief that grew up within the church; it is the belief around which the church itself grew up, and the 'given' upon which its faith was based.

Jesus' declaration at the raising of Lazarus, verified by His triumphant resurrection, radiantly affirms the defeat of death: I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die (John 11:25-26). This sublime statement is further validated by the resurrected power of Christ within the believer.

In the radiant light of the Resurrection, death becomes not a destruction, but a metamorphosis, not a diminishing, but a finishing. It is not a postscript, nor an appendix to our book of life, but rather it reveals life on earth as merely the preface, with life in Heaven as the full text — a text without end.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me is the assuring word of the psalmist. Death is not substance, it is but a shadow. Death is not a dead end, for we are led to go through its valley.

From the earliest days of our movement, the death of our people in the Army has been reported with the official and triumphant term, Promotion To Glory. Death becomes the ultimate promotion for every soldier of Christ, the consummation of life itself as we enter into the larger and unending life God has for us — life that will exceed our most daring imaginings. The Apostle Paul gives us the exhilarating text: No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor. 2:9).

In the light of Easter, death is but the gateway to life eternal. The Apostle Paul flings his challenge at death: O Death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?...Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:55-57). The grave and sin retreat in defeat.

Message from - Ian Chaffey Cwm Corps UK - Thursday, February 17, 2005 10:56:05

"The Cross"

'It is finished' - John 19:30



George MacLeod said: 'Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on a town garbage heap; at a crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write His title in Hebrew, the language of the religious, Latin, the language of the barbarian, and Greek, the language of the cultured. It was the kind of place where cynics talked smut, thieves cursed and soldiers gambled. But it's where He died, and it's what He died about.' Are any words more victorious? Jesus draws a deep breath, pushes His feet down on those Roman nails and cries: 'It is finished!' What was finished? The history-long plan of redeeming you and I was finished. The work done by Jesus as a man on earth was finished. The task of selecting and training ambassadors was finished. The song had been sung. The blood had been shed. The sacrifice made. The curse of sin broken. The sting of

death removed. It was over. The words, 'It is finished' were the same words they wrote across a receipt when a debt had been paid in full. Was any less acceptable? No! Would any more be required? No! 'It is finished! The cross is a trading post. At the point of believing faith, God takes all your sin and lays it on the shoulders of Jesus, while at the same time taking all of Christ's righteousness and wrapping you up in it. What a transfer! And how do you get it? By working for it? No! You receive it by trusting in Christ alone!

Note: Ian Chaffey is a student currently studying a degree in computing and his spare time he have a small local e-business - www.pcsforeveryone.co.uk. He was a Young Peoples Sergeant Major of Cwm corps. Please mail your comments about this message to the author using the following email ian@thechaffeyhouse.freeserve.co.uk.

"EASTER/ LENTEN DEVOTIONAL"

Easter message from **Major Janet Munn**

Associate DC Northern New England DHQ, USA Eastern

on Tue, 08 Mar 2005 21:35:58 IST. Mail your comments about this articles to : [click here](#)

" . . . and JESUS ASKED"



But about the resurrection of the dead - have you not read what God said to you, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? He is not the God of the dead but of the living. - Matthew 22: 31-32.

"You look just like your father!" she exclaimed, while looking into my face. "How could this be?" I thought to myself. After all, he is thirty years older than I am, weighs twice as much as I do; he is a male and I am female, and many other differences in our appearance. Yet, I knew in my heart she was right; I had heard it many times before. I do look like my father. People who know my father and then meet my son say that they too look alike. The generational connection is undeniable. We are more than individuals; we share in a common lineage.

Jesus adopts the use of a phrase commonly used by Jews in reference to God, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In Exodus 3:15 it is stated this way:

God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers-the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob-has sent me to you. This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

The message here is that God is at work in the midst of the generations. God is at work throughout history, from times long past, today and on into the future, as strong as ever. God is the one who says of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6) and yet who is continually doing a "new thing" (Isaiah 43:19. From generation to generation the likeness of the Lord is upon the people of God. More surely than the family resemblance for generations in my family or yours, in the Lord's family, His likeness, presence and name are ever real, ever gracious, and ever powerful.

NEW LIFE

Message taken from the booklet "**When your Whole World Changes**" International Bible Society.

At some point in our lives we've each chosen to walk away from God's intentions for us. The Bible calls this choice sin and says that it has a death grip on our hearts and lives. **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God** (Romans 3:23).

God offers reconciliation to us through Jesus. "**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him**" (John 3:16-17).

Jesus lived a life of loving, teaching and healing people. Ultimately, he gave his own life to save us from the judgment we deserved. He was resurrected three days after he died, demonstrating his power over sin and death. As Jesus said, **I have come that they may have life, and have**

it to the full (John 10:10b). Jesus provides us with both the model of living as God intended and the power to do it.

In the Bible, we read, **If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved** (Romans 10:9-10).

Embrace the full life God intended for you. Invite him to teach and reshape you to be more like Jesus. **If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come** (2Corinthians 5:17)!

God's intention is that all of creation be renewed, and that the world no longer suffer from disaster and brokenness. In the new creation, **the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away** (Revelation 21:3b-4).

Seek the support of other followers of Jesus. They can help you as you begin your journey of knowing, following and loving God.

CHOICES

This message posted on 2 July 2005

Choices, we make them everyday, they are unavoidable. We made a choice this morning when we decided to get out of bed, and that was only the beginning of the choices which we made throughout the day. What we were going to wear, what we were going to eat, whether we went to work or school, there is just no end to the choices we had to make.

Some are crucial to our well being and if we make the wrong choice the results can be devastating. A good and meaningful marriage, a satisfying and purposeful vocation are all dependent upon the choices we make. Other choices are inconsequential, nevertheless decisions have to be made and ultimately our happiness and wellbeing is determined by these decisions.

Choices involve priorities. And the things which are important in our lives, our families, our value systems, external influences, these all dictate the decisions we make.

Charles Swindoll in his book ' Living Above The Level of Mediocrity' wrote:" Life places before us hundreds of possibilities. Some are bad. Many are good. A few, the best. But each of us must decide, "What is my choice? What is my reason for living?" In other words, "What priority takes first place in my life?" Swindoll goes on to say:" To be completely truthful with you, however, we aren't left with numerous possibilities. Jesus Himself gave us the top priority."

"But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." Matt 6:33

Swindoll goes on to say that Matthew 6:33 should be the filter through which all of our decisions pass:"..where I put my money, where and how I spend my time, what I buy, what I sell, what I give away. That means a two pronged question needs to be asked each time: Is it for His Kingdom? Does it relate to His righteousness?"

When we measure our choices by these two questions then we can be assured that there won't be any regrets about the decisions we make, the results will be God's best for our lives. And life can't get any better than that.

Have we a name for glory Transcending time and space? - August

Message from Ray Reese, Australia [e-mail to author](#)



It is interesting to take a few words of a song and think about them for a while. Sometimes, I wonder what the writer was thinking about or what caused him or her to write in a certain way. With some pop songs I can believe they were written on the back of a table napkin while the writer was preoccupied with other things. Many Christian songs come from deep experience or to reveal a glimpse of a personal insight into the majesty of God.

I wonder again what General Gowans was thinking as he wrote these words? I take a guess and would think that as he thought of the name Jesus, he heard running through his mind the magnificent words in the Prologue of John's Gospel. Then comes the clear acclamation:

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1: 14 NIV).

We have seen his glory! We have seen Him (The Word) who there:

"In the beginning ... (who) was with God, and ... (who) was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1: 1-3 NIV)

PRAYER:

We praise you Heavenly Father for the glory we see in Jesus. We thank you too for those who saw Jesus when he walked the earth and became faithful followers and recorded what they saw. Help us to be faithful in revealing the glory of Jesus to those around us. Amen.

MEDITATION:

Tell me the old, old story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love.
Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child,
For I am weak and wary,
And helpless and defiled.

Chorus

Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story
Of Jesus and his love.
Tell me the story slowly,
That I may take it in,
That wonderful redemption,
God's remedy for sin.
Tell me the story often,
For I forget so soon;
The early dew of morning
Has passed away at noon.
Tell me the story softly,
With earnest tones and grave;
Remember! I'm the sinner
Whom Jesus came to save.
Tell me the story always,
If you would really be
In any time of trouble
A comforter to me.

Tell me the same old story
When you have cause to fear
That this world's empty glory
Is costing me too dear.
Yes, and when that world's glory
Is dawning on my soul,
Tell me the old, old story:
Christ Jesus makes thee whole.

Author: Arabella Catherine Hankey (1834-1911) The Salvation Army Song Book: Song Number: 98

Testimony from, Tricia, Wales, UK Territory.

