

# Prepare<sup>the</sup> Way

*Preparing the Bride of Christ for the return of Christ*

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# 100



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COVER: "But one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals (Revelation 5:5).'"

## Talk to us..

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# 100 not out

*“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old (Matthew 13:52).’”*

*by John Gardiner*

**A**S with all things of God, the call was very simple: **To help in some small way prepare the bride of Christ for the soon return of Christ.**

And as we reach this milestone of 100 issues, we earnestly hope we have not often wandered too far from that mandate. We hope that theological hobby-horses, commercial pressures and any desire to be acceptable and popular in the eyes of man have neither dimmed the flame nor muffled the trumpet.

It has been a wonderful blessing and a great privilege for all of us involved with *Prepare the Way* to see that, while this magazine has proved to be not everyone’s cup of spiritual tea, there are many around the world who still take seriously the call to press towards the goal and keep answering the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

To those who’ve faithfully supported this ministry through thick and thin, and to the many who’ve given in secret with no expectation of human thanks, please be sure that any gratitude we can offer pales into insignificance alongside the favour of the God who sees in secret and rewards openly (Matthew 6:4).

In this issue, we’ve done exactly what the verse at the top of the page says – we’ve taken, out of our treasure, things old and new. We have some new articles, and then we have also drawn out of the storehouse of the past 100 issues some of the early treasures that have been the most requested and copied down through the years.

We trust this issue will be a table spread with fine spiritual food – and we hope we can continue to be a blessing to you in the years ahead!

*“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Saviour, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen (Jude 1:24-25).”*





# A voice in the wilderness

by Peter Pollock

**THE prophet Isaiah, in his 40<sup>th</sup> chapter, speaks about a “voice” – a crying voice, a lamenting voice – beckoning from the Wilderness that urged us to be ready, to prepare the way for the Lord, to make straight in the desert a highway for our God!**

“Make straight” in the “desert” a “highway” for our God. A pretty clear instruction; a pretty clear definition of condition and a pretty clear road! As always, God speaks loud and clear.

In the book of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, the last word before 400 hundred years of silence prior to the birth of Jesus, we are promised a prophet, an Elijah, who will precede the coming of the “great” and “dreadful” – two great contrasts obviously depending upon where you stand with the Lord. This prophet, in the power of God’s Holy Spirit, will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers, something that God sees as important, “lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

We must, therefore, assume that there is something significant about fathers and their standing with their children. Maybe that is why the devil, the god of this age, is so diligent about his worldwide anti-father conspiracy. But more about that another time...

To get back to Isaiah and what he prophesied, we can thus realistically, symbolically and doctrinally be certain that it will always be a lonely voice crying out in the wilderness. Indeed, God’s truth will always be regarded as “backwoods” and “unnecessary” in a hedonistic, humanistic, money-crazed, power-mad world!

It will always be about making “straight” in a “desert.” Sad, yeah even tragic, but true!

Reading in Chapter three of Luke’s gospel we are enlightened about God’s chosen harbinger, His trusty herald, John the Baptist. God is immutable and meticulous and so we can be sure there was no better choice than John to be the messenger. And I do believe that God will continue with the same simple straight forward message as a stricken, godless world prepares for the Second Coming.

The Greek word *parousia* (meaning arrival or official visit) is used 24 times in the Bible, 17 of those referring to the return of Jesus. The Second Advent is in fact the fulfilment of all scripture and prophecy, and should be something we should all be far more excited and passionate about!

God has promised the return of His Son to rule and reign and that every knee shall bow and tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord. It is going to happen because God says so and it does not depend upon you and me, or how well we are organising the “church” or our ministries.

And it came to pass, says the Bible. And so it will! John was specifically “chosen,” born in the Spirit, even in his mother’s womb and he was to be the selected witness. Just the same as the real church, which was born in the Holy Spirit that day at Pentecost, was chosen of God to be His corporate witness until He finishes the “church age” by “rapturing,” taking away His saints just prior to His inevitable return.

I do sense an excitement among the genuine brothers and sisters as we currently experience a revival of quality. By

that I mean that the “real church,” the solid core, is alive and well and becoming more aware of the need to stop playing games and focus more upon Jesus and less upon those “good things” that merely become undermining counter-attractions to the main purpose of the church – to get people saved and discipled!

However, while God is working with “His own” sheep, the world is in chaos, and it is deteriorating on a daily basis and with increasing and alarming rapidity. Hopelessness is rife as people are gridlocked in fear and desperation. Shaking heads at mind-boggling statistics does not help, except to confirm that man has lost control.

We are in apocalyptic times and the good news for believers is that the rapture and wedding feast can’t be far off, while the bad news for the unbelievers is that tribulation and more suffering are just around the corner. Those who don’t make the cut, as it were, will be left behind, to mull over the fact that in life it is the ultimate no-brainer to reject Jesus Christ.

I believe that it’s time for the John the Baptist church! That same spirit that raised John to herald Jesus the first time is at work to herald His return and manifest very real witness and presence. And it will most surely not be about false preach-them-happy-and-rich messages! And it will expose those false prophets who travel around promising peace, goodwill and material prosperity to all!

Let’s take a closer look at John the Baptist. He was born six months prior to Jesus and even as his mother heard the news from Mary about Jesus, John leapt in the womb. John was part of a select group of

“biblical giants” with barren mothers. He was also a Nazirite, further suggesting a special ordination.

He lived in the desert, was sustained and nourished by eating locusts and honey and all this ensured that he would not be tainted by the world in any way. He was truly to be in the world and not of the world!

Holiness is separation unto God. It is not about halos, harps and a fancy CVs, it’s about a righteousness that only comes from God and is only available in Jesus Christ.

Spirit-led, John was taught in the wilderness ensuring no contamination and with his long hair, leather belt, radical words, language and disposition, must have been a frightening proposition! His language was strong, and many would have contended that such straight talking can’t possibly be fruit of the Holy Spirit. “Where is the love?” I can hear from our modern-day chorus of grace charmers!

But when John spoke of the “brood of vipers” he was in fact quoting Jesus, for our Lord used similar phrases in describing white-washed Pharisees. John’s message was loud and clear, telling us that we are sinners, who desperately need to repent and be baptised. He did target the Pharisees, underlining that God does really have a problem with those who pretend to be believers but are not – that Synagogue of Satan Jesus refers to in the book of Revelation.

“Bear fruit worthy of repentance” – a very clearly defined message. A true decision bears fruit!

John likened Jesus to a “winnowing fan,” “thoroughly cleaning out the threshing floor” and “He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire!” “He will baptise with the Holy Spirit and Fire (Matthew 3:11).” John said all this before he had even met Jesus!

It was accurate insight from the very throne-room of God. Then came the moment he baptised Jesus, which signalled the end of his ministry.

We read how this mighty man of God met a sordid, absolutely bizarre end and there was no last-minute attempt to save him! It was an ignominious departure, all rather matter-of-fact, impersonal and downright unfair. Jesus was upset but He didn’t break down, simply because it was all in the script. It was all God-ordained! Mind-boggling in its awesomeness, if we really allow ourselves to see it in this

context.

Some profound issues emerge from John the Baptist’s ministry. Personally I have always been deeply touched by his statement about the shoelaces and that he does not even deserve to tie them for the Lord! He had no false illusions about himself. He knew he was wretchedly unworthy, a clear indicator that the Holy Spirit had been working with him for years.

Oswald Chambers writes: “True repentance causes a sense of inexpressible unworthiness” – the true fruit of a spirit that convicts on sin, righteousness and judgement and always raises Jesus to the highest platform.

John’s understanding of his role was crystal clear. God’s servants always have a clear simple vision. “I must decrease, He must increase.”

We have to empty ourselves for God to be able to use us effectively. John told his disciples to follow Jesus, not him, and indicator of true Christian leadership which is humble and serves.

John was happy to give up everything, and give it all away. What a great problem we have these days with men and woman who just can’t die to their own visions and ministries!

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## **The Lamb Who takes away sin**

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Then there was the accuracy of John’s doctrine, and I particularly highlight his description of Jesus as the “Lamb of God” who takes away the “sin” of the world. Not the sins, plural, of the world! The original sin in the Garden of Eden, which is incidentally the father of all sins, is the sin of unbelief.

Adam and Eve did not believe God, Who told them not to eat of that fruit. They were tempted, ate and died spiritually, as God had promised. That started it all! Unbelief is the greatest sin of all and even now it is the one sin that Jesus did not die for – simply because if you don’t believe in Him, there is no way back to the Father.

With John there were also no signs and wonders. No healings and mountain-top stuff, just the plain and simple straight truth. Also there was no special treatment for him, nor was he a profound source of insider knowledge!

There was no molly-coddling or special encouragement in prison. Are you the one? he asked. Again no yes or no, but

told to look and listen. Maybe we can all take note, because we tend to want, and even demand, the yes and no from God when we should be content just to look and listen.

John’s job was to speak the truth straight, pulling no punches and fearing no man. All it cost him was his head, persecution and martyrdom. But it is the same spirit that needs to prevail in the true end-time church right now, for indeed the storm clouds are gathering, the twigs are budding and the trumpets are sounding the fall of Babylon.

Of course revival is all about God through His Son Jesus, but for us who love to analyse and extract key one-liners, perhaps we can be excused for suggesting that a key to revival is locusts and honey? Locusts swarm, devour and destruct and in the Bible represent judgement and retribution. Honey, on the other hand, represents God’s word, a divine wisdom from God that presents judgement and mercy, wrath and grace, kindness and sternness, all together at the same time.

A locust-and-honey sandwich would have been a John the Baptist delight – a divine mixture in the centre of the bread of life! In Luke 3, we are introduced to all the great leaders of that time, listed faithfully by the anointed scribe, but then we are reminded that the word of God did not come to all those fancy leaders, but God chose to bring it through John in the wilderness.

God is not going to usher in His Kingdom with the rich and famous nor with the humanly wise and powerful. It’s about a remnant. It’s about the John the Baptists. It’s about a narrow road. It’s about the faithful few!

Stop claiming Abraham, said John. That excludes tribes and cultures, and of course religion and all the things that we have made it. The biggest business in the world today is religion! And yet, what a sorry mess as we head towards the return of Jesus.

Bear the fruit of repentance and that, dear friends, has much more to do with brokenness and weeping than it does with prosperity and triumphalism! In Revelation 9:20 we have just read about a third of the world being wiped out in judgement. And yet: “those who remained did not repent.” They did not turn from their wicked ways. Shaking fists at God!

It’s all out there! Make no mistake about that! Time is short! Extremely short! 





# Shafts of Light 28

by Helen Gardiner

*"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (James 1:2-4)."*

**MY own experience has taught me, and is still teaching me, that one of the greatest virtues that the Lord desires us to have is patience.**

It is a hard lesson to learn, especially as we live in an instant society.

God has given me conditional promises in my walk with Him. I have never battled to hear the nature and the condition of the promise; but I have always found that God's timing is far longer than I expected.

I have been waiting for Him to fulfil one promise of deliverance all my life (I am 60 years old). I now feel the fulfilment is imminent, but I could be wrong. Over all the years my faith, rather than waning, has grown stronger.

I like to think that in that day of my freedom, I will lay hold of an anointing and an authority that will be able to be imparted to others and will bring them instant release: that they will not have to wait as I have waited. Again, I suspect I may be wrong. Why? Just because the virtue of patience is so paramount to the Lord, that He is probably not going to impart instant answers to prayers.

My heart sometimes bleeds as I am called upon to pray for those in the body who are afflicted. There is such a desperate heart-cry for instant release, yet I know that God's agenda is to beget and reproduce His character in His people. And that takes time. A long time. We are in process.

