



ASSEMBLIES
Outreach

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February 2022

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

In this issue: News of Commended Workers
Our Willing Saviour
“Searching for God” (excerpt)
Lord, keep me Desperate
Three Obituaries
Words for a New Year
Internet Corner
(... and more)

Assemblies *Outreach*

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Evangelistic Mission (NSWAEM)

The NSWAEM publishes this bi-monthly magazine to offer opportunities for NSW Commended Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly activities and other kindred bodies, to share information about their ministries, to encourage others, and to encourage prayer.

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Written contributions to *Assemblies Outreach* magazine are welcome and actively sought from NSW Assemblies and any associated ministries and individuals.

Please submit your assembly news, people profiles, letters, etc, for the **April 2022 issue on or before 11th March 2022.**

Contributors enjoy reasonable liberty in their expression of opinion and exposition of Scripture within the boundaries of a biblical evangelical Christian faith. Neither the Editorial Team, the Board of NSW Assemblies' Evangelistic Mission, nor Commended Workers are to be held responsible for every view that may be expressed in these pages.

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Mr C. H. Winrow, Mrs M. J. Winrow,
Mr D. Gordon

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Awake to Israel

History ● Current Events ● Prophecy ● Evangelism

20 years
in 2021

...To declare unto you all the counsel of God. Acts 20:27

Meetings are held monthly,
February to November

Second Saturday, 2:30pm
at Epping Gospel Chapel

Cnr Carlingford Rd & Duntroon Ave,
Epping, NSW

Also Streaming via ZOOM

Contact richard@awaketoisrael.org for the link

For further information:

www.awaketoisrael.org

www.facebook.com/AwakeToIsrael

Our purpose:

- ✧ *Supporting selected Christian Ministries in Israel*
- ✧ *Witnessing to our local Jewish Community*
- ✧ *Teaching believers what the Bible says about end times.*
- ✧ *Promoting awareness within the local church of Israel's part in God's future plans.*

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come together and search the Scriptures.

Awake to Israel is a ministry of Epping Gospel Chapel and combined Brethren Assemblies of Australia.



Dear Readers,

Welcome to this February 2022 edition of the *Assemblies Outreach* magazine. This is the start of the magazine's 51st year of continuous publication! I wonder if anyone (apart from our office) has kept every one of the 300 issues so far? If so, you deserve a special award for ummhh ... ??????

Thanks to Francis Williams (in Tassie) and John Short (Hong Kong) this month for their submitted material "out of the blue" so to speak. You are a blessing to me and our readers. Thanks to all the other contributors too. Some we know, some we don't.

Of the former, Doug McNaught is in my thoughts. I understand he is still in Macquarie Hospital's rehab area, where they are undertaking to overcome his 'deconditioned' state, whilst also trying to reduce the pain from the Shingles. Please uphold Doug and his wife Jenny in your prayers.

There has been an unusual number of obituaries to be included in this

issue, but I'm glad to report that none of these deaths has been caused by Covid-19. Of course, the Lord God has many, many ways to call His children to their home with Him and we need not fear any of them!

Being the start of a new year, may I wish all our readers an encouraging one, as they grow closer to the Lord and serve Him faithfully.

May I also mention that subscription fees are due, see page 17 of this magazine for details of the current charges.

If all goes to plan an invoice will be included in the mail package for each individual subscriber (unless you have already paid). The invoice will be on green paper. In the case of a church, the invoice will be in the first package mailed to that church or assembly. Please ensure this invoice is delivered to your Treasurer or Secretary as soon as possible for payment. □

CONTENTS of this Issue:

'Out and About' in NSW	4	Barbara Swan - Obituary.....	18
News of Commended Workers... 6		Mavis Saxby - Obituary.....	21
Our Willing Saviour	9	Dr Cedric Gibbs - Obituary	23
It's solved by walking.....	11	Words for a New Year.....	26
"Searching for God" (excerpt)... 12		If the World is Ending.....	28
Being a Missionary (poem).....	14	Internet Corner	30
Lord, keep me Desperate	15	Adverts	31, 32

'Out and About' in NSW Assemblies

compiled by Colin Winrow

If you attend a NSW assembly, or you work with any associated Christian Brethren ministry, please feel free to submit your local news or event dates to this 'Out and About' section so we can inform and encourage people in all our assemblies and churches.

Short items (even if only one sentence) are welcome and can be mailed to this magazine at PO Box 20, Pennant Hills, NSW 1715, or better still, e-mailed to:

outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au

* * *

Are you looking for a worthwhile way to spend a GAP year? Ephraim House at Moree may be your answer. Visit this website to get all the details:-

<https://ephraimhouse.org/thegap/>

* * *

The **Hands & Feet** organisation has been working with the **ACCS** to provide a very helpful and practical course on Caring. It will help churches work with people in need in their community. The course will be available via a link on the H&F website early in 2022:

www.handsandfeet.com.au

* * *

CCCAust(NSW) issued its January newsletter via email on 28th Jan and informed that the February Coordinating Conference would not be held, largely due to COVID-19 related complexities. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 5th May** in Burwood.

In the meantime, news updates will be sent out on a regular basis.

* * *

For more information on COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines, click the link below:

www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/rules/people-in-nsw

* * *

Did you know you now can find CCCAust(NSW) on Facebook? "Like" their page to receive regular updates on CCCAust(NSW) Churches and related para-ministries.

<https://www.facebook.com/CccAustnsw/>

* * *

Kevin Keegan, CEO and National Director of FEBC Australia, has written to remind us that FEBC and Christian Radio are still reaching out to millions of listeners as countries continue to be impacted by the pandemic globally. Radio and digital media have played a key role in keeping people informed, inspired, motivated and safe.

February 13th was **World Radio Day** which is 11 years old this year. FEBC is celebrating 75+ years of broadcasting Christ to the World by Radio & Media. For the Body of Christ this is a chance to celebrate the reach they have in telling people of God's love.

Please celebrate with FEBC by praying for those in conflict regions, those persecuted, and those who live in hard-to-reach places. Here are some of them; Ukraine and Russia, Mali and Malawi, North Korea and China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Cambodia, India and Pakistan, Philippines, and South Pacific Islands. ➤

In the December 2021 issue of this magazine, we forgot to include the following important details for Ben and Lara Penrose, to supplement their news article on page 13; (humble apologies!)

“Ben and Lara live in the Lower Blue Mountains and are part of Blaxland Gospel Chapel where Ben is an Elder. They work in Sydney among the muslim and afghan communities. They are very happy to come to other church groups, if invited, and share more about their work.

They can be contacted thus:-

Ben: 0490 317 261

ben.penrose@fosanet.org

Lara: 0490 810 758

lara.penrose@fosanet.org

* * *

Please pray for the family of Mary Ellen Arnold who passed away on 29th January, 2022. Her husband, Noel, her son Sam, her daughter Priscilla, and her brother Andrew Collins, will all miss her very much. So will the residents of the Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village where she led the Pastoral Care team for many years.

* * *

A number of other fairly well know Christians in NSW have been called home to Glory since our last magazine, and some are mentioned in detail in this issue.

Barbara Swan died on 27th December (see page 18); Mavis Saxby died on 25th January (see page 21); Dr Cedric Gibbs died on 1st February (see page 23); and John Krishna died on 13th February (see page 20). 