Posted on 10 August 2005 [E-mail to Tricia](#)

I will tell you about something that happened to me about 4 years ago, I was driving along a very twisting and narrow road in Devon when I went round a sharp bend and 3 people were walking towards me I had to swerve over to the other side of the road to miss them and a car

was fast approaching me, I had to swerve back to my side of the road where I hit into the bank, I pulled up shaking and very upset my son Robert was with me he has Down's Syndrome, he asked me why I was crying and I said "well I could have killed those people walking towards us or that car that was coming fast could have killed us" he said " but, mummy didn't you see him" I asked him who and he said " didn't you see Jesus he was sitting right beside you steering our car" even now writing this it makes me cry although I feel so blessed and comforted to know that our saviour loves me enough to be with me whatever I do.

Also always remember that Jesus is not like a telephone that can be engaged, out of use or nobody answers it we have a direct line to HIM and HE always answers us.

I hope that you might gain some inspiration from these two things.

TESTIMONIES - DAVID MILLER - Staveley Corps, UK - Posted on 1 September 2005.

[E-mail](#) - [David Millers corps web site](#)



Up until my conversion I guess I was best described as a devout agnostic. I hadn't exactly had a Christian upbringing, and to me God, if He existed, didn't seem to have any part in my life. It was that way until I reached my mid thirties when as Parade Director for a large south coast carnival I came into contact with my local Salvation Army Corps. I received a letter from the Corps Secretary, now a dear friend, asking me if it would be possible for the Household Troops Band, who were on a south coast tour, to hold a March of Witness along the parade route prior to the procession. I didn't know a lot about The Salvation Army then, but I did know that they had some very fine bands, so I replied suggesting that the band should lead the procession. Approval was duly obtained from DHQ, and we awaited the day.

As Parade Director I was at the start of the parade, where the Bandmaster John Mott invited me to have supper with the band after the parade. How could I possibly refuse? So with a little fear and much trepidation I accepted. When the band struck up to start the parade the atmosphere was incredible. The usual shouting and yelling of the crowds was noticeable by its absence, they were actually listening to the music! I was very moved, not only by the band's music, but by the reaction of the vast majority of the crowd. The march of witness took place at the head of a two mile long carnival parade and in front of nearly 45,000 people!

Supper with the band turned out to be nothing like I thought it would be. I remember thinking that these people were human after all. I found myself thinking that this was really a good place to be, and that these people were good people to be with. Suddenly I began to feel very emotional, and for no reason that I could explain the tears started to flow. Some very patient and understanding people explained to me that God was trying to talk to me, all I had to do was listen. Believe me, I took some convincing of that! What could God possibly want with someone who had rejected Him for so long? But as no other explanation made any sense at all, I finally agreed to try and listen to the Lord.

The effect was almost immediate, the tears stopped and it seemed that all the darkness had been taken out of my life. There and then I accepted Jesus as my Saviour, yes me, the devout agnostic. I was told that not only did I need God, but that God needed me. Now that just didn't make sense at all. A few years earlier I had been diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy, so even too much walking was out of the question.

I didn't have to wait long for an answer. I became an adherent, and later joined the League of Mercy. Through The Salvation Army I have been privileged to work with the homeless and the lonely and to render assistance to the victims of the hurricane that hit the UK in the late 1980's. I have taught aspiring members of the YP band to play a wide range of instruments, and even on a few occasions been invited to play with the senior band. Although sadly there was no permanent place for a saxophonist. I have delivered countless Christmas dinners, and even entertained our Christmas day guests at the corps. My greatest joy was to assist in leading my parents to accept the Lord.

Even though I am no longer well enough to attend many meetings, I am pleased to say that the Lord is still keeping me busy doing His work. I am Webmaster of two Salvation Army Corps web sites, and two other Salvation Army related web sites. I have written the history of my corps, and am working on a book about the Salvation Army Generals. Life is still very full and very good.

I do hope you haven't found my ramblings too boring, I just wanted to tell everyone that God is still working miracles in peoples lives. I firmly believe that to live your life to the full, you first need to give your life to God.

TESTIMONY FROM JAQUES DE VILLIERS, SOUTH AFRICA

Posted on 5th October 2005 E-mail: info@salvationarmy.co.za

My name is Jaques de Villiers and I am HIV Positive. This is my story. At the age of 17, I completed school with N1. After school I did my national service and thereafter worked for various security companies.

I got involved in a syndicate and received jail sentence of 4 years. When I was released from jail, met a young lady and got married (have one child). I was fortunate enough to get a well-paid job at Coco Cola after the history I already had. But things still didn't get better, because after three years my wife left me and I lost everything that was important to me, and so I bottled up a lot of hate in my heart - to a point where I wanted to murder my family that I had already lost, but instead of that I turned to drugs and thought that would fill the gap in my life, but it didn't. I turned to prostitution because of my need for love and companionship. The consequences of this, was that I became HIV infected was more alone than ever before, because no one wanted to know me.

Whilst staying in Roodepoort, 7 people stabbed me, 16 times and things were just going downhill all the way, 'cause at that time I was also involved in credit fraud with the Nigerians. Things got so bad that I had to sleep in a open field for a week and all I wanted to do is give up on life. I decided to go to the nearest church, in search for help. The minister could not help and all he could say was that I messed up my life. I then practically begged him to phone The Salvation Army, and so he did and dropped me off by the Center's gate. I had nothing except the clothes on my body and after the interview, the management agreed to give me a chance. Since I've been living at the Family Mission Centre, I've been able to find myself again, but most importantly I found Jesus Christ, and now I will always belong to Him and when I die one day, I know where I will be going - to meet with my Saviour.

A PLEA FOR UNITY Posted on 1 November 2005

P.H Welshimer -1916 -

The pleas is the unity of God' people, the plan is RESTORATION, the purpose to be accomplished is the redemption of the world. Jesus prayed in the garden that they might all be one as he and the father were one, and he gave as the reason that the world might believe the God has sent him. The biggest curse today to the extension of the kingdom is the division of the forces. It weakens the forces that are at work, makes unbelievers chills the ardor of Christians and causes the world to look on with derision. Division breeds contempt causes strife. The only salvation of the world lies in unity, and unity can not come without restoration. The followers of Christ are not asked to unite upon non-essential. All are not asked to have the same opinion. In matters essentials we are to speak the same thing. "Whew the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent. "We form opinions only where the Book does not speak, but where it speaks we will listen to the word of God, and opinions are to have no weight. Gods Word always must take preeminence over the opinions of men.

30 November 2005

Rev. Michelle Sim
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A CHRISTMAS STORY

Christmas message from,
Rev. Michelle Sim,
Northern Praise Ministries, Canada

*"Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second birth.
Hark the herald angels sing, 'Glory to the newborn King!'"*

It was Christmas 1982 and I had sung the third verse of this Christmas Carol hundreds of times over the majority of my 34 years. But I had never "heard" it before. I had never "gotten" it.

But then, ten months prior to this particular Christmas, on precisely February 22, 1982 my entire life had changed forever.

I had grown up going to church. It was the cultural thing to do in the 50's and early 60's. But confusion set in when I was old enough to ask questions and no one in the church, or my parents, had answers that satisfied my curious nature.

When I asked mom if Mary had really been a virgin, she looked at me dumbfounded and said "Of course not. Don't be so stupid!"

But I and everyone else in the church in which I had been confirmed, every week diligently recited the Apostles' Creed, proclaiming the virgin birth. AND each one of us, every week, marched to the altar and partook of the sacraments of wine and bread, remembering Christ's sacrifice until His return. I *really believed*, in my childish naivety, and I was crushed to find out that, just like a good girl scout, all that I had chosen to walk in allegiance to was nothing but a bunch of lies. I was thirteen.

Hypocrisy is a killer. But a heart seeking the truth will eventually find it.

After the time of my horrendous discovery, I became bitter against anyone going to church. I continued to go myself because I liked to sing in the choir. That was until the choir mistress got crankier by the week and then eventually took off with a man whom was not her husband. I started getting very judgmental against these people going to church for the wrong reasons, as though I was not one of them!

Then my sister Janine got pregnant at seventeen and some of the leaders in the church decided that her little sister (me!) would not be allowed to come to their homes anymore. I was only thirteen but even I knew that I couldn't get anyone pregnant!

Church people were looking bleaker by the day. I didn't want anything to do with them and so I eventually at seventeen walked away from church life.

Fast forward to 1981 in southern Ontario - there is a serious recession and we are in a real estate crisis, about to lose everything. I have been married since 1968. I now have two sons - one a genius, one developmentally challenged. My husband, a good provider, works as many as three jobs at a time to provide a nice home for his family. He is a workaholic! We are young and he does not know how to be a father. I have sunk into a serious depression as I have no life. I am creatively dead, I am overworked, I have no help, I am raising the children primarily on my own. I am young, attractive, intelligent, loving and kind and I am dying. I am so catatonically depressed that I believe if anyone even touches me, the last bit of life remaining in me will be sucked out and I will cease to exist. I have lost my peripheral vision.