However, we cannot wait to be perfect

before we do God's works which He has for us to do...

I was blessed the other night when we watched a teaching of William Carroll from Times Square Church in New York City, when the essence of what he said is that we must be prepared to "grow and go simultaneously."

Pastor Carroll himself has come through a season of illness, with diabetes, and it is amazing to see the deeper nature of his ministry since the illness. God's ways are not our ways. We have to trust Him with all our hearts.

*"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance (Psalm 42:5)."*

Last issue I wrote about the insatiable desire I have for the Lord: the passion to feed Christ within. That is still very much with me. Verses 1 and 2 of Psalm 42, really expresses my heart:

*"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."*



*"And it shall be, in that day," says the Lord, "That you will call Me 'My Husband', and no longer call Me 'My Master,'"*

*"I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me as faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord (Hosea 2:16,19&20)."*

This Scripture, I believe, is very much a "now" one, as intimacy with the Lord should be peaking among the mature, and, as the Church prepares Herself in these End Times.

However, I would caution that this

Scripture is not an excuse for a bad earthly marriage. Our marriages should be getting better as we both become more Christ-like.

Our principal yoking, though, should be to the Lord, and the yoking to our earthly spouse should be secondary to that. We cannot look to our earthly partners to fulfil in us what only the Holy Spirit can do.



Daily, the Lord brings encouraging Scriptures to me, but among the encouragement is one sobering word from Isaiah 1:16-20:

*"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. 'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'"*

It is important to embrace the part about being devoured by the sword.

Obedience is so crucial, and if and when we mess up it is so important to make right immediately.



Revival is on our hearts in these days. True revival means high standards of righteousness.

I remember hearing years ago a story from the well-known medical missionary Helen Roseveare. She lived through revival and recounted a time when they had been basking in the presence of the Lord – which never left them. But for one

day when she was chatting with a friend and they got into criticising someone else – immediately the Holy Spirit departed. I assume He came back when they were convicted and repented.

These days there is just so much gossiping and criticism. It really is quite awful. We certainly are not going to see any revival until we repent and stop doing these things.



We, as a women's group have been so blessed by watching the Peter Horrobin series on "Truth and Freedom." In the last teaching entitled "The Truth Shall Set You Free," he quotes from three of the early church commentators who wrote a couple of hundred years after the book of Acts. They reported seeing all the same kind of miracles recounted in Acts, but one said that one of the keys to the supernatural was unity among the brethren.

As a worship team at Mount Zion Church we enjoy a strong presence of the Holy Spirit. One of the keys is that because we are family, and are in unity and community, God commands blessing. There are no superstars and no egos.

So it must be in the Church if we are going to see revival.



A couple of months ago, I felt led to re-look the film *The Passion*, produced and directed by Mel Gibson. I recall it made an impression upon me originally, but, not that much of an impression...

This time around, it was a lot more powerful. Maybe because when I originally watched, I had not been broken by the Lord. This time there were sobs of sorrow, repentance and empathy. I think the film contributed to the ongoing salvation of my soul. Think about looking again.



One of my favourite Scriptures at the moment is from Judges 5:31b:

*"But let those who love Him be like the sun when it comes out in full strength."*

Oh Lord let it be so.

For many years I had a giant poster type affair which I had made. I had it up in my kitchen and was encouraged by it daily. It got to the point, though, when my husband said it was time to take it down because it was looking pretty scruffy.

The sentiment and passion of this heart-cry has stayed with me, and I have more faith that it is about to be fulfilled than I had all those years ago.

Talk about patience!

Hallelujah.



**T**HE following is an eye-witness account of a meeting led by Evan Roberts at Trecynon in the Welsh revival of 1904:

The prim congregation breathed heavily and deeply. But the young minister in the pulpit remained absolutely silent.

They observed however, that his body shook perceptibly as tears coursed down his pale cheeks.

Then a strange stillness fell upon the people. It soon broke when one of the proudest of that assembly fell on her knees in agonising prayer and unrestrainedly confessed her sins, creating consternation among other proud, self-satisfied, respectable members. Others followed rapidly.

How the elders gasped! All over the chapel, men and women, young and old, kneeling in the pews and aisles, claimed "the blessing." Mount Zion, for once, became a veritable Valley of Baca.

Immediately upon the ending of those burning confessions, impromptu hymns were sung. How the people sang! That service continued all day. Mr Roberts reiterated the cry, "Obey! Obey! Obey the Holy Spirit!"

When evening came, the other churches had received the news. The neighbourhood seemed to have assembled in this one place, striving to enter the building where "the revival" was. The crush was terrible.

When I reached the chapel there were hundreds clamouring for admittance. A generous deacon, who had been there for 14 hours without a break, offered me his chair.

Confronting me and surrounding me was a mass of people, with faces aglow with a divine radiance, certainly not of this earth. One section of the congregation was singing, "Oh! The Lamb."

In another part of the building scores were engaged simultaneously in prayer, some were wringing their hands as if in mental agony, while others who had received "the blessing" were joyous in their new-found experience. With awe and fear I gazed upon the scene.

A young woman with a beautiful countenance and an exquisite voice challenged, "What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him and observed Him." She clapped her hands for joy.

A Presbyterian minister, his countenance pale as death, stood and recited: "Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colours from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? 'It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.'"

Underneath the gallery, a young man stammering, drew tears from all eyes as he cried, "W-w-w-what in-must I d-do t-to be s-s-s-saved?"

When this spiritual tumult was at its height, there came a sudden calm. Evan Roberts was on his feet. He looked straight down at me. Our eyes met for a few seconds. I solemnly avow that those eyes searched me through and through. They burned like coals of fire.

In a split second, my innermost soul seemed to be laid bare. I feared and I shook. The lustre on his countenance eloquently proclaimed the abundance of grace overflowing his heart. Had there been a cover nearby, I would have sought it.

Will anyone forget it? I think not. The fadeless scene has only deepened with the passage of the years.

What was the secret of this movement? It was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. The meetings were full of the spirit of prayer. Evan Roberts was often in an agony of prayer, and he drew floods of prayer from the people. He observed that the success of a meeting in saving souls was in proportion to the spirit of fervent prayer in that meeting.



# Daniel Nash, a remarkable intercessor

**“I HAVE known people who prayed till they were soaked in sweat on a cold winter’s day. I have known people who have prayed for hours until they were totally drained of strength because of the agony of their souls. I have worked with a man of this calibre.” – Charles Finney**

While Charles Finney was preaching to the masses and seeing remarkable conversions, a humble man was prostrate in a house nearby, in intensive prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The story of the almost unknown Daniel Nash is the story of a very powerful prayer ministry. So important was Nash to Finney, that, a few weeks after Nash’s death, Finney went back to an ordinary pastoral ministry.

Daniel Nash was born in 1775 at an unknown place in the USA. No one knows what happened to his life before he was 40. What we know is that at the age of 40 he became the pastor of a Presbyterian Church and during his first year there around 70 people were saved in something of a mini-revival.

But he withdrew after being voted out of the church. The rejection from those he loved wounded him deeply. Also, as a result of a serious eye infection, he spent several weeks in a dark room where he could not read or write. The broken preacher began to pray earnestly and so began one of the greatest prayer evangelism ministries ever.

When Finney came to Evan Mills in New York to start his evangelistic work, Nash joined him in a partnership which was to last until the death of Nash, seven years later. Their aim was to go to the lost ones where no one had previously preached the gospel.

The foundational thought behind their work was that before you can evangelise an area, it needs to be prepared through prayer. Daniel Nash would quietly enter the town where Finney was intending to

preach, and find two or three people who would pray with him in unity. Together they would pray intensively that God would work in the lives of the people in the town. Often it took three to four weeks of prayer before Finney could come.

Finney recounts one episode: “When I came to a town to start revival, a lady contacted me. She said, ‘Brother Finney, do you know a Father Nash? He and two other men have been staying with me for the last three days, but they haven’t eaten anything. I heard them groaning, so I looked in and saw them prostrate. They have been lying like that for three days. I thought something terrible must have happened, but I was afraid to go in and didn’t know what to do. Could you please come and see if they are all right?’ No, that’s unnecessary, I said. They are only travailing in prayer.”

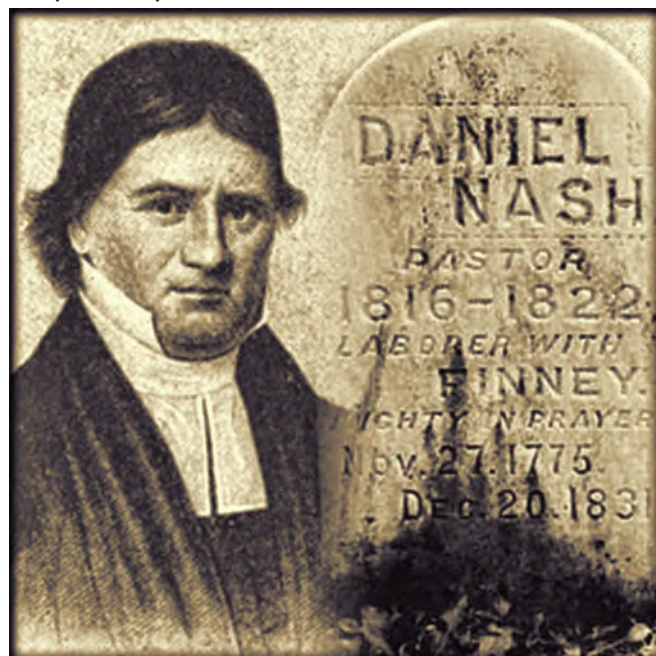
Nash didn’t just pray before Finney came. While Finney was preaching, Nash and other intercessors were in a separate room, praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the preacher.

Finney clearly saw that the important thing in fruitful ministry was powerful prayer which meant that the Holy Spirit came on the assembly with such conviction that the conversions were real. Remarkably, up to 80 per cent of the converts made

during his preaching remained believers.

With many conversions, it was not surprising that these two men were persecuted. False accusations were sent to the newspapers. Meetings were disturbed by noise – stones were thrown at the building or shots fired outside. On one occasion, effigies of Finney and Nash were hanged and burnt before a great crowd of people. The enemies of revival counted Nash as an equal to Finney in the work. They feared and hated his prayers at least as much as Finney’s preaching.

Nash used to have a list of people whose salvation he prayed for daily. Even several times a day he would pray for the same people and he got results. As Finney said, “He concentrated entirely on praying for people who were so hard that they could not be reached in any other way.”





# Eric Liddell, complete surrender

**O**N April 6, 1923, in a small town hall in Armadale, Scotland, Eric Liddell spoke for the first time of his faith in Christ. Eighty people came to hear Scotland's famous runner give his testimony.

"Shyly, he stepped forward and for a few seconds surveyed his waiting audience, then he began," writes Catherine Swift in her biography, *Eric Liddell*.

"There was no lecturing, no fist thumping on the table, no wagging or pointing a finger to stress a point, no raised voice to impress on them what he thought they should be doing. In fact, it wasn't a speech at all. It was more of a quiet chat, and in his slow clear words, Eric for the first time in his life told the world what God meant to him.

"He spoke of the strength he felt within himself from the sure knowledge of God's love and support. Of how he never questioned anything that happened either to himself or to others. He didn't need explanations from God. He simply believed in Him and accepted whatever came."