Meetings & Events

Please note that because of the ongoing uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, any dates published in this section may be subject to change, even at short notice.

If in doubt, contact the organisers of any event(s) you are interested in.

(Note: for **the latest details** of the Events listed below, please be also sure to check on the organisations' websites.

2022

19th **NAC22 AMT Conference** at Naamaroo, Lady Game Drive Chatswood; from 9.00am to 3.00pm. John Fleming will present “CONTAGIOUS: Entrepreneurial and Market Place Mission”.

25th-26th **Build 2022 Men's Conference:** at CCC Camps Central Coast; speakers are Malcolm Gill and Roy Gomez. This year's theme is 'Standing Strong in a Shifting World'

September:

9th-11th **Camp Sam** at CCC Hawkesbury. Camp Sam is a Christian camp for young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Camp Sam(uel) aims to provide such young adults with a fun, activity-filled weekend.

Enquiries: 1300 75 72 76





Ariel & Beverly Cinco
12 Berry Street
Mt Druitt NSW 2770
11 January 2022

Good day and Happy New Year.

I'm sorry I was not able to send updates about our church work here in Mount Druitt. Christmas season and New year are a bit hard for us due to many unexpected events, but God was always with us as we continue to serve Him.

For the past few weeks we were affected by COVID restrictions, one member tested positive and we were not able to have our service due to the need for members to isolate. The following week, my daughter Kendelle tested COVID positive and we needed to isolate for another week. We did our Service on Zoom for the last two Sundays.

My father-in-law was very sick last month and He died a few days ago in the Philippines; we are now working on his funeral service.

We are in isolation when he died and we were not able to accept visitors or visit other family members.

Hoping I can send an update in the next few days after the funeral of my father in law.

Continue to pray for us as we look forward to what God is going to do in His church.

*Thank you and God bless.
In Christ,
Ariel*

David Gillies and CLO
PO Box 442
Round Corner NSW 2158
3 February

Thanks for your gifts. They are greatly appreciated. Christian Literature Outreach (CLO) commenced over twenty two years ago and now supplies Christian Resources, mostly monthly, to the Chaplains in 140 Prisons and Juvenile Justice Centres in Australia and bi-monthly to New Zealand prisons. These resources are then distributed to the Inmates.

As a charity, most of the work we do is only possible thanks to the generosity of our Partners who help support our work through regular prayer and donations. We know that God has big plans for each Inmate and a destiny that He desires them to fill. We are very grateful to every partner who supports this Outreach work.

Our Vision is to reach out to as many hurting people inside the prisons as possible with life-changing resources so that they can discover God's will and purpose for their Life. With your help, we will be able to provide for the ever increasing demand for Devotionals, Booklets, Books, Inspirational Booklets and Bookmarks, Christian Comics, CDs and DVDs, Christian Newspapers and Bible Correspondence Courses.

Please read the following note received recently from a chaplain:

"Hi David, Please pass on my thanks to not only you, but also those who assist you in everything you do."



"I have regular chapel attendees who take the very generously donated books back to their rooms to read, then come and get another. I have an African-Canadian inmate whose faith has grown so much because of the material that you send in. He is so thankful and he's going to write a note and post it to you. I also have a Vietnamese inmate here who is an avid reader and gave his heart to Jesus in March last year. Highly intelligent and very repentant, he has become somewhat of an evangelist in the gaol and regularly shares his faith in what Jesus has done for him. He is always reading, not only his Bible but also books provided by your people. He is going to write you a note as well.

"The devotionals are highly sought after, not only by those who attend chapel but also by those who don't; particularly 'The Word for Today'. Never underestimate the impact your ministry is having, it's massive.

Thank you so much."

Please continue to partner with us in prayer, and any donations, whether on a regular monthly basis or as a one-off, as finances allow, would be gratefully appreciated.

Regards,

David Gillies

Ph: (02) 9651 2599

Mob: 61 (0)418 298 410

Website:

www.ChristianLiteratureOutreach.org

Please submit any news items, letters, adverts or short articles for the April 2022 magazine on, or before, 11th March.

Geoff & Liz Folland
9 Amberley Court
Wantirna Vic 3152
2 February

Prayer Points

Praise God for the opportunity for our missionaries to gather, encourage each other and be launched into the year ahead. Pray that we would be prepared to adjust to the constantly changing demands of this season;

Praise God for Ryan and Serena's willingness to step into senior leadership over our Church Movements team. Pray for Ryan & I to continue to develop our relationship of mutual trust and understanding;

Praise God for our students willing to commit these weeks to engaging in mission, and being equipped for the year ahead. Pray for God's protection and blessing over their efforts.

Praise God for the opportunity to share God's Word. Pray for my preparation and for the Spirit's anointing as I preach.

In His Grace, Geoff & Liz

Rob & Greta Flinders
PO Box 505
MATRAVILLE NSW 2036
8 January

Dear Friends,

Greta had a week in Maitland with her brother and his wife and I joined them on the first and last days of her time there so her brother and I could start work on building a SCFS Australia website.

➤8

I found working on the website very stressful - but I'll leave you to guess why!

In between my two visits to Maitland I had ship-visiting commitments here in Botany and also one in Port Kembla.

In the last four weeks or so I've had contact with seafarers from over 25 different countries and, in the grace and goodness of God, I've been enabled to get

Bible Courses into the hands of some 70 men, so I'm very thankful.

Please note my new email address:-

Email: robflinders@icloud.com

Warm regards,

Rob Flinders,

Seamen's Christian Friend Society



“I have one desire now – to live a life of reckless abandon for the Lord, putting all my energy and strength into it.”

— Elisabeth Elliot



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There are seven “I AMs” in the gospel of John but there is one more “I AM” that illustrated the Lord’s willingness to offer His life as a sacrifice for sin. This is found in John 18. We should remind ourselves that John was a witness to the events that he describes but that he wrote after the other gospels were written and didn’t feel the need to repeat the history that they described. There is no record of Gethsemane in this gospel but the Lord’s experiences in that garden are referred to in the first verse of this chapter 18.

He Knew

The Lord Jesus Christ knew everything that was going to happen on that day before He created the heavens and the earth. (Isaiah 46: 9, 10)

We know that Judas had already arranged with the priests and had left the upper room before the Lord began His upper room discourse and the Lord’s Prayer. If the Lord Jesus Christ knew all about Calvary, then why did He pray the prayer in the Garden? (Matt 26:39) This was to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah 63:5. There was never any chance that the Lord Jesus Christ would pull out on His way to the Cross. However He still looked for help and found that there was none to help.

Judas had a large contingent of soldiers with him when he came to betray the Lord. We can see from Acts 10 and Acts 27:1 that a band had more than two hundred soldiers, for a centurion commanded 100. Other sources tell us that a band was a tenth

part of a legion, that is, 600 soldiers. The leaders of the Jews didn’t want to have any trouble. Even though they had previously decided not to do anything against the Lord during the Passover Feast they still took the opportunity when Judas offered it to them (Matt 26:5).

The Lord Jesus Christ had already sweated, as it were, great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). As we read, He knew all that would happen that night before it happened. He wanted to protect His disciples from the agonies that He was going to face so He was proactive and went to the soldiers from the chief priests and Pharisees to ask them Who they were looking for. We know from Luke 22: 47-53 that the disciples had swords and were ready to fight if necessary, so He didn’t wait for them to try and take Him.