I am in trouble.

At a job I had taken on, I had met a woman named Ruth, whom I could only describe as an angel. She was peaceful, calm, loving, patient and Roman Catholic. Now I knew that her peaceful state was not due to her religious affiliation as I knew many Catholics who were as messed up as the most messed up people I knew. Ruth began to tell me about God and that Jesus, God in the flesh who came to earth to identify with us and to pay the ultimate sacrifice for us with His blood, was real and that He loved me.

I told Ruth she was nuts! Now this was how out to lunch I was as Ruth was a client of mine and we all know that the customer is always right. But as I said, Ruth was patient. She told me

about miracles she had received and how God had provided supernaturally for her. I mostly scoffed at her, but deep down I must have been listening.

I had left God but He was still hunting me down.

When our financial troubles began to get so serious we did not know what to do, I shared our situation with Ruth and she told me that I needed to pray for help. I laughed and said I didn't know how to pray. My Common Book of Prayer was long gone and if a prayer was not written down, I didn't know what to say. She sincerely responded to my doubt with "Just talk to God Michelle, as thou He was right here." Instead, I asked Ruth if she could pray for me. "Of course I will." She lovingly replied.

I carried on for a few more weeks, not at all going toward God and sinking deeper into a despair I had never nor since experienced. I'd call Ruth every once in a while and say "Ruth you're not praying hard enough. Nothing's happening."

One day, Ruth simply said, "Michelle, you pray."

Shortly after, on February 22, 1982 I was so depressed I could not go to work. I fell asleep at my kitchen table, my head being held up by the rim of my coffee cup. I woke up, went into the bathroom and looked into the mirror. I looked twenty years older than my thirty-three years and I had a large ring imprinted into my forehead from the coffee cup. What a decrepit mess. Then I heard inside of me Ruth's voice, "Michelle, you pray. Just talk to God, as though He was right here."

The next half hour was a supernatural experience for me. I was literally drawn upstairs to my bedroom where I fell on my knees onto the floor. I spilled my guts before a God I was still not sure even existed. I cried out, **"IF YOU EXIST, help me! I don't want to go on like this. I WANT to be a good wife.. a good mother. HELP ME!"** I sobbed for several minutes and when I stopped, a peace came over me that is still indescribable. The Bible calls it "the peace of God that passes all understanding." All I knew was that everything was going to be all right. I remained in a God-cocoon for weeks, surrounded by a Love that I had never experienced before. God proved to me, one individual young woman, that He did indeed exist.

That night, a pastor and his wife from British Columbia were brought to our home by a real estate agent and they rented our home. They were starting up a new work in Oakville and were looking for a place to rent while their home in Mapleridge sold. The rent was much higher than they had wanted to pay but they felt that our home was where they were to be. They had no idea that that very morning I, a lost soul, had fallen on my knees in desperation and asked God to send help.

The deal was written up, accepted by us, and they asked if they could visit us the next evening before returning to B.C. to make their move east. We agreed. My husband did not understand why my depression had lifted. He reasoned that it was most likely that our place had rented and that we could move into our new home. He knew nothing of my spiritual experience - that I had been zapped by God Himself! We had never had a spiritual component in our marriage.

That night, February 23, 1982 I experienced what the Christmas Carol sings about **"Born to give us second birth!"**. I had never ever heard about being "born again", but the pastor prayed for me and I truly became a new person. I was instantly delivered from a serious depression. I have never suffered with depression since - free for almost twenty four years now.

I have received healings and strength when I had not an ounce of natural energy left. I have created things that I don't know how to create. **In one day I wrote a whole play that was performed at The Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts and that raised \$25,000 for the Salvation Army. I have won a Juno Award.** I have traveled to many places and experienced many amazing things. I fiercely faced a crazed cult leader and rescued my nephew's wife from his hypnotic prison. I became a full time pastor at the church started by our renters! **"Light and life to all He brings. Ris'n with healing in His wings."**

Christmas 1982 shed light on a lot of things. I understood the Christ in Christmas. **I KNOW the Christ in Christmas.** I am grateful for His great love never fails me.

A heart seeking the truth will eventually find it. Have a very merry Christmas!

About the author: Michelle Sim founder and pastor of Northern Praise Ministries. She is also an active fundraiser, a producer, a playwright, a singer/songwriter, recording artist, worship leader and co-founder of the newly formed Authentic Women of Canada. Topics of great concern to Michelle include: Empowering Women to be All God Intended; The Power of Women to Heal Men; The Power of Love & Unity; Music & The Church; Choosing to Make Your Marriage Great; Dealing With Difficult Children, as well as many more Biblically based topics. more to visit her websites:

Northern Praise Ministries : <http://www.northernpraiseministries.com/>

Authentic Women of Canada : <http://www.awocanada.com/>

Personal site : <http://www.MichelleSim.com>

THE REAL GLORY OF JESUS FOR YOU AND ME!

Christmas message from - Mr. Ray Reese, Gold Coast Temple Corps Australia - Email: ozthoughts@yahoo.com.au, Date: Thu, 01 Dec 2005 11:24:12 IST

Christianity and Christmas came to Australia with the first white settlers in 1788. In fact it was just 11 months after they landed that Reverend Johnson conducted the first Christmas Service. It is recorded that Governor Phillip and his Officers sat down to a fine Christmas dinner. However, for the majority of the first settlers, the convicts, it was just the usual ration of bread. One convict who was sentenced to receive 200 lashes of the whip had his punishment reduced to 150 lashes because it was Christmas.

The biggest difference in Christmas in Australia is the heat. The only chance of a "white Christmas" in Australia is the white of hail from a storm. This year, we have already had a couple storms which have left the ground covered in hail which looks like snow from the distance. In many places, there is a good chance that the temperature on Christmas Day will reach towards 38c/100f. Storms, bush fires, floods and cyclones have greeted Australians on Christmas Day. Although, I will say that most Christmas days, I have known have been very pleasant days although a little hot and humid.

Australia's population has just passed 20 million. This is in a country the size of the 48 States of the United States below Canada. However, there are many cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The majority are at least nominally Christian, therefore Christmas is observed by most. It is just like Christmas in many places. Not everyone will have a traditional hot Christmas dinner. Many will have cold salads and meats including seafood with oysters, prawns, crab and lobster for some.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in Australia, most churches will have their biggest congregations of the year. Before that many people will have gathered in parks and halls to sing Christmas carols and celebrate the joy of Christmas.

An Australian Christmas may be different but so, too, were the shepherds very different to the wise men from the east. Yet, we all kneel and worship the one "Jesus, the baby of Bethlehem".

I am pleased to know that Christmas joy and peace will be shared by us all throughout the world which Jesus came to love in a very special way.

HAPPY MEMORIES – HAPPY CHRISTMAS Thu, 01 Dec 2005 18:47:09 IST

Christmas Message from:

Commissioner (Dr) Paul du Plessis

Commissioner for World Evangelization
International Head Quarters, Salvation Army
London, United Kingdom
Paul_du_Plessis@salvationarmy.org

We lived in India for nearly five years – 1990 to 1994. That meant four Christmases celebrated with fellow-Christians and in company with Salvationists. We have many happy memories.

The Chennai Central Corps Band would go to selected homes in the weeks before Christmas, but on Christmas Eve we would play at some of the five-star hotels. I recall the pride I felt as I stood there with the band and we were acknowledged by so many visitors, many of them foreigners. Some knew The Salvation Army from their countries; others had no idea who we were. I remember a conversation with fellow-South Africans of Indian origin who had returned to find their roots. They were believers; they knew what we were doing. They spoke with great admiration for our courage to witness in that way. 'But we could never do it ourselves,' they remarked. I was happy that I was in company with people who did.

Serial lights and decorated Christmas trees were everywhere; shops were out to capitalise on the gift-culture that surrounds Christmas; lighted stars hang in front of the homes of Christian families. All of the city seems to know it's Christmas. 'Do they know what it's all about,' I often wondered. I was sad to know that many had no idea who Jesus is, but I was happy I was with people who knew him personally.

Christmas Day invariably included a celebration gathering at the corps; we'd visit officers serving on headquarters with a small gift for the children. Then we'd go to The Haven or to the Boys' Home at Periamet. There'd be a splendid meal to enjoy, but it was the games afterwards that will linger in my memory - cricket in the grounds at Periamet or party games at The Haven. For every child there would be a story tinged with sadness, yet what fun; how much laughter; such joy. I could enjoy it with them.