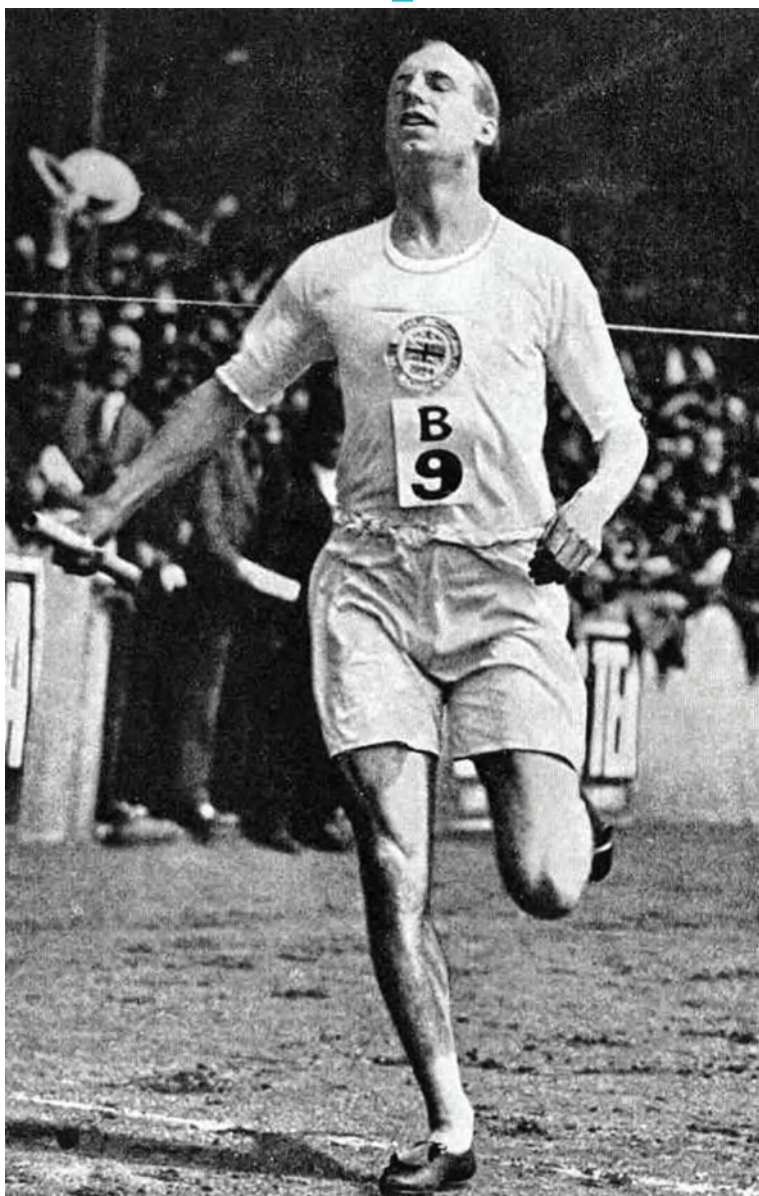
News of Liddell's talk was reported in every newspaper in Scotland the next morning.

God was preparing Liddell to honour Him, and his testimony still reverberates today.

Liddell was an unorthodox sprinter. Coming out of trowel-dug starting holes, Liddell ran with abandon, head tilted toward the skies, knees thrust upward to his chin, feet rising high from the ground. Before each race, Liddell shook hands with each competitor, offering his trowel to fellow runners who struggled to dig their starting holes in cinder tracks with their cleats.

When asked how he knew where the finish line was located, he replied in his deliberate Scottish brogue, "The Lord guides me."

As word of his faith in Christ spread through England, many wondered if he would display the same zeal on the track.



Liddell silenced any sceptics in the AAA Championships in London in July 1923, by winning the 220-yard dash and the 100-yard dash. His time in the 100 stood as England's best for 35 years.

He won the Harvey Cup for the best performance of the meet and readied himself for the Paris Olympics in the summer of 1924.

Liddell waited excitedly for the posting of the Olympic heats for the 100 metres and the 4x100 and 4x400 relays, his best events. He was stunned upon learning the preliminary dashes were on Sunday. "I'm not running," he said flatly and then turned his attention to train for the 200-metre and 400-metre dashes.

He considered Sunday to be sacred, a day set apart for the Lord; and he would honour his convictions at the expense of fame.

On Sunday, July 6, Liddell preached in a Paris church as the guns sounded for the

100-metre heats. Three days later, he finished third in the 200-metre sprint, taking an unexpected bronze medal. He quietly made his way through the heats of the 400 metres but was not expected to win. Shaking hands with the other finalists, he readied for the race of his life.

Arms thrashing, head bobbing and tilted, legs dancing, Liddell ran to victory, five metres ahead of the silver medalist. "The Flying Scotsman" had a gold medal and a world record, 47.6 seconds. Most of all, Eric Liddell had kept his commitment to his convictions of faith.

The next year, Liddell returned to China, where he had been born to missionary parents, as a teacher and missionary. In 1932, he was ordained as a minister and married in 1933.

He ministered pleasantly and plainly, often travelling on bicycle, braving constant fighting between Chinese warlords and Japanese in their growing conquest of China.

His decision to share Christ in isolated communities, forcing him to leave his wife and children behind, was the result of insistent prayer. "Complete surrender" was his description of this attitude.

In March of 1943, Liddell, along with other Americans and Britons, entered a Japanese internment camp. He was appointed math teacher and supervised a sports programme. He arose each morning to study his Bible and was the cheer of the camp.

But his health deteriorated rapidly. A brain tumour ravaged his body with severe headaches. Shortly after his 43rd birthday in January 1945, Liddell collapsed. His last words, spoken to a camp nurse, were, "It's complete surrender."

Upon learning of Liddell's death, all of Scotland mourned.

Heaven rejoiced.





by Winkie Pratney

**W**ith so many medical problems around, many people go for a physical checkup once a year. These physical checkups cost a little time and a little more inconvenience. But if the beginnings of a dangerous illness are discovered, the cost is worth it.

Now, the Christian is supposed to have the answer to the moral plague sweeping the nations. But something is very wrong with the average Christian church.

There is supposed to be love, but there is envying, strife and division. There is supposed to be holiness, but there is often downright ungodliness instead. There is supposed to be power, but there is largely only weakness and spiritual sickness.

We are supposed to have revival, but on the whole we have still not seen any great awakening. "My brethren, these things ought not to be."

If a physician can prescribe pills for bodily ailments, doesn't the Master Physician have one for the diseased soul? Of course, He does – the "Gos-pill." Which means, of course, "Good News."

However, before we can be given the Good News, we should thoroughly understand the Bad News...

Before a cure can be accepted and applied, there must be diagnosis. To achieve this, some sort of spiritual checkup is needed. Which is precisely what this is all about.

One caution: like any checkup, this is going to cost you time and inconvenience. However, unlike the physical checkup it may also hurt somewhat. Of course, a sore spot shows infection present.

When you go through this, remember it is designed to expose, and that exposure might hurt! Be assured, however, that a little pain now may save an awful lot of trouble later. If it's any consolation, this

checkup is absolutely free.

It will only cost you, of course, on diagnosis, your sin. Of *all* things, you can afford to lose that, can't you? Nobody in their right mind wants to keep a killer cancer. **Ready?**

To take this spiritual checkup you will need only pencil, paper, some time – and complete honesty.

### CASE HISTORY

For the next hour or so, let the Holy Spirit turn His searchlight on your spiritual life. Let Him probe, X-ray and test your soul! And let Him start by opening the closets of your memory.

Memory is highly efficient at remembering wrong. Although it easily forgets merely unpleasant or worthless things, it NEVER forgets unrighted SIN. Much mental illness today can be traced to GUILT never wiped from the mind by the twin tools of confession and restoration – and receiving forgiveness.

Face each wrong with its full load of guilt, admit it to God and others who are involved, *as* wrong, then ask and receive healing forgiveness (Psalm 32:1-5; 1 John 1:5-9).

Use the following three lists as checkup charts to examine your life before the Lord. Take each one slowly and carefully. Check each area that is a "sore spot" and on your own paper write out what you will have to do to get it right.

Confess them to the Lord one by one as He shows them to you.

Don't give in to the temptation to pass quickly over any area that hurts. Take your courage in your bare hands; *face* your sin. It will be painful. Let God furrow your heart and break up all the hardness that has formed from unconfessed sin. If tears begin to come, let them. "Godly sorrow works repentance" and tears may soften your heart for God to work with

it (2 Corinthians 7:10; Psalm 38:18; 34:6, 18; 51:17; Ecclesiastes 7:3; Psalm 147:3; Ezekiel 34:16; Luke 4:18).

### MEMORY TEST

**Stealing:** Can you remember taking money or property that was not yours? Did you steal from neighbours, relatives, shops or stores, school or home? (Exodus 20:15; Ephesians 4:28)

**Cheating:** Did you get anything from anyone unfairly? Does someone know or suspect that you cheated to pass an important test? Did you rob someone of their fair share of praise or pay for a job? (James 5:1-4; Malachi 3:5; Deuteronomy 24:14-15; Jeremiah 22:13; Job 31:13)

**Lying:** "Any designed form of deception for selfish reasons." If you design to make an impression contrary to the naked truth, you have lied. Have you been deceitful? (Revelation 21:8)

**Slander:** Speaking evil of someone. You do not have to lie to slander. Have you talked about someone behind their back in a way you would not to their face? Are you guilty of backbiting or criticism? (Matthew 7:1-5; 1 Corinthians 5:12; Colossians 3:8; Matthew 5:21-24)

**Immorality:** Are you guilty of stirring up desires that you could not righteously feed? In outings with the opposite sex have you failed to keep your body and mind clean and pure, and bartered your integrity for pleasure? (Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1; 2 Peter 2:14; 1 Corinthians 6:18)

**Censoriousness:** Have you spoken about others without love? Did you judge, think or say the worst thing about a person? (John 7:24; 1 Corinthians 4:1-7; Galatians 6:1)

### ACTION TEST

**Envy:** Behind talk of other's failures and faults usually lurks envy. Did you gossip and boast to exalt yourself at another's expense? Does it hurt to hear certain people praised? If you have nursed this spirit of Hell, repent *deeply*. (Job 5:2; Proverbs 14:30; 27:4; Galatians 5:25)

**Pride:** Pretending in thought or life to be more or less than you really are. Do you pay more attention to your looks than your soul? Is there a trouble-stirring spirit in your life? These are the signs of pride. (Proverbs 16:5; 12:18; 21:4; 29:23; Titus 3:9; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; 1 Peter 5:1)

**Ingratitude:** How many times have others gone out of their way for you, perhaps really sacrificed to help you – and you took this all for granted? (2 Timothy 3:2; Malachi 3:8-11)

**Anger:** Have you been bad-tempered? Did you shrug off self-control and lose patience or gentleness with someone?



(Proverbs 14:29; 15:8; 21:9; 22:24; Ecclesiastes 7:9; Ephesians 4:26; Colossians 3:8)  
**Cursing:** Have you used gutter language? Swearing has no place in the life of a child of God. Have you failed to guard your speech? (Deuteronomy 5:11; Matthew 5:33-37)

**Levity:** “Needless frivolity, silly talk – talking and acting like a moron.” Jests that tend to undermine the sacred and precious standards of life. Real humour is a gift of God, and will always edify or prepare the way for the Holy Spirit; foolish levity is sin. (Ecclesiastes 5:3; Proverbs 24:19; Ephesians 5:4)

### INNER INSPECTION

**Hardness:** Did you fight back, murmur or return evil for evil? Was your response to trial un-Christlike when you were wronged or hurt by someone? (Philippians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 10:10)

**Habits:** Have you continually overindulged natural appetites until they have grown far beyond normal? Are you a slave to food, drink or stimulants? (Philippians 3:19; Proverbs 23:21; 1 Corinthians 6:19)

**Half-heartedness:** Can you remember times when you deliberately shirked your full share of responsibility? Did you skip times of secret or public prayer to please yourself when you should have been meeting with God? (Proverbs 19:15; 21:5; 24:11-12; Matthew 25:1-13; 25:14-30; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; James 4:13-17)

**Hindrance:** Have you destroyed another’s confidence in you by needlessly taking up their time? Have you prevented them from doing God’s work? (Ephesians 5:16)

**Hypocrisy:** Did the life you lived before some people make all you said of Christ and His gospel a lie? Have you said one thing and done another? (Matthew 6:5-6; 7:3-5; 23:28; Revelation 3:15-16)

**Broken Vows:** Is there a vow you made to God that you have not kept? Did you promise Him something that you have since forgotten or gone back upon? If it was unwise, you had better ask forgiveness and release; He expects you to *keep* voluntary vows! (Ecclesiastes 5:1-6)

### SURGERY NEEDED?

If the Holy Spirit shows us sin, we must go back to the place where the Lord first met us. It is the cross again. We see the Lord Jesus once crucified – for that sin – bearing our penalty.