The officers knew who they were looking for and they told Him that they were looking for Jesus of Nazareth. The Lord Jesus Christ knew Who they wanted but He gave them a chance to own up to what they were doing; He also gave Judas a chance to repent of his evil deed and confess his sin. The Master always gives us a chance to confess our sin before we face the eternal consequences of what we are doing.

At this stage the Lord Jesus Christ admitted that He was the One that they were looking for by saying, “I am He!” This small historical episode shows us that the Lord Jesus Christ was willing to become the Lamb of God, which takes

away the sin of the world. We know that He is the best possible Saviour as He was the only One who could guarantee “on time” success before He came. (Compare Dan 10:13, where in this case the LORD sent a mighty angel to meet Daniel but he was delayed for twenty one days.) However, no one could delay the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though the Priests didn’t want to kill Him during the Feast, He went to the cross at that time because it was time for Him to die, as had been prophesied many years before.

No One Suffered Like Him

The Lord Jesus Christ was willing but what did He know at that stage. In Lam 1:12 Jeremiah prophesied of the Lord Jesus Christ, “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.” We know that no one in history suffered as much as the Lord Jesus Christ suffered during the time that He was paying the price of our redemption.

He was beaten, battered and bruised, more than usual in crucifixion. As a general rule a man being crucified would be whipped first to make him bleed and hasten the process of death. However, the Lord Jesus Christ was beaten so badly that He was scarcely recognisable as a man (compare Is 52: 14) He was forced to wear a crown of thorns and was slapped in the face many times. They pulled hair from His beard and spat in His face.

It is a well-known fact that a person’s emotional state will affect the way they feel pain. During the First World War the medical personnel noted that soldiers with horrific wounds didn’t struggle with the pain immediately because they were glad to be leaving the front line because of their wounds. Later, these same people struggled with the pain of the same wounds as they realised they were permanent and would affect them for the rest of their lives.

The Lord Jesus Christ was under extreme emotional torment as He went to the cross and while He hung there to save the world from sin. He struggled with the problem of injured innocence, even though He was there to be wounded for our transgressions and wounded for our iniquities, He was still a man and was declared to be innocent by God, the Romans and the Law. He also struggled with the problem of unrecognised excellence. John 1:10 reminds us, “*He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*” He was unjustly blasphemed. Matt 27:43 reminds us that His enemies said, “*He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.*” The Lord Jesus Christ was actually on the cross because He was glorifying the Father’s Name (John 17: 4, 5) He is God now and was God then. He had wrongly attributed motives, they said of Him, “He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, ➤

and we will believe him." (Matt 27:42) This was said in mockery, but He actually was in the process of saving sinners from hell and in order to do this He chose not to save Himself. He was experiencing personal rejection; all His disciples forsook Him and fled (Matt 26:56) *"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."* (John 1:11)

A Synergy

While the Lord Jesus Christ was God and remains God for time and eternity, He was a man during the time of His earthly ministry and Heb 4:15 reminds us *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*

Even though He remained sinless for His entire life as a man, He still experienced all the pain being a man. This means that all those emotional issues troubled Him while He was

on the cross. There is a synergy in pain and when a person experiences pain from different sources the pain multiplies rather than just adding up.

The Lord Jesus Christ also suffered all the eternal torments of hell during those long dark hours that He hung on the cross for He said, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46) The true torment of hell is being separated from God.

Knowing all these things, the Lord Jesus Christ said in the garden "I am he."

This shows us that He was willing to go to the cross to be wounded for our transgressions and wounded for our iniquities. It is one thing to have the best possible Saviour, but He is of no use unless He is willing to be the Saviour.

The Lord Jesus Christ **was willing** to be our Saviour. **Praise Him.** □

It is Solved by Walking

Author unknown

There are times in life when we feel overwhelmed by circumstances and we end up standing still. Sometimes that means physically being still - so debilitated we can't move. Mostly it means we just can't seem to make decisions or move ahead. Every decision is fraught with danger so we refuse to make choices or move in any direction.

At those times a Latin phrase may be helpful, "Solvitur ambulando".

It literally means, "it is solved by walking".

Staying still may feel safe but it does not change anything. What we need is a step of faith; to move ahead, to pray, think, consider, and then step out. 'Solved by walking' is not just good advice, it's the spiritual discipline of trusting God and moving forward. □

An excerpt from “Searching for God in Christianity”

by Sean Nolan

Hopefully this book will be released in the USA and Australia in April 2022.

Jesus is the only baby in the history of the world to name Himself. In the first few chapters of Luke’s Gospel we see the archangel Gabriel appearing to Mary and Joseph. Gabriel instructs them to name the baby Jesus. Gabriel communicates God’s name for this child, and this child is the God who sent Gabriel. Jesus is literally naming himself.

Love is the nature of God and Yahweh is the high covenant name for God that reveals His nature. Putting these together, we come to understand that love is the substance of Yahweh. Understanding this, we can comfortably adopt love as a descriptive name for God. Jesus knows God is love, as He is God. We can add to this that Jesus knows God’s love is active and that this activity will manifest in our existence as salvation or reconciliation. Knowing this, Jesus gives Himself a name that is descriptive of this truth: He names Himself Jesus, which means “Yahweh saves,” or paraphrased, “the God of love saves.” If we follow our theological process and combine our understanding of God’s essence, being, and nature with our finding on what Jesus’ name means, we end up with a doctrine. We are putting together the idea that Yahweh is love and that Jesus is saying that He, as Yahweh, is about reconciliation. Thus, we end up with the truth that Jesus’ name means “loving reconciliation.” Jesus’ name is extracted from His identity.

Jesus set this whole thing up; through Gabriel He gave Himself a name that is absolutely linked to His being of love, a love outworked as reconciliation.

It is also interesting to note the wider activities of Gabriel. Gabriel comes to the priest Zechariah in Luke 1, tells him that he is the one who stands in the presence of God, and commands Zechariah to name his son John. Gabriel’s comment to Zechariah about standing in the presence of God is a direct instruction to Zechariah as a priest to do as he says; Gabriel’s command is not his own but God’s. This may not be as straightforward as the command Gabriel gives to Mary, but we must be mindful of the contexts of the conversations. Mary was going about her daily business, but Zechariah was the priest chosen to enter the temple and burn incense. Zechariah knew this instruction was from God in response to his prayers and that it was not optional.

So why this name? Why John? It is most interesting to combine three things here: John’s name, the origin of John’s name, and John’s function. John’s name was given directly from God, and means “the Lord has been gracious.” John’s function is to usher in the new covenant of grace. I want to add to this the meaning of Mary’s name: “rebellion.” Mary was just like us in the sense that she got her name from the regular old way of parents picking it—no angels involved! But ➤

while Mary's name was not hand-picked by God, she was. (To fill the story out, we might as well add in the meanings of Zechariah and Elizabeth's names: "God has remembered" and "God is an oath." Lastly there is Joseph; he is not Jesus' father, but his name appears in Luke 1 and means "he increases.")