Yes, it is possible to have a 'happy Christmas'. I remember many - and am looking forward to another this year. It won't be in Chennai, but I'll be thinking of many good friends there. That will make me happy all over again.

Happy Christmas to you, wherever you are.

Paul du Plessis

BIBLE MESSAGES PUBLISHED GEE JO ONLINE - 2006

PRAYER FOR MY CHILDREN

From Major Joy Emmons

PRAYER -1

Published on 7 January 2006

You've heard of people who play music so their unborn child can learn Chopin? I prayed for our child. Then we prayed for the children as they grew. How quickly I learned that it was easier to care for them in toddler seats than in the teen tunnel. After surviving triumphantly four teenagers, my husband and I can assure parents, "Yes, there is life after the teen years." The romance comes back into the marriage! But, the praying intensifies. With our first now in his 30's I've learned that there is no retirement in prayer. Often I wish that I knew better how to pray for them when they were infants. As they have grown, so have I and now I've learned to pray The Word.

Recently I took Psalm 119 from the Message and rewrote the Psalm as a prayer for my own children. This first prayer is a prayer that they will follow God's plan. You might want to pray this prayer putting in the names of your own children. Make it personal.

Lord, bless our children by keeping them on your course. Help them to walk steadily on the road You have revealed to them. Remind them to follow your directions, and to do their best to find YOU. Don't allow them to go off on their own, but to walk steadily along the road you have marked for them. You've prescribed the right way for us to live, now help each of us to keep your expectations in life. Make their steps steady, keeping the course you have set; So that they will have no regrets in comparing their life to your counsel. Thank you for speaking straight to their hearts; for teaching them the pattern of your righteous ways; Make them willing to do what you tell them to do. And don't ever walk off and leave them.

PRAYER 2

Published on 2 February 2006

From Major Joy Emmons

My mother-in-law said, she would like to have never sent her children to school because they learned things that she would never have taught them. It's easy to blame a lot of the actions of our children on school, friends and society. I couldn't help but notice how our children became tense and irritable. The sibling rivalry raged and then vacation came! My little cherubs returned to normalcy and I, too, wished that vacation would last forever.

We can't teach our children everything! Some are making wonderful efforts at home schooling. While overseas it was necessary for us to be the English teachers of our children, but God used others to teach them lessons as well. One thing I learned was that He was a much better teacher than we were. This week's prayer is for our children to learn from God's Word and God himself so that they rely on His promises.

Lord, teach our children to live clean lives. Make their hearts thirsty for reading your Word to guide them in life. Make them O Lord, to be single minded in their pursuit after you. Don't allow them to miss the road signs you have posted for them. Teach them to bank on your promises hidden in the vault of their heart, so they won't sin themselves bankrupt. Be blessed God; train them in your ways of wise living. Put your words of counsel on their lips. May they delight far more in what you tell them about living than in gathering a pile of riches. May they ponder every morsel of wisdom from you, as they attentively watch what you have done for them. May they relish everything you've told them about life, may they not forget their Spiritual Inheritance.

PRAYER 3

this site on 4 March 2006

Published BN Vol. 10 No. 4, 2004,

People are surprised when I tell them I don't pray for my children's happiness. We do pray that they will be blessed and that they will be protected from those who would spiritually harm them. This week we will use Psalm 119 to pray God's blessings on our children and protect them from those who would cause them spiritual harm. Some of our children's greatest spiritual lessons are seeing the change God has made in our lives; thus the prayer that the children will see what God has shown us.

Be generous with my children, Lord, that they may live a full life; not for a minute will they take their eyes off your road. Open their eyes so they can see what you've shown me of your miracle – wonders. They are strangers in these parts; give them directions. Their soul is starved and hungry, ravenous! May they find Your Word to be satisfying and your commands nourishing. And those who think they know so much, ignoring everything you tell them – let them have it! Don't let them mock and humiliate my children; help my children to be careful to do just what you've said. While bad neighbors maliciously gossip about them, may my children be absorbed in pondering your wise counsel! May your sayings on life be what give them delight; may they listen to them as good neighbors!

PRAYER 4

Remember when you were a child and couldn't wait to grow up? Remember when you thought it was only you and your friends as kids who had problems – caused by the adults of course! We read about childhood depression at astounding rates. This week we will pray for our children in the difficult times; those times when we as parents can't pick them up to make them feel better. There problems get tougher and there comes a time when we can't kiss it and make it all better. Even when they are 'all grown up' and you find yourself in an 'empty nest', they never outgrow their need for prayer.

Lord, when my children are down, lift them up. Get them on their feet again. Keep your promise to them. Train them in your deep wisdom. Help them to understand this life inside and out; so they can ponder your miraculous wonders. When their world is falling apart build them up again by your Word. Barricade the road that goes to nowhere; and give them the grace of your revelation for their problems today. Teach them to watch your road signs at every curve and corner in the Road of Life. Teach them to hold on to what you tell them. God, don't let my children down. May they purpose to run the course you've laid out for them. Teach them how... and make them teachable.

PRAYER 5

How do we pray for our children? We pray that they will be blessed, for their physical and spiritual protection. Some pray for their happiness, but I pray that they will live in the center of His will knowing that only there will they find lasting joy. This week's prayer gives us some more specifics to pray for. We would like our children to learn from our experience, but they need their own "lessons for living". Often they do not want our insight into their life plans, so we pray for godly wisdom and a desire for His counsel. We all need to be obedient. It is a life long lesson. We all need God's affirmation that His promises hold true for us today. We all have critics, so we pray that the critics of our children will be silenced. And most of all it is my prayer that all my children (spiritual as well as born to me) will be hungry for the word of God (Matthew 5:6). Here's the prayer for this week:

God teach my children "lessons for living", so they can stay on course. Give them insight so they can remember what you tell them. May their whole life be one long, obedient response? Guide them down the road of your commandments. May they love traveling this highway! Give them a bent for your Words of Wisdom, and not for riches and the things of this world. Divert their eyes from toys, trinkets and the temptations of sexual sin. Energize them on their Christian Walk. Affirm your promises to them – promises made to all who fear You. Deflect the harsh words of their critics. Speak words of correction to them gently. May they always be hungry for your counsel. Preserve their life through your righteous ways!

PRAYER 6

The world is going to mold our children or they will be shaped by God's love. The pressures children are under today were unthinkable when we were growing up. It is important that we understand those pressures so that we can pray more intelligently for our children. They are being offered lies and we must pray that they be presented with the truth of a God who loves and cares for them. We can teach them by our living lives of love and stories of real life heroes (ourselves) who are making the spiritual journey. The obstacles we have found and the truth that helped us to get around those stumbling blocks will bring the Truth of God's Word to reality if we are willing to share our weakness and falling as well as the victories. Our children live in a world that is not teaching them the Ten Commandments. We as parents and grandparents must begin teaching them now in order to mold them in God's love.

Let your love, God, shape the children's lives with salvation, exactly as you promised; Then they'll be able to stand up to mockery because they trusted your Word. Please don't ever deprive them of truth, not ever. May your commandments be what they depend on. May they guard with their life what you've revealed to them. Guard it now, guard it ever; and may they stride freely through wide open spaces as they look for your truth and your wisdom. May they tell the world what they've found, speak out boldly in public, unembarrassed. May they cherish your commandments – oh, may they love them! May they relish every fragment of your counsel.

PRAYER 7

As I write this, we are packing up to go to Columbus Citadel, Ohio. One of the boxes is journals. An entire box of my writing to God and things He has taught me. When my older daughter was 14, she begged me to read some of my journaling when I was her age. One of the things that amazed me was my tender heart for God at that age. I desperately desired that my children be disciples of the Lord. Years later when there was a strong discussion about life's issues, my daughter asked, "How did you learn the will of God?" I answered that I listened to God. She responded, "Then why don't you let me listen to Him, too?" The thought stopped me in my tracks. I needed to trust my children to God and stop ordering them around spiritually, deciding what God's will was for their life. So I started praying this prayer for them from Psalms 119 49-56:

Lord remember what you said to me when you called me, "This is the way. Walk in it. Do not go to the left nor to the right. (Isa. 30:21)" Please Lord, speak to my children and keep my children in your Way. May your Words hold them in bad times; Yes, and let your promises rejuvenate them. When the insolent ridicule them without mercy, may they not budge from Your Revelation. May they watch for your ancient landmark Words, and know they are on track. When they see the wicked ignore your directions, may they feel righteous anger. May they set your instructions to music and sing them as they walk The Journey. May they meditate on your name all night, God, Treasuring Your Revelation, O God. When they walk through the rain of derision, may they be still because they live by your Word and counsel.

The following have not been submitted. The prayers are written only.