A line of blood trickles down from its splintered base. The sight should shock and grieve us; we see the awfulness of God’s judgement. This is not the law, representing God armed with holy wrath and determined to punish the sinner without hope or help.

Rather, it is *LOVE* demonstrated in the infinite cost God is willing to pay and the sacrifice He is willing to make in order to save us from sin. It is the most terribly beautiful picture of the Gospel, showing God’s hatred for sin and heartbreak over man’s selfishness.

Walk out into the light of reality. Drop your self-deceit and face this sin for what it really is. Turn from it, from the depths of your heart. Take sides against it with God; purpose in your heart *never* to go back into that sin again.

“Oh God, You know my foolishness, and my sin is not hid from You... for Your Name’s sake, pardon my iniquity, for it is great... If you, Lord, would mark iniquities, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared (Psalm 69:5; 25:11; 130:3-4).”

Will you do this now? Will you go to your gracious and loving Father as a little child and humbly ask His forgiveness?

“If we confess our sins, He is *faithful* and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).” (also Psalm 103:8-12).

### CONFESSION

Confession is humbling yourself and admitting your wrong. Restitution is the willingness to pay back or restore wherever possible. If you are now forgiven before the Lord, are you ready to ask Him for the courage to confess and restore to others you have wronged?

Your conscience must be clean before both God *and* man if you want to know true freedom. You cannot stand for God with a dirty past in the eyes of others.

You will not, of course, have to confess every sin to everyone; just the sins committed against the ones you know you have wronged. Those sins against God alone you have left with His loving forgetfulness, (Psalm 103:8-13; Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34); those against God and man must be put right with *both* God and the person(s) wronged.

Restitution should only go as far as you can humanly repay. You will *never* be able to undo all your wrong, but God expects you to do all in your power to restore that which you have taken from others; no more and certainly no less.

God asks of you the willingness, if need be, to go to a hundred people to restore a relationship. True, total repentance is to do that which is right up to the full limit of your ability. Often those who see your sincerity may make exceptions to any claims they have to restitution, but you will have to trust your case to the hands of God Who does all things well.

Name the *basic sin*! You can never really undo the *results* of your sin; no-one can really forgive you for these. However you can always (and *must*!) right the sin *itself*, by *naming it* and asking forgiveness for it. Confess the sin that caused your words or actions; God will show you what it is. What was your *real* wrong? Write it down so you can see it.

Make sure the *way* you ask is right. Such halfhearted “confessions” as the ones below show false or incomplete repentance and are usually worse than useless:

“I’m sorry – but it wasn’t all my fault!”  
“Forgive me – *if* I have wronged you...” “I was wrong – but *so were you*!” “Alright – I’m sorry” or “I apologise.”

Full blame must be taken; the sin must be *named*; pride must be crucified.

Do you have a truly repentant attitude? If you have trouble getting the proper feelings, think of all the hurt and loss your sin has caused. What did your sin cost Christ (Luke 22:39-44; John. 15:8-14)?

Is the other person in the mood to forgive? If they get angry when you arrive, wait quietly in a repentant manner until their temper is under control. Then acknowledge your sin and ask forgiveness. Pray for help before you go (Proverbs 22:24; Matthew 5:43-48).

Don’t use words taking the blame off yourself. Don’t involve others who may have also sinned; don’t try to witness as well, unless specifically asked why you are making this thing right. Don’t underestimate *your* guilt or *their* hurt.

The *elements* of these three sentences *must* be in any truly effective confession:

1. “God has convicted me of something I did (have been doing) against you...”
2. “I’ve been wrong in...” (*Name* the basic sin – envy, pride, stubbornness, etc.)
3. “I know I’ve wronged you in this, and I want to ask: will you forgive me?”

When you have gone through your list as thoroughly as if you were about to meet God before the throne of Judgement and determined to get right everything you can, you may burn your list and leave your sins forgiven and forgotten for ever! Wrongs may not be wiped out completely from your mind, but they can be exchanged for memories of the joy of forgiveness! Should satan try to recall a dark past shadow, you will be able to think, instead, of the bright memory of confession and forgiveness.

It is up to you now to put into practice what you know must be done. Your testimony will be a ray of hope to any you come in contact with. Don’t just *read* this; in His Name, go and *DO IT!* ☞



# The Prophetic Savant

by Chip Brogden

*sa-vant* (n.): 1. a mentally defective person who exhibits exceptional skill or brilliance in some limited field; 2. a person who is highly knowledgeable about one subject but knows little about anything else.

*“...the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad (Hosea 9:7).”*

*“What then is genius? Could it be that a genius is a man haunted by the speaking Voice (of God), labouring and striving like one possessed to achieve ends which he only vaguely understands?”*

– A.W. Tozer

**NB:** The use of the male pronoun in this writing is for convenience only. We mean no partiality to our brothers, and no disrespect to our sisters.

**THE prophetic savant is a person afflicted with a heavenly autism, making him nearly incapable of normal relations with those around him. Accused of being aloof, cold, and distant, he is apt to hide himself from people, withdrawing into a world of his own. He never seems to be all “there”.**

Even if he forces himself to come down to Earth for a moment, those around him may have the sense that there is an unspoken dialogue going on somewhere inside of him, a secret communion carried on beneath the surface that never allows him to be fully “in the moment.”

How do we explain this? As a prophetic savant he sees, hears, and relates to the world differently than the rest of the population. They have not seen what he has seen; they have not heard what he has heard. And so he finds very little camaraderie, very little sympathy or understanding, no one with whom he can open his heart and share his soul, because he no longer speaks the same language, and they no longer speak his.

Of course, he may have surface-level exchanges with anyone: he is approachable, not haughty, or high-minded. He may even be personable and likeable. Yet there is something so other-worldly

in his demeanour that he is more often frightening than friendly, in spite of his best efforts. He is a spiritual autistic, and no matter how hard you try to know him, he is generally unknowable, and to a certain degree, he resists all attempts to know him.

If a prophet is anything, he is extra-terrestrial – above the Earth. He walks the Earth with others, but he is not of the Earth. He is from beyond; he is from above. If we trace his history we will find that he may or may not have had a normal childhood. He may or may not have come through extraordinary experiences. But at some point in his life, either as a child, or as a young adult, or as an old man, something from another realm broke through the thin membrane between Heaven and Earth and took hold of him. It may have been a burning bush, or a Voice crying out to him from beyond the veil, or a Heavenly Vision which brought him briefly into contact with something and Someone that he could not completely fathom.

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*The clouds parted,  
the veil was rent*

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However it happened, for one moment at least, the clouds parted and the veil was rent, and he saw something that is unseeable; he heard something that is unhearable; Heaven itself was opened up to him, and he saw into another world. The thing he saw and heard now burdens him like a mantle that has been draped over his shoulders. He feels its weight, for it is with him day and night, whether he is eating or drinking, working or resting.



It is the impression that everything around him is a lie, and what he has seen and heard is the Truth, and this Truth is not static, but it is living, growing, and increasing within him from the day it comes to him in the form of a seed.

For a long time he struggles to find words and vocabulary to express the inexpressible. He cannot explain why he feels the need to try and express it, but for some inexplicable reason something drives him to open his mouth, or take up his pen, and make it known. Whatever it is, it will not permit him to savour it or keep it to himself, and it seems intent on coming to the surface and interrupting the normal course of his life.

This process can be frustrating and painful, so much so that he may give up several times, content to simply walk in what he has seen and heard and leave it at that.

But try as he might, he cannot run away from what he has seen and heard, and he cannot deny the compulsion to bring it forth. On the one hand he cries out for a “normal” life, while on the other hand he knows he cannot deny what has been revealed to him. When he does achieve some modest success in articulating something of Heaven he is pleased for a time, but soon grows impatient with it, and eventually is dissatisfied with it altogether, because it cannot do justice to what he has seen and heard.





And so the process begins again, the continual search for words to more perfectly express what he is trying to communicate (and a subtle fear in the back of his mind that he may never be able to adequately express it), which leads him to invent words which may have never before existed, or to look for Spirit-inspired words in some unknown tongue that can be translated into something others can understand.

The prophets of old correctly called it the “burden of the Lord,” for it is like a woman who must live the rest of her life being in perpetual labour, delivering the same child over and over again. What relief there is only comes in discharging the burden, but that is not to say it ever really leaves: it merely allows the prophet time to catch his breath until the next contraction doubles him over again. The burden is with him the rest of his life, and he never fully discharges it.

Even when he tries to be disobedient to the Heavenly Vision and flees from the presence of the Lord he is pursued and hunted down like some kind of a wild animal who has gotten loose, knowing it is only a matter of time before he is captured again. The Voice never leaves him, the Vision never lets him go.

When he refuses to speak then the fire which is already kindled only burns hotter, until he ends up doing what he has resisted doing all along, just to relieve himself of the

unbearable tension and inward pressure. He cannot extinguish or quench the fire no matter what he does, he can only be obedient and find temporary relief, until the next word comes, and then off he goes.

He may beg God to send someone else, and may protest his inability to speak, or to write. But he is already ruined for anything else, and even when he denies the Lord Who called him and returns to his former occupation, it is all dull and lifeless, and he meets with nothing but frustration and failure. There is no way to escape it. He knows he is called to something Higher,

even when he is clinging with everything he has to something Lower.

## He must be broken before he will obey

Like a wild horse, he resists the dealings of the Lord and must be broken before he will obey. Eventually he learns not to resist the Lord, but to co-operate with Him. He becomes pliable and bendable in order to survive. His very life now is bound up with what he has seen and heard. He cannot be disobedient to the Heavenly Vision, and if it means he dies, then he dies. If it means a renunciation of everything he once believed, then he renounces it – reluctantly at first, then cheerfully. If it means suffering the loss of all things, then he lets them go.

Over time the one who has seen and heard becomes the very essence of what he has seen and heard. The Man becomes the Message. He bears the Testimony in himself, and becomes one with it. He needs no preparation to speak; indeed, preparation does nothing to help the message he brings, and it often gets in the way. His whole life is the preparation, and since he is the Message, it is with him constantly.

He can no more separate himself from the Message than he can separate his

head from his body. If there is an “On/Off” switch then it was long ago turned on and then disabled so that it can never be turned off again. After many seasons of God’s dealings he finally perceives that this is what the Lord has sought for all along, not just to GIVE him a Message, but to MAKE him a Message; to gain for Himself a Messenger and capture him completely, embossing the Message into his very being.

And so he goes about his daily business, constantly haunted by that Voice, torn between the menial task at hand which calls for his physical and mental exertion, and the Higher Calling which seeks his undivided attention. He knows he should do all things, great and small, as “unto the Lord.” But he also knows that Heaven and Earth are locked in mortal combat over him while he stands there in the middle, torn between the two, desiring to depart the Earth altogether and be with Christ, but knowing that it is more profitable for his brethren if he remains.