When we put these together, mindful of the function of each person in the story, we get the Gospel message loud and clear: God implants loving reconciliation in the heart of humanity's

rebellion and this process is forerun by grace. If you want, you can add in the idea that God remembers, and He is an oath—total integrity. God graciously remembers our futile situation as those born into rebellion, and He brings about loving reconciliation for us. God's integrity when it comes to grace-based salvation is absolute.

author, Sean A. Nolan,
PhD (candidate) Theology, MTh.
www.hopesociety.org.au

[Two more excerpts will be published in coming months. – Editor]

NSW WOMEN'S MISSIONARY PRAYER & SUPPORT FELLOWSHIP

It was in recognition of overseas missionaries as wanderers, living away from their homeland, and frequently finding themselves in difficult, painful circumstances, that the NSW Women's Missionary Prayer & Support Fellowship began, and continues. Priority is given to women's needs publicised in the AMT Global Prayer Matters, supplemented by information shared in private correspondence. Missionaries commended by NSW Assemblies are more intimately known so are remembered more frequently during our prayer times. Meeting with missionaries on furlough is an enjoyable highlight.

Meetings are held on the **second Friday of each month**, from **February to December**. Two home groups are available for anyone interested, one at Cherrybrook, and one at South Hurstville. Tea and coffee are provided at 10am before a prayer session from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

At Cherrybrook: in the home of Mavis Winrow, Elouera Gardens, 1/9 Julia Close, Cherrybrook.

Contact Lil Fleming ph 9858 5436 email: lflem@bigpond.com

At South Hurstville: in the home of Margaret Hind, 2/14 Rickard Road, South Hurstville.

Contact Margaret Hind ph: 9546 8545

email: margarethind@gmail.com

BEING A MISSIONARY

[Supplied by John Short]

**“As My Father has sent Me,
Even so send I you.”**

John 20:21

“Out where the loneliness presses around me,
Looking on sights that are sordid and drear.
Strangely abiding – yet GOD surely called me,
Why do I wonder, when Jesus is near.

Strangeness of living – strangeness of people,
Have I not come with a Gospel of cheer?
Why is my heart surprised with such burdens?
Is not my Saviour – my Jesus – out here?

Lord, teach me fully to do without friendship,
How to let go of those things that were dear –
Be rid of sin’s-“self-life” that hinders me –
Surely my Master- my Jesus is here.

He, Who is GOD, took the form of a servant,
Humbled Himself unto death, without fear,
Alone, forsaken, despised and rejected,
My blessed Saviour – my Jesus – came here.

Father, forgive all failure in serving –
Heartaches, regrets all disappear!
Taking the Cross, then “Christ-life” infills me;
Jesus – my Victory – my Life – is here.”

ooooo

How and to what did the Father send the Son?
To manifest fully “another” life, One of holy manhood that
would go into suffering, rejection, sacrifice and death;

But unto ultimate victory and glory!

Even so, does He send His beloved servants today.

ooooo

CBR – P.O. Box 95413, TST, Kowloon, HK, SAR of China.



Many of us love Robert Robertson's hymn "Come Thou Fount" because of these lines:

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above.

We understand this. We all keenly feel our proneness to wander from the God we love. And we all want this terrible proneness to decrease.

So if we sing this hymn seriously and in faith — really wanting God to keep us from wandering so we persevere and make it to His heavenly courts — what are we asking God for? What does losing our proneness to wander look like?

A Severe Mercy

God has left us plenty of mystery in how He "keep[s] [us] from stumbling and . . . present[s] [us] blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy" (Jude 1:24). But it's not all mysterious. From Genesis to Revelation, we find a consistent element present in the lives of persevering saints of God. And it is captured in this brief sentence in Psalm 119:67: "*Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.*"

What cured, or at least decreased, the psalmist's proneness to wander? Affliction. If the writer of Psalm 119 was working with Robert Robertson on composing "Come Thou Fount," he may have suggested the last sentence to read something more like,

Here's my heart, O take and break it;
So I love thy courts above.
To borrow a phrase C. S. Lewis used

when comforting a suffering friend, God uses affliction as "a severe mercy" to help keep His saints from going astray.

Effects of Affliction & Prosperity

This is a paradox. Affliction is typically an evil we experience in our bodies, relationships, circumstances, achievements, or religious persecution. Prosperity is typically a good we experience in our bodies, relationships, circumstances, achievements, or religious freedom. Yet, we have a tendency to move toward God in affliction and wander from God in prosperity.

The Bible is full of examples of this paradox, but let's look at two: 1) when good came through the evil of affliction and 2) when evil came through the good of prosperity.

The Blessing of a Satanic Thorn

The revelations and power granted to the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit in order to fulfil his apostolic calling to plant and oversee many Gentile churches, as well as function as the global-historical church's foremost theologian, were overwhelming for any fallen human being. How did God help Paul remain faithful? Paul tells us,

To keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. (2 Corinthians 12:7)

"We need God to do whatever it takes to keep us desperate for Him so we don't wander."

>16

What specifically this “thorn” was isn’t important (I thank God we don’t know for sure). What is important is that we see how God used an evil affliction, a messenger of Satan, to keep Paul humble and faithful.

None of us bear the same responsibility as Paul. But if we think we therefore need fewer afflictions, we are significantly wrong. We are tempted to unbelief in ways Paul wasn’t because of the things he saw and we haven’t. Like Paul, we need God to do whatever it takes to keep us desperate for Him so we don’t wander.

The Peril of Prosperity

David knew by experience the truth of Psalm 119:67. When he was afflicted with King Saul’s plots to assassinate him, with barely one step between him and death (1 Sam. 20:3), David didn’t go astray. He kept close to God and would not sin against Him (1 Sam. 26:10–11).

But David also experienced the flip-side of the paradox. When David was the unrivalled king of Israel, and God had prospered him in every way, that’s when he strayed from God into bed with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11).

Why did David’s affliction result in faithfulness and his prosperity result in sin? We all know. David was desperate for God when Saul (acting as a messenger of Satan, it would be fair to say) afflicted him. This experience even resulted in glorious psalms of worship (like Psalms 18, 54, and 57). But when David was not desperate for God, he was more vulnerable to his self-destructive depravity.

Whatever It Takes, Lord

The same is true of us. When are we most prayerful and faithful? When we keenly feel our desperation for God, like we can’t live without Him. And we are most vulnerable to sin when we don’t feel that way.

We don’t romanticize affliction, just like we don’t romanticize death. Evils themselves are not to be loved, but resisted. God is to be loved and trusted. Only He is wise and strong enough to work for good what is meant for evil (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20). Paul pleaded with God for his thorn to be removed (2 Corinthians 12:8), and so did David (Psalm 7:1–2). They were good prayers. God simply had something better in store for Paul and David and us by letting the thorns remain, and supplying His sufficient grace (2 Corinthians 12:9).

“Affliction makes us feel our real desperation for God.”

What was the better thing he had in store? Desperation for God. Affliction makes us feel our real desperation for God, and we cry out for Him. That’s why Paul boasted more in his weaknesses than his strengths. He knew that when he was weak, he was strong — because when he was weak, God was his strength (2 Corinthians 12:9–10).

In all our proneness to wander astray from the God we love, we don’t need to ask our loving heavenly Father for affliction. Instead, let us ask Him for the merciful gift of desperation, for that is what we really need. ➤

We do not need to be afraid to ask Him to make us desperate for Him, because our Father loves to give good gifts to us (Luke 11:13). We can trust Him to do for us what we need most.