Because you have satisfied them, God, may they promise
To do everything you.
I beg you from the bottom of my heart: smile,
Be gracious to my children just as you promised.
May my children take a long, careful look at your ways,
And keep their feet on the trail you blazed.
May they be up and ready, never dragging their feet,
Quick to follow your orders.
When the wicked hem them in – and there is no way out –
May they not forget your plan for them.
Lord, I get up in the middle of the night to pray for them,
And to thank you:
Your decisions are so right, so true – I can't wait till morning!
May my children always be friends and companions of all who respect you,
Of those committed to living by your rules.
Your love, God fills the earth!
Train my children to live by your counsel.

Be good to my children, God
 Be as good as your Word.
Train them in good common sense;
 May they be thoroughly committed to living your way.
Before we learned to answer you, we wandered all over the place,
 Keep each of us in step with your Word.
You are good, and the source of good;
 Train my children in your goodness,
The godless spread lies about them,
 Help them to focus their attention on what you are saying;
The godless are bland as a bucket of lard,
 May my children dance to the tune of your revelation,
May troubles turn out all for the best –
 May troubles force them to learn from your textbook
May truth from your mouth means more to them
 Than striking it rich in a gold mine.

With your very own hands you formed me;
 Now breathe your wisdom over me so I can understand you and
 be an understanding mom.
When my children see me waiting expecting your Word,
 May they take heart and be glad.
I can see now, God, that your decisions are right,
 Your testing has taught me what's true and right.
Oh, love me – and love my children. Hold us tight right now
 just the way you promised.
Now comfort us so we can live;
 Teach us to dance to your revelation.
Let the fast-talking tricksters be exposed as frauds;
 Those who tried to sell us a bill of goods,
 Keep our mind fixed on your counsel.
Let my children fear you and turn to me
 For evidence of your wise guidance.
And let me live whole and holy, soul and body,
 So I can always walk with my head held high.

This prayer is for the spiritual warfare we find in our children's lives.

I'm homesick, Lord. I'm longing for the salvation of my children. I'm waiting for your word of hope that they will be saved. My eyes grow heavy watching for some sign of your promise: "Teach a child how he should live, and he will remember it all his life." (Pr 22:6 TEV); "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your family." (Ac 16:31 TEV). Lord, I'm trusting you for the salvation of my WHOLE family. How long must I wait for your comfort? My eyes are swollen from crying for my children's salvation. I keep a steady gaze on the instructions you post in your Word. How long do I have to put up with all this foolishness of my children? How long till you haul the tormentors, the drug dealers into court? The ones who

provide alcohol for miners. The ones who sexually abuse our children. The arrogant and godless try to throw our children off track. They are ignorant of God and His ways. Everything, you command is a sure thing, but the world harass my children with lies. Help! They've pushed and pushed – they never let up – But I haven't relaxed my grip on your counsel, O Lord. In your great love revive me as I pray, so I can alertly obey your every word.

On this particular day, I just didn't know how to pray anymore. I had left writing prayers for a time – due to a disturbance in my spirit over a situation with one of the children. Then there was more delay due to scheduling. This day when I prayed for them, I said, "Lord, I don't know how to pray for them anymore, so I'll just ask that you let your will be done in their lives." That was when I had the release in the Spirit to get back to Psalm 119.

"What you say goes, GOD, and stays, as permanent as the heavens."

What do you say about my children? What do I pray? Teach me how to pray for them.

Your truth never goes out of fashion; it's as up-to-date as the earth when the sun comes up. The young people are so into fashion, Lord. Attract them with your 'state of the art' fashion.

"Your Word and truth are dependable as ever; that's what you ordered — you set the earth going."

The world is filled with untruth, Lord. Attract the children with your Truth. Excite them with the dependability of your Truth. Stir them with the stability of your Truth. Revive them with the reality of your Truth. Set them in motion to the symphony of your Creativity.

" If your revelation hadn't delighted me so, I would have given up when the hard times came." Delight my children with your revelation!

But I'll never forget the advice you gave me; you saved my life with those wise words.

Save me! I'm all yours.

Give my children words of advise as you gave me. Save them from folly with wise words. Save them! Give them a desire to be sold out for you!

Teach the children to look high and low for your words of wisdom. The wicked lie in ambush to destroy them. Make them only concerned with your plans for them.

Help us all to see the limits to everything human, but the horizons that can't contain your commands! Give us a desire to obey your commands.

(selected verses from Psalms 119: 89-96 THE MESSAGE: The Bible in Contemporary Language © 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson. All rights reserved.) Selections from Psalms 119 The Message

EASTER – TRULY THE TIME TO CELEBRATE!

31 March 2006

Easter message from

Pastor Michelle Sim
Northern Praise Ministries
PO Box 61015 - Oakville,
ON Canada L6J 7P5

Not speaking from a commercial viewpoint, the feeling of Christmas and Easter can be so opposite! Commercialism makes it all about "make believe" – Santa Clause and the Easter Bunny. Commercialism makes it about the pressure to buy presents that we don't really need or want or overdosing on chocolates and sugar that are terribly bad for our health.

The manger celebrates the birth of an innocent child. Albeit a humble birth – a child born is always celebrated. People came from miles to see Him for themselves and angels rejoiced from on high. The Saviour, Messiah, King was born! Mary held her baby close, rocking Him, caressing him and tending to His every need. Such a wondrous time and we celebrate in true Christian services with glory to God, high praise, celebration!

The cross, on the other hand, is a horrible thing to observe – it celebrates the death of an innocent man. The worst punishment for those ruled in contempt of the law – a horrific death, preceded by humiliation, isolation, torture and the knowledge of what was to come. The guilty had a hard enough time with it. But Our Man – Our God – Our Jesus – was innocent! Being very man, Jesus Himself, sweating blood in Gethsemane called out to His Father begging to be spared the inevitable – the will of God. But, “Love” bended His powerful, magnificent knee and humbly proclaimed, “Nevertheless, not my will, but Yours be done!”

So for the Christian, the thought of the cross, and therefore Easter, is pain-filled – emotionally, spiritually speaking. And, without faith, it is impossible to UNDERSTAND the joy and beauty of what really happened when our Jesus shed His precious blood for us. Sometimes it’s hard to get past the pain, to the joy. We need faith, just like Jesus, to see beyond the obvious to accept and live the victory – to live the love that is the only requirement of the New Testament.

Like millions of people around the world, I was privileged to see the movie The Passion of the Christ produced by Mel Gibson. It changed my concept of love. For whatever reason, it was hard for me to “get it” when it came to understanding love. But with every blow that Jesus took, with every glob of spit on His body, with every insult cursed His way, with every inch of ripped flesh, “Love” responded. When Mary could no longer cuddle her boy as He was made to carry His own death pole, “Love” responded. The look on the actor’s face when He portrayed Jesus delirious as death drew near allowed me to get a picture in my head of what “Love” does when all hell (literally!) is coming against Him.

I came away from the movie, saying “God help me to walk in Your love that Jesus has for us!”

Having seen the movie once, I went back for a painful second time. But the second time I realized the “joy”, early in the movie. Victory came for Jesus, very man, when HE DECIDED to follow the will of His Father. I almost jumped up and screamed “Hallelujah!” when Jesus stomped on the head of the serpent in the garden! Right there, He defeated death itself!! And all the pain was yet to come... it didn’t matter, the decision had been made. A life dedicated to Jesus, definitely does not mean, that the pain of life has ended.

“I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
No turning back, no turning back!”

Through the slain and resurrected Christ, Who shed His innocent blood to pay the penalty of mankind’s sin, we have the victory! Through Christ, we can do ALL things that He requires of us. Through Christ we are able to love the unlovable.

Great cause for celebration! Happy Easter indeed.

Blessings from
Pastor Michelle Sim
<http://www.MichelleSim.com>

About the author: Michelle Sim is the founder and pastor of Northern Praise Ministries. She is also an active fundraiser, a producer, a playwright, a singer/songwriter, recording artist, worship leader and co-founder of the newly formed Authentic Women of Canada. Topics of great concern to Michelle include: Empowering Women to be All God Intended; The Power of Women to Heal Men; The Power of Love & Unity; Music & The Church; Choosing to Make Your Marriage Great; Dealing With Difficult Children, as well as many more Biblically based topics. more to visit her websites: <http://www.MichelleSim.com>; email your comments to: msim2@cogeco.ca

GLORIOUS LIGHT

April 24, 2006 10:16

Message from **Colonel Bramwell Booth (R)**
Corydon Corps – UK Territory

One of the great advantages of being retired is that I now have a little more time to enjoy one of life’s great luxuries. Reading the daily paper with a cup of coffee in my hand.