Heaven calls him to rise up, but Earth tells him to keep his feet firmly planted. His heart is constantly breaking and longing to go, to ascend, to rise up, to stop seeing through a dark glass, and see face to face, without the distraction of the natural, the fleshly, the temporal, because he knows the Earth is not his home. Yet he struggles with the fact that Earth is where he must live and work. This accounts for why he may sometimes seem difficult to be around.

As a savant he possesses insight and skill which others do not possess. But it is a gift, not anything of himself, nothing of which he could boast of. If you were to ask him if he considers this to be a blessing, he would probably say it is more like a curse, because it sets him apart from others even when he tries his best to be hidden and to blend in.

He cannot read the Scriptures as others do, for after only a few verses the Heavens are opened up to him again and he is lost in its depths. A single passage may keep him occupied for months as Heaven unfolds it to him, and he cannot tear himself away from it.

His preaching is affected, because he cannot decide in advance what he will say, and even when he would like to bring forth something new and exciting, he usually ends up saying the same thing, like, “Repent!” He often does not say what he wants to say, and does not say it in the way he would like to say it. If he wants to be



# The Prophetic Savant

## Continued...

serious, he finds himself laughing. And when he wishes to be friendly, he finds himself screaming at the top of his voice to a startled congregation of people, who wonder how this fellow was ever allowed access to their inner sanctum in the first place.

When he leaves a place he almost never sees the result of his labour, and only eternity can reveal the true significance of what was said. For now, it is all hidden, and he has to live with the fact that his fruitfulness will never be measured in terms that human beings, including himself, can see and appreciate.

## A dead, shallow thing to him

He cannot go through the motions of religion like most mortals. It is a dead, shallow thing to him because it cannot compare to the reality of what he has already experienced. He finds it difficult to listen to another person preach when he knows they have not yet ascended to the heights nor plumbed the depths that he has already navigated. And when he tries to lead them into these heights and depths himself he is often misunderstood or rejected altogether. So either he attends the meeting and suffers in silence, or stays home and suffers in solitude; but either way, he suffers.

His seeing is affected by a sort of "spiritual dyslexia." While others view things from a one or two dimensional viewpoint, he sees them through several dimensions at once – forward, backward, reverse, upside-down, right-side up: life and death, light and dark, Spirit and flesh, Heavenly and Earthly – which often puts him at odds with his more pragmatic and doctrinally-correct brethren.

He is so at one with what he has seen that he speaks of it as having already happened, because he has, in essence, already experienced it and lived it. It is the Prophetic Tense, which calls those things that be

not as though they were. In his world, the world of the Spirit, they exist already. We call it "prediction" because we cannot yet see it with our natural eyes, but he simply stands outside of Time and views Past and Future as one unbroken and continuous Present.

His hearing is affected so that he is increasingly sensitive to his surroundings, even though it seems as if he is not paying attention. He is listening, but he is listening inwardly. He no longer trusts his natural ears, because the Heavenly Voice and the inner witness are more reliable. Thus, he is able to hear God speaking, while the rest of the crowd says, "It thundered!" or "It was an angel!"


He is also able to hear when God is not speaking, and does not get carried away with the multitudes who claim to speak, see, and hear things from God when they have not heard or seen anything from Heaven. He cannot bear to listen to them.

His concentration is affected in such a way as to make him appear obstinate and unyielding to others. The truth is that he is actually quite flexible and pliable before the Lord, but before man he is as solid and impenetrable as a rock. No amount of persuasion or argument from man will move him – but the slightest touch from the Lord will bring him to his knees.

Having discovered the One Thing that is needed, he will tenaciously and ruthlessly shun the "many things" which crowd in to seek his attention, for he sees everything else as a distraction. Indeed, he is quite willing to sacrifice the good in favour

of the holy. And when the Lord has him focussed on a particular thing he is as a beam of light fastened upon a singular point until everything melts before it.

Even his praying is affected, for he can no longer pray as he wills and for what he wants. He seemingly has no will of his own. Instead the Heavenly Voice bids him to pray with a Heavenly perspective, and all too often the Heavenly perspective is at odds with the Earthly perspective. So when his brothers and sisters pray for blessing and increase, he finds himself praying for destruction and decrease; and when they are resisting and praying against something, he finds himself asking God to perform the very thing the rest of the world is against.

To the rest of the world, the autistic savant is a bit of a retarded genius, an unfortunate mixture of idiocy and brilliance, caught up in a world of its own. The prophetic savant bears a similar stigma. But if you engage him at all, you soon discover that he sees all of this as absolutely normal; the way it is supposed to be. He no longer wishes for a normal life, because the life he has now IS normal: he has lost his own life in exchange for a new life. He lives in the Heavenlies while he walks on the Earth. He does not think of himself as special, as anything other than a regular person, but often wonders aloud why others cannot see what he has seen when it is all so self-evident and plain. To him, maybe; but the rest of us are blinded by the Light he exudes without knowing it. 

## Love and Humility

by Frank Bartleman


**T**HERE are two errors to be avoided – dictatorship and lawlessness. Sects generally begin with an honest effort to preserve and restore some long-lost truth, but they end in division. History repeats itself. No religious body has ever recovered itself after losing its first love.

To be like Jesus is the standard that God has set for us. If Heaven is real, we should live like it – this will produce Pentecost. The human spirit too often dominates, while love and humility are clothed in rags and sit by the wayside begging. The gentle Jesus is often pushed aside and knocked down in church meetings. Sin and the flesh will kill any Pentecost.

The doctor looks at the tongue first. Have you been speaking evil? Evil speaking denotes a bad heart and every radical movement for God has ultimately failed on the test of love.

We need holiness of heart. It is a vital error to substitute light for heat. "Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." Read 1 Corinthians 13 once more. Be not drawn away from "the simplicity that is in Christ."

**Faith gets the most, love works the most, humility keeps the most.**

God's vision comes to humble men. He who seeks to make footprints and do sublime things is a failure. A self-conscious poser is a loser. Let self intrude and the whole is spoiled. Excellency is proportioned to the oblivion of self. A fisher for compliments has lost God. Self-consciousness must go. We need to be broken! 



# Praying to Heal Cancer

by Francis MacNutt

**A**S we all know, cancer is one of our deadliest diseases, and if you have prayed for cancer patients, you have discovered that it is also one of our most difficult and mysterious ailments to pray for.

At times, we have seen amazing results when we have prayed and occasionally we have actually seen tumours shrink before our very eyes. But we also need to be honest and say that it doesn't always go that well.

At other times, the cancer remains but, nevertheless, the pain diminishes or disappears. Sometimes with prayer the harmful side effects of the chemo or radiation treatment are reduced or even eliminated: the patient's appetite remains normal, the hair does not fall out, and his/her strength and vigour remains.

Still another wonderful effect of prayer: a person who is given three months to live, lives on another two years beyond what the doctors predicted. Most wonderful of all: at the moment of death, the patient is in great peace; some seem to experience a vision of angels, or better yet, of Jesus.

And so, even when there isn't a total physical healing, a notable partial healing takes place. It is no small thing if the pain goes away, while the patient remains at peace.

From what we have learned about cancer, there are several things I would like to share.

**1. Inner healing.** Apparently, all of us have cancer cells in our body but usually our immune systems deal with them, especially when we are younger. But, if we suffer a severe loss or emotional trauma, the immune system can become depressed and our bodies fail to contain or destroy the unhealthy cells.

For instance, some studies indicate that the most dangerous period comes for a married man if his wife dies before he does: his desire to live is weakened by his mourning and loneliness. His body picks up on this sadness and stops fighting against the force of diseases, such as cancer.

The practical application of this is simple: if you are praying to heal cancer, you may suspect that an inner healing – a healing of the memories – may also be very



helpful. It will take time from the moment the emotional blow first strikes until the cancer grows large enough for us to notice it, perhaps a year. So if you are praying to heal cancer, check and see if the patient suffered an emotional trauma about a year before the onset of the cancer. Was a wife deserted by her husband – or vice versa? Did a beloved family member die – such as a child, a mother or a father?

Praying to heal the pain of that loss or rejection may be crucial to the physical healing of the cancer.

**2. Soaking prayer.** Everything we have learned about spending time in prayer specially pertains to praying for cancer. Occasionally, someone is healed immediately (as was Judith, my wife, 1979), but ordinarily the healing takes time – what we call “soaking prayer.”

As I see it, soaking prayer applied to cancer is like God's radiation treatment; the longer our hands are held near the cancer site, the more the cancer cells wither away, while God strengthens the healthy cells and the immune system to fight back. (Occasionally, too, there is a “spirit of infirmity” or of “cancer” that needs to be confronted and cast out.) Praying for cancer can be a long-time process.

Just as we do not expect a cancer patient to be cured by one chemo treatment, neither do we ordinarily expect that one single, brief prayer will be sufficient. Usually, when we have seen cancer healed through prayer, the patient's family and church have really persevered in continuous prayer. (The wonderful thing about prayer is that it has no harmful side effects, as do continued chemo and radiation

treatments.)

**3. When cancer seems to return.** I don't like to talk about people “losing” their healing, as if the sick person is to blame. I have known one person, at least, who seemed to be dramatically and instantly healed of stomach cancer. And then, a year later, the cancer returned – this time in the lungs.

I think the best way to explain the mysterious relapse is that almost all the cancer cells were eradicated. But a few unhealthy cells were left, taking a year for them to multiply. What was missing was follow-up prayer. We rejoiced in her total healing but it wasn't as total as we thought. And so we neglected to keep on praying as a precaution; in those days it almost seemed that we were lacking in faith if we prayed again, after her apparently miraculous healing.

But just as in the natural order, we return to the physician for a check-up after an operation, we likewise need to be spiritually prudent and continue to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.”

**4. How to Pray.** The way to pray for cancer ordinarily has two elements in it. One is the prayer part where we ask God to heal the cancer or we command the cancer cells to stop multiplying. This takes just a short time.

Then comes the laying on of hands, which is like God's own radiation treatment. This part can take plenty of time. The longer the cancer is held in God's force-field, the more healing takes place. Sick cells die, while healthy cells take on added life. If you pray in tongues, this would be a good time to do it.

The laying-on of hands can take anywhere from a minute to an hour or more. It can be repeated every day (in a family especially, where husbands and wives pray together) or every week or so, if they visit a prayer minister. In churches or prayer groups, it is usually not feasible to spend a lot of time praying for one individual, so this is one reason we stress that every church and prayer group needs a small, dedicated group of prayer ministers who can spend time in praying with the sick.

Above all, as Jesus encourages us, “Pray continually and never lose heart (Luke 18:1)”

*With grateful acknowledgements to Christian Healing Ministries.*



# An Open Letter to Pastors in Pornography

From Steve Gallagher

*My Beloved Brother,*

**I WRITE this letter with tears in my eyes because I know firsthand the hopelessness and darkness you are now experiencing. In spite of repeated promises to quit, you remain trapped in an uncontrollable habit of pornography and masturbation.**

There is a part in the movie, *Fellowship of the Ring*, where Aragorn asks Frodo if he is frightened. Frodo responds, "Yes." Aragorn then ominously says what I want to say to you: "You are not nearly frightened enough. I know what hunts you."

A devil is stalking you, luring you and dragging you into ever-greater darkness. The "power of the ring" is growing stronger in its grip on you.

If I sound like I am being overly dramatic, the truth is that I am not being nearly dramatic enough: you have every reason to fear.

However, I also want to tell you that it is my unshakable testimony that God can lead you out of this dark valley back into the blessedness of His presence. To find this path of escape will require painful self-examination and a heart-felt, no-excuses repentance. I promise you that if you will do what is outlined in this article, you will find freedom. Let's begin by appraising the situation, using the lives of David and Samson to represent two different types of pastors who become addicted to pornography and sexual sin.