Therefore, we can make this our prayer:

“Whatever it takes, Lord, decrease my proneness to wander from You – by keeping me desperate for You.”



Please submit any news items, letters, adverts or short articles for the April 2022 magazine on, or before, 11th March.

ASSEMBLIES OUTREACH MAGAZINE

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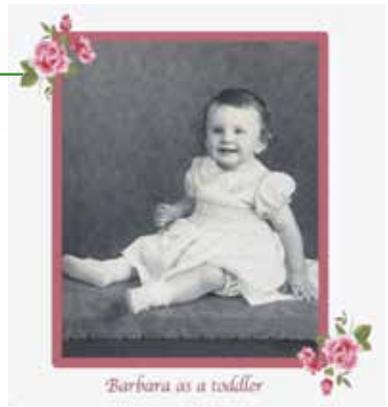
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Barbara Lillian Swan

1 October 1937 -27 December 2021



Barbara as a toddler



In December last year Barbara (Barb) Swan had surgery for bowel cancer, but died a few days later. A Memorial Service was held at 2pm in Greenway Chapel Memorial Gardens on 5th January 2022, followed by her burial. Mal Rowson welcomed everyone present and those online, and opened in prayer. David Swan read the 23rd Psalm and Heidi Rowley read the Eulogy, which forms the bulk of this article.

“Barbara Lillian Swan was born at a private hospital in Park Avenue Gordon on 1st October 1937 to William and Muriel Swan. Their son Ken was 5 years old. Two years later, Barbara and Ken were blessed with a little sister Maryann.

Barbara was christened at the Gordon Congregational Church and later went there to Sunday school and fellowship. She attended Gordon Public School and later Hornsby Girls High School where she gained her leaving certificate. During this time the family moved to Mt Colah. When Barbara left

school she started working in a clerical position at Kur-ing-ai Council. She left this position and went to work in Newcastle as a Bursar at the Church of England Grammar School for Girls.

Whilst working there our brother Ken lost his first wife Lois and baby. Ken had two little boys, David and Stephen, who needed someone to look after them. Barbara immediately dropped everything and went to Parks and later Wagga with Ken to look after him and the boys until Ken married Elizabeth.

After Ken married Elizabeth, Barbara came home and lived with Mum and worked as a receptionist for Dr. Sing at Mt. Colah. After mum passed away Barbara was at home on her own, and she decided to take herself on The Woman’s Weekly World Tour. She enjoyed it so much she got the urge to travel and has since been on many adventures overseas as well as touring every state in Australia.

I believe it was in her teenage years that Barbara accepted Christ as her Saviour and was baptised at Waitara Gospel Chapel.

Barbara later became involved in Girls Rally at Asquith Gospel Chapel as a Leader and would provide Spiritual ➤

Education, activities and attend camps with the girls. She attended weekly church services at the chapel.

From Mt Colah Barbara went to live at Ryde Road, Pymble, in our grandparents' home. Whilst there she started voluntarily working at Outreach Christian Book Warehouse and worked tirelessly at the Mission Centre in Newtown taking Greetings Cards, Bibles and other Christian Literature to be sold at various churches. There was also a shop in Gosford that she sometimes worked in which was rented by the Mission Centre. I know on occasions when she drove out to churches in the country she took Bibles with her too.

During this time Barbara was offered and accepted a position as a Companion to a lady who was terminally ill, and who lived on a Wheat and Sheep Station in Young.

On Barbara's return, her niece Annie started working in Sydney and Barbara graciously offered to share her home with Annie. This continued for 2 years until Annie married in 1991.

While living in Pymble, Barbara regularly attended St. Ives Gospel Chapel.

Barbara later sold our grandparents



Ken, Barbara, and Maryann

home in Pymble and purchased a unit at Wahroonga, which still allowed her to continue worshipping at St. Ives Gospel Chapel.

For many years Barbara attended the monthly Friendship Luncheon Meeting on a Tuesday at Waitara Gospel Chapel and manned the Outreach Book Service table there. This was always gratefully welcomed by all who attended.

She also helped run the Outreach Book stall at the annual Spring Fair at the Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village for many, many, years. She was a valuable member of the Elouera Ladies Auxiliary there and was always helping when needed, including providing support, activities and enjoyment at their Monday Fundays. She also continued her Outreach Book Service volunteer work taking Bibles and Christian literature to the Village to put in their sales showcase.

As well as this, Barbara volunteered with a friend at Hornsby Hospital, doing meals-on-wheels for many years.

During Barbara's time living in Pymble, she would go to Mangrove Mountain, where the family had property. We all enjoyed staying in the original house which was hers. Later she had it removed and had a lovely modern house built.

Barbara later sold her part of the family property and purchased a little cottage in Nabiac which she loved and enjoyed for a number of years. She would often go to stay for a few days or more and would enjoy sewing and cooking whilst there.

From Wahroonga Barbara moved >20

to Tarrigal Glen Retirement Village, Erina, where she has lived for the last 10 years. She retired from Outreach Book Service and this allowed her to spend more time away doing other things she enjoyed, like bus trips.

She attended Green Point Baptist Church, joined a Bible Study Group and also volunteered on their meals program for Coast Shelter in Gosford. She sometimes also volunteered at Henry Kendall Cottage in West Gosford as a historical guide.

After selling her cottage in Nabiac and whilst living at Tarrigal Glen, Barbara would take herself out each month to Kulnura to a roadside stall to buy her vegetables. Barbara loved to

get out and about and drove her little car all over the place enjoying regular visits to the countryside.

Barbara would visit John and me most Sunday afternoons, and during the week could be found either enjoying playing table tennis, Zumba, or walking around her Village where she would meet her friends for a chat and also provide church notices which she would print off. Barbara enjoyed attending Wednesday afternoon Chapel.

Our sister was a very generous person who helped many people financially, and in other ways, during their times of need. □

John Krishna – with the Lord



Seamens Christian Friend Society
Taking the Message of Life to Seafarers

by Rob Flinders

As you have perhaps already heard, John Krishna, the SCFS Representative in Port Kembla, was called home in the early hours of Saturday morning, 13th February. John is survived by his wife Pushpa and their siblings. The funeral is scheduled for 10am on Thursday, 24th February, at Fairy Meadow Anglican Church where John and Pushpa are members.

John, together with his wife, was a great prayer warrior who had a great compassion for seafarers onboard the ships visiting Port Kembla. John has boldly and lovingly proclaimed the gospel to seafarers for many years. John

and I often visited ships together and he was always a great encouragement to me each time we did so.

Readers may remember that John was featured in two *Assemblies Outreach* Magazine articles in 2012. One article was titled 'Three missionaries, not Two!' The other was titled 'Taking the Message of Life to Seafarers in Port Kembla'.

He will be remembered with great affection, and sadly missed by SCFS Representatives in NSW and also by many seafarers.

*"Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his faithful servants."*

Psalms 116:15 □

Mavis Rose Saxby (10/9/1933 - 25/1/2022) – Obituary

The bulk of this article was compiled by Jenny Saxby, Mavis's daughter-in-law, and read at the graveside service, on 31st January 2022 in the Castle Hill Cemetery. It was in pleasant weather and a large number of friends and family attended. Mavis was buried in the same plot as her late husband Richard, and mourners were comforted by the knowledge that both are now reunited safely in heaven, with their Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

"Mavis was born in Glenfarne Street, Bexley in the family home. She was the third child, and only daughter, of Ted and Doris Sefton.