And last week I read an article by John D Barrow, who, I was told, had just won the £800,000 Templeton Prize for ‘expanding human perception of divinity’.

I have to say that I understood his introduction better than the later part of the article since most of it was in scientific jargon that was really quite beyond me.

He began by saying that little over a year ago he was in the great Basilica of St Mark in Venice. He arrived the early evening with a small group of other scientists for a guided tour after it had closed to visitors for the day. When he entered it was almost in total darkness. Then, very slowly, the light levels rose, and the interior began to be illuminated by hidden sodium lights.

He writes "The darkness gave way to spectacular golden light. The arching ceilings were covered in a gleaming mosaic of glass and gold.

Between the 11th and the 15th centuries, nearly 11,000 square feet of gold mosaic were made for St Marks, square by square, mixing gold with glass by a delicate process that is still not fully understood, to produce this sparkling golden sanctuary.

And yet the hundreds of master craftsmen who had worked for centuries to create this fabulous sight had never seen it in its full glory. They worked in the gloomy interior aided by candlelight and smoky oil lamps to illuminate the small area on which they worked but not one of them had ever seen the full glory of the golden ceiling."

John Barrow continues "Our Universe is a bit like that. The ancient writers who celebrated the heavens' declaration of the glory of the Lord saw only through a glass darkly. Unbeknown to them and countless others who followed them, the Universe has revealed itself by the instruments that modern science has made possible to be far bigger; more spectacular, and more humbling than we ever imagined it to be."

It reminded me of an experience we had when we were visiting the Corps in Milan. Captain Iannarone, the officer, was anxious we should see the world famous Duomo. That magnificent cathedral situated in the centre of the town with its world famous front elevation and flying buttresses. We walked into the cathedral and found a dark, gloomy interior, virtually devoid of any light.

It was huge, but it was totally lifeless. I looked around and could not be but disappointed at what I saw. Obviously I did not share my feeling with the officer who was so proud of his city's most famous monument, but I left quite disillusioned.

A year or so later, I was in Milan again and we had time to take a short walk in the center of the town. We went again to the Duomo. But what a difference we saw!

There was service in progress, there were hundreds of candles illuminating the darkest alcoves. A long line of worshipers was slowly moving towards the altar from which the priests were dispensing the sacrament.

And all this transformed the cathedral into a living, 'bright reality' as song 455 has it. There was the low hum of voices in prayer, the gleaming white of the priests robes shining in the candlelight, each one adorned with gold and crimson splashes of color.

It was an unforgettable experience and I returned from the Duomo to the little corps in the suburbs of the city with a new sense of vision and of enthusiasm.

As we all know, it is possible to come to phases of our life when we find it difficult to feel the presence of the Lord right there with us. Circumstances overwhelm us and we see only the glory of God through a 'glass, darkly'

We feel we ought to be able to sing that wonderful chorus without hesitation

Show us thy glory, Christ of the mount,
Thou art of light and wisdom the fount;
We would adore thee, make known thy power,
Stay with thy people, hallow this hour;
We would adore thee, show forth thy power,
Stay with thy people, hallow this hour.

But too often we cant. We are living within the darkened St Mark's cathedral, enlightened only by the small flame of a candle or the smoky light of the oil lamp. And yet, if we did but know it, we are permanently protected by Divine presence, that 'Archiving ceilings covered in a gleaming

mosaic of glass and gold'. Perhaps we should more often remind ourselves of Harry Anderson's words of his lovely song

I want thy constant presence, Lord,
Then e'en a dark adversity
Will be a blessing in disguise;
Live thou thy life in me.

Then to faith's vision thou shalt be
Ever a bright reality,
Keeping my heart in purity,
Living thy life in me.

With its chorus we have sung so often:

I give my hear to thee,
Thy dwelling place to be;
I want thee ever in my heart;
O live thy life in me.

And now let us pray together:

Dear Lord, help me today, and every day, that, however dark and gloomy the day may seem, I may remember that your glorious presence is just there right above me.

Shining down on me and waiting to fill my life with your light, your joy and your protection.

To which we all say, with all our hearts: Hallelujah.

About the author: Colonel Bramwell Booth (R) is the great grand son of General William Booth the founder of the Salvation Army. Col Bramwell Booth now live in UK with his wife Ruth and they are the soldiers of the Corydon Temple Corps. Please write your comments about this message to: BRAMBOOTH@aol.com and this message received on April 24, 2006 10:16 PM and posted this site on 1 May 2006.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2006

Wednesday, December 20, 2006

Christmas message from Mrs Linda D Johnson

"that is above every name"—Jesus



Naming a baby can be a daunting task. Couples typically wrestle with their own preferences, not to mention pressure from parents and grandparents. But Mary and Joseph had no choice about their child's name. The angel who appeared to Mary said about the Son she would bear, "you are to give him the name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

You might think that would be happy news for Mary, but it caused her to ponder deeply what such a name could mean for her Son. You see, to the Israelites, atoning for sin meant offering an unblemished animal to be killed by the priests.

Saving people meant sacrifice, and Mary knew that.



She had reason to worry. Jesus, the sinless One, would be the ultimate sacrificial lamb. But the name of Jesus would also have great power. In His lifetime, Jesus demonstrated that He had the power to heal, to cast out demons, to forgive sins. John, the Gospel writer, says that He performed all these "miraculous signs" for an express purpose: "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31)

That first Christmas gift of a birth name, given by an angel of God to Mary, became the perfect Gift for all humanity. And when we believe in Jesus, God pledges we will receive a bonus gift, the Holy Spirit. That promise is for "you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord will call." (Acts 2:39)

How can those who are "far off" receive those amazing gifts this Christmas? From us. That is, from those of us who are willing to proclaim and celebrate the coming of the Lord Jesus, not just among ourselves in the Church, but also among those who don't know about Him.

Why not give someone the perfect Gift this Christmas? Don't worry about what to say. If you know Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit within you, so you will find the words. You may even find the perfect way to tell someone by sharing one of the stories in this issue of [Priority!](#)

Whatever you do, however you tell the story, be sure to use the Name "that is above every name"—Jesus.

Have a truly blessed Christmas.

Linda D Johnson

Literary Secretary
Salvation Army USA Eastern Territory
<http://www.prioritypeople.org>

The General's Christmas Message 2006

WORDS AND SONGS TO GREET THE SAVIOUR 7 December 2006 02:04 PM GMT

THE opening chapters of the Gospel of Luke hold the divinely inspired record of words and songs that preceded and greeted the glorious birth of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Today these words and songs still lift our hearts, as we celebrate Christmas again. It is a time for speaking the good news of Jesus, and a time for singing in praise of his birth. Let Salvationists declare that the Saviour is born! Let the Army rejoice with songs of praise and gladness!



The angel Gabriel spoke to Mary with a message from God: 'You are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' Then words of reassurance: 'Do not be afraid.' Still God speaks today to affirm and encourage us. Mary was called to a sacred task, a highly privileged task, as the mother of the Saviour. Although questioning, she gave her assent: 'May it be to me as you have said.' Her words of obedient surrender are an example to us all.

Next Elizabeth offered words of blessing to Mary and the child she carried: 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!' Mary's instinctive response was to burst into song: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.' What a marvellous picture we have of these two godly women encouraging each other and lifting their hearts and voices to Almighty God.



Elizabeth's child, John, was born first, destined to be the forerunner of the Christ. John's father, Zechariah, had been unable to speak (Luke 1:22) but suddenly he was released from silence to voice words of praise and gratitude to God: 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.'

Zechariah recognised that John would be 'a prophet of the Most High' who would 'go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him'. Here is a father releasing his child into an unknown future for the sake of the plan of God.



Angelic words accompanied the good news of the birth of Jesus. The angel told the shepherds by night: 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today ... a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.' This same message is the one we are called to declare today. It is simple, yet profound. It happened long ago, but is for all eternity. We join our voices with the song of the angels to proclaim: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.'

I urge the Salvationists of the world to speak on, to sing on. Let our telling of the Christmas message be clear, using words that echo the words of old, bringing

blessings as of old. Let our songs be as glad and spontaneous as the songs of old that accompanied the news of his coming, songs that give glory to God.

Lift up your hearts, lift up your voices, lift up the Saviour of the world!

Shaw Clifton, General of The Salvation Army

BIBLE MESSAGES PUBLISHED GEE JO ONLINE - 2007

General Shaw Clifton's Easter Message 2007

The Son of Man Must be Lifted Up
General Shaw Clifton's Easter Message for 2007

It was to Nicodemus that Jesus spoke these words: "The Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may

have eternal life" (John 3:14,15 New International Version). Then followed the famous, most often-quoted words in Scripture from John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."