David had a unique hunger for the Lord from the time he was a young boy tending sheep in the wilderness. His spiritual appetite intensified as he spent time with Samuel and deepened during his years of running for his life from Saul. Undoubtedly, David was hitting his spiritual peak when he became king at the age of 30. Yet, within 20 years, he had committed the unthinkable: he had lured Bathsheba into adultery and had her husband killed.

How did it happen? It seems that the palace life sapped David's spiritual hunger. Everything around him: his increasing responsibilities, his fame and fortune, and his growing pride all combined to dry up his life in God. He became easy prey for

a stalking predator.

Perhaps you can relate to David. You, too, once walked closely with the Lord. You have known the hand of God on your life and experienced His power in your ministry. But little by little, your intimacy with Him has waned.

Quite possibly you have experienced what Corrie Ten Boom once warned about: "Beware of the barrenness of a busy life." Maybe your work became more important to you than your walk with the Lord. It could be that your devotional life gradually withered away until the heavens seemed like brass and the Word of God became stale and lifeless.

Little did you realise that all this time you had a fearsome enemy dogging your every step, feeding your idol of "success," bidding his time until you became so spiritually weak that you could be lured into sin. Let's not have any patronising nonsense that you "fell" into sin as if you were walking along a path in the dark and suddenly – through no fault of your own – stumbled into a hole. There is a reason why it happens. Believers are vulnerable to temptation when they are not walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

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## *A malignant scheme to bring you down*

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Once you reached that place of spiritual weakness, the enemy set into motion his malignant scheme to bring you down. Perhaps you became curious about pornography but underestimated its power. One glimpse of it unleashed a poison that rocketed into your soul and instantly spread throughout your being. However it initially happened, it quickly seized your heart and you found yourself going back to it time and again.

Or perhaps your situation is more comparable to Samson's. He too had the call of God upon his life, but never really enjoyed deep fellowship with Him. From his earliest days he was given over to lust, taking every opportunity to seek out forbidden Philistine beauties. His life was one spiritual failure after another, until he found himself in the lap of Delilah with the Philistines upon him.





You have had struggles with masturbation and pornography since your teenage years. You knew the Lord was calling you into ministry and thought you would attain victory in Bible school, but you found that freedom was just as elusive there as it had been at home.

Then you saw marriage as the way out, but alas, once again you found yourself returning to the pig trough. You have experienced brief moments of God's presence, but "the sin" was always lurking one step away. You have never really known what it means to truly walk in the Spirit.

Regardless of which illustration you identify with, the bottom line is that you are now in the clutches of something very evil. Whether you realise it or not, Delilah has set you up and you are now languishing in a Philistine prison of gloom and darkness.

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### *Eyes mercilessly gouged out*

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The eyes of faith, which once held glorious visions of victories to be won for God, have been mercilessly gouged out. The anointing that once flowed with power and unction has been quenched. The mouth which once was filled with Holy Ghost-inspired messages now serves up weak, uninspired sermons. You have lost the God-given authority to speak His Word: "What right have you to tell of My statutes and to take My covenant in your mouth? For you hate discipline, and you cast My words behind you (Psalm 50:16&17)."

Your life's work has disintegrated into a meaningless existence of going through the motions –pushing a grindstone in a Gazan prison. You are surrounded by heckling devils, mocking all that your life once represented. "Our god has given our enemy into our hands (Judges 16:24)!"

If your sins are of such nature that they have become public knowledge, you have given the world one more excuse to disdain all that Christianity stands for. Oh, how unbelievers love juicy newspaper accounts of yet another fallen minister. You have shattered the trust of your family, your congregation, your fellow pastors and your community. Because of your actions, "the way of the truth (has been) maligned (2 Peter 2:2)."

It's likely that you are in a sin-induced stupor, making you insensible to the great danger surrounding you. Most likely you vacillate between the extremes of faithless despair and stubborn denial. David was

in his sinful condition for at least a year before the prophet put his bony finger in his face and exclaimed, "You are the man!" It took piercing words to penetrate his calloused heart.

If it seems like I've been too hard on you, the truth is that I haven't been nearly strong enough.

You are a representative of the thrice holy God. What a frightening position to hold! No wonder James warned, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgement (3:1)."

Your danger is not only from a wicked foe, but also from the God whose Son you have "trampled under foot (Hebrews 10:29-31)." Please remember that these hard-sounding words come from a man who had to face them in his own life.

Over a period of 15 years, I became increasingly involved in sexual sin until I reached the point where nothing was too shameful for me. "But God, rich in mercy..." heard my cries for help and eventually helped me overcome sexual addiction. However, my heart remained full of corruption and lust. The memories of sexual scenes I had witnessed or experienced were still very vivid.

There were times I despaired of ever having a pure heart. Could a man such as me really be purged of the knowledge of evil? Would I ever be able to forget those pornographic images that seemed forever etched upon my mind? Would I always lust over pretty girls? Was it possible for me to make love to my wife without fantasising about other women?

The answer to each of these questions is a resounding yes! Today I can sincerely testify that the Lord has truly purified my heart. This freedom is there for you as well.

However, I must warn you that it will not be appropriated cheaply or easily. I refuse to offer you psychological gimmicks, superficial solutions or pain-free alternatives. Instead, I will share with you the biblical principles that worked in the lives of me and many others.

It should be obvious that before a man can find purity of heart he must put away the pornography once and for all. This requires open confession to, and accountability with, your wife, friends and associates. A good internet filter is also mandatory. Enough has been written about these topics that a passing reminder should be sufficient here.

Of more long-term consequence is what

God desires to do within you. Having an internet filter or an accountability partner will not wipe away memories, purge sin or cleanse your heart. A deeper work must be accomplished in your inner man.

The truth is that somewhere along the way the foundation of your spiritual and ministerial life has become terribly corrupted. This is no small matter and minimising it will only exacerbate your dilemma. And yet, chances are, that is exactly what you have done.

Consider an automobile that is running very poorly. The owner has the car towed to the shop, convinced that a tune-up will rectify the problem. "Sir," the mechanic informs him, "the engine in this car is shot. Getting a tune-up is a waste of time. It needs a complete overhaul!" You too need more than a few minor adjustments – you need God to do an overhaul of your life.

Consider one more illustration. A man breaks a bone in his ankle. He knows that if he goes to the emergency room, the attending physician will have to wrench his foot in order to reset the bone. The thought of this terrifies him, so he ignores the problem, even though every step brings wincing pain. Because of his unwillingness to face a moment of greater pain in the doctor's office, he must live the remainder of his life as a cripple.

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### *Unwilling to do the difficult thing*

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My dear brother, God wants to cleanse you, free you and use you for His Kingdom. Will you spend the rest of your ministerial career buried by this sin, unwilling to do the difficult thing? Will you eventually become one of the "false teachers" Peter speaks of, "who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires... having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin?" When you stand before God, will the terrible judgement of 2 Peter 2 serve as an indictment against your life?

In your case, it is not a foot that must be wrenched; it is your self-life. Over the past 20 years, I have experienced numerous breakings from the Lord's hand. I mostly attribute the inner purity I now enjoy to those experiences: brokenness restores innocence. In his excellent book, *The Release of the Spirit*, Watchman Nee asks, "Can one who is unbroken, but whose teachings are right, supply the need of the church?"

Brokenness is a precious thing to God



# An Open Letter to Pastors in Pornography

## Continued...

because it allows Him to accomplish His perfect will, use His power and still receive all the glory. Unfortunately, in many people's lives, SELF becomes the Lord's greatest competitor.

Jesus spoke of two different types of brokenness people face. "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust (Matthew 21:44)." The implication is that if a person will not allow Jesus to break his self-life and all that comes with it – self-will, self-indulgence, self-glory, etc – then he will be "broken without remedy (Proverbs 29:1)."

Samson ignored numerous warnings from the Lord. His last days on earth were spent languishing in a Philistine prison, occasionally being brought out to play the part of a clown before his tormentors.

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## *He threw himself on the mercy of God*

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David, on the other hand, threw himself on the mercy of God: "Wash me thoroughly, cleanse me, and purify me," he cried. "Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Create in me a clean heart, O God. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise (Psalm 51)."

Unlike many who attempt to minimise or justify their actions, David thoroughly acknowledged his guilt. This was a man who was truly broken over his sin and freed from its power. Every attempt to justify or minimise what you have done will weaken God's ability to purge your sin.

Perhaps you realise that you are in spiritual trouble but don't know what to do. You would welcome a Psalm 51 experience but feel dead and unbroken inside. As you know, you cannot make yourself experience brokenness. However, you can do what the old-time Pentecostals used to do: tarry before the Lord until you get the breakthrough you need!

Get alone with the Lord in a place where telephones and secretaries can't reach you; somewhere no one can hear you pour out your heart. The best setting would be a remote cabin where you can fast and pray for several days. At the very minimum,



spend four to six hours on your face before God. What is purity worth to you?

Plead for His mercy. Take a piece of paper and detail every sin you have committed. This is no time to go easy on yourself! Ask the Lord to convict you of the selfish attitudes that have allowed this sin to take root in your life. Don't be like some pastors who always take the most painless path available and never find real freedom. Pray over and thoroughly study Psalm 51, 2 Timothy 3 and 2 Peter 2. These chapters are full of deep truths about God's perspective on sin and repentance.

Above all else, don't lose track of what you are there to do. Remember: Deep repentance brings about profound and lasting change. Paul said, "Godly grief and the pain God is permitted to direct, produce a repentance that leads to... deliverance from evil (2 Corinthians 7:10 AMP)." The Greek word for grief used by Paul describes a heart-wrenching, inner anguish over one's sin.

Allow the sword of the Spirit to plunge deeply into your heart. You could easily cry for three days straight if you really saw the ugliness of your sin and how it has hurt those around you.

If you will earnestly seek God to bring about real repentance, He will not disappoint you.

The deeper you allow God to break you, the more profoundly your thinking will be altered. One of the first things you must do is to thoroughly repent to your wife. Undoubtedly, you have hurt her in many ways. Not only have you been fixated on the bodies of other women, but you have probably also neglected her emotionally. Pornography nearly always causes a man to become aloof and distant with loved ones.

If you have experienced a real break-

through, your wife will immediately notice the change in the way you treat her and the children. Your intimacy with her will become far less carnal and much more loving. When I committed myself to putting my wife's emotional and physical needs before my own in the marriage bed, fantasy lost its grip on me and I actually began to enjoy my wife sexually. The power of selfishness must be broken!

You should also see a noticeable change in your devotional life. Rather than dry prayer times and stagnant Bible study, you will discover a renewed thirst for God and hunger for His Word. This is just what you need. A vibrant time with the Lord every morning will not only help you in your own personal struggles, but it will also empower you in your ministry like never before!

Another thing that will change is your attraction to the allurements of the world. Every fallen pastor I have known was more familiar with the world's offerings (sports, newspapers, internet, television programmes and secular talk shows) than with sitting in the Lord's presence. Jesus said, "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell (Matthew 5:29)." This is serious business! You must sever everything in your life that has fed a carnal mindset.

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## *A softness and a passion*

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The greatest changes in your life may seem imperceptible. People will simply notice a softness in your countenance, a genuine passion for God and love for others that weren't there before. Nothing will restore the shattered trust of others more than for them to see you persist in the humility and love that come through true brokenness.

If the temptations still seem overwhelming, you might consider doing something more dramatic like getting out of ministry for a time of restoration.

Whatever path of restoration you choose, you will have to fight to regain your lost innocence. Jesus said that the violent take the Kingdom by force. You must become like Bartimaeus who refused to be silenced and Jacob who refused to let go. Ask, seek and knock and I promise you that God will abundantly meet your need.