Ted, Mavis's Dad, had arrived in Australia by ship when he was 2 years old. His family came from England and had an Anglican background but they had been invited to attend a growing protestant church at Renwick Hall in Leichardt. It was there that Ted met Doris Logan, the woman he married in 1923. When Mavis was born, ten years later, her two older brothers, Ted and Doug, were already 7½ and 9 years of age. Mavis had very happy memories of her childhood — lots of family gatherings for weddings, birthdays and Christmas. She felt very secure and loved. Mavis's father always read a few verses from the Bible after their evening meals and prayed with and for the family. She said that it became normal to pray and ask God for help and guidance.

Every December the family went to the Sydney Town Hall for the presentation of Handel's "Messiah".



This made a big impression on Mavis and began a lifelong love of choral music and a desire to play the organ.

Mavis had a happy school life, first at Carlton Infant School, followed by Bexley Primary, and then St George Girls Selective High School. She had lots of school friends who, for decades met up annually in the city for lunch together. There were often over 20 of them in attendance.

At High School one of Mavis's favourite subjects was French. The teacher, Mrs Hunt, was actually French herself, and really brought the lessons to life. Little did Mavis know that French was to play an important role in her life and she would spend 11 months in Paris studying the language before heading off to do missionary work in Chad in 1960 with Richard, her handsome young husband, whom she married in 1956.

The very year they arrived in Chad, Richard and Mavis's first baby, >22

Brenton, was born at the government hospital in Fort Archambault, after a 200km journey in a borrowed Bedford Ute. Next was Philip, delivered by the same doctor, but this time a little closer to home at Koumra (only a 75 km drive this time). By the time Philip was born, Brenton was almost 2 and speaking Mbai, while Richard was working on a booklet in Kado. So that makes 4 languages under the one roof - English, French, Mbai and Kado, not to mention the Toubouri dictionary that Richard was also working on each morning.

In 1963 the family moved to Pala which became their base for the next eleven years. Here, they literally put down roots — planting citrus trees, rosellas, guavas, mangoes, paw-paws, pumpkins and peanuts. In no time they were eating their own lettuces, tomatoes, beans, sweet corn and eggs. Mavis became very resourceful in the kitchen and something of a self-trained nutritionist.

In 1964 it was time to travel by ship back to Australia for furlough. When it came time to return to Chad in the following May, there was an extra family member in the form of a six-week-old baby daughter named Eleanor.

After a nightmare voyage in the ship, during which both Philip and Brenton contracted measles, they all arrived back in Chad. Mavis juggled motherhood with her missionary work, playing much more than a 'supporting' role. Her duties ranged from nurse to teacher to secretary to confidante. She

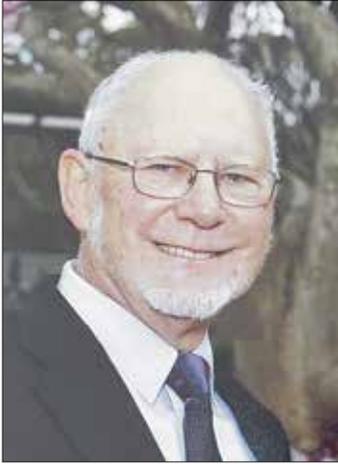
endured sickness, political unrest, dust storms and all sorts of heartbreak, but still looked on those years as some of the best in her life.

After their final return to Australia in 1974, Richard and Mavis worked in the Australian Missionary Tidings (AMT) office in Chatswood, where their experience in the mission field proved to be invaluable. In 1974 she and Richard bought a house at Alexander Avenue, Willoughby, for the sum of \$42,500 which seemed like a small fortune to them.

They attended Willoughby Assembly and stayed there for over 20 years, until Richard retired from AMT in 1996, and they moved to a townhouse at Mt Colah. During the following period, they continued to do voluntary work, including teaching English to migrants at their local church, Waitara Gospel Chapel, where also Richard was asked to be an elder. They also watched as their grandchildren count grew to seven. These were a great source of joy for Mavis.

After 16 years at Mount Colah, Richard and Mavis moved to Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village, Cherrybrook, in April 2013 for the final chapter of their lives.

Sadly, this chapter ended 6 days ago, early on 25th January, when Mavis died peacefully in her room with some family present. Like Richard had been in his family, Mavis was the last surviving member of her original family. May she rest in peace." □



Dr Cedric Gibbs was well known around Sydney assemblies and churches as a Bible teacher and a medical doctor. During the last 9 months he had faced a number of serious health issues and he passed into his Lord's presence on 1st February this year. He was laid to rest on Friday morning 11th February and a Thanksgiving Service for his life was held at West Pennant Hills Community Church (WPHCC) in the afternoon. A large number of family and friends attended the service, including his wife Val, and his daughter Mandy, who read the eulogy, which included the details, printed below with the family's permission.

"Cedric Charles John Gibbs was born on 30th March 1941 in Cape Town, South Africa. He was the oldest of six children, 5 boys and 1 girl. After high school he went to the prestigious University of Cape Town to study medicine. During his studies he married his first wife Gill and she worked to support the two of them, while Cedric continued his

studies, and graduated with a medical degree in 1967. After he qualified, Gill was able to give up working, and their first child, Mandy, was born in October 1968. Soon after, they moved as a family to Port Shepstone in KwaZulu-Natal where Cedric worked at the Murchison Mission Hospital among the Zulu people. This was a challenging role for a newly qualified doctor, as he had to deal with everything from ingrown toenails to brain surgery. He even did some preaching in Zulu. Unfortunately, after a couple of years, he became seriously ill and had to leave the hospital for the sake of his own health.

The family moved back to Cape Town where their son, Kerry, was born in 1971. Cedric was advised to work more regular hours, so he took a job as a medical officer with the Old Mutual Insurance Company. He did also have a small surgery at home where he saw patients after hours.

In 1977, at the height of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the family moved to Australia where Cedric took up the position of Medical Superintendent at the Queen Victoria Hospital in Adelaide. This was a huge step for a small family of four but they very quickly found friends and family among God's people at the Unley Assembly, where Cedric became an elder. He also developed a preaching ministry among different churches and at Christian camps.

In 1981, Cedric moved to work at the School of Public Health at the >24

University of Sydney, and the whole family became part of WPHCC. He was soon asked to be an elder and he did itinerant preaching on many Sundays, at churches all over Sydney and at various camps and conferences. He also began lecturing at Emmaus Bible College, Epping, on a part-time basis.

In 1984, when Ian McDowell retired from Emmaus, Cedric was made the Principal. It was a big step of faith for him and marked the beginning of 22 years in Christian ministry, punctuated by a few stints of practising medicine along the way. Mandy attested that “God was faithful through all that time as my Dad served Him faithfully. It has been a great encouragement to me to hear from many whose lives and Christian journeys were shaped by my Dad’s ministry, including those who went through Emmaus in those years.”

In 1990, the WPHCC elders decided they would like to have a full-time pastor and chose Dr Gibbs, but still as part of the leadership team of elders. He had this role until 1996, when he moved to working with Australian Missionary Tidings (AMT) in Sydney. His role was in mission education, including editing the ‘Serving Together’ magazine and teaching at churches and conferences, and in pastoral care of missionaries.