Lifted up? Yes. That is exactly what they did to Jesus at Calvary. They hoisted him high on a cross of wood and nailed him there. Some thought it would get rid of a troublemaker. Others genuinely believed he had blasphemed by claiming to be the Son of God. A few, a precious few, knew who he was and wept their hearts out as they watched him die. They could not take it in. A good man condemned like a thief. Some who had been close to him had deserted. While he suffered, they ran away and hid.

Lifted up? Yes. There on a high hill, Calvary, at a place called Golgotha, they executed the best person ever to have walked on the face of the earth. Jesus was innocent of the charges leveled against him. He took it all in virtual silence, never protesting his innocence. He knew he was at the center of the Heavenly Father's plan of salvation for all of humankind.

Lifted up? Yes. They looked at him, some mocking. They taunted him with cheap, hollow words: "Come on down and save yourself!" Even now some will still deride and cheapen what was done that fateful day.

Lifted up? Yes. Into dreadful pain, more of the soul than of the body. He was made sin for us that day, carrying all the weight of my sins and yours as a perfect, atoning sacrifice. He felt utterly cut off from God, crying out in agony of spirit as he experienced crucifixion of both body and mind.

Lifted up? Yes. His cross stands starkly as a sign for ever of the loving heart of God towards us despite our sin and disobedience. It is a constant reminder that we can make a new beginning whatever we have done with our lives thus far. Jesus "lifted up" means forgiveness for the truly repentant, sincerely seeking sinner and the real possibility of a pure and holy life even in a sin-sick world.

Lifted up? Yes. Still today Jesus is lifted up for all to see through the lives of those who have received him as their Savior. The nailed-down Jesus, the dead Jesus, was not the end of the story but only the beginning. He defeated sin; he defeated death. The grave could not hold him and they found the tomb empty, the grave clothes lying discarded, no longer required. Hardly do we commemorate his dying before we find ourselves caught up in the wonder of his resurrection. Christ is alive! Lift up your hearts!

Lifted up? Yes. You can lift him up: by the way you live for him; by witnessing for him; by loving and serving him; by obeying his words found in the Bible. You can lift him up: by having a heart of concern for the lost; by feeling the pain of a broken world; by sympathy, compassion and an aching heart for others in their lostness and need. You can lift him up: by devoting yourself to the sacred work of soul-winning, making it your daily business; by responding to a sacred calling into Salvation Army officership if that is what God is speaking into your life just now; by simply being his loving and obedient child.

Lifted up? Yes. There he is in Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father. The Ascended One waits for you, and for me. One day we will be in Heaven too, lost in wonder, love and praise. We will see him face to face. Will you be there? He did it all for you, all for me.

This Easter, let all Salvationists lift up Jesus, for all the world to see and believe that Jesus is the Christ, so that they might have eternal life.

God bless you. He is alive and is with you day by day, moment by moment.

Shaw Clifton, General of The Salvation Army

Easter Blessings from Rev. Vic HATzfeld



To you, my brothers and sisters in Christ,

May the redeeming power of the Risen Christ be with you this Easter and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and remain with you always.

Much love from the Addlestone Corps, United Kingdom Territory.

A very happy Easter to you and yours.

Love,

Anne & Vic Hatzfeld

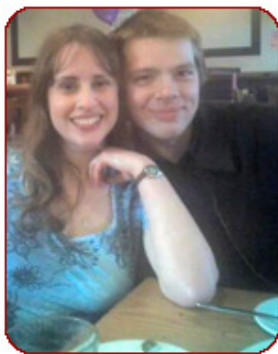
TESTIMONY FROM

AUSTIN NICHOLAS

(Bromsgrove Corps, UK)

Austin's website. <http://www.myspace.com/austin2350>

January 1st, 2006



With God on my side and with the light of Jesus shining like a torch ahead of me than I shall not falter from the path of duty no matter how rough the journey maybe.

God has a purpose for everyone, even if it doesn't seem like it. If you put all your faith in God then the way ahead will be made clear, if you also pray to God and ask him then he will guide you through the murky forest of the earth and lead you to the deep ocean of love on the other side in heaven.

Remember my friends that God created everyone in his likeness to do his will and be a beacon to all those who have drifted from the path of righteousness and have fallen into the pit of despair, and it is our duty as servants of the Lord to help everyone who needs it even if they say they don't.

There are many different ways to help someone, you can give them food when they are hungry, you can give them clothes when they are cold and you can even help them by giving them the tools, equipment and other items so they can fend for themselves and learn new skills. Also if you help them this way then they could earn money for food and other basic life saving items by using the skills and equipment to help someone else.

My prayer is that the world will be cleansed of all the hurt and despair and everyone will lift their voices in praise of the Lord and be glorified for a life that is full of peace and love that we

don't see now. I also pray that God will send another Pentecost to kick start the life changing process of cleansing that I have already spoken about.

"For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him will be saved." I was walking through the pit of shame for five long years until I found God talking to me through the music I was playing and the people i was talking to at Summer School '06.

but above all, if it wasn't for the Lord working through Wendy Woodhouse and other folk at Willenhall Corps who took me under their wing and helped me to find a roof to put over my head when my dad kicked me out and also inviting me to Summer School then I don't know where I will be today!

The subject of Summer School this year was 'Purpose Driven Life' that was based on the book by Rick Warren which states that everyone on earth has been put here for a purpose and it is everyone's responsibility to find what their purpose of life is.

I honestly believe this to be true because I am an ex-Salvationist who was in the Salvation Army for 17 years but only a senior soldier for the last two. I'm 21 now and in the last five years since i left the Army my life has gone down the drain. I was drinking, smoking, having sex out of marriage and going in out of jobs. All this was causing me a lot of stress and my home life suffered because of it. I couldn't keep up with my rent, council tax or any of my other bills and was getting deeper and deeper into debt causing me more stress. I then gave up living on my own and moved into my dad's which at the time I thought was a good idea but we kept arguing about different things and I lost my job at Poundland which was a good thing in a way because it gave me a chance to start going to the Army again in Willenhall, but about a month after i left work my dad kicked me out and if it was thanks to a friend along with Captains Stephen and Jenny Foreman that I managed to find accommodation at the William Booth Center in Birmingham. For the first month i was still drinking and smoking but about a fortnight before I was due to go to Summer School I was drinking more than i used to and going out more or less every night and coming home so drunk I remember how I managed to get back or what happened the night before. It wasn't until the first Saturday night at Summer School I stopped smoking. It's been a lot harder to give up the drink but I pray to God that he gives me the strength to give up for good so that I can return to uniform and worship him the way he wants me to and to do the work he wants me to do.

Whilst I was at summer School I felt the lord's presence in a way I had not experienced before in and through the actions of my adopted brothers and sisters in God's family. The talks and prayers i had with a friend from Droitwich were a real inspiration to me and I can never repay him for his help through that difficult time in my life. Also I thank God for five people who are really dear to me who have helped me through. Firstly you have two girls who are both from Bromsgrove Corps who i spent most of my spare time with at Summer School, because during the time I spent with them I didn't think about smoking or drinking and also i felt the Lord calling me through them to move to Bromsgrove myself and join the Corps there, which I am thankful for because I am helping out with the band which I love doing also i help out with picking up the old folk who go to the hall on the mini bus. I thank God too for Graeme from Gloucester who I have known since my first ever Summer School and I Thank God he was there this year and I thank God he was because of the fun the two of us had during band practice and the talks we had throughout the week. On the Sunday night at Summer School i burst into tears for the first time in a very long time. That week i felt so close to God that during the rehearsals towards the end of the week I was very tearful during the band piece entitled "Shine As The Light" which is an arrangement of songs like "i Am The Candle Of The Lord" and "Wonderful Counselor". This piece was ideal for me because it felt like it was written directly from my life and being used as my personal testimony because its written about someone who was living like Christ but due to the temptations of the world they were drawn away from God and live and earthly sinful life. Then they cry out at several points in the piece "Light Me!" and towards the end of the music they shout it loud and God answers and fills them with the Holy Spirit and right at the end of the music the Cornet's sing out with the song "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God Among Us." It was at this point that I felt God touch me and I burst into tears again.

This was because I felt that I was the person in the piece due to the troubles I have had over the last five years.

I urge each and everyone who has read this to think about all those I have mentioned and that you will pray for each and everyone of them and I also ask that you would pray too for me

because it has not been easy for me to write any of this but I do believe that God has told me to write to tell you about what he can do in your life if you put him first and that you will put your faith and trust in him as I have.

Thank You and God bless you till the end of time.