# How to preach without results

by Charles G. Finney

1. Let your supreme motive be to increase your own popularity – then, of course, your preaching will be suited for that purpose, and not to convert souls to Christ.
2. Avoid preaching doctrines that are offensive to the carnal mind, lest they should say to you, as they did to Christ, “This is a hard saying, who can hear it?”
3. Make no distinct points, and do not disturb the consciences of your hearers, lest they become alarmed about their souls.
4. Avoid all illustrations, repetitions, and emphatic sentences that may compel your people to remember what you say.
5. Avoid all heat and earnestness in your delivery, lest you make the impression that you really believe what you say.
6. Address the emotions, and not the conscience, of your hearers.
7. Be careful not to testify from your own experiences of the power of the Gospel, lest you should produce the conviction upon your hearers that you have something which they need.
8. Do not awaken uncomfortable memories by reminding your listeners of their past sins.
9. Denounce sin in general, but make no reference to the specific sins of your present audience.
10. Do not make the impression that God commands your listeners here and now to obey the truth. Do not let them think that you expect them to commit themselves right on the spot to give their hearts to God.
11. Leave the impression that they are expected to go away in their sins, and to consider the matter at their convenience.
12. Dwell much upon their inability to obey, and leave the impression that they must wait for God to change their natures.
13. Preach salvation by grace, but ignore the condemned and lost condition of the sinner, lest he should understand what you mean by grace, and feel his need of it.
14. Preach the Gospel as a remedy, but conceal or ignore the fatal disease of the sinner.
15. Do not speak of the spirituality of God’s holy law (by which comes the knowledge of sin), lest the sinner should see his lost condition and flee from the wrath to come.
16. Make no appeals to the fears of sinners,



but leave the impression that they have no reason to fear.

17. Preach Christ as an infinite amiable and good-natured being, but ignore those scathing rebukes of sinners and hypocrites which so often made His hearers tremble.
18. Admit, either obviously or casually, that all men have some moral goodness in them, lest sinners should understand that they need a radical change of heart, from sin to holiness.
19. Say so little of hell that your people will think that you do not believe in its existence yourself.
20. Make the impression that, if God is as good as you are, He could not send anyone to hell.
21. Make no disagreeable references to the teachings of self denial, cross bearing, and crucifixion to the world, lest you should convict and convert some of your church members.

22. Do not rebuke the worldly tendencies of the church, lest you should hurt their feelings, and finally convert some of them.
23. Do not rebuke extravagance in dress, lest you should make an uncomfortable impression on your vain and worldly church members.
24. Encourage lots of church socials, and attend them yourself.
25. Make it your great aim to be personally popular with all your hearers.
26. Aim to make your hearers pleased with themselves and pleased with you, and be careful especially not to wound the feelings of anyone.
27. Especially avoid preaching to those who are present. Preach about sinners, but not to them. Say “they,” and not “you,” lest anyone should take your subject personally and apply it to their own life, securing the salvation of their soul. 🐟



# Christian music: A call for reformation

*Almost 20 years ago, well-known Christian musician Steve Camp wrote the following hard-hitting commentary on today's Christian music industry. We believe the truths he highlights also apply to other areas of Christian media such as books, magazines and TV:*

**OUT of love and zeal for Biblical truth and the desire to bring it to light, I come to you, brethren, burdened and broken over the current state of Christian music.**

I come not out of a heart of condemnation, but out of convictions immersed in tears, a person in desperate need daily of our Lord's grace to be conformed to His image.

I come being aware of the depravity from which I have been saved and that my heart, apart from the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is desperately wicked and eternally sick.

Early in my own musical journey I wrote songs that neither represented good music nor precise theology. My motives were impaired; my actions were not godly; and my lips were unclean.

The thirst for prominence and position made my heart prideful, judgemental and calloused.

## To speak with conviction

But the Lord, out of His infinite grace and otherworldly love, broke me with His chastening hand to bring true repentance in my own life – and it's that life of repentance which is my greatest desire and my greatest failing. It is out of the crucible of those experiences that I am driven to speak with conviction to these issues.

This is a call to Reformation – a clarion call to recover Biblical Christianity in the arts. Music is a powerful tool from the Lord Jesus to His church, intended for worship, praise, encouragement, edification, evangelism, teaching, admonishing, and exhorting God's people to holiness – with always our chief aim to glorify God and worship Him forever.

But beloved, the serpentine foe of compromise has invaded the camp through years of specious living, skewed doctrine and, most recently, secular ownership of Christian music ministries.

While I assert this, I recognise that there are godly men and women who love the Lord and who work for these companies



and record for these companies – but that's not the issue here.

The crux of the matter is that the overall nature of our industry has dramatically shifted.

The Apostle Paul warns "it takes only a little leaven to leaven the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6)." When sin is tolerated, it ultimately permeates and corrupts the entire church.

What is pure today will inevitably be polluted tomorrow if we do not "purge out the old leaven." In the past several years, there has been a not-so-subtle drifting away from Christ-centred music to man-centred music. Sadly, this has resulted in various visible manifestations of spiritual sedition – where currently, the Contemporary Christian Music Industry (CCMI) finds itself on a slippery slope sliding away at accelerated speeds from the Saviour, the Scriptures and the church.

Contemporary Christian Music originally began unashamedly declaring Jesus Christ as Lord. Within a few years His name was replaced by several generic titles filtering out the name of God ultimately to the non-specific cognomen, "Love." This led to a multitude of pseudonyms: "The Man Upstairs," "My Higher Power," "Our Family Values Expert" *ad nauseam... ad infinitum*.

This Biblical illiteracy has diminished to cultural unintelligible chatter being presented as profound, acceptable spiritual truth. Os Guinness is spot on when saying, "We have seen a change from an emphasis on 'serving God', to an emphasis on 'serving the self' in serving God."

The object of faith is no longer Christ, but our self-esteem; the goal of faith is no longer holiness, but our happiness; and the source of faith is no longer the Scriptures, but our experience.

Christian music currently reflects this. We are producing a generation of people who "feel" their God, but do not know their God.

We have been given a solemn and sacred duty to communicate through music the

fathomless riches of God's eternal Word. The Word of God is the most holy thing we will ever hold in our hands in this lifetime. As Dr John MacArthur says, "This book contains: the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved and practice it to be holy..."

Lamentably, the music of heaven has been sold to the world – to the ones who had the deepest pockets and made the sweetest promises. In a very real sense, "Simon the Sorcerer" has succeeded in purchasing the work of God from the "apostles" of our industry (Acts 8:14-25).

## For the moment, not eternity

What has been the result of this partnering with the world? Gospel music today has become music for the moment, but not for eternity. Transitory, temporal, trivial messages that devalue Deity and raise "felt-need" affairs above eternal "real-need" concerns produce disposable, consumer driven, cotton-candy music.

This is playing marbles with diamonds. We are unequally yoked with an unbelieving world, sin goes undisciplined, is even tolerated for some artists because of their visibility and sales power and the truth and authority of Scripture is all but abrogated.

Biblical illiteracy is pandemic. Accountability to the local church has all but been abandoned. Moral pluralism and erroneous forms of ecumenism are the dyslexic doctrines of today.

A politically correct, reductionist gospel that appeals only to the flesh and a syncretistic methodology in communication through the arts have sought to replace the true "Gospel According To Jesus" evidenced in the fruit of an obedient life fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit and His truth.

Could it be that the love of money is at the root of it all? Or could it be that ignorance has revealed the unschooled in matters of faith and doctrine?

Unquestionably both.

For many, money has been and continues to be the prerequisite for "ministry," and Biblical truth is no longer vital but vicarious!

Departure from the Word of God is now clearly evidenced in our music, lyrics, business practices and alliances. Beloved, if we



do not repent of our sins, God's judgement will surely be upon us.

When Martin Luther stood at Wittenberg's Door he called for reformation from the recalcitrant Roman Church. Now it is our turn, almost five centuries later, to sound the alarm in our generation. This time, to call the Christian Music Industry to reformation back to the supremacy, sufficiency and Lordship of Jesus Christ. Genuine revival – a fresh return to obedience in Christ is surely needed today, but that would be almost impossible given the current environment of our industry.

Why? True revival is marked by repentance; true repentance brings restitution; true restitution demands that Christian music be owned and operated only by believers whose aim is the glory of God consistent with Biblical truth. This means that the current CCMI labels must return all the money they have received to their respective secular counterparts that purchased them and divorce alliances with them.

The CCMI has gone too far down the wide road of worldliness and there is not the tenacity of character and the Biblical courage of heart and mind to do the right thing no matter what the cost.

These are serious times, brethren, that call for real answers. This is not a time for duplicitous people, proclaiming a diluted message, from disingenuous ministries. It

is a time for those whose lives are tempered with the steel of righteousness, girded with the belt of truth, standing firm in the gospel of peace, raising high their shield of faith, guarded with the helmet of salvation, to wield the sword of the Spirit with a surgeon's exactitude, praying always with all prayer and supplication, with all perseverance for all the saints in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:10-20).

## The Emperor's clothes

Will we champion again the manifesto of the Reformers: *Sola Fide* (by faith alone); *Sola Gratia* (by grace alone); *Sola Scriptura* (on the Word alone); *Solus Christus* (because of Christ alone); and *Soli Deo Gloria* (to the glory of God alone)? Do we have the conviction of heart and courage of mind to do what's just? Do we have the boldness to shout above the roar of the marketplace that the Emperor has no clothes? Will we leave our careers, our contracts, our carefully cultivated plans and press releases, our unequally yoked record companies to serve the Lord again with all our heart, soul, mind and strength? There is no grey in this – it's a matter of obedience.

Oh brethren, "we have a name to be alive, but we are dead (Revelation 3:1)." There is no greater love song to proclaim than the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord at Calvary, but yet others feel content

to sing about the chaff of this world. What the New Testament church wrestled with the least is what our industry craves the most – money. How dare we think we can play politics with God, with His truth and with His church.

We can't negotiate with sin no matter what kind of capital is at stake – and that really is the issue here.

Let us "press on, that we may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of us (Philippians 3:12)." Let us "lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us (Hebrew 12:1)."

Let us fall on our faces before our Holy Lord, repent of our sin and return to our First Love. With lives bathed in His grace, let us provoke one another to love and good works. With undivided hearts may we leave the prodigal's pigpen and come back to the Father's house. Let us commit to prayer and fasting seeking the Lord's will with a broken, contrite and obedient heart. Let us return to our churches and to the faithful pastors/elders that shepherd us – submitting ourselves to their godly leadership. May we be students of His Word filled daily with His Spirit.