By 2001, Mandy was living in Uzbekistan with her family, and her brother, Kerry, was living in the USA. Cedric’s thoughts turned to pastoring an international church overseas. Mandy was attending the International Church

of Tashkent, which was looking for a new pastor. She said “and so it came to be that my parents also moved to Uzbekistan to take up that ministry from 2002 to 2006.”

“When it came time to move on again, Dad was 65 and decided it was time to “retire”. Although he did give up full-time work and ministry, and did slow down a little, he never did stop preaching and teaching and mentoring younger Christian leaders.”

“Unfortunately, my parents’ dreams of a long happy retirement, enjoying each other’s company, were not to be, as my Mum was diagnosed with lymphoma in late 2008 and passed away in June 2009. I think the bottom fell out of my Dad’s world at that point, but God still had a lot more blessings in store for him. In 2010, my Dad took the round the world trip that he and my Mum had been planning to take.”

After returning to Australia, Cedric met Val, a wonderful Christian woman with whom he very quickly ‘clicked’. They were married in 2011. As well as becoming “Grandpa Cedric” to Val’s beautiful grandchildren, he also welcomed his grandson Finian, born to Kerry and Lia in 2011.

Over the past 10½ years, Cedric and Val have had the opportunity to serve the Lord together through leading a Bible study group in their retirement village at Galston. They have found a new home church together at St Jude’s Anglican church Dural. They’ve had the opportunity to travel to many countries together. Cedric has ➤

continued to preach at various churches and to regularly give devotions to the staff of Pacific Hills Christian School.

Mandy was also so grateful that her Dad was able to walk her down the aisle when she married Ehab in 2018. She is also grateful that despite the once in a lifetime global pandemic, they were able to celebrate her Dad's 80th birthday last March with so many of his friends, who have been like family to them over the years.

Mandy also said "Over the past nine months, as Dad has become increasingly weak and unwell, his wife Val has been by his side, through countless medical appointments and COVID tests, several hospitalisations (some planned and some unplanned) major surgery and chemotherapy. I am so grateful that he has had Val

caring for him in ways that I couldn't, including being by his side to the very end."

"The outpouring of love and appreciation for my Dad since he went home to be with the Lord last week has been both overwhelming and encouraging. ... There have been many who have said what his preaching and teaching meant to them. It has warmed my heart to know that my Dad's life of faithful service impacted so many; probably more than he ever knew. He was loved by so many, not least of all by me."

"... Cedric Charles John Gibbs was saved by Jesus Christ, he lived his life to serve Him and he is now at rest in his Saviour's arms. Well done good and faithful servant. To God be the glory."



Lord lift this cloud that depresses me
That through the gloom, Your face I see
To look beyond frail human sight
Your Spirit reveals Your love and might.

This world is Yours, though sin is rife
May many see Christ's salvation is life.
Human wisdom, money and power cannot achieve
Only Christ Jesus can meet the sinner's need.

The Lord of glory, He will soon appear
A brilliant light for His church so dear,
To gather up to heights unknown, to His throne
The children of God, Christ's love does own.

Francis Williams, 2021

You have to walk into this new year as if it's a new season of life. You can't allow what went down this past year to predict or influence what's coming up. You're not your past, nor your prior mistakes. You're not how people have treated you or who they've tried to define you as. You are a child of God, and as part of your inheritance your Heavenly Father is delivering you a fresh start for this year. In this season allow Him to define who you are, to provide what you need, and to guide you through it all.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*

In this new season, I want you to take your eyes off your circumstances and place them on Jesus. Don't look to the left or to the right. Don't be distracted by the size of the battle. Instead remember who you fight for. Your God controls every battlefield. The One who controls the wind and the waves, He will fight for you. He will provide for you. You don't have to do it alone this new year. He is making the way and providing all you need.

Isaiah 43:18-19. *Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert.*

Just because you can't see a change coming, that doesn't mean it's not happening. The Lord wants you to live your best life, in Him, this year. To do

this He needs your total surrender and commitment. Don't seek a solution. Seek His face. Dive into the truths of His Word. Press onward trusting God and the promises found for you in scripture. It's okay if you haven't sought Him in the past for your life. Seek Him now. Begin living each day for Christ, and He will lead you to new heights with Him this year.

Philippians 3:13 *Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.*

God is not disappointed in you. He rejoices over you with singing. You are His child, and He loves you dearly. Nothing is unknown to Him! Before He even formed you in your mother's womb He knew the mistakes you would make and the problems you would face. He is calling to you now to come to Him, despite your faults, and to trust that He has a plan for your life. Yes, you! His plans are for your good future. He loves you that much.

Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

This can be the year you lay down worry. This can be the year to tell anxiety that it's got to go. This can be the year that you stop trying in your own power, and that you start allowing God to take control. How do you do this?!

Start simply by asking Him to take ➤

control of your new year ahead. Then follow by seeking Him consistently in each new day. When you wake, speak to Him. Even if you don't hear Him answering back! He loved you first. Now it's your turn, and when you love someone you talk to them. Build a relationship by talking regularly with the Lord. Tell Him your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your worries, and your gratefulness.

As you seek the Lord in conversation and relationship you will feel more comfortable to place your trust in Him.

Grab the Bible. Read some every day! Even if you can't understand it all at first. Ask your Father to reveal His truth for your life through scripture. Seek and you will find. Knock and He will answer. Commit to seeking Him through His Word. Then watch your life change.

When you have a problem, seek the Lord. Speak to Him about it. Pray for His guidance, and read the Bible for your answer. When you have a worry, hand it over to Him by bringing it to Him in prayerful conversation. Tell

your Abba Father that you can't fix it, but you believe He can. Believe it, and then watch what He does.

Celebrate your small victories with Him. Write them down. Tell Him thank you. Focus on the positive things in your life, and pray about the rest. Speak life into your day. Speak scripture out loud. Speak positively about yourself. You're not old, fat, or bad at your job. You're a child of the Most High God, created in His image to do great things for His kingdom. He fashioned you according to His will, so be excited for the life He has destined for you as you seek that will.

Trust Him this new year to take you to new heights with Him and in your life. Seek and you will find. You were made for so much more than this. Step into the New Year with a passion for His purposes for you!

Proverbs 3:5-6. *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.* 

“God is looking for those with whom He can do the impossible — what a pity that we plan only the things that we can do by ourselves.”

—A.W. Tozer

If the World is Ending Tomorrow

... here's what you should preach.

I was taken aside after a Sunday morning service by an attender who wanted to know when I was going to be warning the congregation about the impending crash of the world economy that Illuminati would be orchestrating in order to decrease the human population by up to 90%.

After several minutes of hearing of the danger of vaccines, conspiracies with communist nations, and the malicious intent of the heads of states, I finally held up a hand and said, "Even if this were all true, I'd be completely comfortable preaching exactly what I just preached."

I recall, at the time, I was in a series called Roots based on the book of Colossians. We were covering such subjects as how to spot real love, how to grow deeper in Christ, and how to live a spiritually fruitful life.

This isn't the first time I've been confronted about my lack of urgency about end-of-the-world-as-we-know-it issues. There are also these pesky Blood Moons to worry about. And someone is always trying to kill us with vaccines, or aspartame, or a zombie virus ... I've heard it all...