Austin Nicholas (Bromsgrove Corps)

(in the picture Austin is the guy on the right)

Click here for Austins website. <http://www.myspace.com/austin2350>

NEW YEAR MESSAGE 2007

January 2007

BREAD FOR ALL – REALLY

*New Year message from
Commissioner Paul du Plessis (R)*



It was in 1978 that health administrators from around the world gathered in Alma Ata and formulated the brave policy that proclaimed 'Health for All by the Year 2000'. Six years have elapsed since then and still we need to make targets. The words seem to have achieved little. So when I hear someone saying 'Bread for All', I wonder whether it can be achieved, really.

Hunger remains a significant issue for the world. It shows itself in a variety of ways. A child is deprived of sight and it's a simple deficiency of vitamin A; another is bloated and swollen and dies of chronic under-nutrition. 852 million people across the world go to sleep each night hungry. That's compared with 842 million a year ago. The problem gets worse, not better.

How shall we respond? Feeding programmes from a Salvation Army vehicle in Chennai or with meals at a Compassion International Child Development Centre in Nagercoil? And what of destitute people queuing in Kolkata to be fed by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity? Or shall we listen rather to the famous Bengali and winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, Amartya Sen? He postulated that the answer to hunger and famine is democracy.

Three and a half thousand years ago the nation of Israel was in flight from Egypt through a desert. It's not difficult to understand that hunger became a problem. On that occasion God fed them – all of them, really. Birds fell from the sky, and a form of bread appeared on the ground. And two thousand years ago when five thousand people were hungry, Jesus, the Christ, fed them – all of them, really.

And when the miracle was over he laid his claim to one of the titles by which he is known – the Bread of Life.

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6: 35)

It was a statement to point out that important though feeding programmes and even democracy are, there is a deeper human need which must be met. Jesus dared to say that it is found in accepting him. This is no mere philosophy or theoretical proposition. It is to accept Jesus deeply within our total being, just like we eat bread. Many, if not most Christians, celebrate this truth by taking bread in the sacrament of holy communion. It is a symbol of the deeper truth that Christ's body was broken like bread is broken - for all. We feed on him spiritually. It can be bread for all, really!

I pray that those who read the reflections on this theme in the weeks ahead will discover even more fully the truth of this teaching of Jesus.

Note to visitors: no changes can be made to these messages without the Authors permission. All quotations are from the New International Version.

PRAYER FOR MY CHILDREN

Major Joy Emmons.

PRAYER - 8



Be good to my daughter Bethany, God and our new son Damien. Be as good as your Word to them. Train them in good common sense in this new walk of life they have chosen. May they be thoroughly committed to living your way in their marriage. Before each of us learned to answer You, we wandered all over the place. Keep each of us in step with your Word. You are good, and the source of good; Train Damien and Bethany in your goodness. The godless spread lies to them. Help them to focus their attention on what you are saying. The godless are bland as a bucket of lard. May Damien and Bethany dance to the tune of your revelation. May troubles turn out all for the best – May troubles force them to learn from your textbook. May truth from your mouth mean more to them than striking it rich in a gold mine.

Because you have satisfied them, God, may they promise to do everything you say.

I beg you from the bottom of my heart: smile, be gracious to my children just as you promised. May my children take a long, careful look at your ways, and keep their feet on the trail you blazed. May they be up and ready, never dragging their feet, quick to follow your orders. When the wicked hem them in – and there is no way out – may they not forget your plan for them. Lord, I get up in the middle of the night to pray for them, and to thank you: Your decisions are so right, so true – I can't wait till morning!

May my children always be friends and companions of all who respect you, of those committed to living by your rules. Your love, God fills the earth! Even Australia.

Train my children to live by your counsel.

PRAYER - 9

Our 'baby' fell in love with a young man from Australia who worked at a Salvation Army Camp. After courting four years long distance, she decided to go to Australia and get married during Christmas! Unable to attend the wedding due to duties here, I sent them this prayer.

Be good to my daughter Bethany, God and our new son Damien. Be as good as your Word to them. Train them in good common sense in this new walk of life they have chosen. May they be thoroughly committed to living your way in their marriage. Before each of us learned to answer You, we wandered all over the place. Keep each of us in step with your Word. You are good, and the source of good; Train Damien and Bethany in your goodness. The godless spread lies to them. Help them to focus their attention on what you are saying. The godless are bland as a bucket of lard. May Damien and Bethany dance to the tune of your revelation. May troubles turn out all for the best – May troubles force them to learn from your textbook. May truth from your mouth mean more to them than striking it rich in a gold mine.

About the author: Major Joy Emmons and her husband Chet, are the corps officer of Portsmouth, NH in the Northern New England Division (NNE), USA Eastern Territory they have 4 children: Chet III is in Michigan with his wife and 8 year old daughter. He is the assistant manager of a mini Market; Christy lives in Maine with her husband Erik. They are both Spanish teachers. Carl Brengle (www.lastuesday.com); and Bethany works in Philadelphia.

THEY LOVE HIM MORE

By Rev. Juan Galloway

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Obviously as Christians we're not in a contest with others to see who can love God more, but if you're like me you really want to learn from those who love God more than you. Is there anything more important than loving God? Who are these great giants of faith that we need to open our ears to so that we can follow in their footsteps? Look no farther than the gutter.

At an urban Church plant in Paterson, New Jersey called Frontlines I met a man in a drug rehabilitation program named Mark. Mark is 51 years old and has been homeless and a heroin addict for 20 years. He found Jesus in this Christian rehab and was radically changed. While in the program he trained as a chef at a cooking school. He uses his skills to cook for the homeless in a soup kitchen that serves breakfast 7 days a week. He finished at the top of his class in cooking school and was recruited by numerous prestigious restaurants such as Tavern On The Green. Mark prayed about how he should respond to these job offers and ultimately felt that he should stay at the mission and continue serving God there. He's staying because he loves it and he loves God. This man has a peace and joy that I truly envy. Materially he has nothing and yet in the things that matter most he has everything.

Luke 7:41-47

"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."
"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

Jesus was criticized for letting this sinful woman touch him and yet he uses her as an example to teach the "more respectable" people who were hosting him. She loved him more. I think that Jesus is still trying to get through to us as Christians today and still using sinners to do it.

So much of our hang-ups, anxieties and worries would be molehills instead of mountains if we could get proper perspective on our position in the kingdom of God. We have been forgiven much and don't fully comprehend it because there is plenty of stuff to help mask and forget it. The mentally ill, the addicted, the poor and the oppressed are faced with their stark realities everyday which make them acutely aware of the amazing grace of God. We must humble ourselves and learn from them.

Living in the richest country on earth has a strange effect on us. We may have more than we need and still be dissatisfied. We look at those who have failed to achieve and tend to despise them. And yet these same broken people are the ones that God hears when they cry out.

Psalm 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 55:17

Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

I am going to suggest that you spend time with these people who love God so much. I have been fortunate to make many friends on the streets through the church plants I have been involved with. I have learned lessons from prostitutes about faith. I have been given powerful words from people who are homeless and mentally ill. I have cried out with those who are

brokenhearted and experienced God's presence. I have been touched by Jesus in surprising ways.

Like the woman with the alabaster jar who poured out everything she had on his feet, I want to join her in kissing Jesus' feet. I want to thank him for the undeserved mercy that He lavishes on me. I just want to love Him more.

PRAYER FOR MY CHILDREN – PRAYER 10, JULY 2007 from Major Joy Emmons.



Our daughter-in-law had tried unsuccessfully to conceive a child for five years. Finally the announcement came in October that she was indeed with child. As a family they had carved five pumpkins and put one inside of the other asking us to guess where the sixth pumpkin was (counting their two Rottwilers as part of the family) and our first grandchild, Skyler Joy.

Then the renter decided not to pay his rent and he always has to deal with employees who do not work for their wages or people who come into the store to steal. We began to pray for the business man – our son.

With your very own hands you formed these dear children. And know 'Pumpkin Seed' grows in the womb of our daughter – in – love, Liz Joy. Breathe your wisdom over them as parents so they can understand you and be understanding parents. Remind my children of seeing me waiting expectantly in your Word. May they take heart and be glad in you Word. Help my daughter – in – love to see, God, that your decisions are right. I pray that your testing has taught them what's true and right. Oh, love me – and love my children and their children. Hold us tight right now just the way you promised. Now comfort us so we can live. Teach us to dance to your revelation. Let the fast-talking tricksters be exposed as frauds. Those who tried to cheat my son in business, bless my son for trying to do well by them. Keep their mind fixed on your counsel. Let my children respect you and turn to you. Daily show them evidence of your wise guidance.

And let them live whole and holy, soul and body, so they can always walk with their head held high.

Isaiah 62:6-7

I've posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem.
Day and night they keep at it, praying, calling out,
reminding GOD to remember. They are to give him no peace until he does what he said,
until he makes Jerusalem famous as the City of Praise.
(THE MESSAGE: Is. 42:6,7)