Pray on this. Pounding on "Wittenberg's Door," let us come together to make history to make Contemporary Christian Music... Christian again. ☕

# Will you help us be a blessing?

**DID you know that for less than the cost of a cup of coffee you can send the life-giving message found in *Prepare the Way* to church leaders in African countries, as well as overseas missionaries, prisoners and those in hospitals and hospices?**

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# The Parables of Jesus

by Zac Poonen

## 1. Entering God's Kingdom

1. **Sower and seed** (Mark 4:3-8; Luke 8:15) – 3 types of bad soil and 3 types of good soil (30, 60 & 100)

2. **Invitees to wedding feast** (Matthew 22:2-14) – Man refused to wear the freely-offered wedding-garment

3. **Houses on rock and sand** (Matthew 7:24-27) – The importance of a good foundation – of obedience

## 2. Paying the Price

4. **Seedtime to harvest** (Mark 4:26-29) – Growth comes effortlessly, if we follow the laws of the Spirit

5. **The mustard tree** (Matthew 13:31,32) – Artificial growth invites Satan's agents to settle in our midst

6. **Building a tower** (Luke 14:28-30) – "Disciple-making" (v.26,27&33) alone will complete the tower

7. **Fighting the enemy** (Luke 14:31,32) – The Lord can fight Satan with a few – if they're wholehearted

8. **Hidden treasure** (Matthew 13:44) – We have to pay a price for some things in the Christian life

9. **Pearl of great price** (Matthew 13:45,46) – We must value Jesus Himself over everything else

## 3. Loving God and Man

10. **Two debtors** (Luke 7:41-43) – Love for God comes from knowing how much we've been forgiven

11. **Unforgiving servant**

(Matthew 18:23-35) – We must forgive all others, because we've been forgiven much

12. **Good Samaritan** (Luke 10:30-37) – We must be alert to human need around us – in our home first of all

13. **Sheep and goats** (Matthew 25:31-36) – The "righteous" helped their needy brothers and sisters

## 4. The Danger of Legalism

14. **Two sons** (Matthew 21:28-31) – We must mean what we say to God – unlike the Pharisees

15. **Blind leading the blind** (Luke 6:39&40) – If we don't practice what we preach, we're spiritually blind

16. **Wheat and tares** (Matthew 13:24-30) – The hypocrites look just like other believers – on the outside

17. **Fig tree without figs** (Luke 13:6-9) – Fig-leaves symbolise human righteousness – cursed by God

18. **New cloth on old garment** (Matthew 9:16) – You can't put a patch of Jesus' life on to your Adamic life

19. **New wine in old wine-skins** (Matthew 9:17) – Grace (new wine) won't fit into the old religious system

20. **Wise and foolish virgins** (Matthew 25:1-13) – Love for Jesus (oil) alone will make our light shine forever

## 5. Four Types of Backsliders

21. **Lost sheep** (Luke 15:3-7)

– Some go astray through carelessness and lack of fellowship

22. **Lost coin** (Luke 15:8-10) – Some go astray through the failure and neglect of the church

23. **Prodigal son & Elder son** (Luke 15:11-32) – Some go astray through rebellion or spiritual arrogance

24. **Yeast in meal** (Mat.13:33) – Corruption spreads easily in any church – so we must be watchful

## 6. Spiritual Pride

25. **Seating at wedding feast** (Luke 14:7-11) – Always seek for the lowly place – as Jesus did

26. **Labourers in vineyard** (Matthew 20:1-16) – There is hope for those who come to the Lord late in life

27. **Master and slave** (Luke 17:7-10) – When we have obeyed everything, we're still unworthy

28. **Pharisee and tax-collector** (Luke 18:9-14) – God opposes the proud and those who despise others

29. **Children in market** (Luke 7:31-35) – Religious people will criticise us no matter what we do

## 7. Watching and Praying

30. **Persistent widow** (Luke 18:1-8) – A weak believer can prevail in prayer with his heavenly Father

31. **Persistent neighbour** (Luke 11:5-8) – We must seek for the gifts of the Spirit – to help others

32. **Father and children** (Luke 11:11-13) – God is better than the best of earthly fathers

33. **Watching servants** (Matthew 24:45-51; Mark 13:34) – We must be alert – especially the doorkeepers

34. **Fig tree and other trees** (Luke 21:29-32) – Israel's return to the land is a sign of Christ's return

## 8. Being Faithful With God's Gifts

35. **Wicked tenants** (Matthew 21:33-41) – All we have is a loan from God – for which we are accountable

36. **Rich fool** (Luke 12:16-21) – He who is not "rich toward God" with his earthly life and things is a fool

37. **Talents - 5, 2 and 1** (Matthew 25:14-30) – We must be faithful with the smallest gifts God gives us

38. **Minas - 1 each** (Luke 19:12-27) – Time is a gift that God has given in the same measure to all

39. **Dishonest steward** (Luke 16:1-8) – We must use money & material things to win people for heaven

40. **Good and bad fish** (Matthew 13:47,48) – God will finally separate His people from others for all eternity





# WATCH & PRAY

Thanks to  
Elizabeth Kendal

## ANOTHER MASSACRE IN C.A.R.

Central African Republic (which is 76 percent Christian) remains divided, with the north largely under the control of foreign-backed local and foreign Islamic militants. Christians whose towns and villages are in rebel-held territory live with terrible insecurity. Hundreds of thousands are displaced and the "front-line" is perpetually volatile.

On September 16 an Islamic militia swept through the mostly Christian village of Ndomete north-central CAR, killing 19 residents and wounding dozens. The government has labelled it a "massacre." The next day clashes erupted in nearby Kaga-Bandoro claiming at least five more lives. UN peacekeepers were deployed to the area and are now maintaining the "peace." Please pray that God will intervene in this forgotten, continuing conflict to bring about peace, justice and liberty. Please pray for CAR and its Church.

## 'PERSECUTED, BUT NOT FORSAKEN'

Early on Friday, September 2 four Islamic militants attacked the Warsak Dam Christian Colony with the intention of wiping out the 30-40 Christian families living there. First they shot and killed Samuel Masih as he unlocked the gates at 5:30 am.

Fortunately someone managed to call the police. They happened to be close by and on high alert, having been informed that terrorists were

planning to attack the nearby Warsak Military Cadet College. All four terrorists were killed, though miraculously no other Christians perished, despite one terrorist detonating his explosive vest inside a Christian family's house.

May Jesus our Saviour and Shepherd comfort and support Samuel Masih's widow and five children. May Yahweh Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts, command his angels (Psalm 91) to guard and defend Pakistan's vulnerable Christian communities.

## RUSSIA: ANTI-MISSION LAW KICKS IN

On July 7 Russia's President Vladimir Putin signed into law a controversial "anti-terror" package which includes anti-mission measures that eviscerate religious freedom. Five cases came before the courts during August. A Hare Krishna devotee was acquitted. Of four Protestants to be charged (two of whom are foreigners), three have been fined and one was still due in court. Furthermore, a case was launched on August 22 against the director of an Adventist church who stands accused of illegal evangelism for sending Christian literature to the leadership of the district administration.

Pray that the anti-mission measures will be either radically amended or repealed.

## MORE ARRESTS IN IRAN

Middle East Concern (MEC) reports that on Friday August 26, five believers were arrested

as their families picnicked together in Firuzkuh north of Tehran. At around 1:30 pm, officers from the Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) raided the picnic and took the men into detention. The whereabouts of Ramiel Bet Tamraz, Amin Nader Afshar, Hadi Askary, Mohamad Dehnav and Amir Sina Dashti remains unknown.

Ramiel Bet Tamra is the son of Assyrian Pastor Victor Bet Tamraz. Pastor Victor and Amin Nader Afshar were arrested over Christmas in December, 2014 and released on bail in early 2015 pending trial. There are grave concerns that the latest arrests are part of a MOIS campaign to compile "evidence" against Pastor Victor ahead of the trial. Morning Star News notes that 37 Christians were arrested during August alone. The spiritual battle is intense. Please pray.

## ASIA BIBI'S SUPREME COURT APPEAL

Pakistan's highest court has announced that it will hear the appeal against Asia Bibi's death sentence for blasphemy during the second week of October. It is reasonable to expect that, as in the past, this news will trigger Islamic protests, sit-ins and calls for Asia Bibi's death. It may also trigger anger and mob violence against Pakistan's vulnerable Christian communities. As the appeal hearing draws closer, the threat to Asia's life will escalate. If acquitted, Asia and her family will need high-level security immediately, as well as sanctuary in a safe country, if they are to be spared vigilante extra-judicial killing. The Church must be praying for this whole process, and the West must take a stand for religious liberty and Christian security.

## 100th-Issue PtW Day!

**November 6**

is the date for the 100th-Issue *Prepare the Way* day of 2016 at Mount Zion Church in Merrivale (near Pietermaritzburg). Peter Pollock will be preaching – and it would be a blessing if you would join us (and stay for lunch)!



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## Manna for mahala

If you'd like to receive Peter Pollock's Daily Manna devotional, which will also take you through the whole Bible in a year, then go to our website ([www.prepare.co.za](http://www.prepare.co.za)), and on the home page go to the "Daily Manna Sign-up" at the top, fill in your details and we will e-mail it to you every morning. What's more, it's absolutely free!



*The late Dr S.M. Lockeridge, a preacher from San Diego, California preached these words in Detroit in 1976:*

**MY King was born King. The Bible says He's a Seven-Way King. He's the King of the Jews – that's an Ethnic King. He's the King of Israel – that's a National King. He's the King of righteousness. He's the King of the ages. He's the King of Heaven. He's the King of glory. He's the King of kings and He is the Lord of lords. Now that's my King.**

Well, I wonder if you know Him. Do you know Him? Don't try to mislead me. Do you know my King?

David said the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork. My King is the only one of whom there are no means of measure that can define His limitless love. No far-seeing telescope can bring into visibility the coastline of the shore of His supplies. No barriers can hinder Him from pouring out His blessing.

He's enduringly strong. He's entirely sincere. He's eternally steadfast. He's immortally graceful. He's imperially powerful. He's impartially merciful. That's my King.

He's God's Son. He's the sinner's saviour. He's the centrepiece of civilisation. He stands alone in Himself. He's honest. He's unique. He's unparalleled. He's unprecedented. He's supreme. He's pre-eminent. He's the grandest idea in literature. He's the highest personality in philosophy. He's the supreme problem in higher criticism.

He's the fundamental doctrine of historic theology. He's the carnal necessity of spiritual religion. That's my King.

He's the miracle of the age. He's the superlative of everything good that you choose to call Him. He's the only one able to supply all our needs simultaneously. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted and the tried. He sympathises and He saves. He's the Almighty God who guides and keeps all his people. He heals the sick. He cleanses the lepers. He forgives sinners. He discharged debtors. He delivers the captives. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate. He regards the aged. He rewards the diligent and He beautifies the meek. That's my King.

Do you know Him? Well, my King is a King of knowledge. He's the wellspring of wisdom. He's the doorway of deliverance. He's the pathway of peace. He's the roadway of righteousness. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. He's the master of the mighty. He's the captain of the conquerors. He's the head of the heroes. He's the leader of the legislatures. He's the overseer of the overcomers. He's the governor of governors. He's the prince of princes. He's the King of kings and He's the Lord of lords. That's my King.

His office is manifold. His promise is sure. His light is matchless. His goodness is limitless. His mercy is everlasting. His love never changes. His Word is enough. His grace is sufficient. His reign is righteous. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. I wish I could describe Him to you... but He's indescribable. He's indescribable.

That's my King.

He's incomprehensible. He's invincible. He's irresistible. I'm coming to tell you this, that the heavens of heavens can't contain Him, let alone some man explain Him. You can't get Him out of your mind. You can't get Him off of your hands. You can't outlive Him and you can't live without Him. The Pharisees couldn't stand Him, but they found out they couldn't stop Him. Pilate couldn't find any fault in Him. The witnesses couldn't get their testimonies to agree about Him. Herod couldn't kill Him. Death couldn't handle Him and the grave couldn't hold Him. That's my King.

He always has been and He always will be. I'm talking about the fact that He had no predecessor and He'll have no successor. There's nobody before Him and there'll be nobody after Him. You can't impeach Him and He's not going to resign. That's my King! That's my King!

Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Well, all the power belongs to my King. We're around here talking about black power and white power and green power, but in the end all that matters is God's power.

Thine is the power. Yeah. And the glory. We try to get prestige and honour and glory for ourselves, but the glory is all His. Yes.

Thine is the Kingdom and the power and glory, forever and ever and ever and ever. How long is that? And ever and ever and ever and ever. And when you get through with all of the "evers," then... Amen. ☞