I'm a sceptical believer. I've come to have a sturdy faith in Jesus because I believe the central truths of Christianity stand up under tests of logic, reason, science, history, archaeology, and textual criticism. I embrace the Bible as inerrant; as crazy as that may sound to some people.

But I'm still sceptical. I don't mind wrestling with big questions and have found it to embolden my faith over time. But I'm especially sceptical of teachings and arguments that serve as a distraction from the main thing – the Gospel.

Let's say, hypothetically, that the blood moons point to the end of the world as we know it. The Illuminati is planning to trim the human race back a bit and assume complete control over our lives economically and militarily. What I'd want to preach about this coming Sunday is... *the good news that Jesus Christ died to save sinners and rose again.*

And if that wild theory is hogwash and poppycock (the direction I'm inclined to lean in), then what I'd want to preach this coming Sunday is... *the good news that Jesus Christ died to save sinners and rose again.*

The Apostle Paul once warned a young Pastor named Timothy to rebuke some leaders in the ancient church of Ephesus for getting people off-track in endless debates about myths, legends, and Old Testament genealogies. As Paul put it, "*these things only lead to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God.*" (1 Timothy 1:4 NLT) And then Paul continued by saying, "The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith." (v. 5) ➤

I love that statement! Paul is essentially charging Timothy to avoid motivating people to seek God on the basis of fear, rational or otherwise, and instead to seek Him on the basis of love and a desire for purity and real faith.

I don't want people to be afraid of the end of the world. After all, what do we Christians have to worry about in the eternal scheme of things? Though the world falls apart around us and our bodies be destroyed, we live on! We win! We enjoy victory!

I'm not attempting to minimize the seriousness of persecution, which is obviously a real and present danger in our world at present. I'm simply saying that there are some essentials to be preached weekly, regardless of the direction the world around us is headed.

If the world were ending tomorrow, I'd want to preach this Sunday the good news that Jesus Christ died to save sinners and rose again, and that we can live a life of faith in Him that matters for eternity.

And if the world hangs around a few more millennia, I'd want to preach the same exact message. It's (possibly, at any moment) the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine.

You could build a congregation in size, and collect large offerings, by creating anxiety, fear, and anger toward the outside world, but I don't think you'd be on-task. In fact, you might just wind up starting a cult, which never ends well.

Instead, lead people to life in Jesus. Lead people to the cross for redemption. Lead people to discover the life worth living no matter what the world looks like around us. Lead people to follow Jesus, emulate His character, and implement the ways and practices conveyed in Scripture.

Confront sin and apathy.

Point people to redemption in the cross of Christ.

Equip believers to live a life of faith.

Empower servant leaders.

Strengthen families.

Reinforce the biblical faith.

And hail the triumphant return of King Jesus.

In other words, this Sunday....

Preach. The. GOOD. NEWS. 

Supplied by Sermon Central

Jesus says:-

"Yes I am coming soon."

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22:20^{NIV}



compiled by C.H.Winrow
outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au

As usual in this column, we mention Christian items on the Internet and World Wide Web which readers may find interesting or helpful, and worth a visit via their own computer, smart-phone, tablet or other device.

Unfortunately the section is shorter than usual because other matters have taken priority in this issue. However, there seems to be a growing amount of Christian material available to help us study the Bible; and to worship; to teach the children; and explore a range of issues impacting on Christians, the Church, and humanity in general.

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Please Note: to make it easier to visit these websites they have been included as 'hot-links' if you use the PDF version of this magazine. The PDF version is available to subscribers as usual at the rates shown on page 17.

If you try out any of the following websites **please send me feedback** on your experience whilst using the specific website or product itself. With your permission, I may have room to pass on your thoughts to help our readers in future issues of *Assemblies Outreach* magazine, or via our website page:-

nswaem.org.au/Mag/overview.html

* * * * *

In partnership with Tecarta

www.tecartable.com

Tyndale House Publishers has created the **Refresh** Devotionals:

www.refreshdevos.com

This is a comprehensive yet easy-to-use Bible devotional app, with more than 20,000 daily readings written by over 45 Tyndale authors such as Ann Voskamp, Nancy Guthrie, David Jeremiah, Tony Dungy, and Gary Chapman. Readers can customize their own personal reading plan on topics that meet them where they are in life and fits their schedule. The app is available in both Apple and Google app stores.

"It is user-friendly, intuitive, and robust," said Ron Beers, Sr. VP, Group Publisher. "It will inspire you and give you food for thought to meet your daily challenges."

* * * * *

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) has long published its *Decision Magazine* in many countries.

In April 2019, it launched a website by the same name, but with enhanced News Content. At the time, Franklin Graham said "This is not a time to withdraw from the culture. This is a time for believers to pray fervently, work steadfastly, and engage the world around us, both with the truth of God's Word and the eternal hope of the Gospel."

Today the website is still going strong at:-

www.decisionmagazine.com

Please submit any items for the
April 2022 magazine on, or
before, 11th March.

NSW ASSEMBLIES' EVANGELISTIC MISSION (NSWAEM)

ABN 81 001 037 690

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AIMS

- To support the expansion of evangelism and church growth, primarily among Christian Brethren Assemblies.
- To offer opportunities in this *Assemblies Outreach* Magazine for Commended Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly Activities and other kindred bodies, to publicise and explain their ministries.
- To generate funds, through the Christian Outreach Book Service and other means, toward the support of NSW Commended Workers.
- To provide appropriate teaching for Christians.

Further information about the Mission
can be obtained via the website:-
www.nswaem.org.au



*We understand the importance of
family and it shows in everything
that we do.*

Richard Spiteri

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www.christianfuneralsosydney.com.au

Providing communities of continual Christian care
Residential and specialist care provided to the aged, frail aged and those
living with dementia.



Elouera Gardens



Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre



Glenhaven Gardens



Carinya House



Lynden Grove



Groves House

Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village, Cherrybrook NSW

Elouera Gardens comprises 75 independent living units with 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units, surrounded by pleasant gardens. It offers a wide variety of styles and sizes of units and a supportive Christian community.

Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre, Cherrybrook NSW

Set in well established gardens, and with an enviable reputation for delivering a high standard of care, the 120 bed Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre provides high and low level care and special support for people living with dementia.

Glenhaven Gardens Retirement Village, Glenhaven, NSW

Glenhaven Gardens offers modern and spacious 2 and 3 bedroom villas. The village comprises 24 air-conditioned and private units, with either a garage or carport. All units are wheelchair accessible for those who need a little extra room to help with their mobility.

Carinya House, Glenhaven NSW

Carinya House is a 60 bed care centre providing high and low-level care support in a setting where residents enjoy the tranquil bushland setting and partake in a very full and stimulating recreational program. It includes a secure dementia support area and also offers ageing-in-place.

Lynden Grove Retirement Village, Cardiff Heights, NSW

Lynden Grove has 44 modern 2 and 3 bedroom villas. It has a semi-rural outlook with picturesque Mount Sugarloaf as a back drop. It is in a pleasant and quiet bushland setting, yet close to local shopping centres.

Groves House, Cardiff Heights NSW

Set on a ridge with panoramic views to the mountains, Groves House is a 60 bed care centre providing high and low-level care, dementia care and ageing-in-place to the people of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the surrounding districts.

For more information about any of our services please don't hesitate to call our Client Services Team on 02 9842 4111.